D-OGS Newsletter – June 2026

News & Articles of Interest to Durham-Orange genealogists

info@dogsnc.org
PO Box 4703, Chapel Hill, NC 27515-4703
2026 dues – $20
President – David McCorkle

The next D-OGS meeting will be Wednesday June 3 IN PERSON and Online via Zoom ***

Presentation Topic

An 1867 law allowed that males 21+ years of age, regardless of skin color, were eligible to vote. Any surviving 1867 voter registrations are invaluable to genealogists. Please join us on Wednesday, **June 3** at **7:00 PM** at the **OWASA Community Center**, 400 Jones Ferry Rd, Carrboro, **OR ONLINE via Zoom,** to hear ***Diane L. Richard*** present ***Voter Registration and Beyond***.

Across the country, the Reconstruction Acts of 1867 implemented regulations regarding voter registration. Lists of Qualified Voters were created. These are the first lists to include the formerly enslaved, whites (who took oaths), and those who were previously designated as free persons of color. There were also additional registrations from 1902-1908 that also contain information useful to genealogical research.

Speaker Biography

Diane L Richard, MEng & MBA, Mosaic Research and Project Management (MosaicRPM), www.mosaicrpm.com, has been doing genealogy research since 1987, and in 2024, celebrated her 20th anniversary of professionally researching client ancestors while also channeling the "inner teacher" in her by sharing her knowledge via the written and spoken word. In October 2025 Diane received the newly named Helen F. M. Leary Award for Outstanding Contribution to North Carolina Genealogy, awarded by the North Carolina Genealogical Society.

As an international speaker, she has given hundreds of webinars and in-person programs (coast-to-coast and in Canada), conference presentations, workshops, and local meeting programs about the availability and richness of all kinds of records relevant and leverageable by genealogists and the strategies and tips to exploit these records and research tactics most effectively. She has appeared on Who Do You Think You Are? (Bryan Cranston episode).

She is co-founder of GenWebinars, https://genwebinars.com/, launched in May 2024, which provides direct-to-consumer live, online, in-depth, interactive genealogy webinars. She is Vice President of NC Historical Records Online (NCHRO), http://nchistoricalrecords.org/, a non-profit organization dedicated to providing public access to high-quality images of original records and other related information useful to researching North Carolina history and genealogy.

She is co-founder of Tar Heel Discoveries, https://tarheeldiscoveries.com/, which offers in-person, real-time, targeted, focused research assistance leading individuals or small groups to new family discoveries at the State Archives of North Carolina & the Government & Heritage Library.

Directions:

The OWASA Community Center is on the right side of Jones Ferry Road heading west out of town. Park in the lower lot on the west side of the facility - the center is the door closest to the street on the lower level. The in person meeting is free and open to the public – all are welcome!

Recording
This lecture will be recorded and made available on the member-only section of the D-OGS website.

Online Access
Online access will be available to D-OGS members. We will be using the popular Zoom software which runs on PCs and Macs, as well as mobile devices like phones and tablets. It will be free for you to use. You do not need a microphone or video camera - just speakers and a screen, but it will be easier to ask questions if you have a microphone.

Online information will be emailed to members on the day of the program.

ROOTSTECH HIGHLIGHTS

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH (14 April 2026) —RootsTech 2026, the world's largest family history celebration, successfully held its 16th annual event and offered new content in 23 languages. Hosted by FamilySearch, the event drew millions of people in person and online from 235 countries and territories and all 50 states. It offered more than 500 classes, keynotes, an expo hall with more than 200 exhibitors, and the popular Relatives at RootsTech interactive discovery activity. This global experience had millions of participants who made new family connections and viewed millions of ancestral relationships online. Find and share this announcement in the FamilySearch Newsroom.
FamilySearch hosts RootsTech as part of its purpose to help individuals discover more about their heritage and make more family connections—past, present, and future. Although RootsTech 2026 has concluded, many of the sessions are now available on demand for free at RootsTech.org. Users can explore thousands of free online classes and create personalized watchlists of their interests to continue learning and discovering year-round. The RootsTech Online Expo Hall will be available until August 2026.

Most Popular Classes
RootsTech 2026 featured more than 500 sessions and 200 expert-led classes. From AI to DNA to using the latest family discovery tools, the list of topics was extensive. Some of the most popular RootsTech 2026 classes were the following:
"AI and Family History: Help or Hype?" by Andrew Redfern
"DNA's FAN Club: Using Shared Matches to Solve Genealogical Mysteries," by Paula Williams
"Ahórrate años de búsqueda: El poder del texto completo," by Nancy Steffy Orellana Vidal Francisco and Javier Gómez
"Da Hipótese ao Plano de Pesquisa: IA aplicada à Genealogia," by Tatiana Marin
"Finding Binkey: When Research Questions Become a Road Map to the Enslaved," by Michael A. Willis
"DNA Misconceptions," by Kelli Bergheimer
"Gravestone Symbols from A to Z," by Cathy Wallace

RootsTech 2026 Keynote Speakers
RootsTech draws incredibly fascinating live and pre-recorded keynotes to its mainstage, which entertain and inspire its global in-person and online audience. Top actors, athletes, authors, explorers, and company leaders gathered on stage to share personal stories and insights that enlightened, uplifted, and contributed to this year's theme, "Together."

Steve Rockwood. The CEO of FamilySearch International opened RootsTech 2026 with enthusiasm and perspective as the conference celebrated family and the theme of togetherness.
Marlee Matlin. In her main-stage address, the Academy Award-winning actress and author proposed that inclusion is not just a social value—it is a historical responsibility.
Tara Roberts. The scuba diver, storyteller, and National Geographic resident explorer shared her experience investigating African slave-trade shipwrecks worldwide and what it means to her to help bring those lost stories to light.
Steve Young. The NFL Hall of Famer and Super Bowl MVP was the Saturday keynote. He expounded on the role his family played in his remarkable success as a professional athlete and business owner, and answered questions about life, his career, and family history.
Gardiner Brothers. In their pre-recorded virtual keynote, the world-renowned Irish dancers, who currently live in Nashville, Tennessee, returned to Ireland to explore family roots, uncover heritage, and reflect on identity, legacy, and ancestral stories. They also made a surprise in-person appearance in Salt Lake City, performing their signature Irish dance style to the RootsTech 2026 theme song, "Where You Belong."
Jessica Soho. The award-winning journalist and television host from the Philippines shared stories from her career in journalism, uncovering family history, genealogy, heritage, and untold stories that connect the past and the present.
José Hernandez. The NASA astronaut and Mexican American engineer shared his journey to NASA, his migrant roots, and the family history that shaped his path—showing how heritage, resilience, and education can launch incredible dreams.
Zico. The Brazilian football legend, celebrated worldwide for his skill and leadership on the field, shared his journey of determination and perseverance, inspiring viewers to explore their family stories.

RootsTech 2026 Forums
The annual RootsTech forums are popular events for those interested in staying up to date with emerging technologies in the field of family discovery. These forums featured panel discussions from industry leaders and subject-matter experts. Watch this year's forums:
FamilySearch Global and Tech Forum 2026. Leaders from FamilySearch International showcased new features and highlights from around the globe that are helping increase family discoveries and connections.
RootsTech Innovation and Tech Forum 2026. Industry innovators gathered to reveal the latest technology advancements created to simplify your family discovery experience.

Family Discovery Day 2026
Family Discovery Day is a live event for families, offering fun activities and inspiring sessions. Elder Ronald A. Rasband of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and his wife, Sister Melanie Rasband, spoke about coming unto Christ by uniting families for eternity.
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Social Media
Follow FamilySearch social on Facebook | Instagram | YouTube |

What Is RootsTech?
RootsTech, hosted by FamilySearch and sponsored by leading genealogy organizations, offers hundreds of classes, expert tips, and inspiring stories to help attendees connect through family history. Explore our on-demand learning library or join the next virtual or in-person conference for access to more than 200 sessions, exhibitors, and experiences designed to help you discover, remember, and share your story.

About FamilySearch

FamilySearch International, sponsored by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, is the world's largest nonprofit genealogy organization. For over 125 years, FamilySearch has gathered, preserved, and increased access to genealogical records worldwide. Millions of people access our free resources monthly online at FamilySearch.org or through more than 6,500 FamilySearch centers in 129 countries, including the main FamilySearch Library in Salt Lake City, Utah.

MONTHLY BACKUP REMINDER

It is the first of a new month. Don't forget to backup your data files.

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LETTER REQUESTING HELP WITH A FAMILY SEARCH

(We received the following help request letter from a non-D-OGS member. CAN YOU HELP?)

I am James Wood. I live in central Illinois near where my GG-grandfather, Eli Wood, is buried (Bourbon, IL). He was born in NC in 1811 and moved to Tippecanoe, IN, in the 1830's. At that location he served as executor to Ithamar Wood and Thomas Wood. He survived Jonathan Wood (no relationship given!). By the 1840s he had moved to Illinois.

I have a male-line DNA match whose ancestor is Elihugh Wood, born 1760 in Orange County, NC. Elihugh's father is Hugh Wood.

I am hoping to find/verify my Eli's father and mother, if possible. Are any oof the names listed above connected to Elihugh? My Eli Wood and Elihugh Wood are connected by DNA somehow. My Eli had a brother, Martin Wood.

Can I send a check for some research? Help, please.

Thank you.

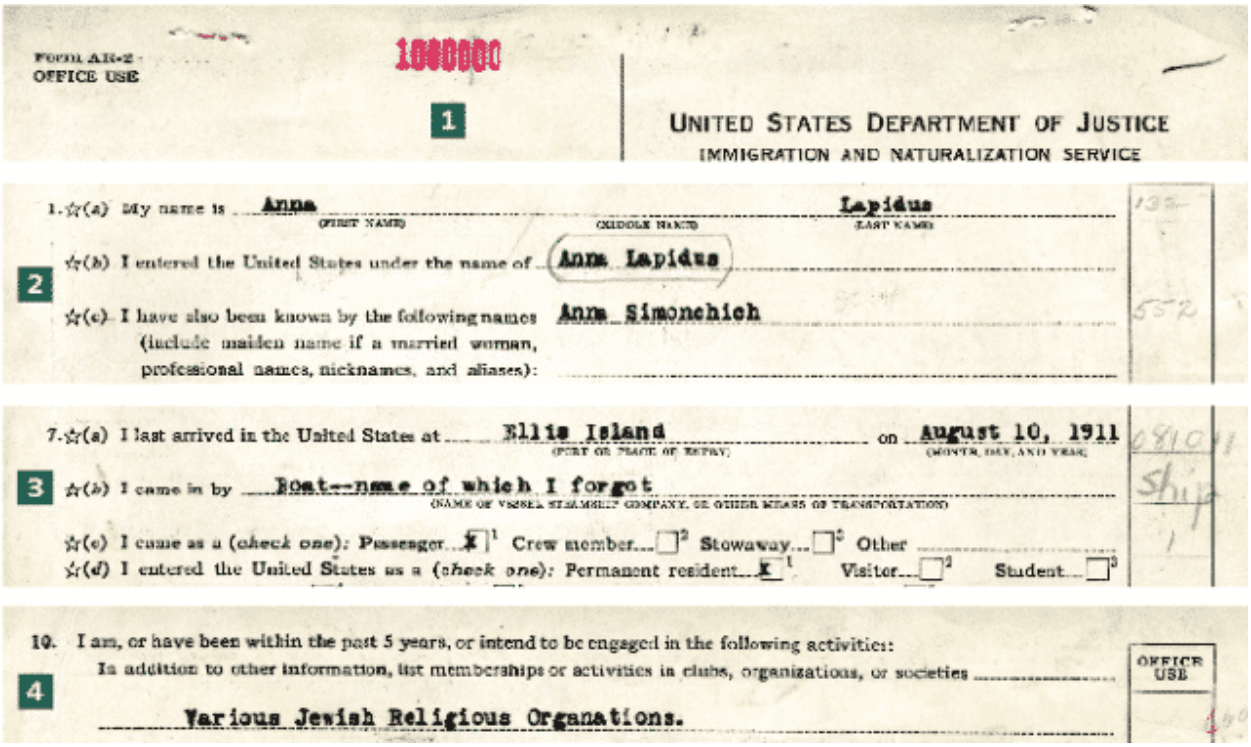
- James W. Wood, 1140 E, CR 400N, Arcola, Il 61910
- (phone # - 217-246-1975) (no email provided)

WHAT IS GOING ON IN YOUR GENEALOGICAL WORLD?

I have had no submissions from my request of a couple of months ago. I asked D-OGS members to tell us about what you are researching and what are you triumphs, "brick walls", etc. Please let us know what is going on out there! This is not a one-way forum!

HOW TO READ AN ALIEN REGISTRATION FORM (AR-2)

By George G. Morgan



Form AR-2
OFFICE USE

1000000

1

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE

1. ☆(a) My name is Anna (FIRST NAME) (MIDDLE NAME) Lapidus (LAST NAME)

2 ☆(b) I entered the United States under the name of Anna Lapidus

☆(c) I have also been known by the following names (include maiden name if a married woman, professional names, nicknames, and aliases): Anna Simonchich

7. ☆(a) I last arrived in the United States at Ellis Island (PORT OR PLACE OF ENTRY) on August 10, 1911 (MONTH, DAY, AND YEAR)

3 ☆(b) I came to by Boat--name of which I forgot (NAME OF VESSEL STEAMSHIP COMPANY, OR OTHER MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION)

☆(c) I came as a (check one): Passenger X [1] Crew member [2] Stowaway [3] Other

☆(d) I entered the United States as a (check one): Permanent resident X [1] Visitor [2] Student [3]

10. I am, or have been within the past 5 years, or intend to be engaged in the following activities:
In addition to other information, list memberships or activities in clubs, organizations, or societies

4 Various Jewish Religious Organations.

OFFICE USE

The United States has passed legislation several times to require noncitizen residents, or "aliens," to register with the government. This was usually during times of war, including the War of 1812, Civil War, and World Wars I and II. While the informational requirements have changed over time, applications consistently asked for name, place of residence, age, country of origin, and date and place of arrival.

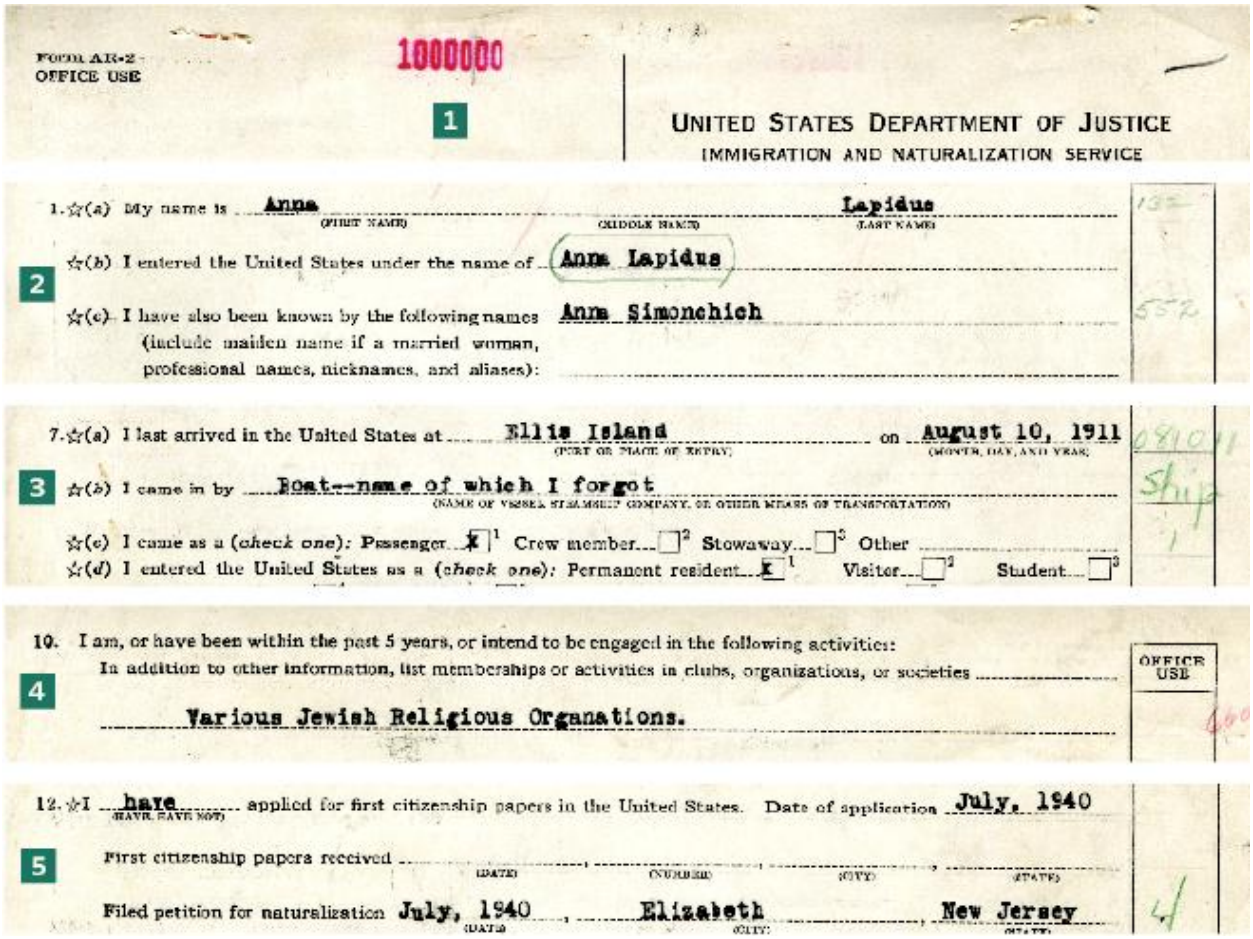
The Alien Registration Act of 1940, also known as the Smith Act, required all aliens to be registered and fingerprinted. Between Aug. 1, 1940, and March 31, 1944, more than 5.5 million noncitizen residents were registered. They completed the two-page Alien Registration Form (AR-2), which had 15 questions covering places of birth and citizenship, date and other details of first and last arrival in the United States. The form also gathered information about employment, organizational memberships and other activities within the past five years, relatives living in the United States, arrests and convictions, and more. Chances are, the answers will point you to other documentary evidence.

The applicant (or if the person was younger than 14, the parent or guardian) signed an affidavit at the bottom of the form. He provided a print of the right index finger and was photographed for the registration documents. The registering official signed as a witness. Immigration and Naturalization Service field offices received the forms on behalf of the US Department of Justice, assigned each applicant an alien registration number (called an A number), and sent him an alien registration receipt card (AR-3) and certificate of identification, shown here.

You can order a relative's AR-2, as well as several other types of citizenship records, through the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Genealogy Program. Remember, only immigrants who

hadn't naturalized as of Aug. 1, 1940, would've completed form AR-2 and received a receipt card and identification document.

Deciphering an Alien Registration Form


FORM AR-2
OFFICE USE
1000000
1
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE
1. ☆(a) My name is Anna (FIRST NAME) (MIDDLE NAME) Lapidus (LAST NAME)
2
☆(b) I entered the United States under the name of Anna Lapidus
☆(c) I have also been known by the following names (include maiden name if a married woman, professional names, nicknames, and aliases): Anna Simonchich
7. ☆(a) I last arrived in the United States at Ellis Island (PORT OR PLACE OF ENTRY) on August 10, 1911 (MONTH, DAY, AND YEAR)
3
☆(b) I came in by Boat--name of which I forgot (NAME OF VESSEL STEAMSHIP COMPANY, OR OTHER MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION)
☆(c) I came as a (check one): Passenger X 1 Crew member 2 Stowaway 3 Other
☆(d) I entered the United States as a (check one): Permanent resident X 1 Visitor 2 Student 3
10. I am, or have been within the past 5 years, or intend to be engaged in the following activities:
In addition to other information, list memberships or activities in clubs, organizations, or societies
4
Various Jewish Religious Organations.
OFFICE USE
12. ☆I have (HAVE, HAVE NOT) applied for first citizenship papers in the United States. Date of application July, 1940
5
First citizenship papers received (DATE) (NUMBER) (CITY) (STATE)
Filed petition for naturalization July, 1940 (DATE), Elizabeth (CITY), New Jersey (STATE)

1. This is the A number assigned to the applicant.

2. The section requesting other names the person has used is particularly helpful for learning maiden names, names used in the "old country" and other names a person might have used in records.

3. Arrival information, which includes the date of most recent arrival, can help you track down passenger lists and determine whether the person traveled abroad. Keep in mind the applicant's memory of these details may have been faulty.

4. On the back of the form, notes about organizations or societies the applicant participated in can send you to records such as member lists and newsletters. Also try adding an organization's name to your newspaper searches for the person.

5. This area will tell you if the person had filed for citizenship but not yet completed the process and can help you locate naturalization records.

HERE'S HOW TO FIND TENS OF THOUSANDS OF FAMILY HISTORY BOOKS FOR FREE

By Family History Daily

One of the most exciting things about doing family history research is moving beyond names and dates to begin exploring the stories of our ancestors' lives. There are many ways to do this. Records like pension applications, wills and obituaries can provide details that allow us a special glimpse into the important events and personal relationships of our forebears.

But there is one type of genealogy resource that often stands above the rest when it comes to providing unique insights. And this same resource also happens to be a wonderful place to locate names and dates, land ownership information, occupations and much more.

We're talking about old books. You might think that *your* ancestor couldn't have possibly made it into a published book, but you might be surprised by how many did. If you are researching ancestors that lived in the US before 1880, with East Coast roots, you have a solid chance of locating them in a compiled pedigree or related text – and there are numerous other possibilities as well.

There are many types of books that may contain information about your ancestors — these include (but are not limited to) published pedigrees, books on the history of a surname in a certain location, those focused on the descendancy of a specific individual, specialized pedigrees relating to a certain subject (such as those concerning service in the American Revolution or lineal descent from a Mayflower passenger) as well as town or county histories.

These books may discuss your ancestors' lineage, military service, land or home ownership, role in a town or county's formation, public service, occupation, personal relationships, family stories, unusual tidbits and much more. They can be a huge help for researching a time period when other commonly used records are less common.

There are thousands of such publications available and many of them are now online and fully searchable. We've compiled a list of 5 places to locate these books for free below.

But before you begin searching for your ancestors in old books consider these tips and warnings.

Books are not always accurate. Some have been extensively and meticulously researched and sourced and others may have been compiled hastily, may have relied on inaccurate information from individuals, questionable documents or newspapers, or may contain additions for the purpose of vanity. And no matter how careful, any author can make mistakes — so make sure you know what you are looking at before deciding how much stock to place in the information.

Take the time to learn about the book, the purpose of its publication, the author and whether sources are documented. Use the book as a guide only to aid you in your research and always look for additional sources to back up the data before adding it to your tree. Be especially careful when using the information from these books to add new names or lines to your tree. Always look for further sources.

Sourcing is important. Despite the above warning, these old books can sometimes be the only place certain information, stories and facts were published. Because of this, you might be tempted to add the information to your tree even if you cannot further verify it. When choosing to do this make sure you correctly list the book's title, author, volume, date of publication and page number(s) along with a link or location where it can be found **next to every detail you pull in to your tree**. This will let those you share your tree with know where the information came from so they can verify the data, do further research and choose whether or not to add the information to their own files.

You should always save copies to your files. Always download or clip the section(s) of book you use for later reference, attaching the above information so you know where to find the original publication again in the future. In some cases, you may be able to download entire books, and you should do this when possible, especially if you have used a significant amount of information from the publication. You never know when the resource may no longer be available.

Name spellings, dates and city names may be incorrect or outdated. The spelling of an ancestor's first or last name may change throughout history, from record to record, or from book to book. Many names were spelled how people *assumed* they should be spelled based on what was common at the time. Satchel, for instance, may be Sachel, Satchell or Satchwell. Be sure to try many spellings when searching and be cautious when adding these spellings to your tree. City and county names and boundaries also changed frequently throughout history so be aware of this when attempting to locate books by location.

It is important to note that some surname focused family history books may only contain the surname on a few pages, since the entire book focuses on that last name specifically. So when searching for an ancestor in such a book you may need to search by first name only or by a date to locate a person of interest. Many books also have helpful indexes of names, and this will come in handy when you cannot search inside a book's contents.

Note that many books have multiple volumes so be sure to look for each one that may relate to your ancestor.

5 Places to Locate Old Family History Books for Free

1. Google Books: Google has a massive selection of free books available. Head to the book search, type in a search term or terms and then look for 'Search Tools' at top. Select the 'Any Books' dropdown and filter by 'Free Google eBooks' to get only free, online results. Google will search all of the text of the book for results. If you want to tell it to search only a title check out our Google Search Tricks article. You can easily search inside a book for a person once you locate a publication of interest.

2. Internet Archive: Internet Archive offers millions of free online books and other resources. They have a huge variety of genealogy books and their search is easy to use. Once you find and access a book of interest they offer a very clean experience. Definitely check this free site for what you are looking for – we have a guide to using this site here.

3. HathiTrust: HathiTrust is another free online research library with many books and other resources that may be of interest in your family history research. You can learn more about it in our article here.

4. FamilySearch: FamilySearch has a books section that consists of more than 200,000 titles right on their website. Most of these books are accessible online, but some may be restricted to access only from an institution — such a Family History Research Center. Simply search for a book and then click on the preview to load it. This search acts a bit like a library catalog, where you can only look for publications by title, keyword, description and author. Unlike the other options we've listed, FamilySearch does not search inside the book's content and therefore you will need to do quite a bit of digging to locate one that may contain your ancestor. Because you cannot search for the text of a book in most cases, you will need to use the book's index to find your ancestors.

5. GenealogyGophers: This helpful free site allows you to search 80,000+ books from the FamilySearch collection and, unlike FamilySearch itself, it searches the text of the book itself making your efforts more effective.

Inexpensive or Partially Free

Amazon: Amazon offers a huge variety of genealogy research and family history ebooks online so we felt we should include it. Some of these are free to download, others are free with Prime or Kindle Unlimited and many others are very inexpensive (often under $1). Because Amazon has so many books on so many topics you may need to do a bit of digging.

Start by visiting the Kindle Store and searching by topic. Use terms like genealogy, pedigree, family tree and history along with family names or locations of interest to help locate what you need. As with FamilySearch, Amazon will not search the text of a book, only its title, author and description. **If you find a book that will cost you money, make sure that you cannot get it free at another of the resources above before paying.** If you locate a book of interest, it can be read, and sometimes searched, on nearly any device or computer with the Kindle reading app.

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4 BIG GENEALOGY MISTAKES THAT MAY BE HURTING YOUR RESEARCH (AND HOW TO AVOID THEM)

By Lori Samuelson

Years ago, as a beginner genealogist, I held many misplaced beliefs that wasted my time and valuable resources. Looking back, **I wish I had known that these ideas were hindering my career as a family historian**. Here are four genealogy mistakes that have limited my research over the years. Avoid them if you can.

GENEALOGY MISTAKE #1: ONLY FILLING IN NAMES AND DATES

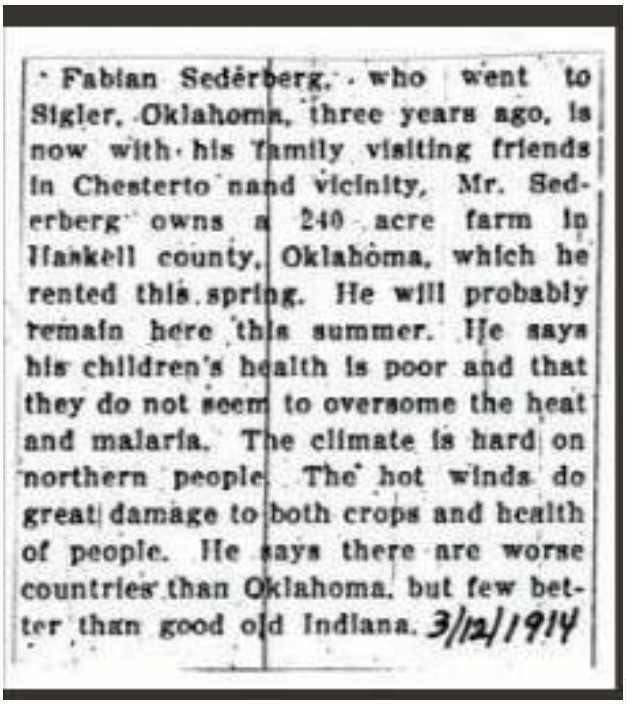
Genealogy is not simply completing a form. Be it an electronic family tree or a paper pedigree chart, I wrongly believed that recording vital statistics was the goal. Yes, dates are important, but genealogy is much more than form filling.

After receiving a fill in the blank family history book from my mother-in-law as a new bride, I turned to my husband's eldest aunt and uncle, Ruby and Carl, for the needed information. Name, birth, marriage, death

and repeat was good enough for me; my limited view of genealogy was to merely trace the lines of ascent as far as Aunt Ruby's memory could go.

Make Instant Discoveries in Your Family Tree Now

It never occurred to me that the information I gained might be wrong and that I should have verified the oral source. **I also was so focused on the distant past that I neglected to ask those present about their own history.** Years after Uncle Carl's and Aunt Ruby's death, I discovered this unsourced newspaper clipping on Ancestry.com:



Fabian Sedérberg, who went to Sigler, Oklahoma, three years ago, is now with his family visiting friends in Chesterto nand vicinity. Mr. Sederberg owns a 240 acre farm in Haskell county, Oklahoma, which he rented this spring. He will probably remain here this summer. He says his children's health is poor and that they do not seem to oversome the heat and malaria. The climate is hard on northern people. The hot winds do great damage to both crops and health of people. He says there are worse countries than Oklahoma, but few better than good old Indiana. 3/12/1914

[1]

How I wish I had asked Uncle Carl about his life in Oklahoma where his father, Fabian, had moved for a fresh start after the death of his wife, Lucy. This newspaper clipping provides clues to the widower's hardships, but it would have been more valuable to have gained a personal perspective from one of the article's unnamed children, Uncle Carl.

Here's what I learned from abandoning the "Just Fill It In" mindset:

- Always seek out vital records to verify an oral history.
- Record the stories of those alive, including yourself, as today will be history tomorrow.
- Try to fill in the trials and tribulations that ancestors endured by looking for records that provide more than just names and dates.
- Newspaper articles, historical texts, diaries, and letters are wonderful sources to gain insight into your ancestor's life.

GENEALOGY MISTAKE #2: ONLY ASKING FAMILY HISTORY QUESTIONS TO THE PEOPLE I KNEW PERSONALLY

Since dead men don't tell any tales, I knew to contact the living for the information I sought. The problem was this: I was only contacting individuals that I knew personally. Elizabeth Shown Mills has written extensively about the value of using something called the "FAN Club," that means researching the **F**riends, **A**ssociates, and **N**eighbors (**FAN**s) of your ancestor.

It is startling to think that information about you is being held in a stranger's home. Don't believe me? About two years ago, my mother's closest friend, Helen, passed away. She had moved to live near family members about 20 years ago. I had also relocated from the area and, other than exchanging Christmas cards, we had no contact.

After her death, Helen's son was going through her belongings and discovered my address and a newspaper clipping of my wedding announcement. He mailed the announcement to me with a note asking how I knew his mom. I replied that as a close friend of my mother, she had attended my wedding and I still cherish her wedding gift, a crystal candy dish.

Later, he called to say he was sorry, but he had thrown out all the letters that my mom had written to his mother over the years, as he had not put together my married name with my maiden name. I would have loved to have read those letters in my mother's handwriting, keeping Helen up-to-date on our lives. Sadly, that's no longer an option.

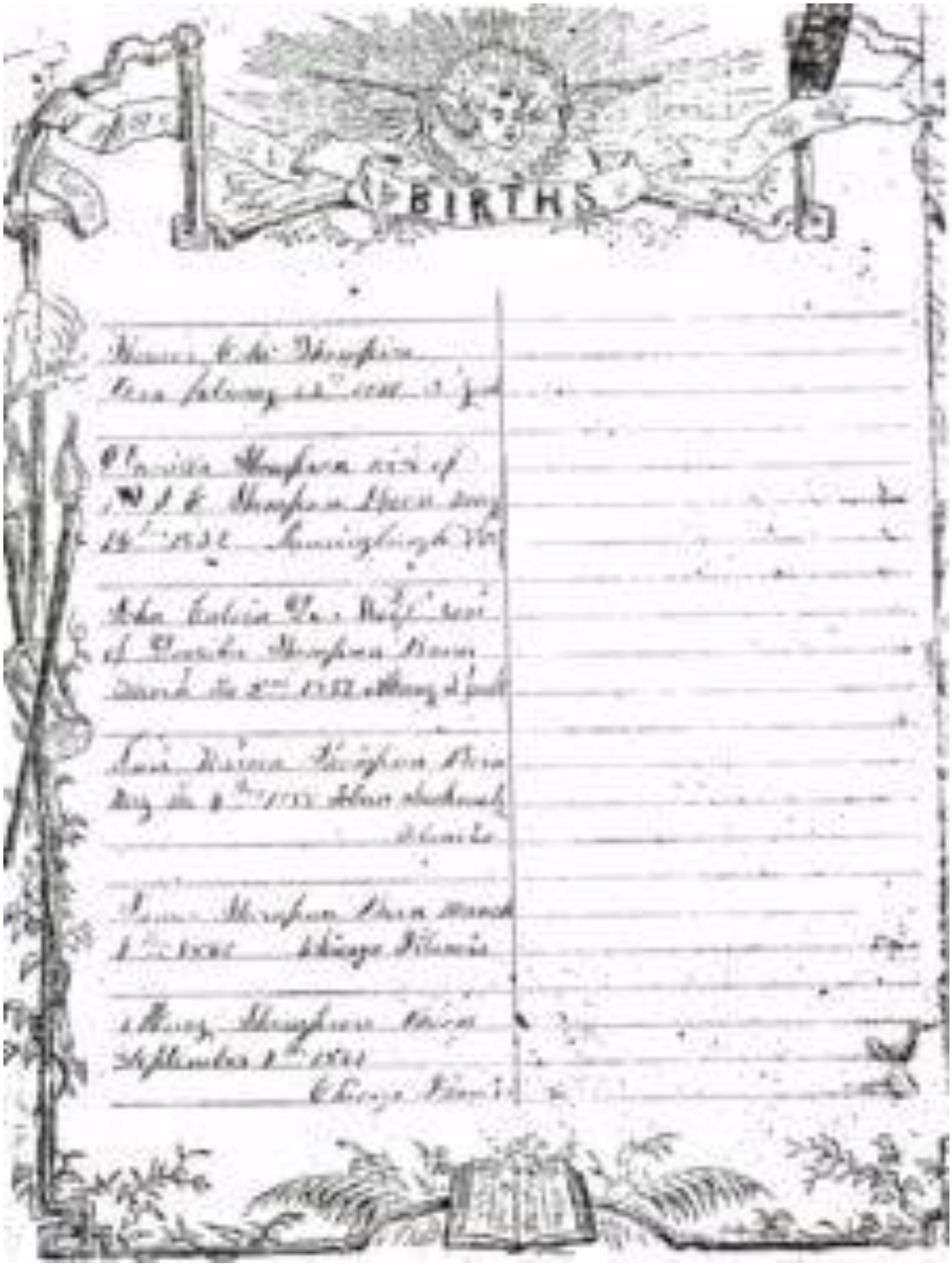
The FAN Club is important but so is reconnecting with distant kin who just might hold the clue you've long sought. One of my husband's second cousins asked for my help in tracing a line to a Revolutionary War soldier, as her mother's dream was to become a Daughter of the American Revolution before she died. I agreed to help; thankfully, by then I had learned the importance of seeking out living collateral lines.

Here's an example.

Drusilla Williams DeWolf Thompson lived and died in the 1800s, hence, no birth and death certificate is available. Her children were all born before birth certificates were required and no baptism certificates for them were located. Trying to link her daughter, Mary Thompson Cook, to Drusilla was problematic as Mary, who was buried in Indiana, had died out of state and her whereabouts at the time of her death were unknown to us. The cemetery did not have a copy of Mary's death certificate and no obituary was found. The funeral home was no longer in operation, and the local historical society and library did not know what had become of the records.

What was there to do? Well, we decided to locate every living descendant of Mary, hoping to find someone who knew where she had died so we could obtain a death certificate that would link Mary to Drusilla.

Mary and her husband, Andrew Cook, had 7 children; 3 had died young. By tracing Mary's 14 grandchildren, and 33 great-grandchildren, we discovered what we were looking for and so much more! Turns out, Drusilla had recorded her husband, herself and all her children's births in her Bible, which was discovered in an attic in southern Ohio, where she never visited:



Drusilla was born in New York, moved to Chicago after her marriage and resided there until her death. Also in the attic was found the only known picture of Drusilla and Thomas:

Left to right is young Mary, Thomas, Drusilla, James and Lewis Thompson in Graceland Cemetery, Chicago, Cook County, Illinois. The tombstone birth inscription matches the date Drusilla had recorded for herself and Thomas in her Bible. Finding the Bible was wonderful; discovering the picture was priceless.

By seeking out those I didn't personally know, such as FANs and distant relatives, I've discovered this

- Overzealous family and friends are today's version of a burned courthouse. Look for them far and wide before they pitch that raggedy Bible, faded scrapbook and unidentified photo. Their trash is your treasure.
- Tracing collateral lines can help you make discoveries that you'd otherwise miss.
- Don't be surprised to find what you need in a place you'd never expect it. People and their belongings move a lot!

GENEALOGY MISTAKE #3: NOT ORGANIZING RESEARCH, FILES AND PHOTOS

I have a cousin who is a packrat. Family members (knowing he threw nothing out and was interested in genealogy) sent him everything they didn't know what to do with. Filling his basement, he rented a storage unit to hold his growing collection. Several years ago, I wrote to him to see if he had a photo of a great great grandfather. He thought he did.

The problem was (and is!) that he can't locate it. **Organization is the key to genealogical success**. My frustration with my cousin's inability to locate the photo led me early on to develop an organizational system that works for me:

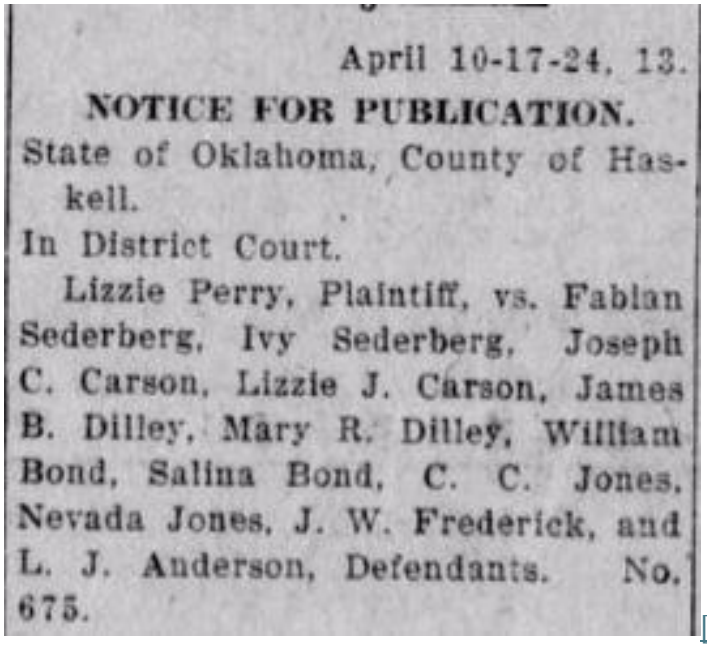
- My research log, maintained on my computer, helps keep me on track with the various lines I'm researching so I can quickly pick up where I left off.
- Digitization allows for finding and sharing needed documents quickly. I have scanned every photo, vital record, letter, and diary and saved them to my hard drive, CDs, and the cloud. I back up to a portable hard drive and as technology changes, I upgrade. The 8 mm movies went to VCR tapes and then to DVDs. Any far-flung family member who was interested was given a copy, so if my numerous systems are destroyed, I can obtain a replacement.
- A self-created database of helpful resources and tips enables me to locate information easily when the need arises. Here's what I have for the Alsace Lorraine region; it's an area I don't research in often but when I need to revisit it, I can check out the sources I've found helpful in the past:

Content	Title	Comment
Alsace Lorraine	Riemer, Shirley J. The German Research Companion Sacramento, CA: Lorelei Press, 2010.	Palm Harbor, Largo & Hillsborough Library
Alsace Lorraine	www.genealogy.net	
Alsace Lorraine	http://wiki-en.genealogy.net/wiki/Alsace	
Alsace Lorraine	http://wiki-en.genealogy.net/wiki/Lorraine	
Alsace Lorraine	Familysearch.org	Check both France and Germany for records/look under maiden name for death records
Alsace Lorraine	Republican Calendar 1792-1805	Familysearch.org, Hathi Trust, and eBook Library
Alsace Lorraine	Alsace Emigration Index - Bas-Rhin 1817-1866	FHL 1,125,002-1, 125,007
Alsace Lorraine	www.francegenweb.org	
Alsace Lorraine	Minert, Roger P. Deciphering Handwriting in German Documents GRT Publications: Woods Cross, UT, 2001.	Also, for French & Latin
Alsace Lorraine	www.communes.com/lorraine/moselle/obergailbach	
Alsace Lorraine	FHL - 1871+ FHL Film 787154-787166, rolls 787165 & 787166	FHL 787154-787166, rolls 787165 & 787166

GENEALOGY MISTAKE #4: NOT SEEKING THE HELP OF EXPERTS WHEN I NEEDED IT

As a hobbyist, it never occurred to me to reach out to professionals for advice. My thinking was if a family member didn't know then no one would.

Along the way I've discovered that archivists, librarians, and historians can provide needed insight into your family's life experiences. Several times a week I send a query through Ask a Librarian or Contact Us. While writing this, I discovered that I didn't have a citation for the Fabian Sederberg clipping. After striking out with the original online poster, I contacted the genealogy department at a county library for help. Although they couldn't locate the article in the two newspapers they have on microfilm, they referred me to the local museum; that archivist directed me to the state library. I also posted a request on a site for professional genealogists asking for recommendations. I received four tips and discovered that the reason Fabian may have returned to Indiana wasn't solely due to the climate and his children's health:



April 10-17-24, 13.

NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION.

State of Oklahoma, County of Haskell.

In District Court.

Lizzie Perry, Plaintiff, vs. Fabian Sederberg, Ivy Sederberg, Joseph C. Carson, Lizzie J. Carson, James B. Dilley, Mary R. Dilley, William Bond, Salina Bond, C. C. Jones, Nevada Jones, J. W. Frederick, and L. J. Anderson, Defendants. No. 675.

[4]

Further research revealed that Ms. Perry was suing Fabian for $1440.00 for unlawfully withholding possession of real estate. Do you know what I learned? **In genealogy, two (or more) heads are better than one – and they don't need to be kin to be helpful.** Reach out to those in the know to gain a more thorough understanding of the past.

It is often said that a little knowledge goes a long way. Hopefully, my lessons learned will inspire you to grow as you move forward with your ancestor hunting.

You might also like:

5 Uncommon Places to Find Your Ancestors' Missing Parents

This May Be the Most Important Genealogy Research Trick You'll Ever Learn

Lori Samuelson *is a lifelong educator and National Board-Certified Teacher/Counselor who has conducted personal genealogical research for more than 30 years. For the past 15 years, she has assisted candidates in*

proving lineal descent for membership with the Daughters of the American Revolution and the Society for Descendants of Lady Godiva. Her bi-weekly blog, Genealogy At Heart, provides research tips, new historical findings for the beginner to the professional level genealogist and her journey to become a Certified Genealogist. Lori is a member of the Association of Professional Genealogists, National Genealogical Society, New England Historic Genealogical Society, Florida State Genealogical Society and the Pinellas Genealogy Society.

Citations:

[1] Unsourced newspaper clipping posted by MLeePierson, 25 Oct 2014; *Ancestry*: accessed 13 October 2017). Poster does not remember where she obtained the clipping or who dated it. The [Porter County, Indiana] Evening Messenger, [Porter County, Indiana] Daily Vidette, Chesterton [Indiana] Tribune and [Stigler, Oklahoma] State Sentinel did not contain the article. A review of the Porter County [Indiana] Vidette for 1914 could not be made as that year's microfilm has not been located. Special thanks to genealogist Luin Leisher and the Indiana State Library and Porter County Public Library staff for their assistance.

[2] Drusilla Williams DeWolf Thompson Family Bible Records, Births 1810-1861, for birthdate of Thomas Coke Thompson, 22 February 1810, Drusilla Thompson ,14 May 1832, John Calvin DeWolf, 2 March 1851, Lewis Warren Thompson, 4 May 1858, James Thompson, 9 March 1860 and Mary Thompson, 9 September 1861; digital image supplied by Lori Samuelson [address private], Tarpon Springs, Florida, 2017. Bible was found in the attic of Anna Honaker Schmidt, Xenia, Ohio in March 2001.

[3] Anna Honaker Schmidt (1912-2003) Williams Family Collection photograph, ca. 1868; digital image ca 2008; privately held by Lori Samuelson, Tarpon Springs, Florida, 2017.

[4] State Sentinel [Stigler, Oklahoma], Vol. 8, No. 6, Ed. 1, 17 April 1913, "Notice for Publication," p. 2, col. 4; digital image, Oklahoma Historical Society: accessed 21 Oct 2017).

ONLINE GENEALOGY RECORDS CAN DISAPPEAR: SIMPLE WAYS TO PROTECT YOUR RESEARCH

By Janet Meydam

These days, millions of people have family trees online, with facts and sources gathered from the many online databases that are available via paid subscription sites and free genealogy archives. If you yourself have created a family tree with numerous records to prove your facts, you're doing a great job. Adding sources to your tree is one of the most important things you can do for your research.

But, be aware, some of these sources could just disappear. No warning, just gone – **because online record collections are not guaranteed to stay online, or publicly accessible, forever**. If you're not downloading the records that you use as sources (and are simply linking to them as many people do) you could find that you lose access to these sources in the future.

This article will explain why this happens and what you should do to protect your information.

Why Genealogy Record Sources Disappear

Genealogy websites strive to provide large numbers of records from many different sources to make subscriptions to their websites more attractive to users. However, even genealogy giants like Ancestry.com do not own most of the records they offer. Instead, many of the records you find online are provided in partnership with other organizations and government entities.

Often, a database is owned by the municipality where the records originated. If not, it may be owned by a library, historical society, church, school, or archive. These organizations own the rights to these databases and control who gets to use them.

So how do genealogy websites offer access to these databases?

They purchase the rights to access databases through license agreements with the database owners. This type of agreement allows a genealogy website the right to link to and display a set of records for a set fee and a set period of time. The genealogy website then turns around and offers access to the records to its subscribers. Genealogy websites may arrange license agreements with individual database owners, or they may contract with content providers to purchase multiple license agreements for many databases.

The problem occurs when these license agreements expire. Most agreements are renewed with updated terms and the records continue to appear on the genealogy website as usual. Sometimes, though, the genealogy website and the database owner or content provider cannot reach an agreement on new terms to continue the license. When this happens, the license expires, and the genealogy website no longer has rights to access the database, so the records must be removed.

Legal battles over access to records may also play a role in some cases. And, in others, sites may choose to remove access to collections or community information they no longer want to support – or move a collection to a new location.

How to Protect Your Family Tree from Record Loss

There are several things you can do to protect records and photos that you have added to your family tree through a genealogy website.

Download Images of Your Records

Yes, it's time consuming and sometimes a handful to organize, but if images of your records are available, **you should always download them**. If your record is an image – such as a scanned copy of a vital record, census record, book page or photo – it can be downloaded and stored in a folder on your computer. If it is simply an index or transcript you can copy the information into a document or notepad on your computer (just don't forget to copy information about the source as well).

This way, should your source database disappear from your genealogy website, you will still have the image of your ancestor's record (or index/transcription) from that database, and therefore your proof of your fact. This is the absolute best way to ensure that you don't lose access to your records.

Just be sure to back your records up! Find out how here.

If you are worried about storage space on your computer, or primarily work on a Chromebook or mobile device, you can save your record images to online storage sites such as Google Drive. These sites usually offer a limited amount of storage for free. See this guide to free storage options for genealogy.

Saving images this way also makes it easy to share your research with others. Please read Quit Attaching Records to Your Family Tree and Do This Instead for help on how to ensure ongoing access to your source records by storing them in the cloud.

If you're not sure if you're downloading OR simply linking to your sources, you should know that the standard on sites like Ancestry is to link to records when you add a source to your tree. When you find a record and add it to your tree it is not actually attached in the same way that a record would be if you downloaded it to your computer and then uploaded it again. That means that if a record is removed from Ancestry, or you lose access because you let your subscription lapse, you will no longer be able to view the records. See **Stop 'Saving' Records to Your Ancestry Tree Until You Read This** for more help on this topic.

Make Sure Your Source Information is Properly Cited

Citing sources is correct genealogical practice, as you always want to give credit to your sources so that you (and others) can reference and verify your source material. Citing will also help you locate records that may have moved or been removed from online repositories.

Even when records are deleted from a genealogy website, the facts entered in your tree and the cited source information is preserved. If your source information is recorded properly, you can look up those sources and possibly reacquire your missing images through other means.

For help citing sources and many other topics see Family History Daily's online courses.

Search Online for Your Missing Database

If the records you want have disappeared from your genealogy website, chances are the owners of the rights to those records have either signed a contract with another genealogy website or published the records online themselves.

Take the title of the database from your source information and conduct an online search for the records. This should help you to determine if the database is published online in another location. You can then plan to access your records through that alternate site. Checking libraries and archives in the region where the records originated is a good place to start.

If you take these steps, you will minimize the damage to your family tree if records suddenly disappear on your favorite genealogy website. Download your records sources now to avoid this loss in the future.

Happy researching!

Janet Meydam *is a freelance writer who has over 40 years of experience in genealogy as a hobby. Her knowledge includes researching many different records from the United States, Germany and Poland. She is also a co-author of her parents' family history book "I Come from a Long Line of Dilleys.*

HUMOR

The cemetery where your ancestor was buried does not have perpetual care, has no office, is accessible only by a muddy road, has snakes, tall grass, and lots of bugs--and many of the old gravestones are in broken pieces, stacked in a corner under a pile of dirt.

PARTING THOUGHT

Life isn't about waiting for the storm to pass, it's about learning how to dance in the rain. – Vivian Greene

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If you have any items of interest that you would like to submit for future publication, please contact Richard Ellington at mailto:richard_ellington@unc.edu or 919.932.0516 (voice/text)