

Cracker Crumbs

Unlocking the Past Towards the Future

Manatee Genealogical Society

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2012-2013

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Don't forget that the MGS Board usually meets the last Wednesday of the month at 10 AM at the Manatee History Records Library in Bradenton (Sep - Apr). All members are welcome.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

DID YOU KNOW? Family Genealogy searching is the second most popular activity on the Internet. (Pornography is the first!) I believe we are searching for family information, not because we are older & smarter, but because we are creating a legacy for our families.

We had an overflow crowd for the February, Dick Eastman Seminar, where we enhanced our knowledge of the Internet. We all learned and interacted with genealogy friends. We are setting the pace for others. The Seminar would not have been possible without MGS board member Phyllis Doucette and our host, Pastor Joey Mimbs of the Bradenton Bethel Baptist Church. The MGS volunteers who jumped in to help, kept everything running smoothly. Proceeds from the seminar, along with your membership support, allows us to schedule prominent speakers and to support the Manatee Library and historical commission activities.

Our annual election of officers is scheduled for the April meeting. Jean Morris is chairman of the Nominating Committee. Her committee is asking for your help and assistance in keeping the MGS successful. Jean is retiring from her long duty as Vice President and Doreen Colket, is retiring after three years as Treasurer. Jim McHugh, Editor of Cracker Crumbs, has also been acting as Membership Chairman. We will be voting for VP, Treasurer and Membership Chairman. All of these positions are important, but they do not require much time. Our activity year is from October to May. Support is available in all seasons, so please contribute a little time to keep the Manatee Genealogy Society and the community thriving.

"Family & Friends are Our Legacy. Time is Our Most Valuable Asset"

Jim Reger, President

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FamilySearch Research Wiki

FamilySearch Research Wiki : <https://www.familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Main_Page> . If you use FamilySearch, you might try their FamilySearch Research Wiki at this link. In the FamilySearch Research Wiki, you can learn how to do genealogical research or share your knowledge with others, plus locate information sources. The Wiki is not just for advanced users, as some individuals concluded after a quick look at the main page. FamilySearch has modified the Wiki Main Page to be more user friendly. Here are some points that Charlie Smith of FamilySearch (Jan 22, 2013) mentioned in an information note. Part of his note follows:

Knowing that FamilySearch Wiki could be of immense help to the beginner, we at FamilySearch Wiki Support organized a design team to determine what should be put on the main page that would let the beginner and those new to the Wiki see what we had to offer, without extensive browsing. The new page is the result of months of meetings, consideration of all the suggestions for improvement, and all of the complaints that have been received over the years.

Again, the idea was to show the beginner and those who were new to FamilySearch Wiki what we had to offer, and that it would be evident immediately upon visiting the main page. Hence, we substituted the Tour, Write, and Edit boxes with six new boxes outlining the topics that lie within the over 70, 000 articles that inhabit FamilySearch Wiki:

Beginning Genealogy. We wanted the very new to genealogy to know that there was material to help the people who had never been engaged in doing "their genealogy." FamilySearch Wiki has a large amount of material for the beginner. We also wanted them to know that we could help them get their research started and organized through the use of their computers.

Find Records by Place. We want the beginner to know immediately that FamilySearch Wiki existed to let researchers know what genealogical records are available worldwide, and how to access them and we are trying to gather even more helpful articles.

Research Tools. We want visitors to know what records were available to research and how to access them, but also, how to analyze what was in those records, and what records they might consider researching in to solve particular research problems. One of the greatest attributes of FamilySearch Wiki is to give people suggestions for where they can look next for information.

Wiki for Groups. We wanted our patrons, experienced or not, to know that there are others in the genealogical world to help both the experienced and the beginner. And again, we wanted beginners to know that they could ask for help from the genealogical community who are eager to help them.

Wiki News. We put out a newsletter to help our patrons know what new things are coming to FamilySearch Wiki. Our newsletter also has experiences from our patrons, sharing insights and hints on doing research in various parts of the world.

Build the Wiki. Besides helping the beginner and those new to the FamilySearch Wiki, we wanted our patrons to know that we are constantly looking for more material. We want whatever expertise or special knowledge they may have that is not now in FamilySearch Wiki. The Wiki has over 70,000 articles and many of them are contributed by our patrons-not everything is from the research staff at the FamilySearch Library.

However, we recognize that the result is not perfect. We have additional changes planned for the near future. Therefore, we would ask that you continue to make suggestions for improvement at Support@FamilySearch.org, with Wiki in the title (by Charlie Smith of FamilySearch - Jan 22, 2013)

Migrations of Our Ancestors

Contributed by Bryan L. Mulcahy, Reference Librarian,
Ft. Myers-Lee County FL Public Library, Ft. Myers, FL

Migration is an important concept in genealogical research. While our ancestors had fewer options for transportation than exist today, it was a common occurrence for many to move multiple times in their lifetime for numerous reasons. This makes locating them an interesting challenge. One of the most beneficial strategies is to investigate what is known in the research field as Old Settler Organization Records.

Organizations of this nature flourished in the 19th century. They tended to be composed of settlers who moved into a particular area or region and stayed permanently or for an extended period of time. Old Settler Organizations were very popular into frontier areas where settlers were looking for any type of stable social environment to help counteract the uncertainty of daily life. Many had endured the numerous hardships and loss of life that commonly occurred on the frontier. These common experiences often resulted in emotional bonds developing with their fellow settlers.

As westward migration opened up to a more diverse population, many of these "early settlers" began to resent new people coming into the area. One of the trigger issues that historians cite to describe this feeling was that many early settlers were born in the United States, whereas the newcomers tended to be immigrants or "big city" people who never contributed to the original settlement.

This resentment led to the creation of many organizations throughout the frontier with strict membership requirements. The key requirement was often based on proving residence tied to a specific date. These dates may have reflected the formation of the county, year that formal statehood was granted, or a local/regional event or time period. Some groups were highly organized with by-laws, application forms, elected officers, etc. Others were more socially oriented and less structured.

From the standpoint of locating surviving records, many of these groups are known by names such as Pioneer or Founders Societies, Old Settlers Society, or the name of an ethnic group followed by the phrase "historical society" of a given county or state. Good sources for locating contact information for these groups include newspapers, county histories, local or regional genealogical societies, state or county historical societies, or Googling the terms "pioneer" or "founders society", plus the name of the state or county. Repositories for these old records may include

state archives, historical museums, and local public and private libraries in the area or region. Don't forget to check FamilySearch <<http://www.familysearch.org>> since the Family History Library has microfilmed many of these surviving society records over the years. BLM 2/9/2013

Epidemics

Contributed by Bryan L. Mulcahy, Reference Librarian,
Ft. Myers-Lee County FL Public Library, Ft. Myers, FL

Throughout human history, peoples all across the world have been ravaged by epidemics. While most of these occurred prior to our modern advances in medicine, there are many parts of the world today where these issues continue to happen. Historically, when epidemics occur, entire towns and families are wiped out. Due to the fear of spreading disease, the remains were burned quickly with little if any effort made to document the names of the deceased or contact next of kin living outside the area or abroad.

The United States has faced its share of epidemics throughout our history. Two of the most sever were the yellow fever outbreak that swept through the South in 1841 and the infamous 1918 Spanish flu outbreak which quickly throughout the world eventually hitting the United States. This latter epidemic claimed the lives of an estimated 25 to 40 million people. Epidemics were often rampant in many parts of the country as part of our western expansion into the interior in the 1800's.

Our ancestors had a much shorter life span than modern medicine has allowed our current generations to enjoy. Two of the most common causes of death were wars and epidemics. If you encounter a situation where your ancestors or a large number of residents within a given locality or region disappeared during a certain period of time in history, and there is no evidence of any war related explanation, an epidemic is a strong possibility. If an epidemic occurred within a given community, an event of this magnitude could be mentioned in any published county histories for the locality or region. The local health department of the community in question would be another source for information.

Many cases of people disappearing from records can be traced to dying during an epidemic or moving away from the affected region. Our companion study guide by the same title Epidemics will provide a comprehensive listing of the epidemics that have occurred within the continental United States.
BLM 1/9/2013

Planning a Successful Research Trip

Article by Carolyn L. Barkley

This article originally appeared on the blog, www.genealogyandfamilyhistory.com, Feb. 22, 2013.

Permission to reprint blog articles is granted to historical and genealogical organizations.

Planning an effective and efficient research trip has always been an important component of a genealogist's repertoire. With today's gas prices - and have you looked at airline prices lately? - affecting the cost of your trip more than ever before, however, your ability to plan well has become an even more significant skill. Here are eight tips to help you make that trip as successful as possible. These strategies work whether you are taking a cross-country trip to Salt Lake City or a morning's drive to your local library- and regardless of whether you're working on your own family or doing client research.

First, remember that research is a cycle of work with several important steps: planning, collection, organization, analysis, reporting, and then planning once again. Each research trip builds upon the work accomplished in previous trips and sets the stage for work to be accomplished in future ones.

Your single most important action is to focus on a problem you wish to solve. Then, you need to be able to answer the following questions:

- Who is the one person - or one event - that I want to learn about during this trip?
- What do I already know about this person or event?
- Where is information on this person or event located?
- What research can I do in advance?

Consider all of these questions long before you leave home. If you have no answers, you are not yet ready to begin your trip. When you can answer them, you will endear yourself to librarians and archivists everywhere because you will be able to present your research needs concisely (please, no twenty-year history of your family even if you are excited by your knowledge) and you will be prepared, knowing what is available - or not - at the institution you are visiting. (Note: You may want to prepare two or three problems in case you find that your first problem, despite careful preparation, cannot be resolved, or that you are SO successful in solving the first problem, that you have time to do more.)

Plan where you will go to conduct your research. First, answer the question: "Do I really need to travel to do my research?" Check the institution's website for collections of online digitized records and databases or the availability of interlibrary loan of microfilm or other resources. (Note: never travel to see microfilm that you can borrow through your home library, or records that are available online.) For example, if I am researching a family in Princess Anne County, Virginia, a place search in the Family History Library catalog would alert me to the fact that all entries are under "Virginia, Virginia Beach (Independent City)." If I used FamilySearch to look for the Pebworth family in Princess Anne County, I would be able to identify 31 records for Pebworth families in Princess Anne. By continuing that search, I would be able to identify which records are not available online and concentrate on those during my research at the Family History Library.

If you decide that you do indeed need to make the trip, check the institution's website to verify its address, find driving directions and parking information, and its operating hours and record access requirements. Check as well for any state or local holidays or unexpected construction interruptions that may have been scheduled recently. (I ignored the holiday issue to my regret last summer, arriving at the Family History Library for a day and a half of research during a cross-country trip only to find that it would be closed for a full day due to a state holiday - Pioneer Day. Ignore this rule at your peril!) Check to see what other activities are located nearby (special library collections, museums and museum libraries, historical societies, etc.) that might support your research). Decide if you will need to stay overnight (or stay several nights) in order to be successful in completing your research goal.

Plan carefully what to take. I am personally allergic to the idea of the rolling suitcase with all of my files bumping along behind me. If you have focused and defined your research problem(s) well, I believe that you only need to take the files that relate to the specific research focus for your trip. Another method to avoid the dreaded black bag is to make sure that your research has been entered (and is up-to-date) on your laptop or tablet, either through a genealogical program - sources please - or through copies of previous research reports and spreadsheets. For the latter, I am a regular user of Dropbox (or you may already use Evernote or some other version of Cloud storage) for research files. Because these files are available to you on any computer with Internet access, you can access and update your files in real time during your research.

Make sure you know what the institution's rules or special requirements are. Are pens allowed; are cameras or scanners allowed? (Did you know that the Library of Congress does not allow musical instruments? - I'm just sayin'!) Make sure you have a picture ID, pencils and erasers, a loose-leaf binder or paper, address labels (they make it much easier to complete request or photocopy slips), and blank labels (indicate source's bibliographic information and place on back of photocopies). If you are taking a laptop, does the institution have easily accessible electrical outlets? Should you bring a small extension cord? Do you have a surge protector? Is Wi-Fi available? Do they allow you to plug your thumb drive into their equipment (the Family History Library in Salt Lake City does, many public libraries do not)? (Note: Bring lifesavers. I know that food is banned in most libraries, BUT, no matter how healthy you are, you will get a tickle in your throat or a cough in the drier humidity and a lifesaver will live up to its name.)

Bring forms (on your laptop/tablet and/or in hard copy) to assist you in your research. I strongly recommend using a research log. There are many different varieties that can be found online, in books such as Emily Anne Croom's *Unpuzzling Your Past Workbook: Essential Forms and Letters for All Genealogists* (Betterway Books, 1996), or on a CD such as Michael Hait's *The Family History Research Toolkit: Forms & Charts for Genealogical Research* (Genealogical Publishing Co., 2008). Research logs allow you to document the name of the individual being researched, your objective or problem, the research institution, and the date of your search. It also documents the location or call number of sources you use (whether you found anything in them or not), the source's bibliographic description, and comments such as "no index," "page x is missing from this copy," or "book/microfilm reel, etc. is missing from the collection." You will also need pedigree charts, family group sheets, and other more specialized abstracting forms depending on the type of research you will be doing.

Once at the research site, take a few minutes to orient yourself to the facility. Where are the restrooms, lockers, coffee shop, copiers, film readers, computers, etc.? Do you need a copy card? What is the collection layout? (Check on the latter two questions carefully as libraries may rearrange shelving and may (read probably) have changed the copy card system since your last visit!) Are the stacks open access, or will you need to request items from closed stacks (and need to have something to do while you wait for them to be pulled)? Are there finding aids, maps of the facility, etc.? Where is the staff located in case you need

assistance? It is also very important that you take care of yourself while you work. Plan to take breaks at specific intervals. I find that after two hours, I need to take a short walk, drink some water, rest my eyes, and reorder my thoughts. Make sure you take time for lunch and get out into fresh air and, hopefully, sunshine. You will be more alert during the afternoon if you do.

When you have finished your research, organize your materials-research logs, forms, photocopies, and any spreadsheets or chronology tables you might have created-so that you can analyze your findings. I recommend using chronology tables as they often will provide visual clues to gaps in your research or to the fact that you might have found more than one person with the same name. I use a simple MS Word table with date, event (name and action), and source of the information. This table also tells me if my documentation is from original sources, rather than from too many secondary reports of the event.

Always, always, always analyze what you have found during your research trip. This step is very often overlooked. Think of the many family trees you've seen online where the mother's birth date is chronologically after the birth date of her children. Simple analysis would have prevented this type of error. Be sure to answer the following questions:

Is your information from a primary or secondary source?

Does the information add to or conflict with what you already know?

If the problem has not been solved, or has led (inevitably) to another research problem, what further work is required?

Write a research report summarizing your trip. Again, this step is often overlooked or deferred, but is important for your own research, not just for client work. In your report, restate the object of your research (your research problem), what you knew when you began the work, the institution(s) in which you researched, the sources you consulted, and your findings and analysis. Outline future work. Attach all of the copies that document your findings. You will have all of this information easily at hand if you kept a detailed research log, annotated each of your copies and supporting documentation, and analyzed your work. The report is simply a way to organize your thoughts and documentation so that the next time you decide to work on this particular research problem, you can simply remove the report from the file and review your previous research as well as your notes about future work.

For further information on many of the topics mentioned here, check out the following sources:

Genealogy at a Glance series (Genealogical Publishing Co.). These concise guides are perfect for travel with. Check the extensive list of topics available, written by experts in their fields. If you are going to the Family History Library, particularly if this trip is your first, you will want to use Genealogy at a Glance: Family History Library Research.

The Library: a Guide to the LDS Family History Library, edited by Johni Cerny and Wendy Elliott (Ancestry, 1988).

The Guide to FamilySearch Online, by James L. Tanner (Bookmark Graphics, 2011).

Quick Sheet series (Genealogical Publishing Co.). Elizabeth Shown Mills has authored a series of concise guides in such topic areas as *Genealogical Problem Analysis: a Strategic Plan*; *Citing Online Historical Resources Evidence! Style**; and *The Historical Biographer's Guide to the Research Process*, among others.

Your Guide to the Family History Library, by Paula Stuart Warren and James W. Warren, (Betterway Books, 2001).

You are now ready to plan your next trip when the cycle begins once again.

Locating Lost or Missing Ancestors

Contributed by Bryan L. Mulcahy, Reference Librarian,
Ft. Myers-Lee County FL Public Library, Ft. Myers, FL

When it comes to tracing our ancestors, overcoming dead-ends or brick walls, is an occupational hazard with genealogists. These challenges are an inevitable part of the genealogical research process. Some would argue that if one does not encounter these issues, the facts may need to be double checked for accuracy. The good news is that many dead-ends can be overcome with patience and good detective work. Most genealogists often find methods or strategies to overcome these roadblocks. The process involves creativity, knowledge of history of the ethnic group, and having confidence in your gut feelings.

One of the most common issues involves dealing with your ancestor failing to appear in any records for the locality or county where he or she is supposed to be. Where do I go from here? While frustrating this is a fairly common challenge. County and state boundaries have changed over time. This applies in all 50 states. The best source for verifying if the county was in existence at the time your ancestor resided in the area is Everton's Handybook for Genealogists. The Fort Myers-Lee County Library has the 10th edition of this title. However, if your library has an earlier edition, that would be sufficient in terms of historical data pertaining to the formation of counties.

Another good strategy is the 25-50-75 mile radius study. If you are certain that your ancestor or their family resided in a given area and the records are not showing up in the county where you began the initial search, draw a circle with a 25 mile radius around your ancestor's home. Any county, even if it is in another state, that falls within this radius should be considered a potential candidate for research. If the 25 mile radius fails, expand outward 50 and finally 75 miles in all directions.

If the ancestor does not turn up within the 25-75 mile radius, check to see if a railroad or waterway passed through the area. If so, follow the route of migration that was most relevant during the time period. County histories can be good sources for determining this type of information. If neither option applies, this may necessitate going back and examining the facts for errors. It can certainly help if the source of the original information can be identified. That fact alone may help determine the accuracy of the facts.

In other cases, the problem may be caused by the type of record you are seeking. Kory Meyerink, AG, and senior partner of ProGenealogists.com, advises that researchers must take the time to fully understand the record. One example he often cites is the need to know some religious affiliation information. For instance, if your family is Catholic, you probably will not find them in Lutheran cemetery records.

Sometimes the reason you're unable to locate them could be a simple matter of misspelling or a variation of the name was used for any number of possible reasons. An example would be when a patron recently mentioned the difficult time she had in tracing her grandmother's ship passenger records until naturalization papers revealed her name as Era instead of Eva. Another set of records recorded her name as Ava. A third spelling later turned up with the name spelled Avalon.

BLM 12/5/2012

Cluster Genealogy: Broadening the Scope

by Emily Anne Croom

from Genealogy Pointers (01-01-13) see: www.genealogical.com

Courtesy of Genealogical Publishing Company and affiliate Clearfield Company

Cluster genealogy is the idea that ancestors did not live in a vacuum but in a cluster of relatives, neighbors, friends, and associates. Studying the history of one person naturally puts the researcher in contact with members of this group, as witnesses to each other's documents, as neighbors, as in-laws, as fraternal brothers and sisters, as business partners or clients, and so forth. Our ancestors often migrated in family groups, as church congregations, or as a group of neighbors. They often lived very close to other family members. They worshipped with, went to war with, bought land from, and were buried near friends and relatives. Although we may not know the names of this group when we begin researching a focus ancestor, we must train ourselves to look for its members.

Some researchers call this the "whole family" approach or the "big picture" approach. Regardless of the name, the principle is the same: We cannot have long-term success if we limit ourselves to a one-name/one-person approach.

When research begins on a focus ancestor, the genealogist may know nothing more than the ancestor's name, with perhaps a date and place of marriage or an entry on a census record. If applicable, after 1850, the next effort is often to find that person in the context of a family in other census records. Then we move to other basic sources--such as vital records, wills and probate files, family Bibles, church records, and newspaper obituaries--to find names, dates,

places, and relationships in the life of the target ancestor. We branch out into land records, military and pension files, naturalization documents, and other sources that sometimes identify the spouse, children, birth and death information, or parents.

We compile at least two family group sheets from this information: one with the focus ancestor as a parent in a family, the other with the ancestor as a child. These two nuclear families are the beginning of, and an important part of, the ancestor's cluster. Sometimes these charts are all we need to move back in time to the parent and grandparent generations.

When we cannot find direct statements of the events, names, dates, places, and relationships we need for our focus ancestor, we search for clues and evidence wherever we can find them to get the answers indirectly. The cluster is often the path toward these clues. Some clusters provide more help than others, and some are easier to identify than others. However, one thing is certain: a researcher has a much greater chance of success when studying the cluster than when clinging to one name as the sole subject of the research. The progress report in chapter seven and the case studies in chapters ten and eleven [of Croom's book *The Sleuth Book for Genealogists*] are examples of the use of cluster genealogy to find answers.

WHY THE CLUSTER?

Why is the cluster approach necessary? For those who have never tried this approach or have not yet needed it to build pedigree charts, some convincing is often in order. Mostly, we use the cluster approach because we want solutions. As in mystery stories, the family and close associates may hold the key to the answer. True, some of the people you will research with this approach may not be related to you. However, if you stick stubbornly to a one-name-only approach, you may end up claiming as ancestors people not related to you.

Consider these reasons for the cluster approach:

In family papers and oral traditions, each child may remember or record different facts about a parent; we put the facts together to get a more complete picture.

For some ancestors, answers are simply not found in documents they themselves created. If Major Grace sells his land to Stark Brown, he may not mention that he inherited his land from his father. However, when Stark Brown sells the same land to Pleasant Luster, the deed may name Major's father as the original patentee of the land.

Some ancestors left few records themselves; the only way to learn about them is through records that others created. One Mississippi man "disappeared" for a few years from his researcher; then, in someone else's diary, she found that he had gone to California during the gold rush. Ancestors who owned no land, for instance, will not usually appear in the deed books, except maybe as witnesses to others' transactions. Why were they asked to be a witness? Maybe the seller was a brother-in-law, a cousin, or the nearest neighbor. The other person's transaction places the ancestor in that place at that time, alive. That one piece of information is sometimes very important.

When several people by the same name lived in the same county at the same time, their nuclear families and close associates are sometimes the keys to sorting them out. We want to find the right elusive ancestor, not just anybody by the same name.

WHO IS THE CLUSTER?

When you run into that old brick wall in your search, what are your options? Give up on that line and go to one likely to have more information readily available? Get on the Internet with query after query: "I need the parents, grandparents, wife's maiden name, birth date and birthplace, and names of in-laws of Donald Doe of Whatever County, Iowa. I've looked everywhere, and all I can find is that he came to Iowa as a young man just after the Civil War. Will share information"?

A query such as this says several things: (1) The descendant may have little or nothing of substance to share in return, (2) the descendant probably has not looked everywhere, and (3) the descendant may not have a clue of what to try next. That is not an uncommon predicament for researchers at some point along the way. What about the option of researching for the next of kin?

The would-be researcher in the query needs to list everything known about the ancestor and make a research plan. This time, it is cluster time. The disclaimer is that some searches do come to a real dead end before you are ready, but the good news is that many tough searches can be solved. The successful ones often involve the cluster. The cluster includes the next of kin, extended family, neighbors, friends, associates, and other people of the same surname.

The following article is excerpted from Chapter 3 of Mrs. Croom's book, *The Sleuth Book for Genealogists: Strategies for More Successful Family History Research*. For more information about the excellent suggestions for scaling brick walls found in *The Sleuth Book*, please consult the following URL:
www.genealogical.com/index.php?main_page=product_info&item_number=1221

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