



THE BIRMINGHAM GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

Founded April 15, 1959

www.birminghamgenealogy.org

<http://birminghamgenealogy.wordpress.com/>

THE PIONEER TRAILS NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2016

General Meeting for February: The Birmingham Genealogical Society will meet at 2:00 p.m. on **Saturday, February 27th** on the fourth floor of the Birmingham Public Library (boardroom in the new library). The Board of Directors will meet at 1:00 p.m. in the same room.

Please join us on Saturday, February 27th (2:00 pm) for a roundtable discussion of “Marriage Records and How our Ancestors fell in love.” We will also discuss the different type of marriage records that are valuable for genealogical research. Please join us for this informative program!

PLEASE NOTE: Please don't forget your 2016 Dues! Current annual dues are \$20.00/individual or \$25.00/family payable to the Birmingham Genealogical Society. Please mail to: The Birmingham Genealogical Society, Inc., P.O. Box 2432, Birmingham AL 35201

Genealogical & Historical Society News

The Alabama Genealogical Society will host its Spring 2016 Seminar on March 12, 2016 at Samford University in Birmingham AL. The theme is “It's All in the Details” presented by George G. Morgan. Topics include The Genealogist as CSI, Bring Em Back to Life – Developing an Ancestor Profile, Clues in the News and Getting Past Brick Walls. A registration form may be downloaded at <http://algensoc.org/main/SeminarFlyer.pdf>

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The past is not dead. It isn't even past. --William Faulkner

Scott A. Martin, BGS Newsletter Editor



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Marriage Records Checklist, 13 February 2013, by Maureen A. Taylor

(<http://www.familytreemagazine.com/>)

Marriage records encompass more than just a marriage certificate, which is lucky for you if your ancestors' wedding happened before vital record-keeping began where they lived. But even if your genealogy research has led you straight to that all-important marriage certificate, see if you can find these other records of your ancestors' unions. You'll confirm genealogical information and maybe even uncover new details:

Annulment: Legal or religious annulments are retroactive and declare the marriage invalid from the date of the marriage. Records are typically found in church or court records.

Banns: A church would announce three times a couple's intent to marry, in case there were any objections to the couple marrying such as bigamy or another marriage intention.

Bond: In Southern states, the groom or male relatives of the bride posted a bond in a public place in the bride's county, in case the marriage was nullified. The marriage generally followed within a few days.

Consent affidavit: A guardian would sign this document to grant permission for his ward to marry. Most common in the South and on the frontier, these documents are among town and county records.

Contract: An engagement was viewed as a legally binding business contract. Similar to the prenups of today, this protected the assets of the wealthy party. If either party broke the contract, he or she could be held in breach of contract and the matter settled in court.

Declaration of intention: A couple would file this document with a town clerk, who would post them in a public place in case someone had the right to contest the upcoming nuptials. Note that this doesn't prove the marriage took place, only that the couple intended to marry.

Divorce petition and decree: The petition for divorce often includes depositions from family and friends, as well as the couple themselves. The court's decree grants the divorce. Remember that a petition may have been filed even if a divorce wasn't finalized.

Marriage license: A civil authority, such as a county court, issued a license to a betrothed couple. It can include their full names, place of residence, place of birth, age and whether it is the first marriage.

Marriage return: After the wedding, the officiant would fill out the marriage return and send it to the local registrar as proof the marriage occurred.

Marriage certificate: This document, given to the couple after the ceremony, records the names of the parties and other wedding details.

Marriage register: Towns or counties kept registers of civil and religious marriages reported to them.

Newspaper announcement: Check local papers for engagement, wedding and anniversary notices.



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Workbook: Marriage Records, 14 September 2015, by Amanda Epperson

(<http://www.familytreemagazine.com/>)

Our American ancestors kept marriage records from colonial times. The government needed to ensure that children who inherited their parents' property were legitimate, that people didn't marry close relatives, that nobody was married to more than one person at the same time and that both parties were above the age of consent or if not, had the consent of their parents or legal guardian. Marriage records can provide important genealogical details about your ancestors and point to new avenues for research. This guide will help you determine where to look for marriage records and record substitutes, as well as what information you may find in the records. Although regulations over marriages varied greatly by county and state, the general process unfolded this way: After the bride and groom agreed to marry, they had to obtain a license or post banns. A marriage license gave permission to a justice of the peace, rabbi or minister to marry a couple. In the 20th century, couples had to fill out an application for a license before one could be issued. If the bride or groom was under the age of consent, a letter of consent might have been submitted when the license application was filed. In some states, primarily in the South, grooms had to place themselves under bond before they married. One or two other men acted as surety to the bond. The bond money was meant to defray court expenses if a planned marriage were not to take place. Some states allowed a couple who didn't want to pay for a license to instead post banns for three consecutive Sundays in local churches. Banns announced a couple's intention to marry and gave the community time to object to the union. The acquisition of the license, posting of banns or putting up a bond all assured the state and the community that there were no legal impediments to the marriage. After the ceremony, the officiant returned a record of the marriage to the courthouse. The returns were either filed or entered into a bound marriage register. The officiant stopped by the courthouse to register or return the marriages he'd performed over a certain period of time. The couple might receive a certificate as an official record as well. No matter what type of marriage record survives for your ancestor, you're likely to find at least some of the following information:

- names of bride and groom
- date and location of marriage
- name of officiant (justice of the peace, minister, etc.)
- names of bride's and groom's parents
- occupations of bride and groom
- ages and dates of birth for the bride and groom
- birthplaces for the bride, groom and parents
- names of witnesses
- names of surety or bondmen to marriage bond

Unless it was a second marriage, the record will include the bride's maiden name. If the officiant was a minister or rabbi, researching him can shed light on the religious affiliation of your ancestors and lead to additional records. If the record includes the names of the couple's parents and their birthplaces, you'll have a jump-start on your research of the previous generation. Depending upon the state's marriage laws, if no was consent filed, you can be fairly sure that the groom was at least age 21 and the bride was at least 18. Women are harder to trace, but marriage bonds generally provide one or two names of men with whom the bride was associated. The men who stood surety to the groom were frequently the bride's father or brother, or otherwise connected to her family. Surety was rarely from the groom's family. The witnesses listed on a marriage record were usually the couple's family members or close friends—researching these folks can help you find records naming your ancestors. Sometimes, though, witnesses had no connection with the bride or groom and just happened to be nearby.

Nonprofit to care for Historic Pell City cemetery, 18 February 2016 (<http://www.wvtm13.com/>)

A nonprofit organization, The Heart of Pell City, is preparing to breathe fresh life into an old town treasure. The revitalization group plans to clean up the underbrush and clean off the tombstones in the Pell City cemetery. "There's quite a bit of work that needs to be done here," said Beth Waggoner, president of The Heart of Pell City. "We really need a large pool of volunteers to come out and clean this area up." Waggoner hopes 50 to 100 volunteers will help with the project. She plans on meeting with the Pell City Council on Monday to discuss the group's plan and obtain volunteer waivers. "Beginning in April we'll be coming with a team of volunteers and cleaning the underbrush," she said. "That's our first mission is just cleaning up and filling the holes because it is a

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danger for people to walk around here.” The second phase is maintenance and cleaning off gravestones. The Pell City Cemetery was deeded to the city. It’s more than 100 years old and hasn’t seen a face-lift since the 1970s, according to Waggoner. She said many of the tombstones in the cemetery belong to workers from Avondale Mills. She said especially after the mills were demolished last November, maintaining the city’s founding history is of the utmost importance. “This city was really built on Avondale Mills and it’s a part of that history,” said Waggoner. “And now with Avondale Mills being completely gone, people are really wanting to hold on to our other historical places within the town.” The organization plans to begin cleaning up the cemetery in April. If they get enough volunteers, Waggoner expects they’ll have the first cleanup phase complete in one month. She said the long-term plan is to bring in a local acting troupe, Pell City Players, to host graveyard tours. “It’s a part of our history. It’s our founding history. It’s what made this a great town to live in,” said Waggoner. In the meantime, Waggoner said for those who are interested, they are maintaining a registry at the local library of people who are buried in the cemetery.

29 March 1904, *THE BIRMINGHAM AGE-HERALD*

“Vulcan’s Head Causes Foundrymen Trouble”

The making of the mould of Vulcan was commenced yesterday morning and it is well on its way. Although the task is tedious and will require several days, the workmen are pushing it rapidly and by the end of the week they hope to have a large part of it completed. The work is more difficult than the moulding of any of the balances of the figure, as there are many intricate lines to be followed in the face, especially around the beard and mouth. The repairs on the head which as broken several days ago while being moved from one part of the foundry to another, have been completed, and now there is nothing to delay the foundrymen in finishing the casting in the next two weeks. The mould of the shoulder was also commenced yesterday, and the outer portion of it was about completed. Today the foundrymen will commence making the pore and they hope by the first of next week to be ready to make a casting of this portion of the figure. The mould and core of the left leg placed in the pit yesterday, and the foundrymen are packing the sand around it so that it will not give while being cast. They hope to make the casting about dark this afternoon, although they may not get it finished until tomorrow morning. The shoulder will require about 15,000 pounds of metal for the casting as it is practically the largest piece of the statue which has been attempted so far. The head is the only piece which is larger. The shoulders are about twenty feet in circumference. Sculptor Moretti is making a plaster casting of the Vulcan with an immense shield behind the iron man. This is typical of the mythological Vulcan, who was always pictured with the spear, the hammer and the shield behind him, on which he is leaning. These statues can be cast in one piece and will be the style used for selling at the exposition. The suggestion was made him yesterday in a letter from James A. MacKight, who is in St. Louis. It will greatly reduce the expense of making the statuettes.



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Jefferson County, Alabama Marriages to 1825
Transcribed and Contributed by Marcella Davis
To be continued in next newsletter

Groom	Bride	Date	County
Abernathy, Samuel	Abernathy, Eleanor	18 Aug 1825	Jefferson
Adams, Elias	Potter, Betsy	12 May 1822	Jefferson
Adams, Hillary	Counts, Sally	14 Apr 1824	Jefferson
Addington, Jason	Sandefer, Elizabeth	20 Jan 1825	Jefferson
Aiken, John G.	Miles, Temperance	31 Jul 1825	Jefferson
Aiken, Samuel	Bivens, Mary	19 Jul 1824	Jefferson
Aldridge, John	Ferguson, Abigail	16 Dec 1821	Jefferson
Alexander, Noah	Gandy, Eliza	27 Dec 1820	Jefferson
Allen, John	Ostean, Margaret	25 Jun 1823	Jefferson
Alred, Thomas	Spradling, Elizabeth	7 Oct 1824	Jefferson
Anderson, S. W. G.	Shelton, Wilmouth	27 Jun 1818	Jefferson
Austin, William	Berry, Susan	13 Mar 1819	Jefferson
Ayers, John	Snow, Cynthia	30 Apr 1822	Jefferson
Bagley, William	Fergusons, Nancy	6 Aug 1822	Jefferson
Bagwell, Furney	Bayles, Fathey	18 Oct 1818	Jefferson
Bagwell, Wylie	York, Polly	27 May 1823	Jefferson
Barger, Isaac	McClerkin, Veste	5 Apr 1825	Jefferson
Barron, Benjamin	Nations, Polly 10	Apr 1823	Jefferson
Barton, Hiram	Willis, Sally	25 Oct 1820	Jefferson
Barton, Isaac	Snow, Nancy	27 Nov 1819	Jefferson
Barton, James	Nabors, Nancy	14 Aug 1823	Jefferson
Barton, Joshua	Bradley, Elizabeth	5 Dec 1820	Jefferson
Bates, James	Brown, Anna	22 Dec 1825	Jefferson
Battles, Littleberry	Varnon, Anna	20 Feb 1823	Jefferson
Battles, Obadiah	Stewart, Kesiah	2 May 1823	Jefferson
Bayles, George W.	Potter, Cynthia	10 Jan 1825	Jefferson
Bayles, Lucas	Snow, Temperance	19 Oct 1820	Jefferson
Bayless, Elbert H.	McAdams, Catherine	4 Jan 1825	Jefferson
Beard, Robert	Tatum, Susan	17 Mar 1822	Jefferson
Benich, George	Stockton, Elizabeth	18 Nov 1822	Jefferson
Bias, John	Killough, Patsy	6 Sep 1820	Jefferson
Bibb, Randolph C.	Green, Irena	8 Apr 1824	Jefferson
Bibb, Thomas M.	Ayres, Maria	1 Apr 1822	Jefferson
Bishop, Joseph	Cunningham, Jane	15 Dec 1823	Jefferson
Blackburn, James	McDonald, Polly	20 Jan 1820	Jefferson
Blythe, Rickets	Clayton, Rebecca	23 Jun 1825	Jefferson
Boggs, George C.	Berry, Rachel	16 Mar 1821	Jefferson
Bolding, Marvel	Steelman, Sarah	30 May 1822	Jefferson
Box, William	Taylor, Eleanor	4 Jan 1819	Jefferson
Boyd, James	Hannah, Jane	4 Jan 1821	Jefferson
Boydston, Jesse	Miles, Ursula	28 Mar 1824	Jefferson

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Bradford, Philemon	Truss, Susanna	9 Aug 1821	Jefferson
Brannon, Jehu	Hunt, Edy	27 Jan 1820	Jefferson
Bridges, Joseph	Condry, Margaret	23 Nov 1818	Jefferson
Brittain, Aaron	Moss, Minerva	5 Jan 1824	Jefferson
Brooks, Jacob Warren	Lacey, Katherine	27 Jul 1820	Jefferson
Brown, David	Anderson, Mille	1 Mar 1819	Jefferson
Brown, Elijah	Edmondson, Nancy	15 Jan 1821	Jefferson
Brown, James	Bell, Margaret	2 Dec 1824	Jefferson
Brown, John D.	Bradley, Agnes	8 Jul 1823	Jefferson
Brown, Joseph M.	Waldroop, Jane	5 Nov 1822	Jefferson
Brown, Thompson	Owen, Nancy	17 Dec 1822	Jefferson
Bryan, Jacinth H.	Ward, Sarah	20 Jul 1822	Jefferson
Bryant, William	Hobbs, Jinny 2	4 Jun 1820	Jefferson
Buchanan, John	Simons, Jane Elmira	4 Jul 1824	Jefferson
Burchfield, James	Clarke, Anne	6 Aug 1819	Jefferson
Burchfield, Jeremiah	Burks, Polly	7 Dec 1823	Jefferson
Burgan, Thomas	Ayres, Peggy	17 Aug 1819	Jefferson
Burkhart, William	Miles, Milly	27 Aug 1822	Jefferson
Burleson, William A.	_____?	6 Oct 1818	Jefferson
Burlison, Michael	Henson, Rebecca	6 Sep 1822	Jefferson
Burton, Chesley	Sanders, Sophia	5 Jun 1822	Jefferson
Butler, Ephraim	Brown, Maria	6 Oct 1821	Jefferson
Byars, Nathan	Reavice, Elizabeth	3 Mar 1825	Jefferson
Byars, William	Goode, Jane	23 Mar 1824	Jefferson
Caldwell, Alexander	Griffin, Frances	5 Jun 1823	Jefferson
Calley, James Smith,	Patience	7 Mar 1819	Jefferson
Calley, William	Dejernatte, Dicy	3 Feb 1825	Jefferson
Camp, John	Brown, Eliza	5 Oct 1821	Jefferson
Camp, Thomas H.	Hanby, Sarah	31 Mar 1824	Jefferson
Campbell, Sidney	Hannah, Esther	20 Jan 1822	Jefferson
Cantley, John	Bryant, Nancy K.	6 Oct 1825	Jefferson
Carroll, James	White, Hannah	8 Jan 1819	Jefferson
Carroll, John	Johnson, Katherine	3 Oct 1820	Jefferson
Case, William	Reed, Margaret	6 Sep 1821	Jefferson
Cawood, Thomas	Tipton, Ruth	30 Mar 1820	Jefferson
Childress, David	Graham, Mary	13 Jun 1819	Jefferson
Childress, Levi	Montgomery, Susanna	3 May 1824	Jefferson
Church, Moses	Clarke, Nancy	30 Mar 1824	Jefferson
Clarke, James	Burchfield, Sarah	5 Aug 1819	Jefferson
Clayton, Charles C. Jr.	Richey, Eliza	21 Apr 1824	Jefferson
Clayton, John	Milton, Aggy	20 Feb 1823	Jefferson
Click, Henry	Burks, Elizabeth	11 Jun 1818	Jefferson
Cobb, Peter M.	Bayles, Mary	15 Apr 1822	Jefferson
Cochran, Owen	Cochran, Alpha	3 Feb 1825	Jefferson
Cochran, Samuel H.	Findley, Polly	5 Aug 1818	Jefferson
Coker, Leonard	Jacks, Polly	9 Feb 1820	Jefferson
Coker, Loving	Lawley, Martha	2 Dec 1819	Jefferson