



**Madison County
Genealogical Society,
Box 631, Edwardsville, IL
62025-0631**

NEWSLETTER

Volume 43 Number 1 Spring 2023

DUES! DUES! DUES! DUES! DUES! DUES! DUES!

Dues for 2024 are now being accepted. We would very much appreciate receiving your renewal checks ASAP. Send your renewal checks to:

***Ferne Ridenour, MCGS Treasurer
4814 Loop Road
Dorsey, IL 62021-1014***

January 8, 2023

DUES 2024:
Indiv/Fam.....\$25.00
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On January 8, 2023, a meeting of the Madison County Genealogical Society was held. At this meeting, a slate of officers was elected. Since there was only one candidate for each office, the election was by acclamation. The officers for the upcoming year are:

President Robert Ridenour
First Vice President Mary Westerhold
Second Vice President Open
Treasurer Ferne Ridenour
Corresponding Secretary Lynn Engelman
Recording Secretary Rose Mary Oglesby

Discussions were held about changes to the website, e-mail addresses, and updating the by-laws. More to come on these subjects later.

After the business meeting, Lynn Engelman made a presentation on *Enhancing Your Family History*.

There are many ways to change a collection of facts, figures, and names into a family history.

Photo albums can be used to enhance your stories. Probate records may contain many different items: pictures, baptismal certificates, discharge certificates, receipts for funerary items, family trees, letters, maps, and plats. Physical objects may also be used to enhance your family histories.

The following two samples show how items that may be passed down from one generation to another can be used to enhance your family history.

We were doing research on a belt buckle obtained by the Madison County Historical Society and it had an 'MG' on it. The belt buckle was from the Madison Guard. Have you ever heard of the Madison Guard? How could you use a belt buckle to enhance your family history?

The story tied to this particular belt buckle includes murder, a lynch mob, and the establishment of a military company in Madison County.

This belt buckle was part of the Sutter collection purchased by the museum in 1929. The museum curator started researching it, starting with the Historical Society information, and she found out that the MG stood for the Madison Guard. The research resulted in the following story:

In 1857, Franz Jacob Barth was a German sutler going between Troy and St. Jacob and was accosted by three Englishmen. Supposedly, they were drunk and requested a ride on Barth's wagon. He said no and continued on his way to Troy. They apparently got angry and planned on robbing him and decided they would kill him at the next opportunity.

Later in the day, the three of them ambushed the trader outside Troy, shooting him several times. He was found on the roadside by a passer-by, who took him to a nearby house where he was attended to by a doctor. The three assailants were captured the next day, which was May 13. Now, keep in mind it began on May 12, they captured the culprits on May 13. They were brought before Barth, the gentleman who was shot, and he identified them.

Barth died three days later. The three were held in the Edwardsville jail awaiting trial, which was scheduled to be held about a week later on May 20. As the trial neared, a report came out that the men would be acquitted and a mob gathered in Highland and travelled to Edwardsville intending to lynch the three men. The local sheriff had advanced warning and was able to gather a large group of men to defend the jail. According to the Norton History of Madison County, a guard unit from Alton was also called on to guard the courthouse during the trial.

The three were convicted 15 minutes after the jury started deliberating. Two of them were sentenced to be hung, while the third was sentenced to life in prison. He was later pardoned on the petition of leading Edwardsville citizens, based on his youth and the fact that he did not participate in the actual shooting. Upon his release, he changed his name, moved to St. Louis, and opened a popular restaurant.

After the incident at the jail, the citizens of the Edwardsville vicinity decided that they needed a local militia and by May 28, 1857, they voted to form a military company. By June 9, by-laws for the company were written and the name Madison Guard was adopted. They selected the U.S. musket as the unit's weapon, and elected officers. Joseph Schloss was elected Captain and Joseph D. Robinson became 1st Lieutenant.

What did all this have to do with the belt buckle? Apparently, they were known far and wide for their military discipline as a very prestigious unit and for the beauty of their uniforms; the belt buckle was part of their uniform.

This buckle was owned by the Captain of the Guard. In 1859, the unit numbered 104 men, including a drum corps. When the first call came for troops to fight the War Between the States, the War of Northern Aggression, the Civil War, or the War

for the Suppression of the Slaveholders Rebellion of 1861, whichever name you want to use, most of the unit joined Company I in the 9th Illinois Infantry.

The 1st Lieutenant of the Guard, Joseph D. Robinson became Captain of Company I and Guard Captain Joseph Schloss went to Alabama and fought for the Confederacy.

There were some interesting connections - Doctor Edward Weir, the son of John Weir, who owned the house where the Madison County Historical Museum is located, was a drummer boy for the Company when he was about 12. The story of Jacob Barth's murder was one of the first told at the first Old Settlers Union Stories in June 1898.

This particular belt buckle had connections to the Madison County Historical Society and the Madison Guard. So you can see how you can use that one thing to enhance your family story.

Libby Prison was one of 23 Confederate prisons in Richmond. It was originally a three-story tobacco warehouse that was converted into a prison. It was second only to Andersonville Prison in Georgia for overcrowding, disease, malnutrition, and mortality.

According to the accounts recorded in the American Civil War Collection 1860-1922, prisoners in Confederate Prisons in Richmond were known for working in bone and wood to reduce the tedium of imprisonment and many items were purchased by Confederate soldiers and officers for their beautiful workmanship ... a lot of times the prisoners would make jewelry.

William Wrightman was a cooper from Alton taken prisoner in 1862 and held in Libby Prison for 22 months. He was one of those prisoners who did bone carving. One particular piece owned by the Madison County Historical Society has the initials H.M.W. on the back. These are the initials of Helen M. Wrightman, William's wife. William was honorably discharged after the war, returned to Alton to take up his cooper business, and he also held a position in city government. This carved bone jewelry was donated to the Madison County Historical Society by William's grandchildren.

Sometimes when you go through parents' houses or grandparents' houses, you will find things that you know were always there. There are questions you should ask: Who owned it? Where did it come from? What is it? Sometimes they keep something because of who owned it and sometimes it's just to figure out what it is. You can look at picture albums and possibly find out where it came from.

I am sure that everybody here has got stuff that they can use to enhance their family story. Don't just be a keeper of names, facts, and figures but use things to tell the history of your family and ancestors, or what was going on in the period.

February 19, 2023

*Daughters of the American Revolution – Who
and What We Are & Would You Like to Join*

By

Paula Mattix-Wand

Registrar for the Ninian Edwards Chapter DAR

Who and What We Are

The Sons of the American Revolution was established in 1889 as an organization for male lineal descendants of the patriots of the American Revolution. However, women were also interested in expressing their patriotism, so initially, some SAR chapters allowed women to join. The National Society SAR made a requirement change that excluded female members. So in 1889, four enterprising women: Eugenia Washington, Mary S. Lockwood, Ellen Walworth, and Mary Desha met in Washington, D.C., and the DAR was founded on October 11, 1890. The DAR headquarters is comprised of three adjoining buildings that take up an entire city block in Washington, D.C. near the White House. It is one of the most valuable pieces of property in the world that is completely owned and maintained by women. In 1986, the DAR was incorporated by an act of Congress, so every year, the DAR President-General has to give a report to Congress.

The DAR Mission

The Daughters of the American Revolution mission is threefold. It is HISTORICAL to perpetuate the memory of the men and women who achieved American Independence.

They have an EDUCATIONAL mission: civics education in school, Good Citizen Awards, Constitution Week, etc. The Educational Mission can be almost anything that has to do with education.

Obviously, PATRIOTISM to maintain, cherish, and extend the institutions of American Freedom; to foster true Patriotism, love of country, and to aid and secure for mankind all the blessings of liberty

Some Local DAR Projects

Some of the projects of the Ninian Edwards Chapter have been:

Benjamin Godfrey is buried in the Godfrey Cemetery. His family burial plot was surrounded by a wrought iron fence on top of a concrete wall. In World War II, the iron fence was removed to be used as defense materials. The Society of the War of 1812 in Illinois marked his grave as a War of 1812 veteran (he served in the navy). Members of the local DAR Chapter were at that dedication and were inspired to replace the fence and return the burial plot to its former beauty. The replacement of the fence was sort of the kickoff of the Benjamin Godfrey Legacy Trail Project.

It was found that there were numerous unmarked graves in Vaughn Cemetery in Wood River. So the local DAR Chapter, along with other groups, constructed many wooden crosses and placed them in Vaughn Cemetery to give the unmarked graves some respect and acknowledge that there are many people buried there that do not have markers.

The DAR is heavily involved in Wreaths Across America. It has been a national and state project to make sure that every veteran's grave is marked in December

The DAR are heavily involved in naturalization ceremonies, where our representatives attend to congratulate the new citizens with small gifts of flags, bookmarks, etc.

The DAR is always in the Alton Memorial Day Parade.

How Can You Join?

An immediate family member who is a member of DAR can be the easiest pathway.

Members of other lineage societies – 1812, Mayflower – are already doing genealogy, so why not prove the Revolution connection? Family tree researchers who make the connection come to us and want to know more. They stumble on to the website and they remember a relative saying, "I think there's a patriot in there somewhere."

The easiest way to start is to contact a local chapter. If you know that a chapter exists and you know someone who is in the chapter, contact them. Or, you can go through the National website *DAR.org*. There is a place where you can input information and that will trickle down to a local chapter. Depending on where you live, they will assign you a chapter. You are not committed to that chapter. But they will say it looks like they are in your area, why not give them a call.

You have to prove is that you are a woman over the age of 18 who is a lineal bloodline descendant of a person who aided in achieving American Independence, through either military or patriotic service. The documents you need to gather – start with yourself – a birth certificate, a genealogical copy is sufficient; it need not be a certified copy. Including your spouse on the application is not mandatory. However, if someday one of your descendants wants to join a lineage society, it will make it much easier if your spouse is on your application.

For generations 2 and 3 you need birth, death, and marriage dates. The first three generations of an application need to be solid. Every line needs to be filled out, every date and every place needs to be there, and vital records are where that information must come from.

Then there is something called the connecting document. In between each generation you have to have a document that this person is the son or daughter of the preceding generation. The farther back you get in your lineage, the harder it becomes. About generation 5 or 6 is usually the hardest. Some other

types of connecting documents might be censuses, wills, and probate records.

Generation 4 through the Revolutionary patriot the process is the same. The documentation you need is one date and place for the birth or one date and place for the death of each person. Oftentimes, you have to do both because the information is not quite complete. You may have a birth date but you do not have a birth place, so you have to have a death date and a death place. And a connecting document is required for each generation.

Every application is unique; there is no standard. The only standard application is if you have a daughter come in on her mother's application.

There is a way information from previously approved DAR applications can be used. It is a process called Build an App. It is a computer program, but registrars can look at what information is available in the DAR database and kind of cut and paste from previously approved applications onto a new one. Any errors or mistakes have to be fixed and the most recent application for that patriot has to be used.

March 19, 2023

This meeting was a video of one of the free on-demand lectures from the recent Rootstech 2023 Conference. The presenter is Amy Johnson Crow and the title is "***How to Milk a Source for All It's Worth.***"

The link to this presentation is available for at least two years:

<https://www.familysearch.org/rootstech/session/how-to-milk-a-source-for-all-itsworth>

You need to have a fairly recent version of your browser to make the connection. I have three computers, none of which is new, and only the newest browser would work (FIREFOX 113.0.2 64-bit).

April 16, 2023

This meeting was a Show and Tell session. Members were requested to bring a story, photo, or other memento of an ancestor that has an interesting story or is an intriguing mystery.

Mary Westerhold brought and talked about a pair of wooden shoes found in her father's home when cleaning out after his passing. Farmers used wooden shoes out in the fields of their farms in the Effingham area.

Robert W. Ridenour brought a portrait of his Great Uncle Freddy (Frederick Singleton Ridenour). Robert W. obtained the portrait and a family Bible from the daughter-in-law of the youngest daughter of Robert Singleton Ridenour .

Uncle Freddy was the oldest son of Robert S. (Robert W.'s Great Grandfather). Robert Singleton Ridenour had three sons and five daughters. Two of the daughters died before the age of 6. Robert W.'s grandfather was the youngest son of Robert S.

According to his death certificate, Uncle Freddy was born in Jersey County, Illinois, on 21 August 1881. His death certificate lists his date of death as 30 December 1914 in St. Louis, Missouri, at the Missouri Baptist Sanatorium, with the date of burial as 2 January 1915, in Rosedale Cemetery, Rosedale, Illinois.

However, his obituary (newspaper and date of publication unknown) gives his age as 25, which would make his birth date in 1889. The obituary also gives his death date as 24 December 1914 and funeral as 26 December 1914. According to my calculation, he died at over the age of 33 years.

The family Bible lists his birth date of 21 August 1882. However, it appears that all the entries up to 1932 were written by the same person. There are a few later entries written by someone else.

Other than the confusing dates, there is another mystery. Uncle Freddy shares the same middle name as his father (Singleton); but no one else in the family has that name.

I have been unable to find any clue as to where the name Singleton comes from. Any suggestions as to where I should look?

May 21, 2023

This meeting was a You-Tube video of one of the recent 2023 National Archives Genealogy Series. The link to this video is:

[***National Archives at St. Louis: Understanding the 1973 Fire and Its Impact on Genealogical Research***](#)

“Did You Really Start With Yourself?”

by William Dollarhide

If asked the question, “How do you start doing genealogy?” most genealogists will respond, “Start with yourself.”

Most genealogists respond that way, but I’m not so sure that’s what they actually do. The fact is, we are more inclined to start with our parents and immediate family members. What we write down about ourselves is usually our name and vitals on a pedigree chart and family group sheet. The information comes from our heads. After all, we know our place of birth, marriage, and all the dates.

The unfortunate fact is, we may not give as much attention to collecting written documents concerning ourselves as for our ancestors. We work from the known to the unknown. Things that are known and established don’t get our attention because we would rather work on the unknowns.

For example, do you have a copy of your own birth certificate? How about a copy of your marriage license? Or perhaps you have a copy of your confirmation record from church? How about a newspaper clipping that mentions your name on the high school honor roll? Where is that old high school annual, the one with that wonderful retouched photograph of you at age 17? Do you still have your college diploma? How about the newspaper article in which you were mentioned – the one about your team winning the championship? Where is that photo of the first car you ever owned?

And then there are your memories. All the basic vital statistics have been written down, and the family group sheets and pedigree charts have all the details; **but what about the history of you?**

You can write quite a nice biography of your great-grandfather. You have that county history in which he was prominently mentioned, giving some details about his life. You have his death record from a county courthouse, a copy of his marriage license, and several other documents. You can prove what you say about him because you have the written documents. Can you do the same thing for yourself?

What have you written about yourself that will be read by your descendants a hundred years from now? Will your descendants get anything more than your vital statistics on a pedigree chart, or is there something else you can leave them?

Some Dos and Don’ts for Writing About Your Life:

- **DON’T worry about what to write.** All you have to do is remember something that happened to you in your life. Make it a vignette or a brief remembrance of some event in your life, such as your earliest childhood memory; your first day in school; the Sunday dress you spoiled; or the time you fell out of a tree and broke your leg.

- **DON’T feel that you need to write everything about yourself at one sitting.** Think of the writing project as an on-going endeavor made up of small pieces and one that may take some time to complete. Write without a plan or chronological order to the things you remember. One day you can write about last week, another day you can write about 40 years ago.
- **DO write at least a couple of paragraphs at a time.** When you recall some event in your life, write part of a page. Make the writing an easy thing to do at any time of the day, without interfering greatly with your time. Then, write by whim or when a thought comes.
- **DO try to remember the names and relationships of people.** Try to remember the places where events took place, and try to place an approximate date to the events you write about.
- **DO treat each piece of writing as a separate item on a separate page (or pages).** Put the written pages in a special place where they can be retrieved and read from time to time.
- **DO try to date the pages for each event you are writing about, so that the pages can be put into a chronological order later.** Dates can be approximate, such as “about 1955” or “when I was in the 4th grade.”
- **DON’T worry about your writing style, grammar, or that your writing will be judged by your 11th grade English teacher.** It won’t. One hundred years from now no one will fault you for not spelling every word perfectly.
- **DON’T worry if you will ever finish writing everything you could write.** If you have separate sheets of paper with stories – all dated – then anyone could take what you have written and make something of it.
- **DON’T think of the events of your life as unimportant.** Your descendants will love reading about things you may think are mundane and uninteresting.
- **DO consider that what you write will become a legacy.**

SOME THINGS TO SAY about yourself that your descendants will love to read 100 years from now:

- Your trip to visit your grandparents when you were 10 years old. What was grandmother wearing? Can you remember the great pastries she made on that old wood-burning kitchen stove?
- The time your brother scored the winning touchdown but ran into the goalpost and knocked himself out.

- When crazy Aunt Ethel came to visit and brought your cousin Hector along.
- Your thoughts at the moment you first looked at your newborn child.
- A description of your first car.
- Your first date. Your first kiss.
- Relatives you remember.
- School teachers you will never forget.
- Family get-togethers. Friends of the family.
- Places you have visited. Unforgettable travel experiences.
- Graduation day.
- Your wedding. Your honeymoon. Your first new home.
- Your first job. The worst boss you ever had. The best job you ever had.
- Great financial successes. Bad investments.
- The happiest times of your life were . . .
- Service in the armed services.
- Going to war. Protesting the war.
- Your family traditions on Thanksgiving, Christmas, other holidays.
- Favorite vacation spots.
- Your troublesome brother-in-law.
- Growing up without television (or the Internet, or cell phones).
- Where you were and what you were doing the day John F. Kennedy was killed.
- Your favorite movies.
- The people you admire most, and why.
- Your hobbies. Your talents.
- Your accomplishments. What are you most proud of?
- Where you plan to put the words you have written.

Here are some Guidebooks to help insure you actually do start with yourself!

- *International Vital Records Handbook, 6th Edition*
- *County Courthouse Book, 3rd Edition*
- *You Can Write Your Family History*
- *Kinship: It's All Relative, 2nd Edition*

Handling Secrets & Sensitivities When Writing Family Histories

by

Michael J. Leclerc, CG

(Excerpted from Michael J. Leclerc, "Crafting Family Histories," Elizabeth Shown Mills, ed., Professional Genealogy: Preparation, Practice & Standards (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 2018), 519–44.)

Writing family histories is one of the most meaningful ways we can communicate the results of our research to our family members and even ourselves. Our projects can be large or small. We can present family history as blog posts, books, journal articles, or privately shared biographies and family sketches. Across this variety, there do exist certain formats, standards, and practices that are hallmarks of quality products. There are surprises and sensitivities we have to navigate.

Every family has secrets. Many are things common and unremarkable to us in the modern era. For older family members and in other societies, the situation may have had significant consequences and emotions can run deep.

Obviously, in reporting our findings we should never lie, obfuscate, or obscure the truth. The truth will out eventually. We want our own reputation and legacy to be one of quality research and reliable reporting. In her 1867 genealogy of the Glover family, as an example, Anne Glover wrote:^[1]

“[Rachel] was twice married. First, Jan. 1, 1785, at the age of twenty-four years, to Benjamin Homes, Esq., of Norton, by the Rev. Jedediah Adams, of Stoughton. He was of distinguished family and ancestry, was the second son of William and Rebecca (Dawes) Homes, of Boston, and was born there in 1763. At the time of his marriage he was twenty-two years of age, and had already been elected to various town and county offices, and was Justice of the Peace for the County of Bristol.”

Benjamin Homes actually was born in 1760, not 1763, and the truth is that he married Rachel on 4 June 1785. Glover backdated the marriage to January because Benjamin and Rachel's only child was born in November 1785, four months after their marriage. Glover then goes on to discuss Rachel's second marriage and the children of that union. She fails, however, to mention that Benjamin abandoned her and the child. Like Rachel, he entered into a second marriage and had children with his second wife. Glover's purposefully altered "facts" and the lack of documentation for any of her work call into question everything she wrote.

While we must be honest, it is also important to consider the feelings of living individuals. When you are dealing with family secrets from a century or more ago, it should be fairly safe to publish whatever you have found. When it involves incidents less than a century old, people may still be alive who were personally involved or knew those involved.

As a compromise, we might write up everything we have discovered about the issue, attaching copies of any evidence that is not easily available. We then donate the file to a responsible, professionally run archive, historical society, or library—placing access restrictions on the material. For example, we might stipulate that the file remain closed until a certain amount of time has elapsed (say, twenty-five or thirty years). By the end of an appropriately calculated period, enough time will have passed that no person who would be offended is likely to be alive.

In the meanwhile, the family history we are writing might address the issue vaguely. A footnote can say there is insufficient space to discuss everything about the family in this work, but that files are on deposit at the site we have chosen. This way, future genealogists will be able to get the facts without our being insensitive to the feelings of living people, and we will not have compromised our integrity.

[1] Anna Glover, *Glover Memorials and Genealogies* (Boston: David Clapp & Son, 1867), 326. The chapter from which this excerpt is taken provides documentation for the corrections made above.

“If Your Ancestor Owned Land, Then There’s a Deed”
by William Dollarhide

Dollarhide’s Genealogy Rule #23:

Locating the county where your ancestor lived is the first step in finding records about the time he was hauled into court for shooting his neighbor’s dog, threatening the census taker with a shotgun, or making illegal corn whiskey behind the barn.

A 90-Percent Chance

Since the first colonists came to this continent, land ownership has always been an important part of our American society. As an example, nine out of ten adult white males in America owned land before 1850. Even today, the figure is more than 50 percent.

With this nearly universal coverage before 1850, and since genealogical research starts getting more difficult about that time, it is a wonder that family historians are not using land-ownership records more often to solve their genealogical puzzles.

For instance, did you know that there is a surname index to virtually every land owner in America since the early 1600s – an index that is more complete than any head-of-household census index ever compiled? And did you know that you have a 90-percent chance of finding your ancestor in that land-ownership index? The land-ownership index is not combined into a single name list. There are thousands of them. Usually called a “Grantee-Grantor” index, they can be found in the courthouse of any of the 3,141 counties in the U.S. Together, they comprise the largest index naming residents of the U.S., particularly for the period 1629 to 1860.

There are few indexes used by genealogists that offer a 90-percent chance of finding the right person. Even today, a modern telephone directory gives the names of only those households with a publicly listed telephone number. A recent study in Los Angeles County, California, for instance, revealed that about 20 percent of the telephone numbers are unlisted numbers. Yet there is a surname index for Los Angeles County that gives the names of 90 percent of the heads of household of that county during the 1850s and later.

Take the 1840 census as an example. In 1840, the names of the heads of household are all that are shown. But if you were to look at the Grantee/Grantor index for the same county, you may discover that one household could have more than one landowner. Say you find in the census that the head of household is John Smith, Jr. But what you do not know is that living in the same household is John Smith, Sr., and maybe even John Smith, III, and each of them owns a piece of property. Only John Smith, Jr. is listed in the 1840 head of household census, but the Grantee/Grantor index lists all three landowners.

We genealogists eventually recognize the significance of land ownership as we attempt to locate records of our ancestors. But, at first blush, we may not see the importance of land records because they do not seem to give us the vital genealogical facts we are after, i.e., names of parents, dates, children, and so on.

But genealogists who dig deeper into the land records will discover that land grants and deeds can provide evidence of the places where an ancestor lived and for how long, when he moved into or moved out of a county, and, in many cases, a surprising amount of detailed information about a person.

Why Land Records?

Here are three good reasons why land records are valuable for genealogical research:

1) The Odds Are Good. Since 90 percent of the adult white male population owned land before 1850, land grants and deeds provide an excellent way of finding an ancestor in local records. Deeds are recorded at the county level; when property is sold, a deed is recorded at the local courthouse. It is a protection to both buyer and seller that the land being transferred is properly recorded. There are exceptions, such as a deed held by a private party and never recorded – which is every title insurance agent’s worst nightmare. But deeds are almost always recorded at the courthouse of the county wherein the land is located.

2) Land Records Are More Complete than Other Records. Land records such as property tax lists, deeds and deed indexes, and the written transcripts of real estate transactions all go back further in time than any other type of record we use in genealogical research. The earliest records in Europe, other than those recorded for the royal courts, are land records. For example, the Domesday Books – which are property tax lists – were gathered for William the Conqueror in the 11th century, and they are the earliest English records in which a common farmer or tradesman may be listed by name. Certain Scandinavian land records date back to 950 AD. In America, land ownership has always been important, so much so that whenever a courthouse was destroyed by fire or natural disaster the deed records – proof of land ownership – were reconstructed by local authorities soon after. For example, deed records were reconstructed for several counties after General Sherman’s troops burned courthouses in the South during the Civil War.

3) Land Records often Reveal the Name of a Man’s Wife. The English common law system of “dower rights” for a widow was followed in the American colonies and continued into the 19th century. Dower rights entitled a widow to 1/3 of her husband’s estate upon his death. No written will had to specify that amount. As a result of the dower rights of a married woman, early land deeds almost always mention the name of a man’s wife because she had a legal interest in any land being sold or purchased. In fact, a woman had “veto power” over the sale of land by her husband. Under the English system, a married woman could not own land in her own name; but with her dower rights, she could veto the sale of the land. Many early deed transcripts will include an affidavit in which a wife was interviewed privately by the court clerk to determine whether or not she was in favor of the sale.

GREAT RESOURCES FOR FINDING LAND RECORDS:

- *Locating Your Roots: Discover Your Ancestors Using Land Records*
- *The Researcher’s Guide to American Genealogy*
- *Bounty and Donation Land Grants in British Colonial America*
- *Character Certificates in the General Land Office of Texas*
- *Federal Land Series*
- *Owner Unknown, Your Guide to Real Estate Treasure Hunting*
- *Richard Griffith and His Valuations of Ireland*
- *The Beginner’s Guide to Using Tax Lists*
- *The Final Rolls of Citizens and Freedmen of the Five Civilized Tribes*
- *Genealogies of Virginia Families from the William and Mary College Quarterly*
- *West Virginia Estate Settlements*