



"A hunch is creativity trying to tell you something."

— Frank Capra

"When you have confidence, you can have a lot of fun. And when you have fun, you can do amazing things."

— Joe Namath

"Enthusiasm is a divine possession."

— Margaret E. Sanger

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Want to see your name in print? Submissions welcomed and will be used eventually.

The Editor

## Newspapers— Research Beyond Obituaries

One of the most underutilized, yet most readily available sources in American genealogical research is the local newspaper. As the American newspaper approaches its 300 year anniversary (the first regularly issued newspaper began in Boston in 1704), it is time that family historians paid more attention to these daily and weekly diaries of local and national events.

Newspaper Research Beyond Obituaries

Unfortunately, most family historians think only of obituaries when they consider newspapers in their research. Of course, we have already discussed using obituaries to track immigrant origins in a previous lesson. However, there are many other ways in which newspapers can help us in our research, and yes, even in learning more about our obscure immigrant ancestors including:

- Finding lost relatives
- Learning more about "Chain Migrations"
- Advertising for friends
- Obtaining copies of passenger lists
- Tracking down servants
- Departure lists in foreign newspapers
- Biographical details from supportive documents

Lost Relatives

Throughout their life in their new country, immigrants may well have been mentioned in the local newspaper for a variety of reasons. Usually they did not initiate the mention of themselves. Rather, other persons were looking for them.

Perhaps they were trying to find family or friends who had arrived earlier.

Others were trying to locate a servant or apprentice who had escaped. Sometimes lists of newly arrived passengers were published.

These kinds of notices are not unique to this time period (middle nineteenth century). Rather, such notices are found at anytime a newspaper was being printed near where immigrants lived. Particular attention has been paid to colonial newspapers, perhaps because of the difficulty of colonial research, or the smaller number and size of such newspapers. However, the lack of other helpful sources during the time period currently being discussed, makes them especially useful if your immigrant arrived during this pre-Civil War period.

Chain Migration

As we have discussed earlier, most persons who immigrate to a new country chose to move to that country because they had heard good reports from previous settlers. This created what is usually called a process of "chain migration." Thus, over the period of years, and even decades, friends, family, and neighbors from the same town or district came to a locality in the New World. Once arriving, they naturally wanted to find their former associates. Often they knew where they lived, or at least thought they did, after all, this was one of the reasons they emigrated.

However, North America is a land of great opportunity. Sometimes new immigrants, upon arriving at their destination, found that the

very people they hoped to meet, and who would have provided them with shelter and perhaps even work, were not to be found. They had moved on. During the early nineteenth century, the communication network was not as developed as it became after the Civil War. Indeed, by the time of the Ellis Island passenger lists (1890s), immigrants had often had frequent contact with their "sponsor" in America. In earlier years, that was not always the case. What is an immigrant to do after arriving in a large city, such as Boston, and not knowing where to find that friend or relative? Many persons took out advertisements in the local newspaper, seeking their friends. These advertisements described the missing persons in some detail, often indicating the town in the old country where

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# MESA DWELLERS

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The Mesa County Genealogical Society was established in 1980 as a non-profit organization to promote an interest in genealogy. A Newsletter is published in March, June, September, and December. Note: All Society meetings are held at the Museum of Western Colorado 7:00 p.m., on the second Thursday of each month. Visitors are welcome. The Museum is located at 4<sup>th</sup> and Ute. The meetings are held in the conference room located in the Whitman School Building.

## January 2004

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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## February 2004

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## March 2004

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7	8	9	10	11	12	13
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28	29	30	31			

Annual Dues: \$10 Singles; \$12 Family. Membership period is March 1st to April 30th. Those with UNPAID DUES (after April 30th.) will not receive the Newsletter. Send a SASE to receive a current membership card if you do not attend regular meetings.

Contributions of neatly typed or written stories, requests for/or giving information, queries, or other information of importance to the membership are welcomed.

The Society disclaims responsibility for statement of fact or opinion made by contributors and will not accept material with obvious errors.

## USGenWeb Mesa County Site

Mesa County USGenWeb site now has cemetery pages. If you have headstone shots or other photos that would enhance a cemetery in Mesa County OR Dolores County. Please Contact Terri Cleaveland at

[REDACTED] for postal instructions. Terri would prefer that pictures be at least 150 dpi and no smaller than 4x5 inches.

The Mesa County USGenweb site is [www.rootsweb.com/~comesa2/index.html](http://www.rootsweb.com/~comesa2/index.html)



## Newspapers— Beyond Obituaries

they came from.

### Advertisements for Friends

Thus newspapers, a common genealogical source for vital events, such as deaths, may also become a source for information about immigrants and their origins. The growth of published abstracts of newspaper items also includes volumes abstracting advertisements for friends and relatives who disappeared into the growing population of America. The most significant collection is likely Ruth-Ann Harris and Donald M. Jacobs, (later B. Emer O'Keefe), editors, *The Search for Missing Friends: Irish Immigrant Advertisements Placed in the Boston Pilot* (Boston: New England Historic Genealogical Society, 1989–1996) whose five volumes covering 1831–1865 list about 25,000 Irish persons once thought to reside in the Boston area.

A smaller collection for Pennsylvania-Germans is Edward W. Hocker, *Genealogical Data Relating to the German Settlers of Pennsylvania and Adjacent Territory* (1935 rpt. Baltimore, Md.: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1981), although not all of the references in this source pertain to immigrants. Sometimes these sources are included in collections of information from many other sources. Such is the case with Donald M. Schlegel's *Passengers from Ireland* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1980) which includes many references of death notices and advertisements placed in early 19th century newspapers, along with more traditional passenger lists.

### Passenger Lists

In some ports, the arrival of a ship full of immigrants from Europe was important news, so some newspapers printed passenger lists. Sometimes no official passenger lists survived, so these accounts may be the only record of arrival. If the local foreign population was great, this may be a featured part of the newspaper. For example, the New York City Irish newspaper, *The Shamrock* often made note of ship arrivals with Irish passengers (until the volume of arrivals became too great). A collection of such lists, accounting for 500 passengers who arrived between 1810 and 1812, was published in a 1982 issue of *The Irish Genealogist*.

### Servants

Some immigrants were mentioned in newspapers because they had left certain obligations, notably servitude. Many immigrants paid for their way To America by selling themselves into an indentureship, a promise to work for a patron for a certain number of years, if he paid for their passage. Once in America however, a small percentage found their indenture not to their liking and tried to disappear into the growing population of the new country.

The persons for whom these servants worked wanted to get full value for the price they paid. Therefore, they were interested in getting these servants back, to complete their contract. In an effort to find these missing servants, the owners took out advertisements in the local newspaper. Of course, not every servant ran away, and not every servant was an immigrant. However, a large number of servants in the Colonial and Early American time periods were immigrants. Therefore, such lists can help identify an immigrant. Farley Grubb's *Runaway Servants, Convicts, and Apprentices Advertised in the Pennsylvania Gazette, 1728–1796* (Baltimore, Md.: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1992) does not focus just on immigrants, but most of the servants and others mentioned in the advertisements were immigrants.

Kenneth Scott published a series of four articles in the *National Genealogical Society Quarterly* (1976–1979) which excerpted information from the *Pennsylvania Gazette* (1775–1783) advertisements for runaways, deserters, missing indentured servants, slaves, and apprentices. Almost all of these persons would have been immigrants.

Of course, a newspaper announcement about someone who has deserted or run away from a contract is not likely to identify the immigrant's home town (even if the runaway was an immigrant). However, it will likely identify the person's country of origin, and at least place the immigrant in a specific place and time, and with a specific family.

The following is an outstanding example from the *Virginia Gazette* of 21 July 1775 which provides significant detail,

and in this case, does mention the immigrant runaway's home town:

John Ecton Ducrect, a native of Berne in Switzerland, who speaks very good French and tolerable English and Italian. He is about 5 feet 9 inches high, pitted with the smallpox, and very swarthy, almost as dark as a mulatto; wears his own hair, with a false tail, and is generally powdered, being a barber by trade. . . . He has been used to travel with gentlemen, and will probably try to get into employ that way, or with some of the barbers in Williamsburg, as he was seen at doctor Todd's tavern, on the way there, the 22d ult. . . . Whoever secures the said convict so that I can get him again shall be paid the above sum [\$20.00].

### Departure Lists in Foreign Newspapers and Magazines

Newspapers in foreign countries also can be very helpful. Especially during the nineteenth century, they often listed the local persons who departed for America, or other destinations. One outstanding example is the *Luxemburger Gazette* which, from 1871 through 1918, published lists taken from the local emigration agency. These published lists (later compiled into a book) include the name of the emigrant, age, town of residence, and their destination, as well as the ship and departure date. The tens of thousands of names preserved represent the vast majority of emigrants from that small country.

Clifford Neal Smith has been very active in searching German newspapers for mention of emigrants who had recently departed. For example, one of his many monographs lists about 1,000 young men taken from an 1807 Wuerttemberg government information sheet (like a newspaper). These men were declared missing, and it was assumed that most of them were clandestine (illegal) emigrants to America. Many foreign regions publish magazines about their locality. On occasion, articles appear in these magazines listing local persons who had emigrated in

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## Newspaper - Research Beyond Obituaries

past years. For example, the *Zeitschrift des Bergischen Geschichtsvereins* [Magazine of the Bergische (Wuppertal) History Society] included an article in its 1930 volume which named 61 emigrants, as well as many of their relatives.

One of the largest sources of such information is probably the *Germanic Emigrants Register* (Diepholz, Germany: Germanic Emigrants Register, 1992 and later). This is actually a microfiche index to a private database with a variety of emigrant records, and has more than 240,000 entries. Most of the entries appear to have been taken from newspaper emigration accounts.

Every family historian wants biographical details about their ancestors, but they usually settle for what is recorded in the major sources they use in their research. Often, when they have found a person's birth, death, and marriage dates and places, they push on to the next generation in their search.

Failure to search other sources, to learn more about our ancestors deprives us of truly learning about them, and of finding hidden clues to additional generations. Such research is especially crucial when dealing with immigrants, since we never know what source might mention a foreign home town. Newspapers can provide excellent detail about our relatives. Often they report on the same events (death, marriage, etc.) that we find in other records, but they may provide more biographical detail. This is why obituaries are such an important part of research for any ancestor. However, even other events noted in newspapers may provide important information.

Early in the 20th century, the Spokane, Washington *Spokesman Review* regularly published lists of marriage licenses, which included the origins of the bride and groom. On 25 June 1910, they published the license of Joe Kambich, a local boy, whose bride was Katica Frankovich, from Glavica, Austria.

Other newspaper abstracts or indexes may mention immigrants without specifically focusing on that group. For example, Jeffrey G. Herbert's *Index of Death and Other Notices Appearing in the Cincinnati Freie Presse 1874-1920* (Bowie, Md.: Heritage

Books, 1993) was not designed to locate immigrants, but as this was a German newspaper in a heavily German city, one would expect that a large number of the 38,000 entries pertain to German immigrants or their family members.

*Gleanings from Maryland Newspapers* by Robert W. Barnes, in four short volumes covering 1727-1795, includes birth, marriage, and death notices. Many of them also provide evidence, sometimes including their date of arrival, that the person named (or his parent) was an immigrant.

Any number of circumstances may generate mention of an immigrant in a local newspaper. He may be elected to office, be accused of a crime, or be due an inheritance in the old country. In these and dozens of other situations, the newspaper, in its story about the subject, will often mention the person's immigration. They may, or may not, indicate the immigrant's home town, but until you find that reference, you won't know!

**Locating Newspaper Accounts**  
Unfortunately, there is no comprehensive listing of newspaper abstracts which publish immigration information. Indeed, there is not even a good listing of the growing number of published newspaper abstracts. And further, while the publishing of newspaper abstracts is growing perhaps as fast as any aspect of genealogical publishing, the existing volumes are only a drop in the bucket, compared to the vast amount of information published in America's newspapers over the past 20 years.

This is one aspect of research that can be done by using your public library system. Often, the larger the library, the better the results. By starting at your own public library or local college library, you will need to obtain from your reference librarian a finding aid for newspapers. The goal is to find a library where your immigrant ancestor lived. Does this finding aid indicate who has back copies of the local newspapers on microfilm?

What years are covered? Was it a daily or weekly publication and can your personal public library request a copy

through Interlibrary Loan? Most newspaper research, for immigrants or any other topic, is accomplished by searching through copies of the actual newspaper. The vast majority of American newspapers are now available on microfilm, and you may be able to borrow a copy through your local library. Does the finding aid list the ethnic newspapers for your immigrant's ethnic group? If the finding aid does not give you the answers to your questions, write a letter to the local libraries in the areas where your immigrant ancestor lived and ask them the same questions. You can also contact local genealogical and historical societies as well. Also ask if any newspaper abstracts were put together from those older issues and what years were covered. Many genealogical societies, historical societies, and public libraries with local history collections prepare indexes on cards or on computer relating to local newspaper abstracts. Is this the case in your area of interest?

By the time you have all of those answers, you'll know exactly what you want to look for. It doesn't even have to be for an immigrant. Now you can determine exactly what you want to look for and what events might be mentioned in these sources. For example, a local history may indicate the years when most immigrants arrived in that town or county. This could suggest a span of time for you to search.

But, where do you begin? Most persons begin with an obituary, but there may be other events. If you know your ancestor was an indentured servant, seek information during the time of his or her servitude. If relatives came to America after he did, look for their advertisements seeking him shortly after their arrival.

There may be an index to the local newspaper. Many such sources are noted in Anita Milner's *Newspaper Indexes: A Location and Subject Guide for Researchers* (3 vols., Metuchen, N. J.: Scarecrow Press, 1977-1982). This source should be in a nearby research library.

### Conclusion

Only a small percentage of immigrants



## Maps in Family Research

by Donna Przech

One of the first special aids a beginning genealogist will want probably is a blank pedigree chart. The second might be a family group form. The third will most likely be a "good map." Chances are that you are not very familiar even with the area where your grandparents were born. You may know it is a small town near Peoria, IL but you probably don't know exactly where Peoria is in relation to Chicago (probably the only city in Illinois a non-Midwesterner can locate with any accuracy), etc.

### Your First Map

If you are lucky, you will have either an encyclopedia, atlas or book of road maps that will show your town. If not, a trip to your local AAA Club (if you are a member) or your local bookstore will turn up a good contemporary road map. This will prove satisfactory for a time, but you will soon come to realize that there are many different kinds of maps and all have their use in genealogy. One major difference is between a contemporary map (how things are today) and an historical map (how they

were at a particular time in the past). Within these two divisions there are many different categories, and some maps show more than one type of information:

- Roads (most common contemporary map)

- Political (encyclopedia maps showing boundaries)

- Topographical (showing mountains, elevations, etc.).

- There are also maps showing distribution of many things — languages, population, crops, temperatures, etc. — but these are less important to genealogy.

For around \$20, there are a number of mapping programs for the U.S. which claim to have all the towns and villages in the U.S. and every street by name. They also will help you plan a trip and provide driving directions.

These are very useful, especially when you are doing research in large cities. They can pinpoint specific addresses so you can tell exactly where the 500 block is, for example. Online you can find this same service at MapQuest or Expedia Maps. (It doesn't hurt to check

both. I found Expedia to be quite inaccurate for my own neighborhood, misplacing my street number by two miles and using an old street name that was changed at least five years ago.)

U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) On the Web site for the U. S. Geological Survey, you can request the location of over 2 million places, past and present, including churches, cemeteries, creeks, population centers, towns, etc. It also produces a map you can zoom in on for a detailed view. However, it only shows the name of the feature you request and surrounding towns. It does not name streets, rivers or other features. You do not have to specify a feature type or state, so you can fill in a family name and see what features throughout the country have the same name as your family — which might provide a clue as to where some of your family has lived at one time. From the USGS site, you can go to the Census Bureau map site. Here you can request your own map of any area. You have to put in latitude and longitude, width and height and it is not that easy to use. The USGS site has a lot of valuable

## Members Research

M. Jo Culberson

Grand Junction, CO 81503

State	County
New Jersey	Essex, Union
Maine	Lincoln
Massachusetts	Bristol, Norfolk
Pennsylvania	Chester, Fayette
Ohio	Warren, Butler, Miami
	Champaign



## December Potluck



## Minute clues yield big payoff in research

By James Beidler

Sometimes the most minute clues can pay off in finding an immigrant ancestor's village of origin. One of my many immigrant ancestors was Johannes Dinius, a 1765 immigrant to Pennsylvania who resided in what is now Schuylkill County when he died 13 years later. Since he spent a relatively short time in the New World and apparently never owned land, there were relatively few American records about this man which translated into few opportunities to uncover his European village of origin. One of those few records was Dinius' will, which was probated in Berks County since Schuylkill County had not yet been created. There was one crucial detail about his document that turned out to be helpful: Dinius listed his children with reference to their mothers. While he did not name his two previous wives, grouping his children this way at least gave a sense of their birth order. The other record that turned

out to be of assistance was the Berks County Orphans Court petition for guardianship of his minor children. The guardian named was Michael Christman of Maxatawny Township, which is the Kutztown area in Berks County. The choice of Christman as guardian seemed significant, since Christman's residence was not that close to Dinius'. Guardians were typically close in proximity to the deceased. After doing nothing about this information for some years, I visited the Pennsylvania German Heritage Center Library on the campus of Kutztown University because I had heard that this library had copies of the records from the Institut für Pfaelzische Geschichte und Volkskunde in Kaiserslautern, Germany. The Pfalz records consist of thousands of cards, nearly all of which connect an immigrant from

the Pfalz (part of the modern German state Rhineland-Palatinate) with his American destination. One of the Pfalz cards showed that Michael Christman was born in Steinwenden, Germany. So, searching in the Steinwenden records for records relating to Johannes Dinius was put on the "do list" for my trip last month to the Family History Library in Salt Lake City. The Steinwenden church records were on microfilm in Salt Lake, and after hours of research, I found records of baptisms and confirmations matching the names of the children mentioned in Johannes Dinius' will and three marriage records (also consistent with the will). There were many spelling variations in the surname, including Tenius, Toenges, Doenges and Denius. The transliteration of Ds and Ts is common in German, and the extra G could be attributed to differences in dialect. The explanations of the surname variants left me with just a slight feeling of doubt, until I inspected another record on microfilm in Salt Lake. These were tax registers from Weltersbach, the small town near Steinwenden that was listed as the residence of Johannes Dinius in the church records. This tax register showed that Johannes Dinius had settled his account in May 1765, just months before he shows up as an arrival in the port of Philadelphia. With this, there was little doubt: The clues from the will and Orphans Court had paid off. The Pennsylvania German Heritage Center Library's address is Box 306, Kutztown, PA 19530; phone, (610) 683-1589. It is open 10 a.m. to noon and 1 to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. ----- Beidler is the former executive director of the Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania. Contact him either at Box 270, Lebanon, PA 17042 or by e-mail to [jmbeidler@comcast.net](mailto:jmbeidler@comcast.net).

## Research Tips



**USING STEPFATHER'S NAME**  
When looking for my father in the 1930 census, I was unable to locate him. I knew he was still at the home of his mother and his stepfather with his siblings, but could not find any of them. Then I decided to look under his stepfather's name even though he did not adopt that name. Sure enough, he and his sibling were listed under his stepfather's name rather than his own father's name.  
PJW

**SNOW CAN MAKE HEADSTONE INSCRIPTIONS MORE READABLE**  
Another way to make headstone inscriptions more legible is to visit in the winter (in climates where snow falls), and rub a handful of snow over the stone. Unless the snow is very dry, it will fill in the letters that are hard to read. I've used this many times, but obviously caution should be used on very old stones with surfaces that are in danger of flaking.  
Mike Comfort  
Norristown, Pa.



## Genealogy Today: Land records can also help track down women

CONNIE LENZEN, for The Columbian

On June 19, 1816, in Hartland, Vt., a deed was prepared. It divided the estate of the late Ebenezer Gould among his sons and daughters. Betsey Gould's share was described as "beginning at the SW corner of John Gould's share, South 86 degrees East 80 rods to a stake and stones, thence North 32 1/2 degrees East 8 rods to a stake and stones, thence North 88 degrees west to said road (Turnpike Road), thence on said road to the place of beginning." It contained two acres, 2 roods and 2 rods. In Vermont and other original colonies, land was surveyed by metes and bounds. The survey would begin at a corner and then to a tree or pile of stones or other landmarks to the point of beginning. A rood is a unit of measurement equal to 1/4 of an acre. A rod is 30 1/4 square yards.

On Feb. 11, 1819, Aaron and Betsey Spencer of Hartland sold to Rodolphus Whitney of Woodstock "a piece of land in Hartland ... being part of the farm (of) Ebenezer Gould late of said Hartland. ... Beginning at a stake and stones standing on the East side of the Windsor to Woodstock Turnpike Road ... thence south 86 degrees East on said John Gould's share 80 rods to Joseph Bryant's land, thence North 32 1/2 degrees East on said Bryant's land 8 rods to the SE corner of Lydia Gould's share, thence Westerly on said Lydia's share." It contained two acres, 2 roods, and 2 rods. The two deeds clearly are describing the same piece of land. No marriage record can be found for the Aaron and Betsey, but the deed is proof of the marriage.

In colonial days, a married woman held a status called coverture, also known as "femme covert." She was

essentially a non-person except for her dower right to one-third of her husband's property. A husband could sell his wife's property as if it were his own.

In the 1819 deed, as in other colonial deeds, the wife is named, and she would give permission for the sale of land. However, the husband was considered the legal owner.

A couple of useful books covering colonial rights are Marylynn Salmon's *Women and the Law of Property in Early America* and Carole Shammas and Marylynn Salmon's *Inheritance in America*

from Colonial Times to the Present.

A Web site with definitions of measurements is at: <http://obslab.whoi.edu/~juan/units.htm>.

Connie Lenzen can be reached in care of The Columbian, P.O. Box 180, Vancouver, WA 98666. Include a self-addressed, stamped envelope for a personal reply. Or e-mail her at [gencolumn@yahoo.com](mailto:gencolumn@yahoo.com).

## Scenery as a Cure

[*Missouri Republican*, Saint Louis, 10 June, 1844.]

The Western Expositor of the 1<sup>st</sup> inst., says a company of young men started from this place a few days ago on a hunting excursion to the Rocky Mountains, for the purpose of regaining their health. Many of them looked more like tenants of the grave than living beings, and we trust that the resident of a few months in the mountains, breathing the purest atmosphere on earth and enjoying a never ending change of scenery, may have the effect of restoring them to good health again.

Captain Andrew W. Sublette is at the head of the expedition. The following is a list of the invalids: Capt. Andrew W. Sublette, James H. Marshall, C. C. Hyman, James P. Ketchum, James M. Cabrer, John F. Easton, Michael Daugherty, Jerome Brawner, C. J. Burk, Lewis Hume, St[.] Louis; Nelson Weston, Wm. L. Wynn, New Orleans; M. J. Bryam, Platte County, Missouri.

--Contributed by Marsha Hoffman Rising, CG, FASG

The above is quoted in its entirety from

National Genealogical Society Quarterly Vol. 91, No. 1, March 2003, Page 63

## MCGS LUNCHES

MCGS is trying to make meeting times more convenient for all our members and is starting a series of lunch-time meetings this month. We will meet on November 5 at 12:00 noon in the conference room across the hall from the Loyd Files Research Library in the Museum of Western Colorado building. Bring your own lunch and beverage. We will view and discuss one of the "Ancestry" series tapes. The meeting will last ±one hour. Future additional noon meetings are planned for the 21st of January, 25th of February and 24th of March in 2004



## Free versus fee, a foolish spat

By: Sandra Devlin, [REDACTED]

I find it peculiar, to put it mildly, that so many who proudly label themselves "genealogy nut" get twisted out of shape when faced with a fee to recover a tidbit of information for their family tree. Curiously, we are so very, very willingly to fork over thousands of dollars for computer equipment to feed our habit and would never consider asking the travel industry to subsidize our wanderings from country to country in search of our roots -- and yet, when it comes to "fees" for information collected by individuals or companies who earn a living by targeting the hobby genealogist as a customer, a tired mantra inevita-

bly ensues: "Genealogy should be free."

What other hobby or interest is there that doesn't cost money? Golf, gardening, sailing, motorcycling, stamp collecting, religion, education or swimming, plus any others of a million more I could rhyme off. In all of the above and many others we make friends along the way who generously share time or energy as a personal favour and we reciprocate without counting the cost. However, there is nothing "dirty" or "nefarious" about the practice of making money from a legitimate venture. Our lives, in every aspect, thrive from both private

enterprise and personal interactions. These are not mutually exclusive.

Who would expect a stranger who happens to be a trained expert in any other field to tend to a family's personal needs -- doctor, nurse, funeral home director, to name but a scant few -- and, to do so for free? Because genealogy experts earn money from the invaluable services they provide doesn't make them less valuable or less needed. Yet, the mantra drones on: "Genealogy should be free."

*(Continued on page 9)*

### Member Research Inquiry

We will be publishing in the newsletter the states and counties that our members are currently researching. We hope that this will aid in research exchanges and tips on which resources are available and more relevant and beneficial. Please return this form by mail at the address below or bring to one of the meeting for Rick Sheldon. You can include an email address if you want to be contacted by email. We will not publish your address in the newsletter unless specified

State

County

Comments:

Name

Address

Phone

MESA COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

Mesa County Genealogical Society  
P.O. Box 1506  
Grand Junction, Colorado  
81502-1502



## Using Newspapers for Genealogical Research

State Historical Society of Missouri

### OBITUARIES

A good obituary provides the genealogist a biographical sketch with factual information and some insight into the personality of the deceased. Some nineteenth-century newspapers routinely published full obituaries for local residents; others printed only brief notices unless the deceased was a prominent citizen or if the family paid to have the obit printed. Current daily newspapers of large cities usually print only a few lines about the deceased, but obituaries in small town newspapers are generally longer. Obituaries will be found in various parts of newspapers. Some papers have special pages or column headings, but most of the time you will need to scan all of the paper. Keep in mind that obituaries can appear weeks

after the actual date of death. Set aside enough time for research, especially if you do not have specific information about the date.

### BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Births were not commonly reported in nineteenth-century newspapers. During the early 1900s, the printing of birth announcements in local papers gradually became a popular custom. Most current newspapers publish notices of births, usually under that heading or placed in columns of local news.

### MARRIAGE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Nineteenth-century newspapers usually printed news concerning nuptial agreements. Marriages appeared under that caption or within columns of local news. You might find column

listings for couples who had applied for marriage licenses, and separate announcements reporting marriages that had taken place. If a couple reached their 50th anniversary, this milestone may also be noted in the newspaper.

### MISCELLANEOUS TOPICS

Legal notices concerning estates may indicate death dates and heirs. Court dockets, lists of taxpayers, subscribers, county fair prize winners, etc., can be helpful in establishing the residence of persons at particular times. It is often rewarding to search several years of local news about the community where your family lived. Not only can facts be deduced ("Mr. and Mrs. Joseph C. Dover took Sunday dinner with their daughter Mrs. Ed Brown" indicates that Mrs. Brown's maiden name was Dover), but details about the community and the lives of family members can add color and interest to a family history. If newspapers for the time and place you need are not available, investigate the possibility that later papers printed items from their back files in 50- or 25- or 10-Years-Ago columns.

### MORE TIPS FOR THE GENEALOGIST

Because newspaper articles can be used as evidence to support genealogical conclusions, it is important to keep a complete and accurate citation on all copies or transcriptions. Make certain you record the title of the newspaper, its place of publication, the date of the issue, and the page number.

To preserve your own newspaper clippings for genealogical purposes, glue or tape a small piece of paper on the back extending beyond the text. Write on that paper the complete citation. Since modern newspapers deteriorate very rapidly, mount and xerox those clippings you want to preserve.

## Free versus fee, By: Sandra Devlin

There is another way to look at the business side of genealogy. When I gather a piece of information for a "fee" from a professional researcher or an organized company, I remind myself that I have just saved myself oodles of money and time. I have come across dozens, if not hundreds, of "clues" from the convenience of my own home, that would have cost me thousands of dollars in travel/lodging and months, maybe years, of my time to find independently, if at all. When seen this way, how easy it is to exclaim: "Wow, that was a bargain!" I eagerly recommend to others the competent and friendly people I encounter in genealogy-related business (just as I would recommend a

good hairdresser, plumber or automotive technician who does great work and enjoys what he/she is doing at the same time). I urge others to support instead of thwart the business end of genealogy, because as the entrepreneurial side of genealogy grows from our financial support, our hobby just gets more and more interesting.

*This column was the winning entry in the 2002 Writing Excellence Competition sponsored by the International Society of Family History Writers and Editors. Sandra Devlin's winning entry from her weekly, self-syndicated newspaper column Missing Links was announced at the annual NGS convention in Milwaukee, Wisconsin on May 15.*



# Genealogical Standards

## Standards For Use Of Technology In Genealogical Research

### *Recommended by the National Genealogical Society*

Mindful that computers are tools, genealogists take full responsibility for their work, and therefore they—

- learn the capabilities and limits of their equipment and software, and use them only when they are the most appropriate tools for a purpose.
- do not accept uncritically the ability of software to format, number, import, modify, check, chart or report their data, and therefore carefully evaluate any resulting product.
- treat compiled information from on-line sources or digital databases in the same way as other published sources--useful primarily as a guide to locating original records, but not as evidence for a conclusion or assertion.
- accept digital images or enhancements of an original record as a satisfactory substitute for the original only when there is reasonable assurance that the image accurately reproduces the unaltered original.
- cite sources for data obtained on-line or from digital media with the same care that is appropriate for sources on paper and other traditional media, and enter data into a digital database only when its source can remain associated with it.
- always cite the sources for information or data posted on-line or sent to others, naming the author of a digital file as its immediate source, while crediting original sources cited within the file.
- preserve the integrity of their own databases by evaluating the reliability of downloaded data before incorporating it into their own files.
- provide, whenever they alter data received in digital form, a description of the change that will accompany the altered data whenever it is shared with others.
- actively oppose the proliferation of error, rumor and fraud by personally verifying or correcting information, or noting it as unverified, before passing it on to others.
- treat people on-line as courteously and civilly as they would treat them face-to-face, not separated by networks and anonymity.
- accept that technology has not changed the principles of genealogical research, only some of the procedures.

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### THE JOY OF FINDING AN UNUSUAL NAME

For a genealogist, finding a relative with an unusual given name and a distinctive surname can be like finding money on the sidewalk. I

found Merab Crookham in an 1850 Census register for Muskingum County, Ohio. All it told me was that she was female, had been born in Pennsylvania, and that she was

so many years old.

She was living in a household consisting of a proven ancestor named Samuel Scott and his wife, Mary. Samuel and Mary had been born in Pennsylvania too. It seemed probable that Merab was somebody's sister, but of which one--Samuel or Mary? If she was Samuel's sister, then Crookham was her married name. If she was Mary's sister, then Crookham was Mary's maiden name. Either way, Crookham seemed an

unusual name, and so it proved to be. A search of Pennsylvania census indexes from 1790 to 1850 turned up only one basic family of Crookhams, located in Allegheny County in western Pennsylvania.

That in turn led to queries on the Internet, which helped me to locate distant cousins who had considerable information and shared it generously. The end result was the identification of many families of ancestors, pushing the ancestral trail



## Internet should be last stop during genealogy journey **By James Beidler**

In past weeks, this column has discussed the two-edged sword that the Internet has been for genealogy. There's fast communication on the upside, but loads of bad data on the downside.

Despite the Internet, the very first steps in a genealogical search -- or at least one done properly -- have not changed.

"Start with yourself and work backward in time" is the tried-and-true method.

It's not nearly as sexy as typing your surname into the Google Web search engine and letting it spit back information, but it is the way that you can be sure that the information pertains to you.

No stone in your living family should be left unturned. Go through your own papers -- birth and marriage certificates, military discharge papers, etc., for any information you may not have remembered.

Do the same for your parents, grand-

parents, aunts and uncles, and older cousins. Ask to see their family pictures and documents, and tell their version of the family story.

Sometimes there will be things you never knew existed. When I was beginning my search, I told my mother I was going to the attic to look at my deceased grandmother's trunk.

"There's nothing up there but quilts," my mother told me.

Sure, nothing that she remembered, but I found a family Bible with an additional generation of information!

Family stories that you've heard over and over may turn out true, false or somewhere in between.

The lore in my mother's family was that her great-grandparents were of different Protestant denominations, so they baptized the children according to gender -- boys following the father's

denomination; girls after the mother's (Records didn't bear this out).

On the other hand, my mother-in-law had insisted that her Welsh-sounding maiden name of Tobin really stemmed from an immigrant ancestor who was a "Polish Jew named Tobinski."

My wife and I had a good laugh -- until we started checking out our hastily made assumptions with primary sources and found a marriage record naming the immigrant as "Anthony Dubinsky," from somewhere in eastern Europe (No verification of the religion, but a "crazy" story it wasn't). And, of course, be on the lookout for "things found on the way to something else."

In looking up 19th century ancestors, you will find that most newspapers did not have a standard part of the paper in which to run obituaries. In seeking one ancestor's obituary, I came across a short item that said "Wellington Machemer and his family have lately taken up residence at Mr. Becker's place."

Here, a family story was confirmed: It had been handed down that this family had lived for a while at "Becker's spring house." By running into the newspaper item, a date was confirmed for this residence. Only after you've exhausted all of the "home sources" is it time to hit the Internet. At the minimum, you will go to the Web armed with a better sense of who you and your ancestors really are and were.

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Beidler is the former executive director of the Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania. Contact him at Box 270, Lebanon, PA 17042; or by e-mail at: [jmbeidler@comcast.net](mailto:jmbeidler@comcast.net)

## THE ORIGINS OF SURNAMES:

The Romans originally used only one name. Later in time, they adopted three to four names. As the Roman Empire began to decline, family names became confused and single names once again became customary.

During the early Middle Ages, people were referred to by a single given name. But gradually a custom developed of adding another name to help distinguish individuals. Sometimes this second name referred to the place of birth, a personal characteristic, or an occupation.

The inheritance of the surname down through the generations derived for a Venetian aristocracy practice in Italy about the 10th or 11th century. Crusaders returning from the Holy Land took note of this custom and soon spread its use throughout Europe. France, the British Isles, and then Germany and Spain

began applying the practice, as the need to distinguish individuals became more important.

By the 12th century, the use of a second name became very widespread. These second names became the source of the surnames used today. These second names that were used in the early Middle Ages did not apply to families, nor were they hereditary. Each new generation adopted a name that suited them as individuals. For example William's son John might be known as John Williamson, while his son William would be William Johnson. Government reached a point where it needed to maintain records of taxation and military service. In order for it to be reliable, it became necessary to accurately identify individuals.

In some of the larger urban communities especially, personal names became



## Planning a Reunion?

There is a 16-page article in "Reunions" magazine on planning a get-together. It includes timetables of what to do when, forms to use, and suggestions on events. The magazine is available in the Loyd Files Research Library

# SURNAMES

*(Continued from page 11)*

useful for social purposes as well as government purposes. In the countryside, the hereditary succession to land meant that it became necessary to keep track of families and not just of individuals. Thus barons and landowners began to derive their names from their manors and fiefs. These names gradually became fixed through the hereditary nature of their lands.

The manorial use of the surnames, then trickled down to the merchants and commoners. For members of the working and middle classes seeking status, the practices of the nobility were imitated, leading to the widespread use of surnames.

By the 1370's the word "surname" was found in documents, and had come to acquire some emotive and dynastic significance. Men

sometimes sought to keep their surname alive by encouraging a collateral to adopt it when they had no direct descendants of their own in the male line. The continuation of the surname became a matter of pride. By 1450 at the latest, most people of whatever social rank had a fixed, hereditary surname. This surname identified the family, provided a link with the family's past, and would preserve its identity in the future. It is not surprising that the preservation of surnames became a matter of family pride.

Many historians believe that surnames derived from places (locational) were the first to become hereditary. Surnames evolved from nicknames or descriptive traits are also of early origin. Surnames taken from occupations came later, and those of patronymic origin were the last to become hereditary. Although patronymic names had been used a long time, they would change with every generation, and were not hereditary (i.e., Williamson, Johnson).

Different spellings of the same original surname were a common occurrence. Language changes, carelessness, and a high degree of illiteracy compounded the number of ways a name might have been spelled. Often the town clerk or census taker spelled the name the way it sounded to him.

When European immigrants first arrived in the new worlds, it was often the immigration inspectors who decided whether or not to change a new arrival's name. This was done for various reasons. Sometimes it was due to mispronunciation, misspelling, or the inability of the immigration officials to translate a Russian or Greek name into our Roman alphabet. Most of my ancestors probably escaped this problem, since they arrived before the big influx of immigrants to sites such as Ellis Island. But there is plenty of evidence of names being spelled differently by the county clerks, sometimes within the same document. Also there is some evidence that names evolved over time, becoming more Americanized.