



THE BIRMINGHAM GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

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www.bgsal.org

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

THE PIONEER TRAILS NEWSLETTER

MAY 2018

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

Please join us as Ron Rutherford presents: "Restoring Old Photographs." Ron Rutherford is degreed professional Texas State Technical College, 1977. Ron's professional experience includes many different areas. He started in High School as a Newspaper Staff Photographer. While in the US Air Force he was assigned additional duties and Unit photographer. He has taken photos all around the world. He has been a graphics professional working with photo editing software from the 1980's. He has polished his photo editing skills for over twenty years. He has evaluated many of the current photo editing software programs but has worked with COREL PHOTO PAINT/SHOP. Over the years he has learned to deal with many of the problems associated with "Old Photos" restoring damaged, faded, and scratched to a like new condition. He will share some his secrets to restoring your photos. **Please join us!**

Research & Genealogical Tips

© Michael John Neill, "Genealogy Tip of the Day,"

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

Order of the Children: For families that lived during a time of no vital records genealogists often do not have dates of birth. In some cases, it may even be difficult to estimate years of birth if records are not available. In cases such as these, make certain that you indicate the birth order is either a guess or inferred from the order of children in a will or another document. If children married, years of birth could be estimated from the marriage dates. And ask yourself, would any of my conclusions change if the order of birth for these children change? Most times they wouldn't, but you never know.

Sources – Original vs. Derivative: Generally speaking, sources are considered to be original or derivative. The words mean what they say, but sometimes there can be confusion. The original is the first one—the actual letter your relative wrote (the physical piece of paper they touched and used their writing utensil on). Any picture, transcription, scan, photocopy, etc. is a derivative. Some derivatives are the legal equivalent of the original—the record copy of a deed or a will that is recorded in a records office. Some derivatives are mechanical reproductions that reproduce the document faithfully (unaltered color photographs for instance). Calling something original or derivative is simply referencing its creation. Whether that something is accurate is another story.

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

Scott A. Martin, BGS Newsletter Editor

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Immigration to USA Before 1820

© Lorine McGinnis Schulze

Before 1820 approximately 650,000 individuals came to America. To find your ancestor on a Passenger List before 1820 you will need to know his/her name, approximate year of arrival and nationality. Not all passengers were recorded before 1820. You will also need to consult newspaper records for names of immigrants, naturalization oaths, indenture lists, grants and other records. Some helpful tips for searching are:

- Search for the entire family. You may find needed clues in another family member's details.
- Search the sources thoroughly and record all details such as neighbors, guardians, witnesses.
- Don't make your search too narrow. If you think great great grandpa immigrated in 1846, but you can't find him, search 10 years before and after
- Be aware of all spelling variations. Remember, spelling was not always consistent nor standardized. Names were often spelled phonetically. Often a recording clerk was of a different nationality than the person providing the information and local accents play a strong part in the sound of a name.
- Use indexes but use them with caution! Remember that indexes can be incomplete or incorrect.

You should also consult P. William Filby's index to names "Passenger and Immigration Lists Index" 15 volumes. You should also refer to Complete Book of Emigrants, 1607-1776

If you have thoroughly searched the records noted above, and have not found anything, you may need to turn to other local records in the USA such as Land records, Obituaries, Census, local histories, Voting Registers, Military Records, and Church Records. These are ways of narrowing the time frame for your ancestor's arrival and finding out more details that will hopefully lead to a place of origin.

For very early arrivals (1600s) in New York, I have started a project to reconstruct names of individuals sailing from Netherlands to the New World. Prior to 1674 passenger lists as we know them were not kept. From the period 1654 to 1664 the West Indies Company kept a ledger book of accounts both paid and owing for voyages. Only the debit side (money due for passage) has been published as "Passengers to New Netherland" in the Year Book of the Holland Society of New Netherland 1902:1-37

I have drawn from several sources (Amsterdam notarial records, court documents in New Netherland/New York, unpublished thesis of Jaap Jacobs found in Amsterdam, and more) to reconstruct names of passengers on known voyages from 1628 to 1664.

For more details of all published lists for this time period, and for information on my ongoing project see

<http://olivetreegenealogy.com/nn/ships/>

You can also search the lists I have compiled and placed online. This is an Olive Tree Genealogy exclusive and is entirely my own research.

Some pre-1820 passenger lists are online. You can start your search on The Olive Tree Genealogy pages at

http://olivetreegenealogy.com/ships/tousa_index.shtml

Choose the year of interest or the port of interest from the menu found about half-way down the page.

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You may also wish to join **US-SHIPSLISTS-PRE1820**. This is a mailing list that I host for the discussion and sharing of information regarding ship passenger lists, immigration records, naturalization records and ships' lists substitutes for immigration to the United States before 1820.

To subscribe send "subscribe" to us-shipslists-pre1820-l-request@rootsweb.com (mail mode) or us-shipslists-pre1820-d-request@rootsweb.com (digest mode)."

To read the Archives for this list you can [Browse the US-SHIPSLISTS-PRE1820 archives](#)

Other records of interest are [Passenger Arrivals in the U.S., 1819-20](#). Prepared on order of the U. S. Senate, this informative database contains most of the immigrants who arrived in the nation between October 1819 and September 1820. The records contained herein reveal such facts about the immigrant as age, sex, occupation, nation of origin and in some records, the ship on which they arrived. To the researcher of U. S. immigration, this can be a helpful tool. You can search this offsite database for free and see the indexed results. To view details you must purchase a subscription.

To read about Immigration after 1820, go to [Immigration to USA After 1820](#)

Some Other Records of Interest:

- Passenger arrivals at the port of Philadelphia, 1800-1819 : the Philadelphia "baggage lists". editor, Michael H. Tepper [Available on CD ROM [Philadelphia "baggage lists"](#)]
- Passenger lists of vessels arriving at Philadelphia, 1800-1882 with index 1800-1906. United States Bureau of Customs
- Ship passenger lists, Pennsylvania and Delaware, 1641-1825. Boyer, Carl

The Acadian exiles in the American colonies, 1755-1768. compiled, translated and edited by Milton P. Rieder and Norma Gaudet Rieder.

Family Legends and Myths: Watching Out for Red Flags **by Sharon DeBartolo Carmack, CG**

"Great-grandma was a Cherokee Indian princess, you know." At the family reunion or while interviewing relatives, you might hear family stories like this or other lore about your forebears. Nearly everyone has a story that has been handed down about their ancestors. Some of these legends may be quite factual; others are myth. Almost all family stories have some grain of truth, however. Family legends aren't usually created out of thin air, and that tiny grain of truth may be the clue that leads you to genealogical success. There are many myths that have worked their way into family stories, and perhaps you've already heard some of these. Often, they are about ethnic origins or how the family came to America. If you haven't heard any of these common legends yet, make yourself aware of some of the most common ones, since you may eventually hear variations as you talk with family members.

The Cherokee Indian Princess Myth

It's always a Cherokee princess, almost never Navajo or Apache or Pueblo or Lumbee. Native American ancestry is an extremely common family story, and it seems it is always to an Indian princess. The Cherokee, of course, are a large tribe with a diverse culture, divided by the Trail of Tears. They intermarried widely, perhaps increasing the likelihood of Cherokee/white ancestry.

One reason this princess myth may have evolved is prejudice. For those who frowned upon a white male ancestor marrying an Indian woman, elevating the woman's status to princess made the truth easier to swallow. Keep in mind that any story that says you have Native American ancestry -- often Cherokee -- may in itself be a myth. Even though it's currently an "in" thing to have Native American ancestry, just a few decades ago, it might have been the skeleton in your family's closet. Proving certain ethnic ancestry can be difficult because of prejudice or popularity

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toward a culture at any given time. Throughout history, some people who were victims of prejudice may have tried to hide their native origins by changing their name or claiming a different ethnicity.

The Three Brothers Myth

It's always three brothers who immigrated to America, never two or four or five or six. Sometimes one is lost at sea during the voyage over, or one went north, one went south, and one headed west, never to be heard from again. There are never any sisters involved in the big move across the ocean. Be wary of the brothers myth, and always keep an eye out for additional siblings both in America and once you start foreign research. You also want to confirm through your research that there were, in fact, three brothers, that the three brothers were indeed brothers and not two brothers and an uncle, for example, or that the three brothers weren't just three men with the same last name.

The Stowaway Myth

For some reason, it is so much more romantic to have an ancestor who came to America as a stowaway rather than a paying passenger. While there are cases of people who actually did sneak aboard ships, this was not common practice. If the stowaway was discovered enroute, typically, he will be recorded on the last page of the passenger arrival list. I deliberately use "he" because you almost never hear a story about great-grandma being a stowaway. Even if you have the family story of a stowaway, still check for a passenger arrival list, since if he was discovered and recorded on the passenger list, he'll likely be on the index, too.

The Claim-to-Fame Myth

Everyone who has the surname Bradford or Alden is related to William Bradford and John Alden of Mayflower fame, right? And everyone with the last name of Boone is related to Daniel. And if your last name is James, you're related to Jesse, of course. If you do have Native American ancestry, then you must be descended from Pocahontas. Is that a red flag I see flying? We all want a famous person to hang on our family tree, but we may not find that person. I'm supposedly related to Robert E. Lee. My research revealed that I really am. He's something like a ninth cousin, twenty times removed.

The Wrong Ethnic Identity Myth

All Germans are Hessians who fought in the American Revolution. All French are Huguenots. All Hispanics are Mexican. Of course, none of these broad statements is true. We tend to lump certain groups of people incorrectly into one category. "German" is not a distinct enough identifier in genealogy any more than "Indian" or "Hispanic." If family stories indicate that your ancestors were German or from Germany, were they Germans from Imperial Germany, Alsatians, Austrians, Swiss, Luxembourgers, Germans from Russia, or Poles from Germany? Even the records you uncover may not tell you more than "Germany." This is why it is so important to learn the unique cultural traits -- customs, traditions, folkways -- about the ethnic group.

Names, too, may be inaccurate indicators of ethnic identity. Just because the name sounds Italian, is it? The name you are accustomed to may have been changed or inadvertently corrupted over time, obscuring its ethnic origins.

The Ellis Island Baptism Myth

This is the myth that an immigrant ancestor's surname was changed by officials during processing at Ellis Island. No evidence whatsoever exists to suggest this ever occurred. During its operation as an immigrant receiving station (1892-1954), Ellis Island was staffed with hundreds of interpreters who spoke more than thirty different languages. Inspectors compared the names the immigrants told them against what was recorded on the passenger lists. These lists were created at the ports of departure. There was no reason to record or change anyone's surname once they arrived on the island. More likely, immigrants themselves changed their names after they settled in America to avoid prejudice and to blend more easily into American society.

Handling the Myth in Research and Writing

Now that I've shattered your favorite family story, how do you tell Grandpa? Or should you? And how do you handle ancient family legends that you've discovered through your research are false? Family legends are part of

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your family history and should never be ignored or taken lightly. As mentioned earlier, there is usually a kernel of truth to the family story. Rather than bursting Grandpa's bubble with the facts, try to find out how the story originated. When you write your family history, include the family story as it was told to you, noting it as family "tradition" or "lore" or "legend." Then explain, if you can, how the story originated, followed by a discussion of your research findings. You may reveal that some elements of a story were true and some were false, or that a story was totally false. Even if you have not been able to prove or disprove the story, acknowledge the lore and say it has yet to be proven. These family stories give color to your family history, so record and share them as what they are.

MEANING OF FLAG DRAPED OVER COFFIN

Have you ever noticed the honor guard pays meticulous attention to correctly folding the United States of America Flag 13 times? You probably thought it was to symbolize the original 13 colonies, but we learn something new every day!

The 1st fold of the flag is a symbol of life.

The 2nd fold is a symbol of the belief in eternal life.

The 3rd fold is made in honor and remembrance of the veterans departing the ranks who gave a portion of their lives for the defense of the country to attain peace throughout the world.

The 4th fold represents the weaker nature, for as American citizens trusting in God, it is to Him we turn in times of peace as well as in time of war for His divine guidance.

The 5th fold is a tribute to the country, for in the words of Stephen Decatur, 'Our Country, in dealing with other countries, may she always be right; but it is still our country, right or wrong.'

The 6th fold is for where people's hearts lie. It is with their heart that they pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with Liberty and Justice for all.

The 7th fold is a tribute to its Armed Forces, for it is through the Armed Forces that they protect their country and their flag against all her enemies, whether they be found within or without the boundaries of their republic.

The 8th fold is a tribute to the one who entered into the valley of the shadow of death, that we might see the light of day.

The 9th fold is a tribute to womanhood, and Mothers. For it has been through their faith, their love, loyalty and devotion that the character of the men and women who have made this country great has been molded. The 10th fold is a tribute to the father, for he, too, has given his sons and daughters for the defense of their country since they were first born. The 11th fold represents the lower portion of the seal of King David and King Solomon and glorifies in the Hebrews eyes, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

The 12th fold represents an emblem of eternity and glorifies, in the Christians eyes, God the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit.

The 13th fold, or when the flag is completely folded, the stars are uppermost reminding them of their Nations motto, 'In God We Trust.'

After the flag is completely folded and tucked in, it takes on the appearance of a cocked hat, ever reminding us of the soldiers who served under General George Washington, and the Sailors and Marines who served under Captain John Paul Jones, who were followed by their comrades and shipmates in the Armed Forces of the United States, preserving for them the rights, privileges and freedoms they enjoy today.



Herman Schoel's 1888 Map of the City of Birmingham and Suburbs

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