



**THE BIRMINGHAM GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY, INC.**

**P.O. Box 2432  
Birmingham, AL 35201**

**Founded April 15, 1959**

**[www.birminghamgenealogy.org](http://www.birminghamgenealogy.org)**

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

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**NEWSLETTER No. 500**

**July 18, 2014**

**General Meeting for July:** The Birmingham Genealogical Society will meet at 2:00 p.m. on **Saturday, July 26th** on the fourth floor of the Birmingham Public Library (in the Arrington Auditorium). The Board of Directors will meet at 1:00 p.m. in the same room.

**The program for July: Please join us as Mary Taylor, BGS member and current 1st Vice-President, presents an overview of the 2014 NGS Family Conference held in Richmond VA.** The theme for this year's National Genealogical Society's Annual Conference, held in May, was "Virginia: The First Frontier." **Please join us!**

**Research & Genealogical Tips: Census Dates Matter**

While any census can contain incorrect information, keep in mind that census questions were to be answered as of the date of the census, commonly referred to as the "census date." The 1910 census for your ancestor's residence may have been taken on 11 May 1910, but the questions were to have been answered as of 15 April 1910. Some census takers were more concerned about accuracy than others and some informants may have understood the "census date" versus "actual date" better than others.

**Using Pre-1850 Census Tick Marks**

Are you trying to get the most from those pre-1850 US census records that only list heads of household and enumerate the rest of the household using only tick marks? Remember that the head of household does not have to be the oldest male and there may be more than one couple living in the household (or perhaps an older family member such as Grandma or Grandpa). And the 1840 census lists all Revolutionary War veterans--either as the head of household or on the right hand side of the census page.

**Widows May Not Be**

There was a time when a significant social stigma was attached to being divorced. It is very possible that a relative who is listed as a widow in the 1900 census was not a widow at all, but perhaps either separated or divorced from their spouse.

**Heirs and Legatees**

Legal definitions can sometimes be difficult to pin down as they can change over time and can vary from state to state. However, usually heirs of a deceased person are related to them by blood or legal adoption. The legatees of a deceased person are given property in that deceased person's will. State statute in effect at the time the reference used should clarify if there is any ambiguity.

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<http://genealogytipoftheday.blogspot.com>, TIPDATE.



**Congratulations to the Birmingham Genealogical Society – this is our 500<sup>th</sup> Newsletter!**

**Announcement!** Sue Steele- Mahaffey has a copy of the out of print *Heritage of Jefferson County* for sale! Please contact her at (205) 956-3007 for details!

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

*Scott A. Martin, BGS Newsletter Editor*

## 2014 Officers & Directors

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### *Charleston Daily Mail, 11 December 1925*

48 DEAD TAKEN FROM SHAFT OF ALABAMA MINE. FIVE ADDITIONAL BODIES BELIEVED IN OVERTON PLANT NO. 2 FOLLOWING EXPLOSION. WORKER BLINDED BY FLASH GRABS APPENDAGE AND IS DRAGGED TO OPEN.

Birmingham, Ala., Dec. 11. -- Twenty-six bodies were brought up from the recesses of the Overton mine No. 2 this morning, bringing the total removed to 48. Mine officials and rescue workers believe that five bodies still remain in the mine, and have abandoned all hope that the remainder of the men would be found alive. Mine officials expressed the belief that the total death list would not exceed 53, as they estimated that all bodies except five had been recovered. Rescue crews worked patiently all night and continued their labors today hoping to remove before nightfall the remaining bodies. Cause Is Unknown. The Overton mine is the property of the Alabama Fuel and Iron company and is considered by federal and state mine officials one of the best equipped in the Alabama field. The blast did not wreck the air machinery, and this aided the rescue party. The cause of the blast had not been officially determined. Some of the mine workers believed it was caused by a miner striking a match which is forbidden, or by a "windy" shot. It is believed that most of the bodies unrecovered are those of negro workers. Relatives of the victims were not allowed to view the bodies. Identification was being carried out with greatest difficulty. Wearied watchers kept an all night vigil about the pit's mouth. The color line was obliterated. White and negro were united in a common grief, and each tried to assume the other's loss. Rain began falling at daybreak but women hoping to find their loved ones yet alive, never budged from the guard lines. A negro miner owes his escape to his mule. Back somewhere in the pit when the gas was worst and conditions appeared darkest for the entombed men, out through the slope opening flashed a big fat mule. Clinging to the mule's tail was the negro who had become temporarily blinded by the blast and took this means of saving himself. He said he knew the mule would "get out if there was any getting." The work of rescue practically completed, the sorrowing community turned to burial of its dead and the help it might give the bereaved. Of the fifty-three men killed outright, only two were unmarried and most of them were parents of large families. Among the victims was Rev. A. C. COLLINS, a negro minister. Haggard and worn, CHARLES DEBARDELEBEN, president of the Alabama Fuel and Iron Company, which owns the property, stopped for a short rest period at noon after having led the work of rescue for 20 hours.