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YOUR GUIDE TO ONLINE RESEARCH

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August/September 2023

Volume 18, Number 3

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Published by Moorshead Magazines Ltd.

33 Angus Dr.

Ajax, ON, L1S 5C4 Canada

1-888-326-2476

Moorshead Magazines Ltd. also publishes
History Magazine.

Postal Information — Canada

Internet Genealogy, Circulation Dept.,

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Ajax, ON, L1S 5C4 Canada.

E-mail: general@internet-genealogy.com

Postal Information — United States

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Niagara Falls, NY 14304.

E-mail: general@internet-genealogy.com

ISSN 1718-0422

© 2023 Moorshead Magazines Ltd.

Published six times per year:

Feb/Mar, Apr/May, June/July,

Aug/Sept, Oct/Nov, & Dec/Jan

Subscription rate for USA & Canada

1 Year PDF Edition (6 issues) \$19.95

2 Year PDF Edition (12 issues) \$34.95

(US orders in US funds; Cdn orders in Cdn funds)

Please add GST/HST as applicable.

GST # 139340186 RT

We welcome the submission of articles for publication. Please address e-mail proposals to edward@moorshead.com. We will always contact people who submit articles, but the review process may take several weeks.

Authors' notes are available at

www.internet-genealogy.com/author_notes.htm

Toll-Free Subscription Line:

1-888-326-2476

Printed in Canada

IG105

www.internet-genealogy.com

In This Issue

Welcome to our August/September 2023 edition of *Internet Genealogy!* It has been quite a year of inclement weather all over the planet. Diane L. Richard's *Researching Your Mariner Ancestors* cover feature made me think of how our ancestors, and more importantly, our seafaring ancestors, looked at extreme weather events with respect to their own lives all those many years ago. Even with today's improvements in technology, the dangers are still present and must be heeded by everyone. The bottom line is: never take your eye off the weathervane and check the forecast often!

Sue Lisk's first article in this issue is *In Their Words: Memoires & Autobiographies*. Sue gives us an excellent primer on the differences between the two styles and how they should be used when writing family history. Sue's second article, *In Tribute: Paths of Remembrance*, is a look at public and private memorials that you might happen upon while out for a walk in your neighborhood, or in another city or country. Some may be marked with a plaque, or simply not marked at all. Dave Obee is keen on census records, and he could hardly wait for the recent release of the *1931 Canadian Census* to find out all he could about his grandparents who arrived in Edmonton, Alberta from Ukraine in 1928. And, don't forget to check out Dave's regular Back Page column as well. Michelle Dennis is back with her look at *Ancestral Movements in Britain and Beyond*. Michelle examines the many reasons for our ancestors' decision to relocate. Robbie Gorr returns with an eye on television... *Must-See Genealogy TV* that is, and he has 25 great viewing suggestions available for you to see, and all for free! David A. Norris is back with *I Hereby Bequeath My Family History Facts...*, a look at Colonial and 19th century wills and estate papers. Ed Storey shows us what we can learn about our British ancestors with *Online British Newspapers*. Lisa A. Alzo returns with her review of *FreeForm*, a note-taking app for the Apple Mac! Meredith Renard is back with *Paying Close Attention* when looking at photographs because you might be surprised at what you will find. Lynn Cassidy returns with *Vacation Commonalities* – a look at the need to document the people and places they visited. We hope you enjoy the issue!



— Edward Zapletal, *Publisher*



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Questions or comments?
Call 1-888-326-2476 or visit
www.internet-genealogy.com



In Their Words: “Memoirs” And Autobiographies

by Sue Lisk

AFTER AN HOUR-AND-A-HALF I WAS CERTAIN I had this jazzy tune down. I might even whistle it in my sleep. After having listened to the music hundreds of times while on hold in between conversations I had with six customer service reps and three supervisors in the Client Verification Department, it would be hard to forget the rhythmic melody.



Dizzy Gillespie holding his memoir, “To Be or Not to Bop”, published in 1979, Bernard Gotfryd. (Library of Congress)

The tenth person at my bank finally managed to confirm who I was. But by that time, I was beginning to wonder myself.

Although it should be easier today than centuries ago to prove to others that we are who we say we are, I got to wondering whether that’s really true. But then as

now, many people have felt compelled to make their presence as individuals known to the world. One of the ways they have done so is by writing their memoirs or the stories of their lives.

For family historians, these personal written accounts are a valuable source of information when it comes to trying to understand the motivations, feelings, beliefs, actions, and experiences of individuals in our family trees. Whether these accounts are written by our own ancestors and relatives or by others, they can also provide contextual information allowing us to better appreciate their lives and times.

Some Considerations Concerning “Memoirs”

Strictly speaking, a “memoir” is a first-person, non-fiction narrative in which the author describes a certain period in his or her life or a series of connected events throughout the author’s lifetime. Although autobiographies are also non-fiction narratives



Even companies occasionally publish their “memoirs”. The Harlan and Hollingsworth Company, once the largest firm in Wilmington, DE, produced railroad cars and iron ships. The company’s office building in Wilmington, DE, from its “Semi-Centennial Memoir of the Harlan and Hollingsworth Company”, c. 1886.

written in the first-person, they recount the entire life of the author.

But the appearance of “memoir” or “memoirs” in the title of an account frequently refers to a work that is really an autobiography or even a biography. And many works that are truly memoirs are not identified as such.

Memoirs and autobiographies share an important feature which distinguishes them from diaries and journals. A person who keeps a diary or journal does not usually expect others to read the entries. In contrast, the author of a memoir or autobiography writes for an audience of some kind. The intended readers may be only family members and relatives or may be the general public.

This “audience factor” has important implications for genealogists.

Family historians should be aware that individuals writing for others will, unconsciously or consciously, be wearing masks of some



Anna M. Stanton (1832–1915) taught industrial arts in Indiana, South Carolina and Virginia. She wrote a memoir about her teaching experiences, published in 1908. Portrait of Anna M. Stanton, ca. 1873. (Library of Congress)

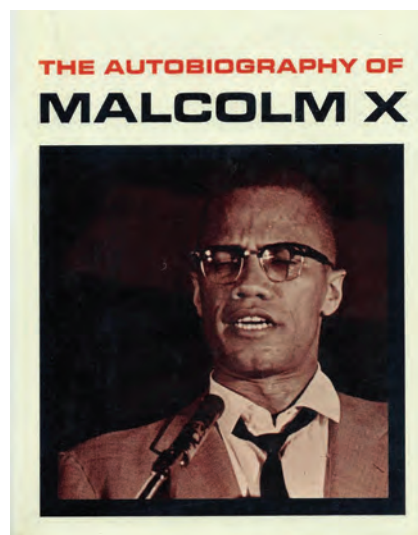
sort. The author may choose not to include unflattering emotions, comments, or beliefs that may have been relevant at the time of the events described. And the author may edit the account extensively. A person keeping a diary or journal rarely does this, so the account would likely seem “rawer” and more authentic to anyone else who might read it.

Genealogists should also bear in mind that memoirs are often written long after the events described. By their nature, diaries and journals are composed much closer to the periods included. Over time, memories fade, and opinions change. After months or years have passed, the author of a memoir may have gained insight into happenings recounted. The passage of time tends to introduce errors into memoirs, which means that the content of memoirs may be less trustworthy than the entries found in a diary or journal.

However, memoirs also offer genealogists some advantages over more private accounts. Because the writer of a memoir intends others to read it, the writer attempts to explain events and situations so that they will make sense to the target audience. This contextual information is often crucial to understanding the account. A diarist has no need to explain anything to others.

Memoirs of Ancestors and Relatives

You may find more memoirs written by people in your family tree than you might expect. By communicating with relatives, you may discover memoirs of your own ancestors or of collateral relatives. Relatives’ memoirs could reveal fascinating information about your ancestors or the places where they lived and the situations they



“The Autobiography of Malcolm X”, 1st edition dust cover jacket of the book authored by Malcolm X and Alex Haley, 1965. (Via Wikimedia Commons)

encountered. But learning more about relatives can also be rewarding.

One of my distant cousins served on a minesweeper in the Navy in WWII. He described that experience in detail in his memoir. He even takes the reader on a detailed tour of the ship, section by section: “Under the aft crews comp[artment] were all the fuel tanks and voids, for ballast and stability. Now I will take you down in the for’d engine room. You better let me go first. Watch your step now; the ladder is pretty steep.”

By the time I’d finished taking his tour, I thought I might be able to find my way around the ship pretty well.

This cousin’s family told me that he was quite serious and withdrawn. Yet I would never have guessed that from reading his memoir:

“Well we were tied up to the sub for an hour and while we were waiting they showed us around the place. The hatches were so small I had to crawl through and pull myself into the next comp[artment] by sections. I never knew whether



to go head first or otherwise. It was really a compact little ship, though. They showed us the Torpedo Tubes and they had torpedoes on either side of the crew quarters. Boy! I never realized that torpedoes were so tremendous. These were approximately 15' long and almost two feet in diameter. I knew it wouldn't fit in my B*B gun."

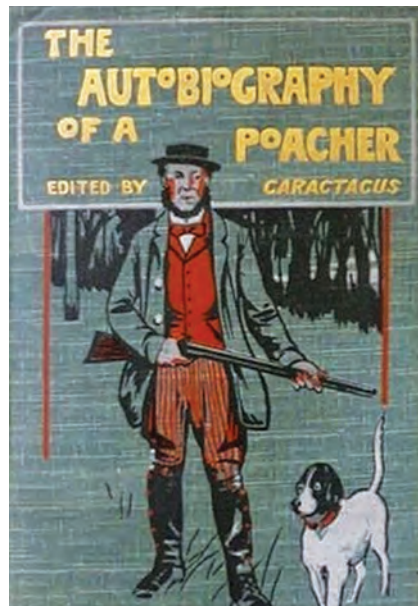
Again and again, I laughed at the jokes I found he'd inserted throughout. Granted, he wrote this memoir as a young man and may have grown more reserved over time. Yet this might be a good example of a carefully crafted account written for his family, presented with the particular voice he chose to use.

The memoir included some surprises. In looking up expressions that I was unfamiliar with, I learned some slang typical of the era. And one of my ancestors made a cameo appearance in the story. The memoir also included a photo of her that I had never seen.

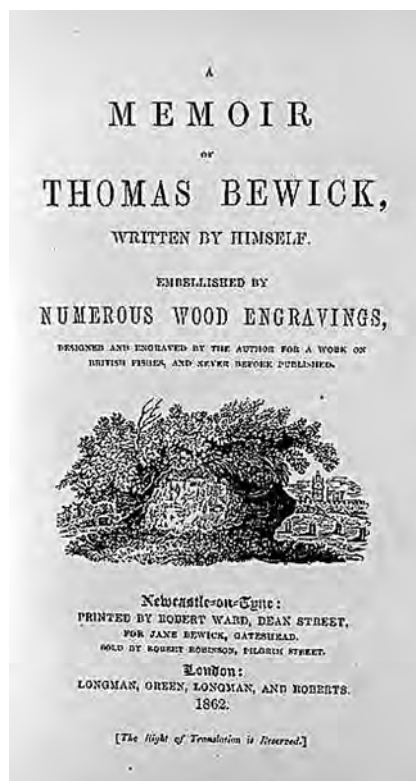
Memoirs of Others

The memoirs of famous people you might find either online or in print can certainly provide information that will help you to comprehend some of the experiences of your own ancestors. But in many cases, the memoirs of people you've never heard of may be more useful. Reading the memoir or autobiography of a former slave, a woman, or an unknown clergyman, for instance, would allow you to hear the voice of someone whom history might otherwise have overlooked.

But even the autobiographies of underrepresented or minority groups from the past will often reveal attitudes that we consider unacceptable today or that minimize the importance of the group



Autobiographies and memoirs of individuals with unusual "occupations" can be a source of valuable information. "Autobiography of a Poacher", c. 1901. (Public domain via Wikimedia Commons)



Thomas Bewick was an English wood engraver and natural history author. "Memoir of Thomas Bewick, Written by Himself, Embellished by Numerous Wood Engravings, Designed and Engraved by the Author for a Work on British Fishes, and never before Published", c. 1862. (Public domain via Wikimedia Commons)

of which the author is a member.

A good example of the latter is "Reminiscences of a soldier's wife: an autobiography" by Mrs. John A. Logan, published in 1913, and accessible on Ancestry.com.

The author begins by defining herself as hardly more than an extension of her spouse: "To tell my own story is to tell that of my famous husband, General John A. Logan...I shared his thoughts and plans no less when he was a senator than when he was a prosecuting attorney in southern Illinois." She could have included more of her own thoughts, but perhaps she felt these were unlikely to interest the public. We can only guess. But had she written a diary, it would probably have offered greater insight into some of her personal reactions and opinions while also reflecting the society and the time in which she lived.

When consulting a "memoir" or autobiography, keep in mind that the content expressed has been filtered through the personal lens of the author, and be sure to verify any "facts" using trustworthy sources.

I heard the mail carrier arrive and drop my mail in the box. And yes, within the three-day window, just as the bank supervisor had promised, that nondescript white envelope had arrived. At last, the name on the card would be correct. And sure enough, there it was, with the wrong name staring up at me once again.

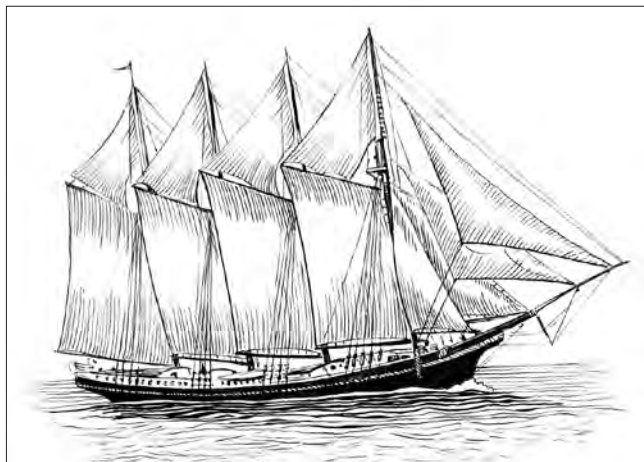
Hmmm. Can you name that tune? ©

SUE LISK, a freelance writer, genealogist, and linguist, is a frequent contributor to *Internet Genealogy*. She works for a news agency in Washington, DC.



Early 19th Century Port Records That Document Mariners

By Diane L. Richard



Line art drawing of a schooner. Released into the public domain by its author, Pearson Scott Foresman, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Schooner_%28PSF%29.png.

Introduction

Sailors, seafarers, mariners, or however you refer to someone who plied a business via a waterborne vessel, have been a constant and vital part of history. Depending on your period of interest and where the mariners were based, you may have already found extensive documentation or almost none. These records are found in many different places. We'll explore some of the record types that might survive and identify your mariner. Each type of record is unique, though overlapping information may be included. And, as always, not every type of relevant record is discussed. I mostly focus on the record types I find more likely to be overlooked.

The term "coastal" trade refers to that activity along the "coast" the article focuses on the eastern seaboard. You also had transatlantic and Caribbean travel routes plied by sailors; different records were mandated after the Revolutionary War depending on who was shipping where.

As always, there are a few CAVEATS:

- 1) The focus is on early 19th-century records. Different records were created and survived for other periods. The colonial period was replete with records such as passes, ships' journals, Greenwich Hospital Accounts, weekly emigration returns, vessel bonds, accounts and duties, and more.
- 2) The focus is on shipping non-slave cargo.
- 3) The focus is United States-generated records.
- 4) Not all records are extant, even federal government records documenting money collected.
- 5) The U.S. Customs Service was not established until 30 July 1789 and focused on imported goods, not coastal trade.
- 6) There were no U.S. requirements for crew lists until 1803. These crew lists only applied to American vessels, leaving U.S. ports for foreign voyages or returning from ports abroad. The law did NOT apply to foreign vessels or American ships plying the coastal trade.¹ This is an important distinction as many sailors/mariners were "local" and just working the coastal trade (especially true between North Carolina and Virginia for example) or even large in-land waterways (e.g., Albemarle and Pamlico Sounds in North Carolina)
- 7) The terms Master and Captain are often used interchangeably.

The genesis for this article is a research project to track down someone who "might" have been a ship's captain or was a mariner of some type in early 19th century Plymouth (Washington County), N.C. Though many N.C. examples are included, these records are NOT unique to N.C., and some databases mentioned reside at New England repositories or UK-based endeavors.



UNITED STATES CUSTOMS SERVICE Records of the United States Customs Service (NARA)

We'll start our exploration with relevant Federal Records – those of the United States Customs Service.

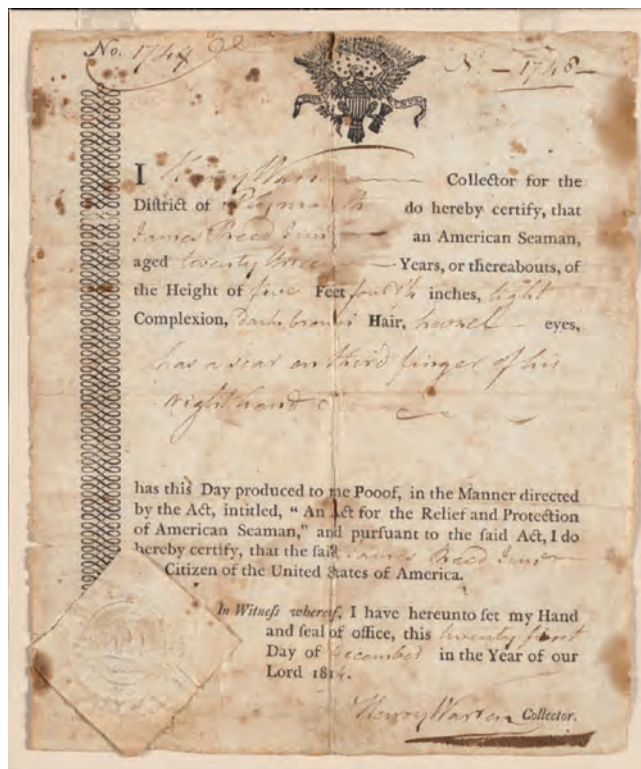
Record Group 36 encompasses the named collection with RG.36.3 “Records of Customhouses.” This is the first place to start in identifying what customs records for a port might be extant, www.archives.gov/research/guide-fed-records/groups/036.html. This guide informs us ...

“Customs districts and customs offices (known collectively as the Customs Service) established by an act of July 31, 1789 (1 Stat. 29). Administration of customs laws placed under the office of the Secretary of the Treasury by an act of September 2, 1789 (1 Stat. 65). Fiscal responsibility for customs collection placed under the Comptroller of the Treasury, effective October 25, 1792, under authority of an act of May 8, 1792 (1 Stat. 280).”

First off, note that, though, when a colony, the collecting of customs occurred, as previously mentioned, from the Revolutionary War period until 1789, there was a gap as the U.S. customs service had not yet been established. This does not mean that there are no records associated with customs houses (aka customhouses) that existed before 1789 as there are, and these will be incomplete.

Second, most of the customhouse records are held at the regional NARA locations and NOT in DC.

This collection has not been a priority for NARA to digitize, and it does not mean that there are no available digitized records for RG.36, specifically those related to Seamen's Protection Certificates, <https://catalog.archives.gov/search?typeOfMaterials=Textual%20Records&availableOnline=true&recordGroupNumber=36>. These are one of the few classes of records for seamen versus captains/masters that exist. These were authorized in 1796 to identify American merchant seamen as protection against impressment by the British Navy. There are databases where you can search for your merchant seaman ancestor, e.g., Registers of Seamen's Protection Certificates, Mystic Seaport Museum, which covers several New England ports, 1796-1871, <https://research.mysticseaport.org/databases/protection>. Just because the port was located in New England does not mean that say, North Carolinians are not documented. Over 70 individuals born in North Carolina are included. Ancestry.com (\$) has several databases focused on these or similar records, as does FamilySearch.



Seamans Protection Certificate for James Reed, Jr.,
21 December 1814, www.digitalcommonwealth.org/search/commonwealth:xw42p8022

For captains/masters, RG.36.3, Records of Customhouses, are key records since records are typically linked to the ship and captain/master by port. Depending on when and where different kinds of records survive. The surviving records typically list the vessel's name, master's name, port of origin, and details of a ship's cargo which might list the contents and consignees. Putting these records together for a particular port can reveal a lot of detail about what the mariners/seamen have been up to. They are just short on naming names! For example, here is the descriptive catalog entry for NARA for “Collection District of Edenton, North Carolina, 2/8/1790-1913,” <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/10510989> which leads to this list of available records, <https://catalog.archives.gov/search?q=record.creators.naId:10510989>. As far as “import duties collected,” the only entry is for 1822-1834 with another volume identified as Abstracts of Tonnage Duties collected, 1790-1850 – a reminder that multiple volumes were often created for a particular port and time though not all may survive.

Records of the United States Customs Service (Elsewhere)

It ends up those records of many customs houses (aka customshouses) ended up in private/manuscript

Abstract of Goods, Wares and Merchandise imported into the District

Date of Importation	Name of Ship	Master's Name	Character of the Goods	Value of Goods	Value of Freight	Value of Duties	Total
1822	John A. Smith	John A. Smith	American	1	-	-	1
1822	Schooner Liberty	Sally Hanning	do	2	2	2	6
19	Schooner	Carroll	do	3	3	3	9
25	Schooner	William	do	5	5	5	15
			do	6	6	6	18
							42

Edenton (N.C.) Port 1823, via RG.36.3.1 held at NARA in Atlanta.

collections held in archives across the country (and probably the world, though I limited my focus to U.S. archives). If you search Archivegrid on customs + port, <https://beta.worldcat.org/archivegrid/?p=1&q=customs+port>, you will find that there are over 1,300 results, corroborating many relevant records are in private collections. Do NOT assume that NARA has all Federal Records created.

For example, we learned above that an import duty collected 1822-1834 volume exists at NARA Atlanta for Edenton, North Carolina, yet, earlier Edenton North Carolina records, 1790-1795 are held in Collection Number: 03428-z, The Southern Historical Collection, Louis Round Wilson Special Collections Library, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, <https://finding-aids.lib.unc.edu/03428/>. The volume is fully digitized and available for anyone to access. Of some frustration is that the book references other books, such as the Ton Book and Import Book, which are not part of the collection. The Ton Book might be similar to the mentioned above volume held at NARA Atlanta.

*1 Cash Dr. to duties on Merchandise
2 For thirty dollars and fifty eight cents amount of
duties on Merchandise Imported in Schooner Betty
Phillip Hathaway master from St. Martins, as
particularized in Import book page 1.*

Example from Edenton (N.C.) Port Book, 1790-1795, held at UNC-Chapel Hill.

You can learn more about these records helpful for documenting mariners/seamen via the following:

Newspaper Archives

Look for information regarding ships (and often, Captains are listed along with the port from which

CUSTOM-HOUSE WILMINGTON.
ENTERED

Jan. 21,	Sch'r, Wm. & Margaret, Lyndou, Jam.	Jamaica
	Sloop Two Sisters, Church,	Jamaica
	Sch'r Ann Eliza, Ruggles,	Baltimore
22	Bolina, Haskwell,	Warren
23	Sloop Fair Play, Luther,	Boston
24	Sch'r Friendship, Snow,	Barbadoes
	Brig Sally, Lewis,	New-York
26	Sch'r Rambler, Crosby,	New-York
	Minerva, Barker,	Boston
	Lucy, Ewer,	N. York
	Aurora, Allen,	Boston
	Free Mason, Sweet,	St. Thomas
	Evelina, Twycross,	with Sugar and Coffee.
27	Brig Georgia Packet, Parker,	Jamaica
	Sch'r Rhoda, Robbins, Trinidad,	with Sugar, Molosses & Fruit.
	Susannah, Grant, Guadaloupe,	with

Page 2, Wilmington Gazette, 3 February 1807, which names for Wilmington N.C. Custom-House the ships, captains, ports arriving from, and sometimes the contents.

came or to which going) as published for many of an area's ports. These notices were published in newspapers up and down the east coast. Remember that coastal trade shipping will NOT be listed in these newspaper notices. As seen in the example, only ships from ports further afield, such as Boston, New York, the Caribbean, etc., are listed; You will usually not find entries for other North Carolina ports, or nearby Virginia ports.

Port Records via The State Archives of North Carolina

Because the Federal records collections are not comprehensive, this means you might discover records held in a state library/archive or similar repository. For example, for the State Archives of North Carolina, there is a Ports, 1682-1887 collection which contains records for several ports, though due to the closure of most North Carolina ports before 1800, there is little after 1800 in this collection (Edenton, Elizabeth City and Wilmington have 19th century extant records).²

Certificates of Enrollment and Certificates of Registry

These are another Federal Record Group, so-called "vessel documents." These were issued to managing owners or masters and started in 1815;

² State Archives of North Carolina, Discover Online Catalog, <https://archives.ncdcr.gov/doc> & NCPedia, Ports and Harbors, <https://www.ncpedia.org/ports-and-harbors>.



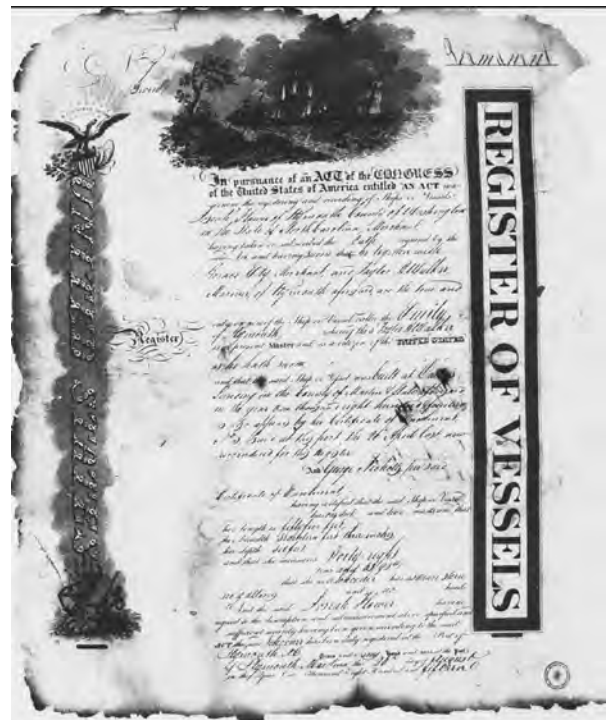
Record of Enrolments Issued and Credited in the District of						Plymouth North Carolina Commencing 1st January, 1814. 1831.									
Date of Enrolment.	No.	Description and name of Vessel.	Husband or managing Owner.	Master's Name.	For what Cause Granted.	DESCRIPTION OF FORMER PAPER.		Tons.	PORT OF REGISTRY.	DATE AND CAUSE OF SURRENDER.					
						When Issued.	No.			When Issued.	Tons.	Date.	Cause of Surrender.		
1831	Feb 26	1 Sht. Expedition	E. H. Mathewick	S. M. Mason	Legal advice	1830	Nov. 4	8	E. Plymouth	25	55				
	Mar 21	2 Hoop Orion	Ben. Bradley	G. W. Archibald	1 st transfer	1831	Jan 21	2	Camden	25	61				
	26	3 Sht. Lander	Samuel H. Smith	W. M. Wilson	1 st change	1830	Mar 30	10	E. "	65	2				
	July 12	4 " Pigeon	W. M. Wilson	James Lamb	New owner		Nov 25	14	Edenton	82	5				
	Aug 30	5 " Navigator	Sam. Maitland	J. S. Walker	New owner		July 19	25	Camden	32	77				
	Sept 7	6 " Mary Eliza	W. D. Henton	P. Hyatt	New owner		Nov 30	34	Woolfolk	26	77				
	Oct 27	7 " Condorilla	W. J. Williams	W. Archibald	New Vessel					88	49				
1831 Ocracoke															
1831	Jan 27	1 Sht. Columbia	W. C. Sisson	James	1 st transfer	1830	Oct 16	11	E. Ocracoke	22	54				
	Mar 17	2 " Advertiser	W. C. Sisson			1831	Mar 17	70	Ocracoke	105	21				
	Apr 19	3 " American Center	G. W. Sisson			1831	Feb 2	2	Washington	100	21				
	June 2	4 " Mary Lou	W. C. Sisson		New owner	1830	Nov 6	3	"	105	21				
	16	5 " Mary	Clifford Simpson				Oct 29	18	Newborn	33	26				
1831 Georgetown South Car															
1831	Jan 7	1 Sht. Diver			New owner	1830	Sept 22	19	E. W. L. S.	24	21				
	4	2 " Aerial				1830	Apr 3	4	Georgetown	15	21				
	Apr 25	3 " John Henry					Sept 19	20	Charleston	16	10				
	7	4 " Wanda					Jan 7	28	Georgetown	102	60				
	May 20	5 " Frederick			1 st change		Apr 3	5	Charleston	25	21				
1831 Charleston															
1831	Jan 1	1 Brig Mary Eliza	J. W. Wilson	J. W. Wilson	Copy	1830	Dec 18	59	New York	118	59				
	2	2 Hoop Mary Lou	W. C. Sisson	W. C. Sisson	New owner		Oct 4	28	Charleston	65	21				

Sample page from "Record of Enrolments ..." for 1831 showing Plymouth & Ocracoke N.C. and Georgetown & Charleston S.C.

earlier records are presumed to have been lost in the burning of Washington in 1814.³ "Vessels engaged in foreign trade were required to obtain a certificate of registration. Vessels of 20 tons and greater capacity in the coastal or fishing trades were required to get enrollments and licenses while those of 5 to less than 20 tons capacity needed only licenses. Copies of licenses were renewed yearly and filed in custom-houses until 1906, when a single form for enrollment and license was issued." Records survive for select states. For once, North Carolina has a robust collection. There are two series of microfilm records for North Carolina – Master Abstracts and Certificates. The Master abstracts (M1863) are a finding aid for M2034 (31 rolls organized alphabetically by port and then time period and divided into rolls focusing on Registration or Enrollment). Plymouth, North Carolina, my target research port, is included, though no owners/masters matching my needs were discovered. And, a great resource for tracking such mariner ancestors.

These records have not been digitized; use WorldCat to locate repositories holding the microfilm of these records for your locale of interest.

For the Record of Certificates of Enrollment (and the Record of Registrations), details given are date of enrollment,



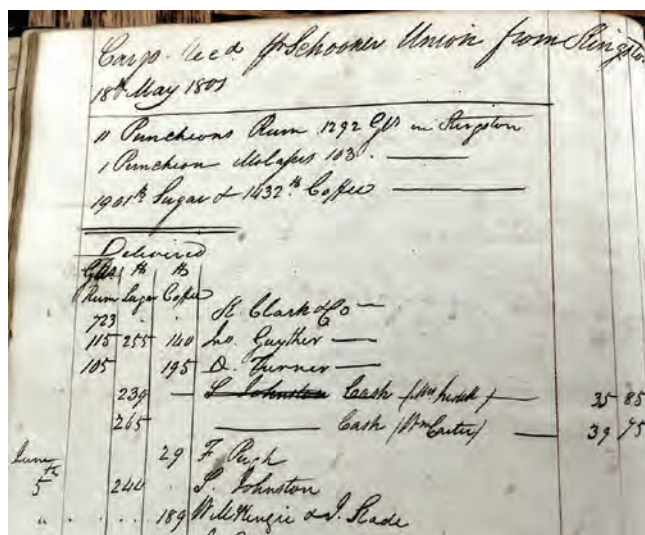
Example of a Plymouth, N.C. Certificate of Registry, M2034, Roll #18, NARA.

³ Vessel Documents, Maritime Records, Research our Records, NARA – Vessel Documents Available on Microfilm for North Carolina, www.archives.gov/research/maritime/vessel-documents.html#NC. Remove the #NC to learn about this record class.

Vessel name, Husband or managing owner (though which is not indicated), Master's [aka Captains] name, and why granted (e.g., new owner, change of papers, new vessel, change in the district, etc.), description of former papers and port of surrender and surrender details. Very helpful when researching ship ownership or changes in such, and the masters/captains are always named. Sometimes the owner and captain are the same.

"Small Business" Ledgers (Letter Books, Business Accounts, Daybooks, etc.)

I discovered numerous individual ledgers where business owners documented the ship's captains with whom the cargo was entrusted, for whom the cargo was intended, sometimes information about insuring said cargo, and so much more. For Plymouth, North Carolina I identified and examined the following early 19th century ledgers, all of which mentioned ships, ships captains, cargos, underwriters, insurers, and more – David Clark Ledger (State Archives of North Carolina), Clark and Carnal Letter Book (UNC Chapel Hill), John Salisbury Ledger (Duke University), and Thomas Cox Letterbook (State Archives of North Carolina). These ledgers provide great details on the cargo, the vessel and master, the destination or origin port, the merchants involved, and much more. This represents a pretty robust collection for one port considering the narrow period of interest and that from 1850 to 1900 the population of this port hovered at around 700-1,200 individuals, <https://population.us/nc/plymouth>, and so was not a large port when



Example page from David Clark Ledger, Plymouth, Washington, NC, 1800-1805, AB 79.1, State Archives of North Carolina – Schooner Union from Kingston (Jamaica), 18 May 1801, carrying Rum, Molasses and Sugar; lists the various consignees/recipients.

An interesting element of looking at more than one ledger for an area is that you might find they cross-reference one another. A cursory glance revealed that David Clark is mentioned in the Thomas Cox Letterbook and that both mention Treadwell & Thorne.

As mentioned in other articles discussing manuscript collections, ArchiveGrid, <https://beta.worldcat.org/archivegrid> is a great place to determine who may hold this type of record. I supplement my ArchiveGrid searches with general web searches and individual repository catalog exploration. Additionally, many theses and related scholarly works (ala Jstor) help us identify relevant extant port/mariner related materials.

compared to nearby Portsmouth in Virginia which had almost 6,500 people in 1840 (same source).

Insurance Records

Not all cargo was insured, but high-value cargo often was insured. When researching the businesses in early 19th century Washington, North Carolina, I discovered that Tre(a)dwel & Thorne (based out of New York) were frequently mentioned as apparent insurers for select cargos (as well as recipients of merchandise).

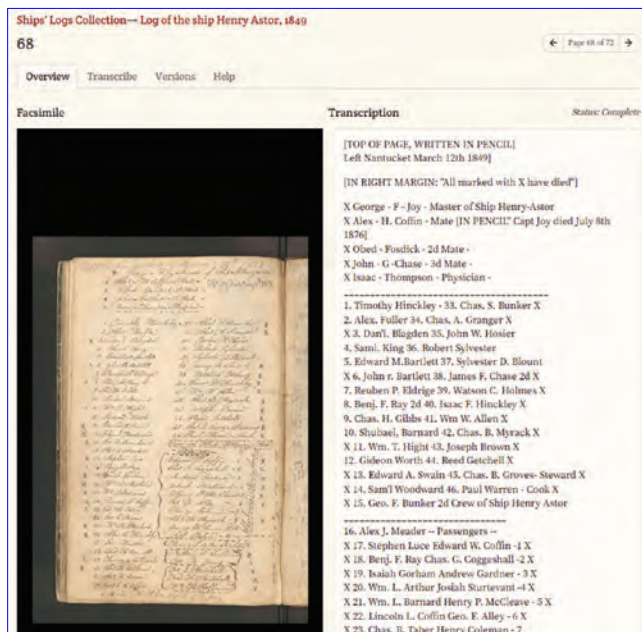
Records survive for some companies, such as the Newbern Marine Insurance Company – Transfer Book (William Hollister & William Hollister Jr, Account Books, 1801-1882, Volume #28, P.112.9, State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina). Unfortunately, no surviving records for Tre(a)dwel & Thorne have yet been discovered.

A helpful resource for North Carolina is Insurance Companies, North Carolina Business History, www.historync.org/NCInsuranceCompanies.htm. Look for a similar resource for your locale of interest.

For a scholarly analysis, consult “Marine Insurance in Britain and America, 1720-1844: A Comparative Institutional Analysis,” Christopher Kingston, www.aria.org/rts/proceedings/2005/Kingston%20-%20Marine.pdf.

Ships Logs

Another way to identify who served on a sailing vessel is via ships logs. Though these logs focused on navigational position, course and speed, weather, and other technical elements, they sometimes mentioned passengers, cargo, crew, and other events that transpired.



The Log of the ship Henry Astor, 1849, Nantucket Historical Society, via FromThePage, listing the crew and passengers for a voyage March 12th 1849 – priceless!

The Cape Ann Museum (Gloucester, Massachusetts) has a great collection of 73 Ships Log Books, www.capeannmuseum.org/media/library_and_archives_finding_aids/a18-ships_log_book_collection_finding_aid.pdf covering 1751–1935 and voyages from around the world. Don't forget to check out the Internet Archive and its collection of almost 150 ships log books, <https://archive.org/search?query=%22log+book%22+ship> which doesn't include the Phillips Library (Peabody Essex Museum) Logbooks, <https://archive.org/details/pemlogbooks>. The Nantucket Historical Association has a collection of Ships' Logs, which are being transcribed on the FromThePage platform, <https://fromthepage.com/nharl/logs>. The New York Public Library also has a collection of Ships' Logs, <https://archives.nypl.org/controlaccess/4176?term=Ships%27%20logs>. So, do look around for these logs/journals/diaries

Admiralty Records

Records of District Courts of the United States, NARA Record Group 21, might also prove helpful.⁴ Since 1789, U.S. District Courts have exercised admiralty jurisdiction. Most admiralty cases before the U.S. district courts in the pre-1840 period concern actions for damages arising from collision; breach of contract (mainly claims for seamen's wages and materials and supplies furnished); pilotage, towage ...

These records survive for select locales such as Northern California, the Southern District of Florida, the Province & Southern District of New York, the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, the Province and State of South Carolina, and the Eastern District of Virginia. With no surviving records for North Carolina, this is not a record group the author has personally explored but that shouldn't stop you from doing so!

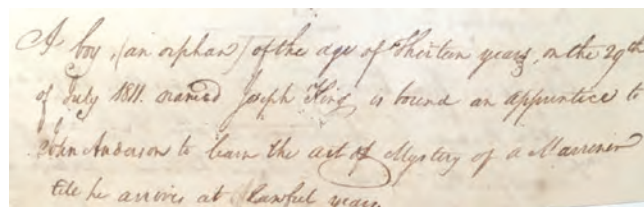
Apprentice Records

Just like other businesses, ships and shipping-related businesses needed labor and one source for such were apprentices. Seek out apprentice bonds (or similar) paperwork to see if individuals were apprenticed as mariner, pilot, rigger, sailmaker, shipbuilder, ship carpenter, etc., and to whom. Odds are the person seeking apprentices for said occupations is a captain, shipowner, shipbuilder, etc.

Recognize also that before the civil war, many "free negro" (aka free persons of color (FPOC)) would have lived in communities where shipbuilding and oceanshipping of goods would have been the dominant industries and as such FPOC would have been apprenticed to these trades.

The Sparrow Family (Thomas Sparrow II, www.ncpedia.org/biography/sparrow-thomas-ii), where several of the extended family lived in New Bern (Craven County, North Carolina), were mariners and apprenticed boys (white and FPOC) as shipbuilders. You can further explore Craven County, North Carolina apprentice records here, <http://newbern.cpclub.org/research/apprentice>.

It is also important to corroborate apprentice records with court minutes, though both should survive is not always the case.



Beaufort County (N.C.) Court Minutes, March 1812, Joseph King is bound an apprentice to John Anderson to learn the "art & Mystery of a Marriner".

Seamen

We are challenged to document any early 19th-century seaman except via Seaman's Protection Certificates (mentioned previously). Captains, ship builders,

⁴ Federal Court Records: Part 02, Records of District Court of the United States, Record Group 21, www.archives.gov/publications/microfilm-catalogs/fed-courts/part-02.html

merchants, and even apprentices sometimes left a paper trail, and the greatest challenge is documenting those who served as mariners beyond the apprentices already discussed. Very few Seaman contracts survive but do search for such. You can view the boilerplate of “An act for the government and regulation of seamen in the merchant’s service. [New York: Printed by Francis Childs and John Swaine, 1790.]” via the Library of Congress, www.loc.gov/resource/rbpe.2140180a/?st=gallery.

THREEPENN	Men's Names	Quar.	Days to Sea Sailing	Advance Wages	Wages per Month	Other Wages
1799	Richard Bayman	Master			4 60	220 - 60
1799	John White	Quar.		250	30	124 - 60
1799	Thomas Stewart	Steward		100	12	30 - 00
1799	Edmund P. Bayman	Steward		9	12	30 - 00
1799	W. B. Bayman	Steward		150	30	30 - 00
1799	Henry & Robinson	Quar.		11	10	36 - 50
1799	James Childs	Quar.		20	20	31 - 50
1799	James Childs	Quar.		10	10	10 - 00
1799	James Childs	Quar.		10	10	22 - 70

Example showing several individuals signing in Edenton, N.C., 1799/1800 that received part of their wages on the Brig Betsy.

Black Seamen

As mentioned under Apprentice Records, many FPOC lived in coastal communities and worked in shipbuilding and related trades. They also served as seaman, sometimes as a family trade and sometimes via the already mentioned apprentice arrangements. As already mentioned, few seamen, regardless of skin color, are documented. Do consult the same resources already mentioned as well as these resources more focused on enslaved and FPOC, so-called “Black” seamen.

- *The Waterman’s Song: Slavery and Freedom in Maritime North Carolina*, David S. Cecelski, The University of North Carolina Press, 2012 & [article] *The Shores of Freedom: The Maritime Underground Railroad in North Carolina, 1800-1861*, David S. Cecelski, *The North Carolina Historical Review*, Vol. 71, No. 2 (April 1994), North Carolina Office of Archives and History, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23521582> & [blog] <https://davidcecelski.com>.
- “To Feel Like a Man”: Black Seamen in the Northern States, 1800-1860, W. Jeffrey Bolster, *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 76, No. 4 (Mar. 1990)
- American Shad and African American Watermen: Aspects of a Heritage Nearly Forgotten, Excerpted from a presentation delivered at The Accokeek Foundation’s African American Heritage Day,

Sept 25, 2010, Jim Cummins, www.potomacriver.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/afamwatermen.pdf

- Recalling early days when blacks went to sea History: J. Jeffrey Bolster spent ten years combing shipping records, crew documents, and other archives from Providence to Baltimore to New Orleans to put together his account of black mariner Carl Schoettler, *The Baltimore Sun*, www.baltimoresun.com/news/bs-xpm-1997-09-18-1997261004-story.html [May need to use the Wayback Machine to read] related *Black Jacks: African American Seamen in the Age of Sail* Revised ed. Edition, by W. Jeffrey Bolster
- Seeking Freedom in the Atlantic World, 1713-1783, Charles Foy, Eastern Illinois University, 2006 [download as PDF, https://thekeep.eiu.edu/history_fac/1/] Dr. Charles R. Foy has explored black mariners extensively and has created a database, not online, containing thousands of entries documenting black seamen.
- *The Black Urban Atlantic in the Age of the Slave Trade*, Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, Matt Childs, James Sidbury, <https://muse.jhu.edu/book/23984>
- Great Britain, the United States, and the Negro Seamen Acts, 1822-1848, Philip M. Hamer, *The Journal of Southern History*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (Feb. 1935), www.jstor.org/stable/2191749

[Merchant] Seamen Relief (Sick & Disabled)

President John Adams signed into law in 1798 an act that furnished medical relief to merchant seamen where a monthly deduction from their wages was then used to provide needed medical services.⁵ Unfortunately, most of the details regarding this relief are general, as published in the *Historical Register of the United States*, providing high-level summaries such as “Camden, N.C. Sick seamen boarded in private houses, at two and three dollars a week; the physicians paid separately.” So, no names of those served. Additionally, states such as North Carolina recognized even before 1798 that support for sick seamen was needed and even stated in the Laws of North Carolina (1817), <http://digital.ncdcr.gov/cdm/compoundobject/collection/p249901coll22/id/160875/rec/19>, “Chapter XXVIII. An act for the relief of sick and disabled American Seamen ... Whereas, the Hospital Money collected at the Port of Wilmington in this state, under the acts of Congress, is insufficient for the purposes designed.”

⁵ U.S. National Library of Medicine, Images from the History of Public Health Service, Disease Control and Prevention, Health Care for Seamen, https://www.nlm.nih.gov/exhibition/phs_history/seamen.html



Customs Records and Mariner/Seaman Bibliography

A few of the websites/resources I found helpful in my quest.

Peabody Essex Museum, www.pem.org/visit/library

Nantucket Historical Association, <https://nha.org/research/research-library/>

Mystic Seaport Museum, Collections & Research, <https://research.mysticseaport.org/>

Portsmouth [New Hampshire] Athenæum, <https://ports-mouthathenaeum.org/portsmouth-customs-house-16/>

Library of Congress – the collection includes a category called “Ships’ papers,” www.loc.gov/manuscripts/?all=true&c=50&fa=subject:ship%27s+papers&st=list

Martha’s Vineyard Museum – U.S. Customs House and Custom Collectors, District of Edgartown 1785-1989, www.loc.gov/manuscripts/?all=true&c=50&fa=subject:ship%27s+papers&st=list

Some nice visual representations of shipping which indirectly identify ports (origin or destinations) -- Mapped: British, Spanish and Dutch Shipping 1750-1800 <http://spatialanalysis.co.uk/2012/03/mapped-british-shipping-1750-1800/> and Visualizing Ocean Shipping, <http://sappingattention.blogspot.com/2012/04/visualizing-ocean-shipping.html>

Worldcat (Library Catalog) – a search on “Customs Accounts” brings up many resources for early British ports, www.worldcat.org/search?q=%22customs+accounts%22&qt=results_page

Records of the Boards of Customs, Excise, and Customs and Excise, and HM Revenue and Customs [UK], <http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C67#>

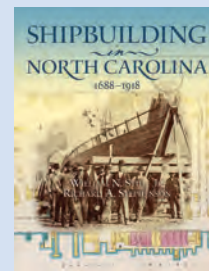
Merchant Mariners Muster, Maine Maritime Museum, <https://mmm.portlandhead.net/>

Previously written about in *Internet Genealogy* [June/July 2020] -- British Online Collection. North Carolina Genealogical Society members can explore some sample entries, documenting North Carolina captains, ships and ports as culled from select ports (Virginia and the Caribbean; NO North Carolina port information survives) – Naval Office Shipping Lists – North Carolina Connections, [www.ncgenealogy.org/journal-supplements-extra-directory/?pdfname=Naval Office Shipping Lists](http://www.ncgenealogy.org/journal-supplements-extra-directory/?pdfname=Naval%20Office%20Shipping%20Lists)

Previously written about in *Internet Genealogy* [December/January 2019] – Extant US Customs Records

North Carolina Genealogical Society Journal – Sailors, Seafarers, Mariners, and More, Volume 45, Number 33, July-September 2019.

Shipbuilding in North Carolina, 1688-1918, William N. Still, Jr., & Richard A. Stephenson, North Carolina Office of Archives and History, 2021. This can be searched via the State Library of North Carolina website, www.ncdcr.gov/shipbuilding-north-carolina-1688%E2%80%931918.



What Else?

Look for organizations that may have supported Seamen. For example, there was a Seamen’s Friend Society of Wilmington North Carolina records, 1810-1963, whose records are found at Duke University, <https://archives.lib.duke.edu/catalog/seamenswilm>. Many ports had their versions of Seaman’s Friend Societies, and records survive.

What about the Mariner’s Church (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), www.history.pcusa.org/collections/research-tools/guides-archival-collections/rg-124 or other religious organizations that catered to mariners? Are there other organizations whose surviving records might help you identify/document your mariner/seaman ancestor?

If you stumble across any kinds of records relevant to mariners/seaman, check them out!

Conclusion

This article strives to empower you to explore your mariner/seamen ancestors. Though it is fairly easy to document masters/captains, we do struggle to document everyone else who served on a sailing vessel as well as those who owned such. Many coastal ancestors supported our rich maritime heritage in the early 19th century. Now, I challenge you to research these ancestors and share their stories.

As always, if there is a neat resource which proved wildly successful in documenting your mariner/seamen ancestor, let the author know. ☺

DIANE L. RICHARD has been doing genealogy research since 1987. She is currently editor of the *North Carolina Genealogical Society Journal* and a professional genealogy and family historian researcher, speaker, and writer. She can be found online at www.mosaicrpm.com and www.tarheeldiscoveries.com.



Discoveries in the 1931 Canadian Census: My Grandparents Were Barely Scraping By

By Dave Obee

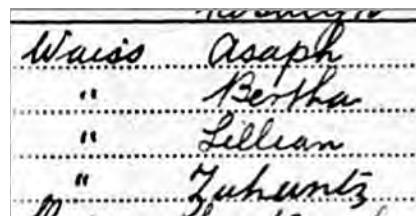
PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF AUTHOR'S COLLECTION

THE FIRST PHOTOGRAPHS OF MY GRANDPARENTS AFTER THEY ARRIVED in Canada from Ukraine in 1928 might indicate that they had it made. Along with my mother, they were in front of a nice house in Edmonton, Alberta, which was to be their new home, for a while at least.



Assof and Berta Weiss with their daughter Delilah in front the Edmonton house just up the street from where they lived.

Rotterdam archives a few years ago and found proof of their lengthy stay in the Netherlands. They were living in a hotel owned by the Holland America shipping line; while there, the family welcomed a boy, my mother's brother.



Assof, Berta, Delilah and Helmut Weiss in the 1931 census, with every name shown incorrectly (but it's them, really).

Times were just as tough in their first years in Canada. My grandfather picked up work wherever he could. My grandparents travelled from Edmonton to rural areas when they heard of farmers needing help. Any odd job would help. Through these rough years, they wondered whether leaving the Soviet Union had been such a good idea after all.

My grandfather died long before I began researching my family history, and my grandmother always refused to talk with me about their lives in a German community in Ukraine or their early years in Canada. About four decades ago, she spoke with one of my aunts, and told her about their move here and their lives after they got to Canada.

My aunt is no longer with us, but her notes are still useful. They indicate that early in 1931, my grandparents were in Edmonton, but then worked on farms south

The number on the house was the only clue I had to where they were living in their first years in North America. Was that where they were living, or was it just a handy backdrop for a photo? They did not appear in any editions of the Edmonton directory, so those references could not help me.

The 1931 census would give me my first indication of where they were, so I had been eagerly awaiting it for years, and was ready to start looking when the census was opened for research on June 1. No index? No problem. I had done my homework so I knew where to look – or so I thought.

I did not expect to find them in Edmonton, but I still wanted to find that house. City directories could help me determine where the house might have been. Check the photo; the snow on the right side of the roof indicated that the left side was probably facing south, which meant it was a street, not an avenue. The house number – 12528 – was a great help, because only a couple of streets, both in northeast Edmonton, had houses with that number.

I knew looks were deceiving. My grandparents arrived in Canada with next to nothing; they had wiped out their savings during a six-month stay in Rotterdam, waiting for permission to immigrate to Canada. Concerns about my 27-year-old grandfather's health caused the delay. I was at the



of the city for a couple of months until moving back to Edmonton. My grandmother gave my aunt the surnames of the farmers who hired them, and using local history books, I found likely locations of those farms. All were in the Ponoka area of central Alberta.

With that, I was set. They would have been on one of those farms when the enumerator came around. I found the name of the enumeration district and on June 1, census release day, I was ready to find my grandparents.

They were not there. No problem finding the farmers they were working for, but no sign of my grandparents. My first thought was that perhaps they had slipped through the cracks; that when the enumerator went this way, my grandparents went that way, or some such thing. My second thought was that since my grandparents did not trust the government – understandable, given that the Communist government in Ukraine had seized and collectivized their farm – perhaps they had gone out of their way to prevent being counted.

Thoughts like that need to be pushed to one side. Too many family historians are quick to declare that an ancestor is not in the census, or passenger lists, or whatever. If you do not find an ancestor, there is a simple solution: Try harder. Look again. Try different searches.

At this point, Ancestry's preliminary index of the census had not been released, and I was not sure how soon it would be out. No matter what, I did not want to wait.

So back to that photograph of the house in Edmonton, which was my only clue, even though it was at least two years old by the time the census was done. My thinking was that they might show up in the census in the general area of that house. Given that I did not have any other

Slater	Farm	11	90	No	no job	35	35
Home maker	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

The census shows the family's dire financial situation. My grandfather's total income was \$90 in the preceding year, when he was unemployed for 35 of the 52 weeks. His income did not cover their rent.

ideas, this seemed like the idea to pursue.

The possible addresses of the house were in the extreme north-east of the city. That was handy, because enumeration districts are split into subdistricts, with the ones at the edge of a city at the start or the end of a district. I determined which district the addresses would be in, realized that the northeast addresses were at the end of the district, and went to work.

I found my grandparents, my mother, and my uncle about ten minutes later.

They were living in the North Edmonton Hotel at 12428 66th Street, one block south of one of the possible addresses for the house in the photograph. With that, my thinking is that they had taken a walk from the hotel one spring day, and had the photograph taken at 12528 66th Street. No idea why the photo was taken in front of the house, or who the photographer was.

Knowing where they were living opens the door to more research. What was the North Edmonton Hotel like? It was a fine three-storey brick structure, built in 1913 after a fire destroyed the original North Edmonton Hotel, which had been made of wood. When it first opened, the hotel was said to be a "first-class place" to stay and dine, but by the time my grandparents arrived it had been turned into a rooming house. The word "Rooming" is written across the census page.

Neatly situated between a railroad track and a meat packing plant, the hotel was a rough place. Newspapers

reported on fights taking place on the premises. While my grandparents were there, the owner had been ordered to clean up a bedbug infestation. But let's not be too critical; it was what my grandparents, along with many other people, could afford. The building was used until it was condemned in 1965.

The 1931 census shows my grandparents were paying \$8 a month for their room at the inn. That seemed to be the going rate, with families paying more than single people. Even at that price, times were tough for my grandparents. The census showed my grandfather had been out of work for thirty-five of the previous fifty-two weeks, and that he reported an annual income of just ninety dollars – which would not cover the cost of lodging, let alone the cost of a photograph.

Even if I did not know about the family's rough early years in Canada, there would have been little surprise that they were struggling with unemployment. The 1931 census, taken soon after the Great Depression began, included several questions on joblessness, and the statistical reports published as a result of the enumeration showed that my grandparents were in the wrong demographic.

They were in Alberta, where 21.3 per cent of wage-earners were unemployed. Only British Columbia, at 25.1 per cent, had a higher rate. My grandparents were also recent arrivals; wage-earners who arrived from 1926 to 1929 had the highest rate of unemployment among all immigrants, a group that was

more likely to be unemployed than the Canadian-born. They were also from Eastern Europe, which meant they were two or three times more likely than British immigrants to be out of work.

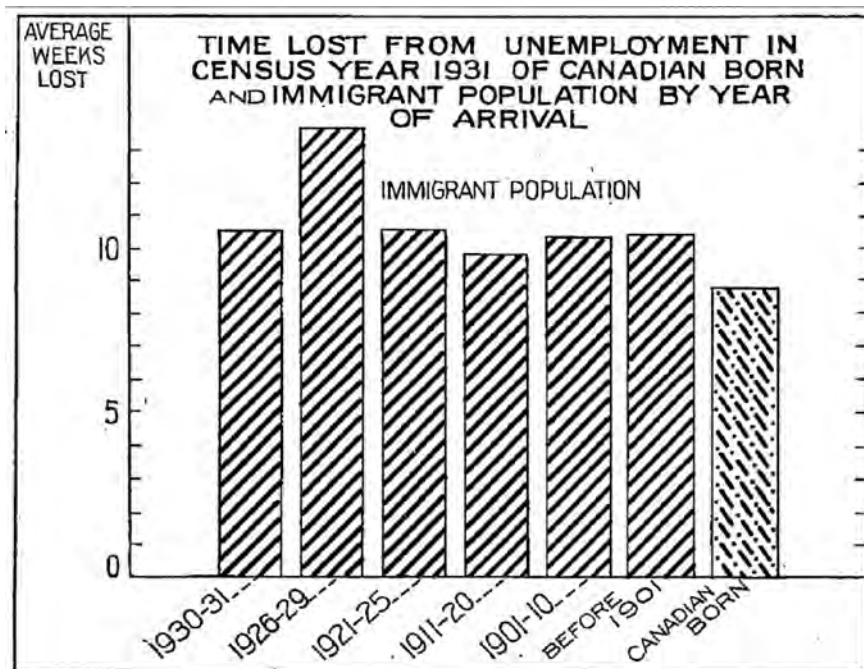
These statistical reports, readily available on several websites, are invaluable for putting our families into context. It is easy to dive into an indexed census, find your family members and leave, but a bit more digging might provide valuable background information that will give you a more complete understanding of your family.

That thinking could help you get the greatest benefits from a census. But there are a few other ideas to keep in mind – and in this piece I have been guiding you to some of them.

The census was indexed just eight days after it was made available. I knew it would be quick, but I wanted to see entries for my family right away, not a week or two later. It might have made more sense to wait – I have plenty of other angles to pursue in my research, after all – but I wanted to search the old way. That meant determining where the people would be, and then searching for them, page by page.

It was a mad race for me, because I was committed to finding my family members before the census index was released. I had two dozen targets, and I found all but one. I intentionally left two others until I could see the index, because “somewhere in Saskatchewan” was simply too big an area to search without an index.

In searching page by page, I discovered many things that I would not have seen otherwise. I found, for example, large groups of men, and occasionally women and families, riding the rails, looking for work. These people were often identified as “floaters” or “drifters,” but they are easy to spot. They were



A graphic in the printed reports based on the 1931 census shows that recent immigrants were more likely to be jobless.

often found next to railyards, usually in cities, and among the last people to be counted.

The numbers will give you a sense of the social upheaval Canada was experiencing because of the economic depression. In Kamloops, British Columbia, 6,167 people were counted, including 526 men in the soup kitchen. Many other communities were facing similar encampments, or “hobo jungles” as they were called. The thought of large groups of hungry, unemployed men, most of them away from their homes, helped convince the government to open work camps away from urban areas. You can understand why that made sense.

A researcher might also stumble on to orphanages; how many children had been given up because their parents could no longer afford to feed them? There are also extensive lists of the patients in what was indelicately referred to as “mental hospitals.” The census also includes the names of women in homes for unwed mothers, as well as the names of prison inmates.

Any of these entries might trigger us to reconsider what we know about our family members, and possibly to open discussions about what happened in the 1930s. Seeing the names of our ancestors among the people seriously hurt by the depression might make the economic woes seem more real. A family connection seems much more immediate than any book of history.

The census should also lead to more research. It is a starting point, not an end point. In my case, seeing my family in that hotel prompted me to find out more about the hotel, its history, and its surroundings. It seemed important to find out more about how they were living. Again: A census should always lead to more research.

Beyond that, maps are indispensable when working on a census. You will need to know where your family members were, which communities were nearby, and so on.

When working with a census, remember that it is, for the most part, oral history and hearsay. Some information will be accurate, but some



information will be best guesses – and sometimes, people misled the enumerators, giving false names, or lying about their marital status or their religion. Beyond that, mistakes happen, because people might have been missed, or names and other details written incorrectly.

Never forget that the Canadian census follows the *de jure* system, which means people are to be recorded where they should be, rather than where they happened to be on a specific night. It's the same as the system used in the United States, but much different than the *de facto* system used in the United Kingdom, where we know for certain where people were on census night.

An index is never perfect. It is only as good as the source information, and an index will not correct bad information but might introduce new errors. That is especially true with an index compiled using artificial intelligence, such as the


Ancestry indexes to the 1931 Canadian and 1950 United States enumerations.

If you cannot find someone in the index, do not assume they are not in the census itself. It might be that you can find them by adjusting your search terms. Or you might need to wait until an improved index is available.

I still cannot find two people in the 1931 census: One of my uncles, and my grandfather's brother. If the next version of the index does not reveal them, I will have to go through the census page by page – and fortunately, my skills in that area are not as rusty as they were in May.

For me, the 1931 census was the most important census release since I started working on family history, and that is saying something; when I started, the 1891 census had just been made available. Your thoughts might be different, of course, but

for me, seeing both of my parents in the census for the first time, seeing the names of long-departed relatives who helped me start genealogical research, and seeing hard evidence of the depression years, made this one special.

The next census of the Canadian prairies to be released is the one from 1936. It will be released in 2028, and I think I know where to find my mother and her parents. But I have plenty to do before then, because I have barely scratched the surface of the 1931 census. As I have said a couple of times: A census should lead to more research – and this one has certainly done that for me. 

DAVE OBEE, a regular columnist for this magazine, is the author of *Counting Canada: A Genealogical Guide to the Canadian Census*, which is the definitive book on the topic.



Here's What's Coming...

The Step-Parent Effect • Researching Toll Roads

DNA & Migration • All In a Day's Work

Missing Ancestors: William Henry Northwood

Music in the Air • Researching Yorkshire Ancestors

Regular Columns and More!

Line-Up Will Contain More than the Above • Final Contents Subject to Change



Ancestral Movements in Britain and Beyond

Michelle Dennis examines the many reasons for our ancestors' decision to relocate

WE PROBABLY ALL HAVE ANCESTORS THAT MOVED ACROSS THE state, county or country or emigrated to the other side of the world looking for a better life. But are there other reasons besides employment that made our ancestors leave behind their towns, family, business, and friends, to move to a completely different place? There are many reasons our ancestors may have moved location, and here are some ideas to get you started thinking about why your family made such a move.



Painting of *La Miseria* by Christobal Rojas, 1886.

Health

Sometimes the declining health of a family member or poverty may have made them move location. Sometimes it was to live with another family in a different place. My 80-year-old mother remembers as a child her family doctor advised the family to send her away from the coalfields to a place with clean air, as she had shadows on her lungs that may turn more sinister. Of course, not all our ancestors could afford to move, and they may have depended completely on their local parish for help.

Infant mortality affected most families. Many families lost children one after the other from poverty, poor nutrition, housing conditions and disease. My gunmaking family in East London in the early 1800s had nine children and lost six girls before the age of three. Despite being financially stable, their parents also died young within a week of each other in 1832. Why? The Local Population Studies Society (LPSS) is a charity devoted to promoting local history, social history, and historical demography in a local context, www.localpopulationstudies.org.uk.



The Vision of Britain website.

The Vision of Britain website has population, life & death, industry, social structure, and housing statistics by parish. It's interesting to look at the health of a particular place by checking the numbers of baptisms/burials at the local parish church around this time. Was it a healthy or affected parish? Could that provide a clue? www.visionofbritain.org.uk.



Looking at the area of London where my ancestors were living and dying, I quickly became aware of many other deaths around this time, and importantly most people in the parish burial register were buried on the same day as they died, which suggested that they perished from disease.

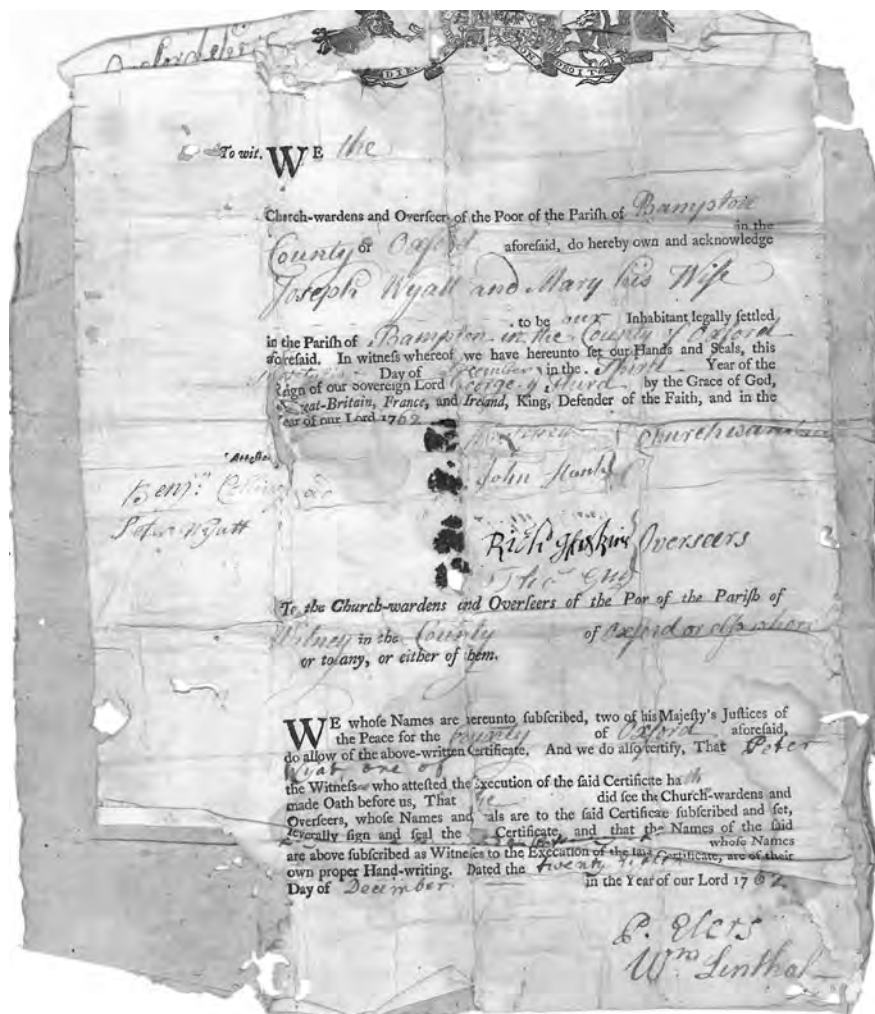
Cholera arrived in London in February 1832, killing over 6,500 victims. There were around 2,500 cases in East London alone. Those living along the riverfront, especially in Whitechapel (like mine) were most susceptible, the main culprit being contaminated water. The burial of cholera victims was meant to take place within 12 hours of death, the body not entering the church itself. Look at articles about prevalent diseases in your area of interest, such as this one that was published in the 1979 East London Record that details the London Cholera Epidemic. www.mernick.org.uk/thhol/1832chol.html.

Tuberculosis (TB, consumption, phthisis) is a progressive wasting disease of the lungs. Poor living conditions, in or near coal mines, or just living in an industrial city could cause susceptibility. In 1851 TB killed one person in four in Europe and America. In the 18th and 19th centuries, TB had become an epidemic in Europe, including England, devastating populations.

Economics

One of the main drivers of our ancestors moving to another place was economics. That is the need to find better work or living conditions to survive.

Researching the economics of the parish your family lived in may provide some clues to the affluence, or lack of it, in your area of interest. Were the inhabitants



Joseph Wyatt Settlement Certificate, 1762 Bampton, Oxford. From Oxford History Centre.

affluent or poor, what were the prevalent occupations? Try looking for local parish records, including settlement and removal orders, churchwardens account books, poor law records, and the parish rate income.

My ancestor Joseph Wyatt was born in Bampton, Oxfordshire in 1739 and married Mary Reeves in 1761 at Witney, Oxfordshire. On the marriage register, Joseph was described as a 'sojourner,' or a temporary resident in the parish. In 1762, Joseph was issued a Settlement Certificate from the Overseer of the Poor of the parish of Bampton, Oxfordshire, stating his legal place of settlement was Bampton.

In the event of the parish authorities discovering that a person was likely to become a financial burden and become chargeable to the parish, such as illegitimacy cases, those taken ill, suspected illegal immigrants or vagrants, the parish authorities undertook a Settlement Examination. The examination took place by the Overseer of the Poor and a Justice of the Peace and was carried out to determine whether the person had a legitimate right to residency in the parish.

If they did have a legitimate claim, such as Joseph, a Settlement Certificate would be issued, allowing them to remain in the parish and work, or claim benefits

if needed. Otherwise, if the applicant could not prove their settlement (by birth, long-term work, or father's residence, etc.) they would be served a Removal Order and then, forcibly if necessary, removed from the parish by the overseers.

My ancestor Jane Wind born in 1796 in Lamesley, Durham, England, was found living in Great Usworth, Durham in 1816. Just a few months later, she was back in Lamesley. After finding a parish removal order, I discovered why. On 11 January 1816 in Great Usworth, Durham, there was a Removal Order issued upon the complaint of the Churchwardens and Overseer of the Poor in Great Usworth. It stated that Jane Wind, a single woman with child, should be removed back to the parish of Lamesley (so Lamesley would instead be responsible for her upkeep).

To track an ancestor's movements try using trade and post office directories, comparing transport and trade links between the towns and cities. Look at the economic growth of a place, and the influx of people due to work opportunities.

Population maps and tables are a great way to track the population, occupations and movement of a place. Using the www.HistPop.org website for Occupation Abstracts for Middlesex in 1841, I can see the number of gunmakers in Middlesex at this time. I can look at other population statistics for Middlesex and examine the growth between the 1841 to 1851 censuses.

Try researching the local or national economy including trade and world events that may have affected your family in the early to mid-1800s using Timeline websites such as the BBC Timelines Sources from History website -

www.bl.uk/learning/timeline/index.html.

The British History Online website has the Topographical Dictionary of England for 1848, which gives a great description of most parishes in Britain at the time, including their main sources of income, schools, facilities, etc. The website also includes information about education, Tithe Assessments, occupations, petitions, wills, Session Records, Ordnance Surveys, Burgh records, Vestry Minutes and the very useful Victoria County History volumes for each English county providing histories and fascinating detail of the inhabitants of particular places. www.british-history.ac.uk.

Some of our ancestors may have been offered an opportunity to emigrate, especially if they were skilled. Many miners from Durham and Cornwall emigrated to the American or Australian gold-fields, sometimes transferring their mining skills from one country to another.

When I couldn't find my Durham coal miner ancestor Henry Brown, born in 1793 in Chowden,

Durham in later census records (after 1851 in Crook, Durham), I thought he may have just died. But no, he had emigrated to the gold-fields of New Diggings, Lafayette, Wisconsin, USA. Three major records alerted me to this - the first two records found on www.Ancestry.com were the U.S. and Canada Passenger and Immigration Lists Index 1500-1900 and the second was an 1855 U.S. Find a Grave Index entry.

The third entry was a newspaper article I found in the Dailey Hawk Eye and Telegraph in 1855 on www.newspaperarchive.com stating that Henry Brown was murdered on his way home from New Diggings to his home in Benton, Wisconsin. The local newspaper reports that he had struck gold, bragged about it at the local hotel and was murdered for his money as he walked home. His pantaloons pocket was torn off, and the gold was gone.

Of course, there are also the more obvious national conditions of economics that caused our ancestors to migrate. The Irish Potato Famine caused thousands of



Irish Famine memorial in Dublin, by Rowan Gillespie. (Public Domain)



people to leave their homeland. Many Irish tenant farmers grew potatoes, a staple crop that was easy to grow in Irish soil. By the early 1840s, almost half the Irish population had come to depend almost exclusively on the potato for their diet. In 1845 potato blight destroyed the industry. Much of the years crops simply rotted in the fields, causing terrible poverty throughout the land. Crops between 1845 and 1849 were completely ruined. As a consequence, Ireland's population in 1844 of 8.4 million decreased to 6.6 million by 1851. The number of agricultural labourers and smallholders drastically declined. About one million people died from starvation, typhus and other famine-related diseases. Irish emigrants during the famine reached two million. Between 1841 and 1850, 49 percent of the total emigrants to the United States were Irish.

The Scottish Land clearances were another major reason for emigration. The forced eviction of the inhabitants of the highlands and western islands of Scotland was between 1750 and 1860. The

removals cleared the land of people primarily to allow for the introduction of sheep pastoralism, involving the enclosure of the open fields previously managed on the system of open fields and shared grazing. The displaced tenants were expected to be employed in other industries such as fishing, quarrying or the kelp seaweed industry. Kelp was harvested from the seashore at low tide, dried and burnt to yield an alkali extract used in the manufacture of soap and glass. It was a very labour-intensive industry but had collapsed by 1820. Other occupations like fishing, were also in decline at the same time. It is estimated that around 70,000 people emigrated elsewhere from the Highlands.

My ancestor Robert Robson, born in 1812 in Dalhousie, Edinburgh, was a land factor (rent collector) for a Scottish landowner in Renton, Dunbartonshire, Scotland in the 1851 census. The following year, the family emigrated to Melbourne, Victoria, Australia arriving in October 1852. The 'Montgomery' passenger ship set sail with 200 emigrants bound for Melbourne from the port of Greenock in Scotland in June 1852.

The Highland and Island Emigration Society of Scotland was a charitable society formed to promote and assist emigration as a solution to the Highland Potato Famine. Between 1852 and 1857, it assisted the passage of around 5,000 emigrants from Scotland to Australia. The Society's work was both praised for providing a solution to the famine in Scotland and criticised for providing landlords with an easy mechanism for the Highland Clearances. The deaths from starvation were so high in 1848, the government delivered oatmeal shipments to locations along the western coast to

feed starving families.

Australia was chosen because the Highlanders' experience as shepherds and cattle drovers would be valued there. Read more about the Highland and Island Emigration Society and their records and passenger lists at www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk

Conflict

Some occupational moves were influenced by the political environment of the time. My ancestor Hercules Jameson was born in 1792 in Lerwick, Shetland Islands, Scotland. Coming from a peaceful fishing family, Hercules joined the Navy and fought in the Napoleonic Wars, serving aboard the British Naval frigate 'Spartan' in 1806.

The HMS Spartan was a Royal Navy 38-gun fifth-rate frigate. By 1810, Spartan was operating off Naples, Italy and fought a battle against a much larger Neapolitan squadron on 3 May 1810. Hercules lost a leg in action with the French in this battle (10 killed, 20 wounded) reported in the Naval Intelligence newspaper (The Scots Magazine Vol 72, 1810). Hercules died in 1835 in the Greenwich Royal Hospital for Seaman and was buried in the Greenwich Royal Navy Hospital Burial Ground, a long way from his birthplace in Scotland.

Researching Military Campaigns (Napoleonic War, etc.) and how they affected Britain can help us understand their impact on certain trades and occupations.

Escaping Punishment

Another, perhaps more unusual reason, for moving across the world became evident when I was researching my London gunmaking ancestor Joseph Davis. Born in 1807 in Whitechapel, London,



Scottish emigration poster 1839.
(Public Domain)



Convict employment from the hulks, Woolwich Kent England. (Public domain)

Joseph, like his father, also worked at the Tower of London and was contracted to supply military muskets and gunlocks to the Board of Ordnance, a British Government body that was the supplier of munitions and equipment to both the Army and Navy.

Joseph married Eliza Hodges, had six children in London, and was granted Freedom of the City of London, entitling him to work as a gunmaker in the city and vote in elections. This was all very well, and when he emigrated to Melbourne, Australia with his young family in 1852, I thought he had gone to Australia for a better life.

But when I researched his gun-making career I came across this entry in an 1840 book by D F Harding "Smallarms of the East India Company 1600-1856," Appendix C, Suppliers of Musket Parts 1807-56.

Davis, Joseph. Appointed among the new or extra contractors, Jul 1840. Suddenly immigrated to Australia ca Aug 1852, it is said as a consequence of a minor scandal involving the well-intentioned falsifying of Ordnance accounts by Francis George Lovell, the Government's Assistant Inspector of Small Arms (who was the son of George Lovell,

the Inspector of Small Arms). No replacement appointed, Davis's percentage of nipples and locks being shared out among existing contractors.

It seems Joseph had taken on a debt for a gunmaking friend who absconded without paying, and was left with a debt he couldn't repay. After trying to cover it up, it seems he left the country when he was found out! He consequently became the Town Clerk of Castlemaine, Victoria, Australia, and his obituary praises him for all his further accomplishments. He was elected to the first town council, drafted a petition for a railway line and proposed a Botanic Gardens for the town.

Investigate the local history of your ancestor's parish using Libraries, Museums and Archives looking at local historical events, property details, rate books, trade directories, and maps for the area.

Migration may be internal (within the country, from one rural area to another, or to a city) or international migration or from one country to another.

Migration may be either voluntary or forced. Most migration may be voluntary, searching for better economic opportunities or housing. Forced migration usually involved people who had been transported, such as convicts, slaves or prisoners. Other voluntary migration includes those fleeing war, famine or natural disasters.

Whatever the reason our ancestors moved around, there are lots of places to look to explain why. ©

MICHELLE DENNIS is a blogger, family historian and freelance writer living in Melbourne, Australia. She has been researching her own family history for the past 30 years.

Profiling People And Places Your Ancestors Lived And Worked

Places

- civil and ecclesiastical jurisdictions
- distance from major cities
- townships, chapelries, and hamlets
- hiring fairs and markets
- transport links
- principal economic activity
- institutions, workhouses, hospitals
- churches and cemeteries
- major landowners

People

- birth, death, and marriages - locations
- parent and spouse names
- names, dates, places of children's births
- places of residence
- occupations
- land/houses - leased, rented, copy, freehold
- education and training
- religion and denomination



Must-See Genealogy TV (For Free!)

by Robbie Gorr

TELEVISION VIEWING HAS ALWAYS BEEN AN important part of my life from the Saturday morning programs of my childhood to the popular soap dramas and miniseries of my young adulthood. But it was about twenty years ago when reality television debuted that I became obsessed with every kind of competition and challenge and *Housewives* show to the point of planning my evenings around those reality-based programs. And with my compulsive interest in all things “genealogy”, I was more than delighted to find that there were even shows available to entertain, elucidate and educate the genealogically-minded and the family history-inclined. If you share the same enthusiasm for genealogy and family history, then you will want to check out at least some of the available “must-see” genealogy TV shows, past and present, many of them accessible for free.



Genealogy TV shows are always entertaining especially to those who have an interest in family history but they can also help advance our own research by providing tips, strategies, resources, inspiration and motivation. (Photo by Evert F. Baumgardner on Wikimedia Commons)

THE BRITISH INVASION

- 1) *Who Do You Think You Are?* There is ongoing debate about whether the Brits do it best or whether they just did it first. This long-running British series first debuted in 2004 and continues after nineteen seasons. It has also spawned over twenty international versions including in Canada (in both official languages), Germany, Scandinavia, Australia, South Africa, Russia and, most notably, the United States where the eleventh season has just aired. The premise is simple as the viewing audience follows celebrities on a search for their unknown ancestry through archives and ancestral hometowns. Whether you are familiar with the episode guest star or not, the selected stories of their ancestors and the documentation uncovered is always of interest. Recent episodes and previous seasons, including some international versions, have their own channel on YouTube.
-
- Who Do You Think You Are?* is a popular long-running British TV series that has inspired over twenty international versions where celebrities search for their ancestry and family history. Episodes may be seen on YouTube where the series has its own channel. (Photo from author's collection)
- 2) *Coming Home* was a British family history series that aired for ten seasons on BBC One Wales ending in 2015. It followed a similar premise to *Who Do You Think You Are?* and followed celebrities as they traced their Welsh heritage and roots. Selected episodes are available on YouTube.
 - 3) *Meet The Izzards* was a two-part documentary that aired on BBC One in 2014. It centered on British actor and comedian Eddie Izzard and used genetic science to trace his distant ancestry. The first part, entitled “The Mum’s Line”, used his mitochondrial DNA to follow his maternal lineage while the second part, titled “The Dad’s Line”, used his Y-chromosome DNA to follow his paternal ancestry. Both parts of the documentary are available free on YouTube.

- 4) *My Famous Family* was a short-lived British television program about genealogy that was broadcast in 2007 on the UKTV History channel. Each episode presented an ordinary member of the public who had a famous ancestor like Queen Victoria, Florence Nightingale, Lawrence of Arabia or the Duke of Wellington. As interesting as it sounds, this series has not yet been released anywhere for streaming or on DVD. Let's hope it becomes available soon.
- 5) *You Don't Know You're Born* was another short-lived British television series that aired in 2007 on ITV. This documentary style series featured the familiar premise of celebrities researching their family trees but there were only three episodes made. This production also has not yet been released anywhere but keep your eyes open.
- 6) *Heir Hunters* was a long-running show broadcast on BBC One for twelve seasons between 2007 and 2018. The series followed probate researchers attempting to find missing or unknown heirs to estates before the British Treasury claim time limit ran out and the estate became government

property. The program, combining legal probate genealogy and family history, was very popular. Many of the 240 episodes produced are available on their own YouTube channel.

- 7) *Long Lost Family* is an emotional reunion series on ITV which is still airing after twelve seasons. It also spawned three spin-off series in addition to several international versions including an American edition that aired for six seasons on TLC. The series uses genealogical research and DNA matching to reunite searchers with the relatives they have been seeking. Some episodes of both series are available on Tubitv.com and YouTube.
- 8) *Dna Family Secrets* is a television series currently airing on BBC Two. The latest DNA technology is used to solve family mysteries involving ancestry, missing relatives and genetic disease. The series has aired for the past two seasons including nine episodes that can be viewed on YouTube. It has also been renewed for a third season to broadcast in 2023.

PUBLIC BROADCASTING SHOWS

- 9) *African American Lives* was the first family history series from esteemed professor, historian and genealogist Dr. Henry Louis Gates Jr. It aired for two seasons consisting of nine episodes between 2006 and 2008 and focused on the family histories of prominent African Americans using traditional genealogical research and genetic analysis. The series is available on DVD and episodes are also available on YouTube.



Professor, historian and genealogist Dr. Henry Louis Gates has been the esteemed host of a succession of family history shows presented on PBS over the past two decades. (Photo by Jon Irons on Wikimedia Commons)

- 10) *Faces of America* was a short-term PBS series, hosted again by Dr. Henry Louis Gates, which used genealogical research and genetics to uncover the family history of twelve well-known Americans. It aired for just one season consisting of four episodes in 2010. The complete series is available on DVD and episodes may also be viewed on YouTube.

- 11) *Finding Your Roots With Henry Louis Gates, Jr.* is a current long-running genealogical television series on PBS. It initially aired in 2012 and has just completed its ninth season. Celebrity guests are presented information compiled by professional genealogists that allows them to learn about their family histories and discover unknown facts about their lineage and heritage. Most seasons are available on DVD and many episodes may be seen on YouTube.



Finding Your Roots is a current long-running genealogical television series where celebrity guests are presented information compiled by professional genealogists that allows them to learn about their family histories and discover unknown facts about their lineage and heritage. (Photo from author's collection)

- 12) *Genealogy Roadshow* was a PBS series based on a previously broadcast series of the same name from Ireland and using the same premise as the popular long-running series *Antiques*



Roadshow. The show examined genealogies of those who attended a convention held in different historically significant locations like Boston or San Francisco and where genealogy experts answered family history questions that they were presented. The series ran for three seasons

between 2013 and 2016 consisting of a total of seventeen episodes (its Irish counterpart aired for two seasons in 2011 and 2014 with just seven episodes). Episodes of the PBS production are available on YouTube.

BYU TV SHOWS

BYU TV is a non-commercial educational television channel founded in 2000 that is owned and operated as part of Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. The channel produces a number of original series and documentaries including some genealogy-related programs and is available through cable and satellite distributors mainly in the United States.

- 13) *Ancestors* was an inspirational BYU TV series combining expert genealogy how-to instruction with moving personal stories and examining family history records from around the world. There were two seasons broadcast with twenty-three episodes that are available on DVD and can be accessed for free on byutv.org and YouTube (include KBYU in the search with the title).
- 14) *The Generations Project* was another BYU TV series that followed ordinary people researching their family history. They were able to learn about their heritage through immersion experiences, solve some family mysteries and connect with previously unknown family members. This series aired for three seasons between 2010 and 2012 and consisted of thirty-eight episodes all available on byutv.org and on YouTube.

- 15) *Relative Race* is a current long-running series that follows the adventures of four teams who use clues to complete challenges as they race across the country to meet previously unknown relatives and win a cash prize. The premise is similar to the popular reality show *Amazing Race* but with a family history influence. Airing since 2016 the eleventh season has just concluded and they are currently casting for season twelve. Episodes are available at byutv.org and on YouTube.



A display of prop clues used in an episode of the long-running BYU series *Relative Race* that follows the adventures of four teams using the clues to complete challenges as they race across the country to meet previously unknown relatives and win a cash prize. Episodes are available at byutv.org and on YouTube. (Photo by Ben P L on Wikimedia Commons)

NETWORK & CABLE SHOWS

- 16) *A New Leaf* was a short-run series that originally aired on NBC as part of their Saturday morning block targeting teens and pre-teens. This show focused on everyday people reaching important moments in their lives, examining their family history and how they could use it in their future. The thirteen episode series aired between 2019 and 2021 and episodes are available for free on nbc.com and on YouTube.
- 17) *Roots Less Traveled* is another series targeting teenagers as part of the same Saturday morning block on NBC. This time pairs of family members travel together to discover their shared family history with emphasis on how the past has helped shape their present. The series debuted in 2020 but after four seasons there is no news yet of its return. Episodes are available to watch on nbc.com and YouTube.
- 18) *The Genetic Detective* was yet another short-lived series that ran on ABC in 2020. Featuring genetic genealogy expert and frequent consultant on several PBS shows CeCe Moore, she and her team assisted police departments using DNA and genealogical research to apprehend criminals. The six episodes of the series are available without cost on abc.com and on YouTube.

19) *Strange Inheritance* was a series that broadcast for four seasons between 2015 and 2018 on Fox Business Network and consisted of 104 episodes. This docu-series employed genealogical techniques to locate the heirs to some bizarre and outrageous (and always entertaining) inheritances. You can watch for free on fox.com, tubitv.com and YouTube.

20) *Revealed* is a brand new home renovation show on the HGTV network in which professional genealogists from Ancestry research information about the client's ancestral heritage. The host and her team then incorporate the family ancestry, stories and heirlooms into the home's unique custom re-design. A sneak peek of the show is available on YouTube but new episodes are airing currently on HGTV.

FROM AROUND THE WORLD

21) *Ancestors In The Attic* was a short-lived Canadian genealogy series that aired between 2006 and 2010 on the History Television network. It was fast-paced and, at times, cheeky thanks to the host but viewers enjoyed the interesting stories that took ordinary citizens on road trips and worldwide searches to track down their ancestors. Various episodes are available for viewing on YouTube.

22) *DNA Detectives* was a documentary series from New Zealand following celebrities as they uncovered mysteries and long-lost ancestors in their quest to learn about their family histories. There were two seasons of the series broadcast in 2015 and 2017. Several of the episodes can be viewed on dailymotion.com and on YouTube.

23) *Where Are You Really From?* was an Australian documentary series that was broadcast on SBS Australia for three seasons between 2018 and 2020. The eleven episodes involved visiting migrant families to discover more about their ancestry, heritage and their communities around the country. YouTube has several episodes available.

24) *Every Family Has a Secret* is an Australian documentary series that follows Australians from all walks of life seeking out the potentially



Every Family Has a Secret is a recent Australian documentary series that follows Australians from all walks of life seeking out the potentially life-changing hidden secrets within their family histories. Some episodes are available on YouTube. (Photo from author's collection)

life-changing hidden secrets within their family histories. It was broadcast for three seasons from 2019 to 2022 on SBS Australia with no news yet about a fourth season. Some episodes are available on YouTube.

25) *Secrets, Lies & DNATies* is a current documentary series originating on Super Channel in Canada. It follows the efforts of the owners of a real investigative company called DNA Confidential to unearth the secrets and lies of their clients' families through DNA research. This series began airing just last year and to date is available for online streaming only.

Genealogy TV shows are always entertaining especially to those who have an interest in family history but they can also help advance our own research. Such programs can make us aware of different sources to investigate and resources to use and apply and we may also find some useful tips and strategies to help. They may also provide some occasionally necessary inspiration and motivation to continue our labors to uncover the details of our own ancestry and solve some of those brick walls and family history mysteries. So sit yourself down, get some snacks and check out some genealogy TV today. ©

ROBBIE GORR is an amateur genealogist and historian who continues to enjoy the thrill of the search and the exhilaration of discovery and, of course, writing about his experiences. He also is a self-proclaimed reality TV junkie.



"I Hereby Bequeath My Family History Facts..."

Colonial and 19th century wills and estate papers

BY DAVID A. NORRIS

A GREAT DEAL OF GENEALOGICAL INFORMATION, AND ILLUMINATING insight into the lives of past generations, can be found in will and estate papers. Wills can provide ironclad evidence linking parents and children together, and to your family tree. Bequests to married daughters might link a female ancestor with her maiden name. Not only might you link direct ancestors into previous generations, but you might find the names of their siblings and other relatives as well. With a bit of luck, wills might tie North American ancestors with their forebears in Europe. And detailed lists of possessions in estate files can show us a great deal about how a family lived 200 or 300 years ago. Probate laws and procedures can vary quite a bit in different places and times, but we can take a quick look at the sort of family history information that wills and estate files might give you.

In Virginia and New England, English colonial courts dealt with wills and probate in the early decades of the 1600s. A small fraction of colonial wills were proved in England. Until 1858, courts of the Church of England handled probate matters. There were numerous church courts, but the great majority of probated wills went through the prerogative courts of York or Canterbury. The Prerogative Court of Canterbury covered southern England and Wales. Within this jurisdiction was the Bishop of London, whose domain included the British colonies of North America. The National Archives of Great Britain has an informative page on pre-1858 wills at www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/wills-or-administrations-before-1858.

The handling of wills and estates in the British colonies of North America was based on existing English law. Each of the colonies (and then the U.S. states that replaced them) drew up laws for handling wills. The actual work of dealing with wills and probate matters was usually done at the county level. Wills were

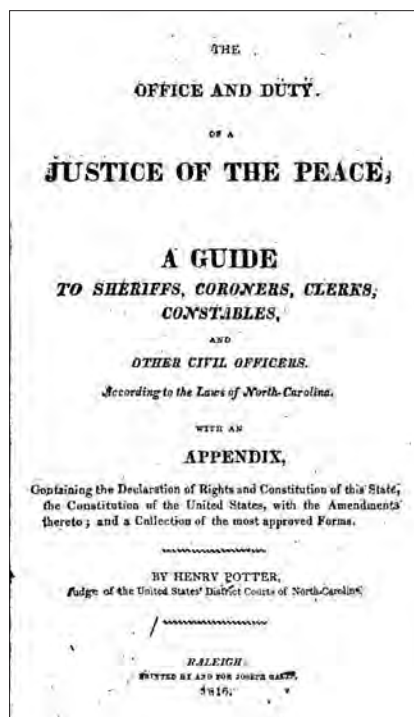
typically proved in the deceased's county of residence. However, if a testator had homes in more than one county, the will might be proved in any of them. Occasionally, in such a case, there might be probate records filed in more than one county.

So far as genealogists are concerned, we can look for several kinds of documents. Each one had its legal purposes, but each also provides the potential for family history information that would otherwise have been long lost to us. Legal terms used in wills often date back to Norman French or Latin, as used in England.

We'll start with the will, or "last will and testament." Describing the document as a "will" refers to distributing property according to the free will of the "testator," the writer of the will. In past times, a female writer of a will was called the testatrix. If someone passed away without a will, they died "intestate."

The phrase "give, devise, and bequeath" covered slightly different meanings with minor differences. One would "devise," or transfer upon death, real property. (Therefore, the deviser was the person making the will, while devisees were those inherited from the will.) Personal property was "bequeathed."

An "infant" in legal terms was a minor, meaning in the colonial era and later they were under 21 years of age. A legal infant could not



Finding a book such as this in an estate sale list could show that an ancestor served as a magistrate or justice of the peace. (Public domain)

enter contracts or file lawsuits; such actions had to be done on their behalf by a parent, guardian, or other representative. A relict was a surviving spouse, usually but not always the widow.

Wills might be quickly drawn up in the last weeks or days of the testator's life, but they could also remain tucked away for years before the testator died. In the age before death certificates, if grave markers have been lost, the date that a will was proved (taken through probate) is often the only indication of a date of death.

When a testator died, their will was brought to a local court having jurisdiction over probate. Once the will was verified, the executor tended to business, such as paying the debts of the deceased; listing assets, and seeing that bequests were carried out. Often, the executor posted a bond, which was preserved in the probate file. After the burial expenses and other debts were paid, the estate could be distributed among the heirs.

Often, there were two estate inventory lists. The first listed the possessions, while the second recorded the estate sale, with the prices paid for each item. Buyers at the estate sale are usually listed with the things they bought. The names are certainly worth checking. The list is likely to include relatives and in-laws of the deceased. Sometimes, specific family heirlooms can be traced from one sale to another when the new owner died and the piece ended up in another estate sale.

Inventories often began with a room-by-room accounting of possessions in the main house. From there, the appraiser would check out buildings, sheds, workshops, and barns, listing tools, implements, vehicles, and other items. Livestock, as well as crops

still in the fields or harvested and in storage, were also accounted for. Such records can tell if your ancestors owned, for example, dairy cows, sheep, pigs, chickens, or geese.

Lists of household possessions, while useful for historians studying material culture, also provide some tantalizing glimpses of individual personalities. My ancestor David Holland, who died in Wake County, North Carolina in 1849, left many items to be listed. He left a bookshelf, and several books are named. Some titles, such as "Military Book," are too vague to be identified. Others included "Pictorial Life of Jackson," "Potter's Justice," and "Emerson's Keys." A ramble through Google Books finds the exact titles: *John Frost's Pictorial Life of Andrew Jackson* (1847); Henry Potter's *Guide to The Office and Duty of a Justice of the Peace ...*; Frederick Emerson, *The Key to the North American Arithmetic ...* Potter's book reflects the fact that Holland served for some years as a justice of the peace.

Pets are not often mentioned in early estate papers. But we do find the names of horses and cows. In

the 1770s, my five-times-great-grandparents in North Carolina owned a stallion named Jack and a mare named Nance. Another ancestor, Elizabeth Hutchins, died in 1803 and left horses named Button and Pigeon. Her relative John Hutchins, who died in 1789, left cows named Bloss, Primrose, and Star; and horses named Derick and Primroses.

Many (and probably most) people left no will or probate records at all. Disease, accidents, and violence contributed to shortening colonial lifespans. A great proportion of colonial forebears died intestate or without a will. In that case, the county court or some other local court oversaw the handling of the estate according to inheritance laws. Family members or friends often dealt with the last wishes of those who owned little or no property, and their estates slipped through the system without leaving written records.

Probate records have the potential to providing much more information than a will. Executors, and guardians of minor children, might keep accounts for years until the provisions of a will ran out.



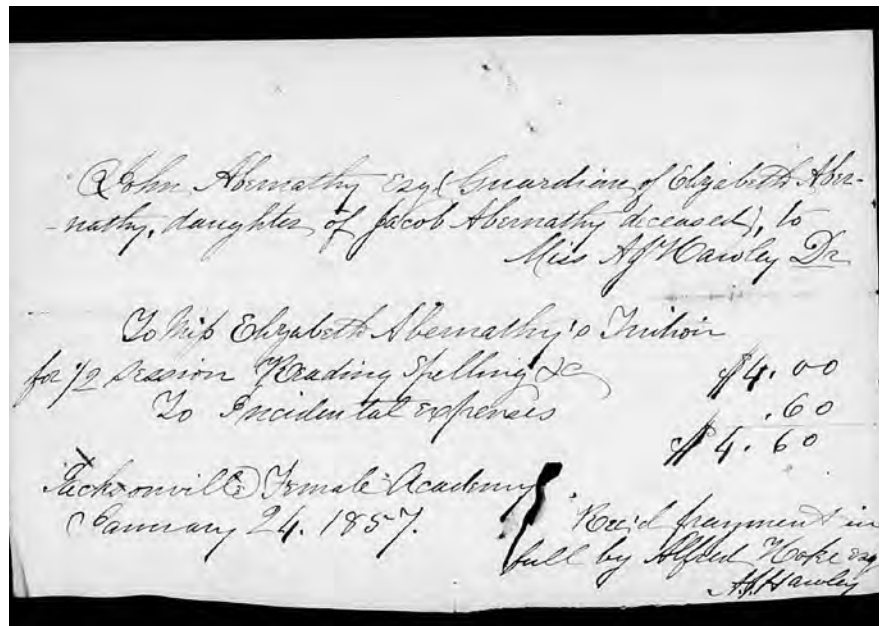
Devisors sometimes gave the name of horses they left in their wills. (Library of Congress)



Ongoing debts such as local taxes, doctor visits, clothing, and school fees for children, might generate dozens of receipts in an estate file.

One ancestor of mine died in North Carolina in 1856, leaving a complicated estate file. Disputes between his executor; his widow, who remarried and brought her new husband into the legal matters; the guardian appointed for his children; and the children, one by one, as they reached the legal age of 21, continued into the 1880s. Among the scores of papers in the estate file were receipts for his children's school fees, dating to the early 1870s. These receipts showed that my great-great aunt was sent away to a boarding school in Alabama, in the same town where her uncle (who was then her guardian) lived. Her brothers, staying with their mother and her new husband, were educated near their home. From the receipts, one can find the names of some of their teachers.

If a testator had quarreled with a likely heir, simply omitting them from a will to “cut them off without a penny” might not work. In such a case, it was possible for someone with a potential claim of inheritance to sue on the grounds that the testator had left them out by mistake. So, many wills have clauses leaving farms, livestock, or other valuable bequests to heirs, while leaving one heir with a token amount such as five shillings, fifty cents, etc. This small bequest proved the heir was not forgotten, but entitled only to this small amount. The “five shilling” bequests don't always show family quarrels; sometimes, a farm or other valuable property had already been conveyed to one heir, so the deviser thought the remaining estate should be divided among the other heirs.



A receipt in an estate file showed that one of the author's relatives, who lived in North Carolina, went away to school in Alabama in 1857. (North Carolina State Archives)

Just the same, conflict within a family shows through in some wills. In 1754, Richard Harrison, of Anne Arundel County, Maryland, specified that “My wife may educate my daus. in any religion agreeable to her, but my son(s) are not to be educated in Roman Catholic principles.” In her 1761 will, Elizabeth Stinson of Calvert County, Maryland, left her son William Polston “1 of my worst beds.” Granddaughter Eliza was to receive “the bed I lie on.”

Genealogists of today all too often will find colonial testators left property “to my wife,” without giving her name. Minor children, also, were not always mentioned by name. There may be other useful family clues, though. If a testator didn't give his wife's name, he might have mentioned the name of her brother or father, giving us her maiden surname. Sometimes, a father or mother names grandchildren in a will, usually if their parents were already dead.

Thomas Clindinning of Baltimore left one 1762 bequest to “my friend Sarah Palmer (wife or reputed

widow of Abraham Palmer).” He left the residue of his estate to his “natural son, John Clindinning of Glasgow, if living.” If his son was deceased, the estate was to go to his wife “Margaret Clindinning, d. o. [daughter of] James Wilson, writer, & my bro. John Clindinning, both in Glasgow.” Here we find in one place a trove of information about Thomas Clindinning, including his family ties to Scotland. Probate files may be one of the best ways of finding an ancestor's birthplace and origins in another colony or country.

Prior to the abolition of slavery at the end of the Civil War in 1865, wills and estate papers sometimes contained useful information for tracing enslaved African American ancestors. Although probate papers and other sources generally use only a slave's given name, the documents sometimes detail their family relationships. The slave schedules from the censuses of 1850 and 1860 were only tallies by age and gender. But, information from these censuses and probate papers such as given names, age,

gender, and county of residence can be compared with census rolls from 1870 or later, which enumerate everyone by name.

A Catalog of Life: Estate Inventories and Sales

One finds many intriguing entries at a personal level. You might wonder how old a “very old table” was on a 1750 list, or when the volumes in a box of “old books” were printed. A pair of spectacles left in a will might mean that an ancestor was nearsighted. Musical instruments and books might give a hint of someone’s interests. A side saddle or “ladies’ saddle” indicated that a woman in the household rode horseback. Owning a sword might indicate service as a militia or military officer.

Colonial thrift shows in wills through descriptions of broken items. Entries such as “1 pair Spectacles (broke)” or “old dray with broken wheel” hint that people would repair rather than discard broken things.

Money in the form of coins or currency is a fairly rare bequest. Trade was conducted much more by paying in commodities (such as tobacco, corn, or pork); keeping accounts; or giving I.O.U.s, or “notes.” Prices in the U.S. were often reckoned in the English system of pounds and shillings well into the 1850s. When dollars were used, small amounts were not always figured in cents, but in fractions such as 5/8 of a dollar.

“Notes” are worth a careful check when you find mention of them. Often, notes stand for loans made to relatives, so identifying the debtors or creditors could lead to finding “new” brothers, uncles, or in-laws to the family tree. Other notes may involve friends or neighbors who figured in the lives of the deceased. Some inventories



Estate inventories can be very detailed lists of the household possessions owned by a family two or three centuries ago. (Library of Congress)

separately listed “doubtful” or worthless notes, which were unlikely to be paid back.

Specialized tools and implements might reflect trades or professions. A doctor might leave behind a set of medical instruments and an assortment of medicines. Surveyors might leave a set of surveying instruments. On the other hand, many farmers owned the necessary tools to handle tasks such as carpentry, blacksmithing,

or shoe repair. Scales were necessary for many households and shops. Small scales weighed ingredients for medicines. In colonial times, British coins were scarce, and colonists used coins from Spain, Portugal, France, and other European countries and colonies. Scales could determine the value of worn-down foreign coins, as well as show whether a suspicious gold or silver coin was genuine or counterfeit. Large scales called



Estate inventories often covered a house room by room, and then listed implements and tools in barns and sheds. (Library of Congress)



“steelyards” or “stilliards” weighed meat, produce, and other heavy items.

Among the bequeathed possessions may be some obscure or strange items. Quite a few Maryland wills note the inheritance of a “buccaneer gun” (a type of musket patterned on firearms from French Caribbean colonies). On the other hand, in 1760 one John Williams, Sr. of Somerset County, Maryland, left his daughter “a Spanish pistall,” not a firearm, but a silver coin. A “fear-nothing coat” was a type of waterproof coat. A “clock reel” was a wooden device that measured yarn as it was put into skeins.

Finding Early Wills and Probate Papers

Generally, wills and probate files were kept at a county level. Some state archives have collections of colonial wills. Some 17th and 18th-century wills (or will abstracts) have been published, and many more have been microfilmed. FamilySearch.org has online will and probate collections from many states. Their page www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/United_States_Probate_Records will show you sources and basic information for each of the states. Links from this page will also provide more detailed information on wills, probate law, and related matters.

The catalog at FamilySearch has a spectacular and growing trove of wills, and probate and estate files, digitized from microfilm and placed online. There are also some published volumes, indexes, and abstracts compiled by historians or genealogists. Occasionally, will information published in the 1800s preserves old documents lost long ago in fires or other disasters.

After combing through old family wills, any interesting facts or clues can be expanded on by searching other records, such as early newspapers; censuses; deeds; tax rolls; or orphan and guardianship records.

After combing through the available probate papers of the counties where your ancestors lived, it might be useful to revisit them from time to time. New collections of early probate papers may appear online. And, whenever your research finds a “new” ancestor, it is worth checking for their will and estate papers, just in case. ©

DAVID A. NORRIS is a frequent contributor to *Internet Genealogy* and *History Magazine*.

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Online British Newspapers

By Ed Storey

MOST OF US WOULD LIKE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE LIVES of our ancestors beyond their vital records. My experience is that newspapers are a great source of information. Here is a little about how and why we might consider UK newspapers for ancestors who lived in the British Isles. Around the world, there are many sources of online newspapers. These are some examples of English ancestors.

The British National Archives has a collection of newspapers that can be accessed for a modest fee and viewed at home. There are papers from as far back as 1700, but most are after 1800. The website is: britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk, and is a good starting point. They allow the first few searches as a trial. Plan to begin your search with something of interest during the trial.

After the trial, there are ways to pay, from monthly to annually. I started with a 3-month subscription for about US\$36 and paid via credit card. Consider unchecking the “automatic renewal” box. That will force them to contact you about renewals and allow you to decide if you want the subscription to continue.

On the search page, there will be a basic box and a box for an [advanced search](#). You can use whichever you prefer. Maybe try a few searches using both methods. My experience is that search engines are not perfect. Further, they use image recognition to ferret out the words. If there is a misread letter, the response will not be correct. For that reason, it might take several iterations to find the person you are looking for. Fortunately, some events were picked up and included in more than one publication.

Henry Redding was from a prominent family in North Wales. He had wooed and married Mrs. DeBurgh, a widow. He was solvent, but not particularly wealthy. Upon the return from their honeymoon, he was served with papers because of debts she brought to the marriage, unknown to him. He tried to have her property applied to resolving the debt, but she was not willing to make her assets available. This is an example of where a newspaper can be valuable because it is unlikely to be recorded anywhere else; especially as this occurred in 1867.

The account can be found in the *Oxfordshire Telegraph*, among other papers. The bankruptcy proceedings were in the Liverpool court. Our goal is to provide the search engine with as much information about him as we already know.

First, we want Henry Redding and not Stanley Redding or Henry Jones. The solution is to put quotation marks around the full name of the person in our search. Presumably, we know the name of the ancestor, so that is our first step. Unfortunately, Henry Redding might be too common a name to allow us to find the correct person, especially if we do not know about the bankruptcy or the widow. If we then enter Wales, or at least

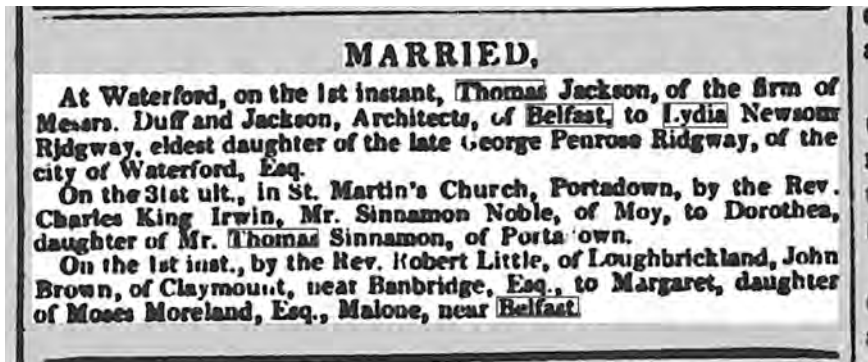
northwest England, we have added some more information that could help us.

Depending on what hints we might have from family stories or knowledge about marital status, we might try those as well. I typically make a quick search with words like death, marriage or bankrupt. Birth is less promising because the adult name might not have yet been established at birth. Older birth announcements might only provide the name of the father. Some clues about when he lived could also be a big help. I try to use the dates from about age 20 to 60, as they are probably when people are most likely to be in a newspaper.

We have seen how to find an uncommon event that is unlikely to be located any other way. Such stories are possibly found in more than one publication, to the extent the editor might think the readers would be interested.

Newspapers frequently have little details that might not otherwise have been found. For example, the *Kilkenny Moderator* has a record of the marriage of Thomas Jackson to Lydia Ridgway. Both of their fathers are listed as well as the site of the marriage. Since the record is contemporary to the event, we can be fairly sure it is accurate.

When reading such an account, be sure to catch all that was written. Lydia’s middle name is present, which might be a clue to her mother’s maiden name. The



Marriage record for the marriage of Thomas and Lydia. Note that Lydia and her father seem to have different surname spellings.

residences of the fathers are mentioned. Since the males have “Esq.” after their names, we can be confident they were families of some note. Lydia’s father, having been a General, is likely included in the *Printed Annual Army List*, easily found online. The Army publication will have annual information as long as he had been an officer.

The same event was also recorded in the *Newry Examiner* on 7 January 1835. A copy of the notice is nearby. If you look carefully, you see the father’s name is spelled with an “i” while the daughter’s name used a “j.” No doubt, it was an error of the typesetter. This shows the benefit of multiple references to the same event. In this example, the father’s spelling is correct, but this is an illustration of the errors that can easily occur. If we had been looking for Lydia Ridgway, the spelling error would have meant we would not have gotten a response from Newry.

Thomas Jackson was an architect in Belfast. Newspapers are a goldmine of information about



One of many notices related to Thomas Jackson and his business. Looking for an apprentice is a clue his business is growing.

him. Several times, there are advertisements related to his business. The *Belfast Commercial Chronicle* tells of his start in business in August 1829. There are other notices when he had a building for sale or was requesting builders to consider a project he had undertaken. It looks as if his life could be well traced, using only local newspapers. Note that the website does the hard work of searching multiple papers for the same person.

A common event found in newspapers is bankruptcy. This is because creditors need to know what is happening to maximize their chances of receiving payment. These documents can contain a surprising amount of information. Even though it is primarily a business issue, there will be clues to address, type of business and even an occasional relative.

Arthur Doris is an example. All I knew was his city, Belfast. I entered his name, city and the word “bankrupt.” I put his name in parentheses as I did not want only Arthur and got an early response. I had no idea he had been having financial troubles, but it was easy to do.

It is always necessary to be alert to people with the same name. With Thomas Jackson, noted above, there are both a clergyman and a crook with similar names.

They sometimes have a middle name or an additional name before Thomas. One way to sort them out is to make a chronological chart of details, including full name and location. If an ancestor lives in a single place but seems suddenly far away, that is a warning that it might be someone else. Similarly, we saw Thomas was denoted with an “Esq.” after his name. Look for the same when reviewing entries that might seem to be correct.

There is another source of newspaper records. This one is free to use but is a little more austere. The *London Gazette* is the publication that records official announcements, even today. Military notices, bankruptcy, and government appointments are all listed, from before 1800. It can be found at thegazette.co.uk. Searches are made by providing keywords, much like the newspaper archive.

From the *Loughborough Monitor*, we can find the financial problems of Thomas Yateman in the 28 August 1862 edition. On 28 October 1862, the *London Gazette* provides an update on his financial journey. The emphasis in each article is different and, if you have an ancestor with such troubles, it might be worthwhile to explore both.

As we know, English subjects were sent around the world, so we should not limit our searches to papers from the British Isles. Since Australia had a significant population of people born in England; it might also be a fruitful place to look for ancestors. I have an ancestor, Colonel Thomas Barrett. I went to trove.nla.gov.au in my search. This is the website for the newspaper collection of the National Library of Australia and allows us to access records from old Australian (and some New Zealand) newspapers. I entered nothing

THE BANKRUPTCY ACT, 1861.

**IN THE COUNTY COURT OF LEICESTERSHIRE
HOLDEN AT LOUGHBOROUGH.**

THOMAS YATEMAN, of the White Swan Inn, Wellington Street, Loughborough, in the county of Leicester, Licensed Victualler, having been adjudged bankrupt under a petition for adjudication of **bankruptcy**, filed in the County Court of Leicestershire, at Loughborough, on the 22nd day of August, 1862, the said Thomas Yate-man is hereby required to surrender himself to **BEAUVOIR BROCK, Esq.**, the Registrar of the said Court, at the first meeting of Creditors, to be held before the said Registrar, on the 12th day of September, 1862, at Ten o'clock in the forenoon precisely, at the County Court Office, Loughboro'. The Registrar of the said Court is the Official Assignee, and **LANGFORD WILSON**, of Loughborough, the Solicitor acting in the **bankruptcy**.

A **public sitting** will be appointed by the Court for the said Bankrupt to pass his last examination, of which sitting due notice will be given in the *London Gazette*. At the said first meeting of Creditors the Registrar will receive the proofs of the debts of the Creditors, and the Creditors may choose an Assignee of the bankrupt's estate and effects. At the **public sitting** proofs of debts of Creditors will also be received, and the said Bankrupt will be required to submit himself to be examined, and to make a full disclosure and discovery of all his estate and effects, and to finish his examination.

*Notice is also hereby given to all persons indebted to the said Bankrupt, or that have any of his effects, not to deliver the same but to the Official Assignee, and give notice to the Solicitor acting in the **Bankruptcy**.*

A thorough account of the financial travails of Thomas Yate-man can be found in his local newspaper. The London Gazette record has a more financial bent, with more details for creditors.

THE BALLARAT STAR, TU

A SLICE OF INDIA.

CLAIMED BY A NE WZEALANDER.

Now that the death of Cecil Rhodes has put the words "Empire building" in everyone's mouth, there comes to hand most appropriately a claim by a resident of New Zealand which shows incidentally how the Empire was built in the eighteenth century. This claim brings to light a curious page of history. At the same time it is rather startling. The claimant, a lady living in New Zealand, practically wants the Imperial Government to recognise her title to a slice of India. No trifling slice either, since forty-one villages are in dispute. To put a monetary value on the claim would be impossible. Over one hundred years ago, when an ancestor

every month. It was all in vain, however. The company remained obdurate. In 1832 Mrs Simpson bequeathed the "gaghire" to her son, Mr Henry Chapman, and four other persons, and they continued the fight with the same measure of success. Want of means, the Indian mutiny, and other causes, kept the matter in abeyance for years. Some considerable time ago, Mrs Cook, one of the daughters of Henry Chapman, came to New Zealand, and her daughter, Mrs Felton, the present claimant, revived the case. She obtained legal advice in various quarters, which was unanimously in her favor. Mr H. D. Ball, the Crown Solicitor in Wellington, and probably the most distinguished lawyer in New Zealand, was so satisfied with the genuineness of her claim that he advised her to go to England to prosecute it. Want of means prevented this course being adopted, and Mrs Felton's solicitors advised her to seek the assist-

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A bit of the article about the descendants of Colonel Barrett. You can see names like Mrs. Simpson, Henry Chapman and Mrs. Cook. This article shows the relationship between the Colonel and his descendants.

more than his name and down-loaded an article about him, dated 8 April 1802. It is a complicated story about land awarded to him by an old ruler in India. I have found no further details about the Colonel and his descendants. As printed, the descendants of the Colonel, actually of his sister, were living in New Zealand when they petitioned the British government for the land that was granted in the previous century.

The details of the intrigue are beyond the scope of this article, but it serves as an example of how to learn about ancestors through newspaper archives. Not everyone in Australia was recorded in the past, but the search is easily accomplished and is part of "leaving no stone unturned."

Keep in mind that all records are accessed by character recognition programs. If the original document has been damaged, your ancestor might have been missed. I chose better-quality examples to use as illustrations. Some are barely legible. You may not be able to read everything, but I believe our eyes are better at deciphering words than machine character recognition. I have also seen extra spaces in the middle of a word, which can baffle a computer but is recognizable by us regular folk.

Here, we have had a glimpse into a useful source of genealogical information from the British Isles. Our goal, when researching ancestors, is to leave no stone unturned, and newspapers are an important stone to consider. ©

ED STOREY and his wife, Nancy, live in Arizona where he works on the brickwalls in his own family history.



The Value of Paying Close Attention

By Meredith Young Renard



Photo courtesy of author

IT'S SO EASY TO SKIM YOUR WAY THROUGH GENEALOGY RESEARCH, ISN'T IT? Anxious to get this great find noted in your repository or database. Excited to now have this wonderful bit of information to add to a timeline or a story.

Over the years, I've learned to take time to focus on a treasure and not just glance at it. Take, for example, a 1947 photo of my grandmother that I had for years but hadn't ever really looked at with a researcher's eye.

When concentrating on the whole picture one day, it became like a "can you spot this" puzzle. I could see "Conejo Valley Airport" in the photo and there was a note in my grandmother's hand that this was Mrs. Janns' plane. Where was this? Who was Mrs. Janns? And why was my grandmother standing by this plane anyway?

Thanks to the Internet, I learned about the Conejo Valley Airport by contacting a website called "Abandoned & Little-Known Airfields"

(www.airfields-freeman.com/ca/Airfields_CA_Ventura.htm). I was stunned to learn the airport had been in Thousand Oaks, California since my widowed grandmother was quite poor and I had never heard of her traveling outside New Jersey. I've also learned that the airport was once known as Janns Airport, the Janns family being prominent in that area going back to the late 1800s, which explained Nana's note about Mrs. Janns.

The next step was to learn why my grandmother had been to California, so I called my cousin Ray who recalled that Nana had made the trip due to a lifelong dream to see the Rose Bowl Parade.

Had I continued just glancing at this photo, I'd have missed out on the joy it gives me to imagine my Nana's Bucket List trip. It also pleased me to give permission for her photo to be shared on the "Abandoned & Little Known Airfields" site – she would be thrilled all over again. 📸

MEREDITH YOUNG RENARD is in the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) as the Wisconsin State Chair of DAR Project Patriot, chair of various committees and member of others in the Jean Nicolet Chapter in Green Bay. She is a life member of the Sons & Daughters of Oregon Pioneers, a member of the National Genealogical Society and various other genealogical and historical societies as well as a former Fortune 500 company executive.



Take Better Notes with Freeform

Lisa A. Alzo reviews a powerful Mac-based note-taking app

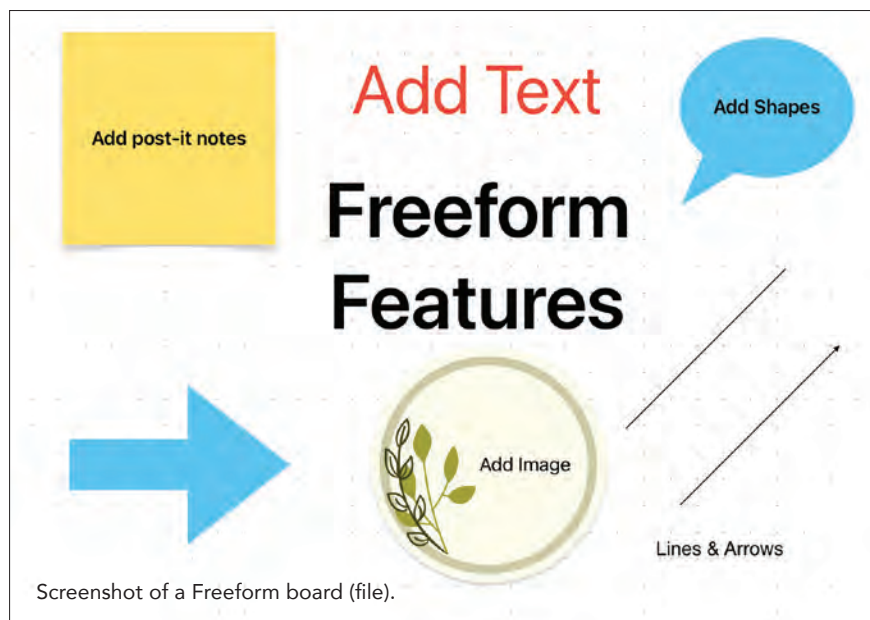
ARE YOU LOOKING FOR A SIMPLE WAY TO TRACK YOUR GENEALOGY research? Or a method to create a visual outline or mind map while writing a family story?

Freeform is a powerful and versatile note-taking application for Mac that allows users to create and organize notes intuitively and flexibly. With its sleek and user-friendly interface, Freeform provides a unique and refreshing approach to note-taking that can help users stay organized, creative, and productive. It is like having a portable whiteboard in your pocket.

How to Get Freeform

On 13 December 2022, it became available for Apple users in the latest versions of iOS, iPadOS, and macOS (macOS 13.1 Ventura). Note: Older versions of macOS (Monterey, for example) will not support Freeform.

Key Features



Freeform helps users organize and visually lay out content on a flexible canvas, offering the ability to see, share, and collaborate all in one place without worrying about layouts or page sizes. Each Freeform file you create is a board. Users can add a wide range of files and preview them online without ever leaving the board. Designed for collaboration, Freeform makes it easy to invite others to work on a board together even while on a FaceTime call. You can limit access to only invited people, or anyone with the link and set permissions to “can make changes” or “view

only” and allow or restrict if others can invite additional collaborators. Freeform boards are stored in iCloud and support iCloud sync, which means you can access notes across all Apple devices, including Mac, iPhone, and iPad. This is perfect for genealogists and writers to take notes on the go and seamlessly transition between devices. A Freeform file can be exported as a PDF.

Some of the key features of Freeform include:

1. **Note creation in any shape or form.** Unlike traditional note-taking applications that rely on rigid structures and templates, Freeform lets you create notes in a freeform manner – in any shape, size, or format, whether it is a text note, an image (inserted from a file, scanner, or an image you take on your device), a PDF, or a web link. A simple drag and drop of notes into any order you choose makes it easy to organize and categorize your ideas.
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3. **Customization options.** Freeform allows you to personalize your note-taking experience.



Choose from a range of fonts, colors, and backgrounds, as well as add custom tags and labels to notes. This allows you to categorize quickly and organize notes based on different projects, topics, or themes.

4. Mind Maps made easy.

Mind maps popular tools are used frequently in the business world for brainstorming and organizing ideas. To learn more about Mind Mapping, read my article “Mind Maps: Free Your Mind” *Internet Genealogy*, Oct/Nov 2012. Freeform makes it easy to create mind maps. Simply drag and drop notes into a central idea, and then branch out to related ideas. This allows you to see the connections between different ideas and concepts visually, making it easier to organize and develop your thoughts.

Ways to Use Freeform

There are endless ways to use Freeform for genealogy. Here are a few ideas:

1. Mind map a research plan.
2. Make a list of records to check for your ancestor.
3. Create an ancestor timeline.
4. Storyboard your family history project.
5. Take notes at conferences or during webinars.
6. Collaborate with cousins on a brick wall/solve a genealogy research problem.
7. Plan an “immersion genealogy” experience in an ancestor’s hometown.

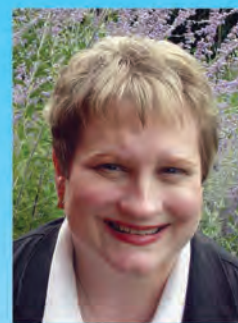
Summary

Freeform is a powerful and flexible note-taking application for Mac

that offers a unique and refreshing approach to note-taking. With its freeform note creation, powerful search functionality, and customization options, Freeform can help you stay organized, creative, and productive as you explore your ancestors’ records and stories. If you are a Mac user looking for a note-taking application that can level up your genealogy research to-do lists and organize notes for your family history, Freeform may be the perfect choice for you. ©

LISA A. ALZO, M.F.A., is a freelance writer, instructor, and internationally recognized lecturer specializing in Eastern European research and nonfiction writing. She is the author of eleven books and hundreds of magazine articles. Lisa works as an online educator and writing coach through her website, Research Write Connect, www.researchwriteconnect.com. She is a regular contributor to *Internet Genealogy*.

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In Tribute: Paths Of Remembrance

by Sue Lisk

IN SEARCHING OUT A PROSPECTIVE “ADVENTURE” WITHIN A FEW MILES of my home, I came across a reference to a statue of two children located along a park trail I frequently follow. I’d never walked far enough to see it, so I decided to seek it out.



Stephen Weitzman’s 1992 sculpture, “Whispers”, in Sligo Creek Park, Silver Spring, MD. (Photo courtesy of author)

The sculpture was unusual, one of a young boy and girl seated close together whispering to each other. A small garden surrounded it. At the garden’s edge a dedicatory plaque read:

“Denis’ Garden

A Girl Scout Gold Award Sponsored By M.A.D.D.

Dedicated To Anyone Who Has Lost Someone Due To Drunk Driving.”

The dedication made no sense to me, at least not in the context of the sculpture. And initially, there was no connection. But it all came together over time.

Memorials, whether public or private, enable us to maintain special bonds with ancestors and relatives. I’d like to share some ideas and examples of ways you might consider creating tributes to them, on your own or with others.

PUBLIC MEMORIALS

When hikers, runners, and cyclists follow the Sligo Creek Trail as it winds its way through portions of Montgomery County and Prince George’s

County in Maryland, they pass several intriguing memorials.

Denis’ Garden

Sometimes a public memorial first emerges primarily as a private gesture. This was the case for a memorial dedicated to Denis Martin Wolf that I encountered along this trail.

At the age of seventeen, Denis was killed by a drunk driver when he and his friends were riding their bicycles up Sugarloaf Mountain in Conus, MD. Denis’s family had lived in the Sligo Creek watershed. In memory of Denis, his family arranged for two benches to be placed on the park trail close to the area where they had once lived. Each bench bore a plaque that read “In Loving Memory of Denis Martin Wolf”.

Had Denis lived, he would have attended the University of



The dedicatory plaque in Denis’ Garden in Sligo Creek Park, Silver Spring, MD. (Photo courtesy of author)



Maryland the following year. His family provided a bike installation close to the University of Maryland to offer students a safer alternative to cycling in the streets.

But the family also wished to have a memorial close to their home.

Stephen Weitzman's 1992 sculpture, "Whispers", had been installed in the park some time earlier. Denis's family had seen children playing on and around the statue but noticed that there was no seating nearby, so they decided to have two benches dedicated to Denis installed there.

But Denis's legacy would soon take on a wider meaning.

One of Denis's nieces was looking for a Girl Scout Gold Award project and wished to create a garden surrounding the sculpture and benches. In 1998, with funds from Mothers Against Drunk Driving, Denis' Garden was completed and its dedicatory sign was installed at the site. A public memorial commemorating a private tragedy had taken on a life of its own in being dedicated to anyone who had experienced a similar loss.

The Chestnut Ridge Bench

Another bench on the Sligo Creek Trail attracted my attention, but the story behind it was also out of the ordinary.

In this instance, a large family group dedicated a bench to their ancestors, James and Mary Lee, who "lived here on Chestnut Ridge [from] 1741-1764". It was strange to imagine the couple living in what is still a beautiful, wooded area with a creek running through it but that now borders a busy street with vehicles racing past just a few hundred meters away. The Lees owned 110 acres of land here, at a place once known as Chestnut Ridge Plantation.

Various branches of the Lee family thoroughly researched the history of the Lees and their property and gathered at the location in 2007 for the bench's dedication. One of the Lee descendants, Ann Coleman, who travelled to Maryland for the event, had already decided to write a historical novel about her ancestors. Following her visit, she was inspired to change the novel's setting to the area where the Lee couple lived and titled her novel, *Leaves of Chestnut Ridge*. The book incorporates family stories as well as the author's own research findings. In writing and publishing the novel, the author found another way to celebrate the lives of her ancestors and share parts of their histories with others.

PRIVATE MEMORIALS

Although public memorials can be a wonderful way of paying tribute to an ancestor or relative, they can

be expensive. And some people prefer to honor their loved ones in a more private manner.

Memory Gardens

The practice of planting a memory garden, sometimes also known as a "memorial garden", is a special way of paying tribute to someone who has passed. The person in whose memory you create your garden might be an immediate family member or even a relative or ancestor you've never met but whom you wish to honor.

Many online guides offer suggestions as to how you might set up your garden. These websites are often helpful. But remember that you can design a memory garden in any way that appeals to you. Your garden can be simple. It doesn't have to incorporate waterfalls, pergolas, or statues. Consider what suits the space you've selected, and then use your imagination.

One of my cousins used to plant



The creation of some tributes to loved ones may be particularly labor intensive. Coral Castle in Florida was hand-sculpted by Edward Leedskalnin across almost three decades from 1,100 tons of coral into a series of stone tributes to his wife. Photo by Carol M. Highsmith. (Library of Congress)

sunflowers that reached heights of fourteen feet or more. When I decided to create a garden in his memory, I knew I wouldn't have enough space for such a lofty endeavor. As a result, I settled on planting relatively small but striking sunflowers that grow no more than four feet high. In this small garden they are an unexpected but beautiful reminder of him and his own garden.

If your grandmother loved roses and always wanted to plant them around her house but was unable to do so due to insufficient sunlight, perhaps you could consider planting a memory garden dedicated to her in a sunny area that incorporates various varieties of roses.

A website called Botanical Paperworks offers some ideas worth considering if you're looking for guidance or inspiration. You'll find the article at <https://botanicalpaperworks.com/blog/creating-a-memorial-garden-to-honor-remember-loved-ones/> Pick and choose any elements you might like to use in your garden.

The author includes ideas that are more practical for some areas than others.

Placing an engraved rock in a garden if you live where snowfalls are heavy would not make sense since you could not "simply brush off the snow" to see the engraving.

If you decide to plant flowers, the connections you establish between the types of flowers you choose and your loved one may be more personal than those suggested by the symbolism of particular flowers.

And your garden does not need to be located in a sunny area. Gardens that incorporate plants like hostas, heucheras, and oakleaf hydrangeas require more shade than sun. Yet these lovely plants have the advantage of displaying

longer-lasting foliage or blooms than many sun-loving plants.

Memorial Spaces at Home

Dedicating a space within your home to a relative or ancestor is another option for those who prefer private memorials to public ones. Although some people associate this idea with the placement of funeral urns, this option may not be one you would even consider.



Tributes to ancestors can take many forms. Based on a black-and-white photo, Sue Riestler painted a likeness of our ancestor, Lillian Schaefer, on porcelain. (Photo courtesy of Sue Riestler)

You might want to place just a meaningful photo or two, favorite books or artwork, or treasured objects on a shelf, a mantle, or a nightstand, for example. But Karla Helbert, a licensed professional counselor, develops this general idea more extensively in an innovative manner in her article you'll find at www.goodtherapy.org/blog/shrine-altar-grief-healing/.

Admittedly, the idea of creating a "shrine" – whether of a religious nature or not – for a family member who has passed would most likely apply when memorializing an ancestor or relative you've known personally. But this still

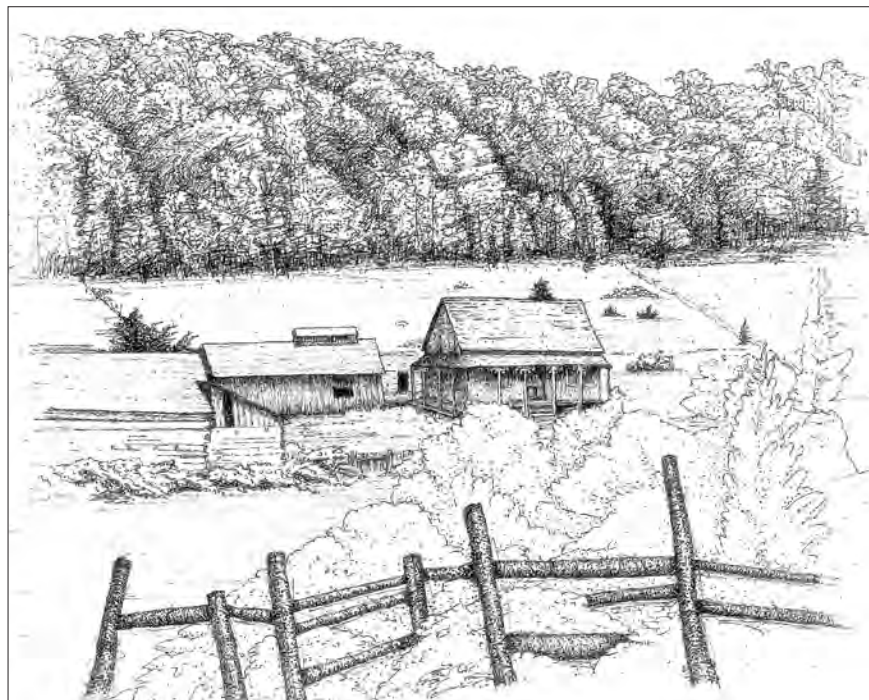


Photographer David Long chose to creatively memorialize his wife and her piano playing via a light painting he titled "The Blues". (Photo courtesy of David Long)

accounts for many of the family members you may wish to honor.

The author provides background information related to the creation of shrines and altars in the wider world throughout history. But she explains that in a home, personal shrines "can establish a private place to which you can return to reflect, meditate, grieve, engage in personal ritual, remember and honor" a person who has passed. She provides a list of ideas that can help you work through the process of deciding how you will create your personal memorial space or shrine.

She specifies that a shrine can be permanent, semi-permanent, or temporary. You can incorporate whatever items you like, including natural objects such as colored leaves, bird feathers, pinecones, or rocks. A shrine can also play an important role in the healing process following the passing of a loved one.



Places of importance to ancestors can also be memorialized. A sketch of High Mountain View, the homestead of the author's Stender ancestors, in Ladysmith, QC. This sketch by Marlena Lambert is based on an old family photo. (Photo courtesy of author)

My thoughts drifted back to the Whispers statue in Denis' Garden. The way in which the viewer relates to the sculpture in the context of the loss of a loved one depends on the individual. Perhaps it could suggest the many secrets that were never shared due to a life cut short. But it could also symbolize the deeply personal connections cherished and maintained across time.

And so it is with the tributes we dedicate to those whom are part of our own family trees: we create our own meanings. ©

SUE LISK, a freelance writer, genealogist, and linguist, is a frequent contributor to *Internet Genealogy*. She works for a news agency in Washington, DC.



Tracing Your Germanic Ancestors

This edition of our *Tracing Your Ancestors* series is authored by Leland K. Meitzler and contains a wealth of information on resources to help you locate your Germanic ancestors. Articles include: Finding the Place, The Hail Mary Genealogical Search, Using German Maps and Gazetteers, Passenger and Immigration Records, Online Database and Family Tree Sources, German Parish and Civil Records, Census Records of Germany, Reading Fraktur German Printing, Calendars and Religious Feast Days, Reading Old German Gothic Handwriting, and more. 68 Pages. Magazine format.

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Vacation Commonalities of Our Ancestors

By Lynn Cassity

NO VACATION WAS THE COMMONALITY OF MOST OF OUR ANCESTORS. Only the rich could afford Grand Tours and transatlantic ocean voyages. Not until the advent of trains, cars, and planes did vacations become affordable.

Most vacations of our ancestors involved traveling to unusual and wondrous sites. Cooks Tours in Europe featured pyramids and Biblical lands. Our North American ancestors toured the Grand Canyon, Niagara Falls, and Old Faithful. They escaped hot cities in the summer for coastal or mountain retreats. They walked historic sites in Washington DC, New York City, Philadelphia, and battlefields in the East, South and West. World Fairs drew our ancestors for fun, education, and to tour pavilions of countries they could never afford to visit.

Train travel was the commonality allowing our ancestors to do this. For centuries people didn't get beyond twenty miles from home. Trains changed that. One of my ancestors who had moved from Kentucky to Missouri traveled home by train to introduce his bride to his family. Surprisingly, he never mentioned another commonality: how dirty the ride was.

A spokesman visiting a small town to gain support for a bond to rebuild historic Union Station in Kansas City was told just how dirty steam engine train travel was. "The soot and sparks came in through the open windows," a 96-year-old local woman revealed. "And if you closed the windows to keep the soot and ashes out, you sweltered." With sudden realization, he replied, "So that's why the women's lounge is so large at the station. "Yes," the lady said. "We needed a place to clean up!"

Later in the 19th century, our ancestors' vacation commonality became the automobile. In 1952 they watched a Chevrolet TV commercial with the jingle *See the USA in your Chevrolet, America is asking you to call*. The auto industry was targeting Americans to buy cars and enjoy vacation travel as the post-war economy and highways improved.

And they did travel in cars. If they couldn't afford motels, they camped out on byways and turnoffs. My grandparents headed west for two weeks of vacation every summer in their large station wagon. At the end of the

day, they pulled over somewhere quiet, pitched a small tent for their kids, and slept in the station wagon every night until they reached family in California and stayed with them. The only way they, and many more ancestors, could afford to get away.

Visiting family was a commonality our vacationing relatives shared. One ancestor's only sister planned to move hundreds of miles away when she married. Before the marriage vows took place, the bride's father insisted the groom promise the sisters could visit each other every summer. They did for many years.

Another relative moved two states away and came home to visit family every summer during his vacation. They drove all night in their station wagon to stay with family, escaping motel and restaurant bills for a family of six.

One more commonality was getting lost. Something had to inspire the invention of those confounded glovebox roadmaps our ancestors couldn't refold.

However, the biggest thing our ancestors shared was the need to document the places and people they visited. Whether with sketches, paintings, postcards, journals, or Brownie cameras, they all recorded their vacations to remember that rare time away. ☺



Touring cliff dwellings by ladder almost one hundred years ago. (Photo in public domain)

LYNN CASSITY enjoys discovering the many facets of her ancestors' lives through newspapers, diaries, and interviews. She also helps organize local museum exhibits to share the knowledge.



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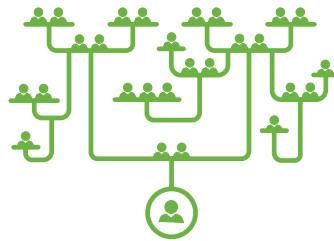
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I have been there [the Genealogy Center] many times and found a lot of information on different branches of my family. Anyone interested in genealogy research should go there.

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Answering the “Where Do I Go From Here?” Question

WE KNOW THAT ALL FAMILY history research begins with a question, and in seeking the answer, we typically ask even more questions. In the Genealogy Center at the Allen County Public Library in Fort Wayne, the most frequently asked question is some form of, “Where do I go from here?” “Here” is typically where a path of inquiry has ended without one being satisfied with the results, without one getting the answer to the question. What does one do then?



Explore manuscripts at the National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections (NUCMC).

The Genealogical Proof Standard is a good guide for answering that question. Element one of the guidance is, “Reasonably exhaustive research has been conducted.” That means we have explored more deeply and more broadly to determine what other sources of information are available to shed more light on the person or family being investigated. As individuals excited about finding our families’ stories, we can easily develop a pattern in which we explore only those records we are most familiar with and those records that are easiest for us to access. Adopting that process could leave many of our questions unanswered. How do we explore more comprehensively?

First, use all the free online bibliographic databases to locate materials in librar-

ies and archives that match our surnames of interest as well as four other research factors: geographic locations in which we suspect our ancestors lived, the ethnicities of our ancestors, the religion they practiced, and their occupations. To investigate for books and manuscripts use www.WorldCat.org; to explore for manuscripts, use ArchiveGrid (www.oclc.org/research/areas/research-collections/archivegrid.html) and the National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections (NUCMC) (www.loc.gov/coll/nucmc). Searching bibliographic databases can be less intuitive than searching Amazon or Google, so give yourself time to explore how a particular site operates, which search terms work best, and how to interpret your search results. For example, some search results (though not the majority) may have links to free, downloaded copies. WorldCat will indicate which libraries own an item of interest in order of proximity to one’s zip code.

Second, search the holdings of the Internet Archive, <https://archive.org>, and Google Books, <https://books.google.com>. Digital copies of millions of books and periodicals can be found at these two free sites, and Internet Archive offers free downloads of any items in several formats. It is a tremendous research boon to be able to search through the texts of online books.

Third, search the online catalogs of major libraries and research repositories. Those catalogs can truly be your research assistants. The Genealogy Center’s catalog (www.GenealogyCenter.org) makes the collection’s 1.2M+ items discoverable and provides links to free digital copies of nearly ten percent of that number.

Finally, newspapers for your area and time periods of interest can be the source of answers to many of our genealogical questions. Newspapers chronicle the lives and times of our ancestors. The Library of Congress freely offers *Chronicling America* <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov>, access to twenty million newspaper pages. Many libraries have subscriptions to Newspapers.com and NewspaperArchive.com. In addition, many states have newspaper digitization projects that can be accessed through their state libraries or state historical societies. Other sites worth looking at include Elephind.com and FultonSearch.org.

Often the answer to the question, “Where do I go from here?” can be found by locating all possible information for a surname, geographic location, ethnic group, and occupation. ©

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Connecting the Threads from Generation to Generation

Karen L. Newman looks at the enduring popularity of quilting

QUILTING IS NOT A DYING ART FORM. PEOPLE LIKE ME QUILT today as their ancestors did generations ago. For example, the state of West Virginia holds a yearly juried quilt exhibition (<https://wvculture.org/west-virginia-department-of-arts-culture-and-history-is-currently-accepting-entries-for-its-annual-juried-quilt-exhibition>). These quilts can tell stories of ourselves and our ancestors.



"Mulatto ex-slave in her house near Greensboro, Alabama." Photograph by Jack Delano for the Federal Writers Project, May 1941 (Library of Congress)

The Works Progress Administration (WPA) Federal Writers' Project conducted interviews from 1936 into the 1940s and these records are located online at the Library of Congress (www.loc.gov/collections/federal-writers-project/index/location). The best known of these is the Former Slave Project. Some of the women who were enslaved used quilts to record their history (www.fashionstudies.ca/the-role-of-clothing-and-textiles-in-defining-family). If you are researching enslaved ancestors, the easiest method of searching this database is alphabetically. Search first for the county and, if not listed, find your state. The quilt might be mentioned in the

interview of the female enslaved. If not, then these quilts were often considered heirlooms and left to family members either in a will or given away before death. These interviews might also reveal family members and the plantation where the person was enslaved, where you could find bills of sale in plantation records located elsewhere, or a family member listed in the slave owner's will.

The Quilt Index (<https://quiltindex.org>) is a searchable database with photos of quilts donated to public and private entities. Sometimes these entries contain important genealogical information. After you press the search link at the top of the page, you can choose how to narrow your search, such as the location of a quilt by city, county, state, province, or country. You can search by the time period and/or date range it was made, its pattern, or its maker. I typed "Ohio" and found a Civil War quilt made by Mary Stone Gardner. The person donating the quilt to the Wyoming Quilt Project claimed this quilt is the only record of Mary in the family (<https://quiltindex.org/view/?type=fullrec&kid=27-23-86>). This illustrates how important these types of records are for locating female ancestors. Several quilts list Methodist ladies' groups as the quilt makers. If your female relatives were Methodists, they might be quilters. My local newspaper wrote an article about my grandmother's quilting group in a Methodist church where she's been a member for over fifty years. Quilts, along with their owners and some familial details, can also be found at the Smithsonian (www.si.edu/search/collection-images?edan_q=quilts&).

Quilting is not the only fabric medium



"Two Quilts by Theresa Tate Newman and Gertrude Tate Hensley." Photograph by Karen Newman, May 2023 (Private Collection)

with genealogical value. Some needlework samplers are located online at the Smithsonian. One such sample with a detailed family

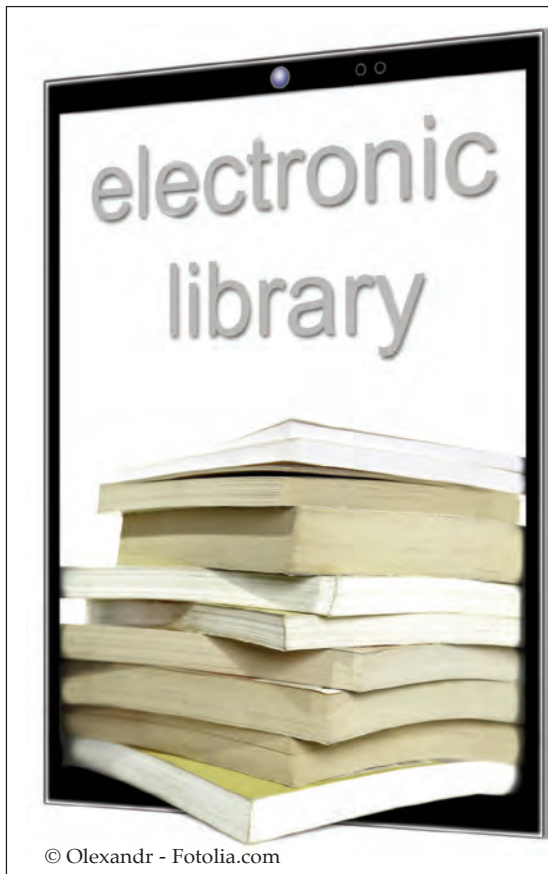
history is that of Hester Ann Posey (www.si.edu/object/hester-ann-poseys-sampler:nmah_629454) who lists her parents and her siblings' birthdates.

Textiles can be an important, often overlooked, genealogical resource. There are a number of these online. Even if you cannot find what you need, these internet sources like the Quilt Index can lead you to a place that you can visit, such as the West Virginia State Archives and a book you can buy such as *Georgia Quilts: Piecing Together a History*, edited by Anita Zaleski Weinraub. However, you are more likely to find these items among family members, as I did with my grandmother's quilts and my 4X great-grandmother's pincushion. Sometimes these inheritances lead to more questions than answers, but isn't that the fun of genealogical research? ©



"Sarah Carmichael Basey Pincushion" Photograph by Karen Newman, March 2018 (Private Collection)

KAREN L. NEWMAN is a member of seven lineage societies and several genealogical societies, including [Daughters of the American Revolution](#), [Magna Charta Dames and Barons](#), and the [National Genealogical Society](#). Her writing has appeared in *Going In-Depth Magazine*. She holds a certificate in Genealogical Research from Boston University.



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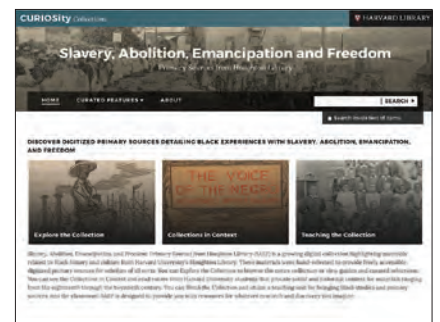
Internet Genealogy looks at websites and related news that are sure to be of interest

Diane L. Richard looks at websites and related news that are sure to be of interest

Slavery, Abolition, Emancipation and Freedom (Harvard Library)

<https://curiosity.lib.harvard.edu/slavery-abolition-emancipation-and-freedom>

The depth of many university collections, previously mostly inaccessible to your average genealogy researcher, is incredible, and they are now more accessible than ever via digitized platforms like this one. As described, “is a growing digital collection highlighting materials related to Black history and culture from Harvard University’s Houghton Library. These materials were hand-selected to provide freely accessible digitized primary sources for scholars of all sorts. You can Explore the Collection to browse the entire collection or view guides and curated selections. You can see the Collections in Context and read essays from Harvard University students that provide social and historical context for materials ranging from the eighteenth through the twentieth century ... SAEF is designed to provide you with resources for whatever research and discovery you imagine.”



As I often do, I searched on North Carolina and discovered this fascinating document, “Statistics, prepared from the Census of Blacks, taken in April 1863 in Newbern N. Carolina,” authored by James Horace, <https://curiosity.lib.harvard.edu/slavery-abolition-emancipation-and-freedom/catalog/74-HOU00201C00057>. This is part of the United States American Freedmen’s Inquiry Commission records collection at Harvard, <https://hollisarchives.lib.harvard.edu/repositories/24/resources/1446>. Researching this entity led me to SNAC (Social Networks and Archival Context), <https://snac.cooperative.org/view/44768405>, providing additional details about this commission and then an article, “The American Freedmen’s Inquiry Commission, 19th-century Racial Pseudoscience, and the False Assessment of Black America, 1863-1864,” Jeff Strickland, Montclair State University, <https://digitalcommons.montclair.edu/history-facpubs/16> which then led me to numerous other resources. Remember, there are always threads that you might pull as you explore one record type to further pursue records that might prove invaluable in researching your ancestors.

The Irish in Canada Podcast

<https://theirishincanadapodcast.ca/>

As self-described, “The Irish in Canada is the podcast exploring the lives and legacies of Irish immigrants and their Canadian descendants. The podcast was created, and is researched, written, and narrated by Jane McGaughey, the Johnson Chair of Québec and Canadian Irish Studies at Concordia University’s School of Irish Studies.” The programs vary in length, with most between 10-20 minutes long. You can access the full archive, which currently includes nine episodes for Season 1 and six episodes for Season 2. These podcasts help bring alive some history that is unknown by many and yet important to understanding the lives of your Irish Canadian ancestors.



Rotterdam City Archive

<https://stadsarchief.rotterdam.nl/english>

With many 20th-century immigrant ancestors, it is not unusual to find that they traveled via the Holland America Line (HAL). In celebration of the 150th anniversary of the line, the Rotterdam City Archive website now has HAL passenger registers covering 1900-1940 online. You can search on surname, forename, departure port, and limit by years. The detailed registers provide info on where the passage was booked and the ultimate destination, along with other details. Learn more via the PR piece, “Explore Passenger Lists from the Early 1900s,” www.hollandamerica.com/blog/recent-articles/whats-new/explore-passenger-lists-from-early-1900s.

Though many traveled through Rotterdam to emigrate, if you are researching Rotterdam residents, you will find public notary records, registers of businesses, shop and individuals' names, census records, civil registers of births, marriages, and deaths, and other genealogical gems.



AMA Deceased Physicians Card File

www.nlm.nih.gov/hmd/genealogy/ama-deceased-physicians.html

Finally, in the early 20th century, the American Medical Association (AMA) started the construction of a reliable medical directory, with the first issue published in 1906. A biographical index was crafted in parallel with the information written/typed on cards. “The cards are exhaustive for physicians who died between 1906 and 1969” and include an incomplete collection of death notices and biographies for those who died in the 19th century. You will sometimes find multiple cards and as with all databases, some cards have basic information regarding death whereas others have details on education, where lived and died, and more.

The actual database is available via FamilySearch, www.familysearch.org/search/collection/2061540, and includes physician biographic records for 1864-1968.



The Ogilby Muster (TOM) First World War Online Archive (UK)

www.theogilbymuster.com

This online platform provides access to archives held in regimental museums across the UK to preserve the memories and experiences of those who served in WWI. Over 75 collections participated, and the website will eventually hold more than 2 million items. Besides directly searching for a person via name, you can also explore the records via which Regimental Collection might be relevant, www.theogilbymuster.com/regimental_collections. You can access materials directly, though there is the option to register for a free account which will unlock additional information.

Read more about this exciting project here, www.salisburyjournal.co.uk/news/19687940.ogilby-muster-first-world-war-online-archive-set-launch.





Capturing Stories Before They Fade

Memory and memories are remarkable
– in fact conversation is often about memories

A CASE IN POINT – WHILE VISITING MY 94 AND 92-year-old stepfather and mother a few weeks ago, at dinner “the guys” Dave (dad), John (friend), and I reminisced about some of the less intelligent (but fun at the time) things we’d done in our pasts. At one point, John looked over at his wife and stated “I guess this is part of being a guy. We have all been through times in our life that looking back, you can truly say ‘I’m lucky to be here.’”

While some of the moments we described over dinner seemed like “guy things,” “lucky moments” are universal – my sister and I had a few and I don’t even want to think about some of the experiences my daughter has had... ok, one on my daughter’s – over a long weekend while going to school in Colorado they drove over to Moab, Utah and the text photo I received on my phone I will never forget.... Their truck was on a cliff, likely thousands of feet off the canyon floor. All was well, and all were safe, but....

Why is this pertinent to a family history article?

We all have times in our lives that “define us,” and make us who we are and how we live/lived, but if we don’t capture these stories, we won’t know who our loved ones are/were, and our loved ones won’t know who we are/were.

For this reason, we must Capture Stories before they fade.

I LOVE taking pictures of my adventures to reminisce and share with others. But sometimes life happens too quickly, or you were “in the moment” and not thinking about taking a picture. For these times we need oral reminiscence and writing/journaling to capture these stories.

I also LOVE to “Do Good” and have been honored and humbled to help others in their historic activities to help others. For the past two years, the International African American Museum (IAAM) utilized Vivid-Pix Memory Stations to capture images, mementos and stories in the Charleston, South Carolina area. With the opening of the IAAM Family History Center on 27 June 2023, Memory Stations availability and engagement are furthered so that more stories can be shared.



The International African American Museum (IAAM) explores the history, culture, and impact of the African American journey on Charleston, on the nation, and the world, shining light and sharing stories of the diverse journeys, origins, and achievements of descendants of the African Diaspora. Across 11 galleries and a memorial garden with art, objects, artifacts, and multi-media interaction, IAAM is a champion of authentic, empathetic storytelling of American history. As a result, the museum will stand as one of the nation’s newest platforms for the disruption of institutionalized racism as it evolves today. The mission of IAAM is to honor the untold stories of the African American journey at the historically sacred site of Gadsden’s Wharf and beyond.

For more information, please visit iaamuseum.org
or call **843-872-5352**.

We look forward to welcoming you to Charleston for food, fun and history.

Live Life!
Rick 📸

RICK VOIGHT is co-founder and CEO of Vivid-Pix

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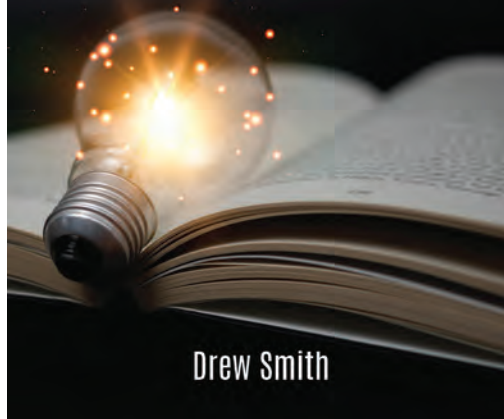
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GENERATION BY GENERATION

A Modern Approach to the Basics of Genealogy



Drew Smith

Generation by Generation: A Modern Approach to the Basics of Genealogy

The questions all newcomers to genealogy research ask themselves is, “Where do I begin?” “Should I join a commercial subscription service like Ancestry.com?” “What if I don’t find what I’m looking for on the Internet?” “How do I organize the information I’m gathering along the way?” Fortunately, this guide answers all those questions and engages neophytes with a book that takes an entirely fresh approach to the subject.

The guide is divided into two parts. Part I (“For All Generations—Preparing to Research”) discusses such things as relationships between family members, naming practices, genealogy software, how to review existing research, and the basics of DNA testing. Part II (“Generation by Generation—Doing the Research”) begins with a discussion of the major genealogy websites, and then explains the most important record categories for all generations from the present day back to the colonial era. There are also chapters devoted to searching for the origins of American families in the records of Canada, Great Britain, Ireland, and non-English-speaking nations.

By: Drew Smith; Price: \$29.95
Pages: 170; ISBN: 9780806321271
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A Peek Behind the Scenes at Who Do You Think You Are? (U.K. edition)

I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN SKEPTICAL ABOUT GENEALOGY SHOWS ON television, thinking that the discoveries were a bit too easy. The stars featured were over the top in expressing their surprise, and wondering how much they knew before they started.

After spending a day with the fine people who produce the U.K. version of *Who Do You Think You Are?* my thinking has changed – and not just because Kevin Clifton, the *Strictly Come Dancing* star featured in the episode, was a supremely nice person to deal with.



Kevin Clifton on a break during filming in Victoria. (Photo by Dave Obee)

I helped him understand why one of his ancestors was in an orphanage in Victoria, British Columbia, which was just one step on his path to learning about his deep family history in Canada. The Clifton show (season 20, episode 4) is quite emotional, and well worth seeking out through the BBC website.

To help Kevin, I relied on newspaper accounts from 140 years ago. Why did they ask me to take part? I am a family historian by night and I am a newspaper publisher by day; for the show, I pulled material from back issues of the very newspaper that I run.

What did I learn while working on the episode? Here is just a sample:

- Confidentiality is of utmost importance. I had to sign a non-disclosure agreement about the show itself, but beyond that, I had to be careful to not give Kevin any hint of what was to come.
- The producers told me I should not look into Kevin's family history, just to ensure that I let nothing slip. Well, of course I did a bit of research, but was very careful with what I said to him. (That was not easy.)

- A lot of planning goes into the show. Two people from the show came to Victoria ahead of the filming to check records, chat with people who might help Kevin, and find the best locations.
- Accuracy is a top priority. The producers did fact-checking before we filmed, and contacted me again after they returned to England, to make sure I could back up what I had said.
- It's a 60-minute show, but it could have been two or even three hours. A lot of excellent material was cut to make the episode fit the time slot. I would love to see the out-takes.
- The people who run the B.C. legislature library were a great help. The library was not available for filming that day, so a staff member brought the bound newspaper volumes to a rented room in a private club.
- I have worked with television crews for more than three decades and cannot say enough about the professionalism of this crew. They were the best.

In all, it was a fantastic experience, one of the highlights of almost half a century of family history research.

If only I could find other stars from England who have roots in Victoria, I might be able to do it again! ¹⁶



DAVE OBEE runs *CanGenealogy.com*, a link site devoted to Canadian resources.

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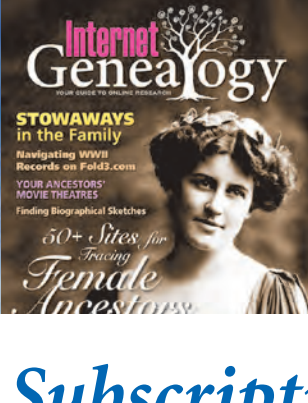
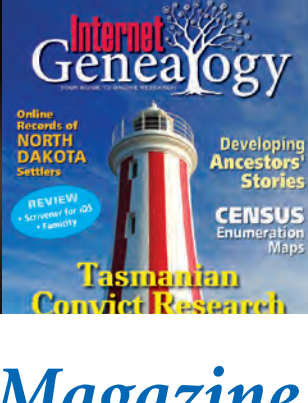
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