



# Kansas Council of Genealogical Societies

PO Box 3858, Topeka, KS 66604-6858  
URL: <http://www.kcgs.us>

Newsletter

Volume 14, Number 3

March 22, 2015

Hello,

Wow! Did everyone enjoy the first and second days of spring? Today is even better. My trees are budding and the hyacinths are up. Forsythia is blooming. I am so ready.

The registration brochures for our June conference should be on their way to your societies. If you don't see one, just go online to our website and download one for your self. You will really enjoy this speaker.

Here is something genealogists might want to know:

## The Limitations of Familial DNA Searching from Eastman

The New Orleans Advocate has published an interesting article about the advantages and the limitations of familial DNA searching. I admit I was not familiar with that phrase until I read the article by Jim Mustian. He writes, "Familial searching differs from traditional DNA testing, a mainstream tool used to identify criminals. In familial searching, the number of partial matches — in which genetic profiles share several common "alleles," or variant forms of genes — can be overwhelming."

The process is controversial and does not provide positive identification of the individual in question. However, it apparently can identify close family members.

≡ **Kansas Council of Genealogical Societies, Inc.**

2015 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Featured Speaker

Kathleen Brandt

Kathleen is an international genealogy consultant, speaker and writer with more than 10 years of experience as a Professional Genealogist and is a licensed Private Investigator. Her clients include NBC *Who Do You Think You Are?*, and PBS, *Finding Your Roots*, with Henry Louis Gates, and she appeared on the History Channel, *How the States Got Their Shapes*. She has extensive experience in international and nationwide documentation retrieval, free-colored research, military record reconstructions, and tracing slaves, as well as Italian, Irish, Swedish, and German records.

Plan Now To Attend!  
Saturday, June 20, 2015  
Wichita, Kansas



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Proponents argue familial searching is a harmless way for police to crack otherwise unsolvable cases. The closest partial matches can steer investigators toward a criminal's family members, whose DNA profiles closely resemble those of a convicted or incarcerated relative.

Skeptics warn that the technique drastically expands DNA testing beyond the function envisioned by states that compel criminal defendants to submit DNA samples upon arrest. Many states lack formal legal rules governing the use of familial searching by law enforcement, while Maryland has explicitly outlawed the practice.

In this case, the police used a genealogy DNA database originally created by the Sorenson Molecular Genealogy Foundation, a nonprofit whose forensic assets have since been acquired by Ancestry.com. You can read the full article at <http://goo.gl/Vtde3J>.

## Women's Army Corps

From Fold3

Did you know that Fold3 has a huge number of documents from World War II about the Women's Army Corps (WAC), including hundreds of photos? If you're not already familiar with the WAC, you might be surprised to find out just how versatile this group was during the war.

The WAC was originally formed as the WAAC (Women's Army Auxiliary Corps) in 1942 as an auxiliary to the Army, but in 1943 it was incorporated into that military branch and renamed the WAC. The goal of the WAC was to free up men for WWII combat by replacing them with women in noncombatant military jobs. The women of the WAC (called WACs) worked with the Army in over 200 types of positions, including as clerks, stenographers, secretaries, teletype operators, mechanics, instructors, weather forecasters, course plotters, photo analysts, telephone operators, parachute riggers, drivers, radio operators, electricians, and cryptographers. However, within this diverse array of jobs, WACs were most often assigned to clerical and communications jobs, which the Army deemed appropriate for women.

Over the course of the war, around 150,000 WACs served at home and abroad, in places like England, France, Italy, New Guinea, the South Pacific, North Africa, China, and India—just to name a few. Although they sometimes faced discrimination and criticism, WACs were in high demand, and the officers they worked with—including General Eisenhower—often praised them for their hard work and skill. Their admirable qualities were proven by the fact that at the end of the war, 657 WACs received citations and medals.

Do you have any family members who served in the WAAC or WAC? You can find all sorts of information and images from the Corps on Fold3.

From Eastman's Newsletter

## Kansas Supreme Court Proposed Restricted Access to Kansas Marriage Records

The Kansas Supreme Court is considering proposed changes to Supreme Court Rule 106 to clarify treatment of personally identifiable information in marriage licensing documents maintained by the district courts. The new proposal restricts marriage records to attorneys, court officers, and to:

Unless otherwise ordered by the court, marriage licensing documents may be disclosed to the court, a court employee assigned to the case, the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, or the person to whom the marriage license was issued.

District courts must make publicly available a limited marriage record as prescribed by the Judicial Administrator. The content of a limited marriage record must not include the following personal information:

- (i) an applicant's Social Security number;
  - (ii) an applicant's date or city of birth;
  - (iii) an applicant's mother's maiden name;
- or

(iv) any information expressly designated as confidential on forms promulgated by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment under K.S.A. 23-2509.

Additional details may be found in the Kansas Proposed Rule Change to Supreme Court Rule 106 – Court Records at [http://www.kscourts.org/kansas-courts/general-information/proposed\\_rules\\_2015/Rule106031315.pdf](http://www.kscourts.org/kansas-courts/general-information/proposed_rules_2015/Rule106031315.pdf).

**Participate in the #1000pages Transcription Challenge from NARA**

## More about Surnames

When we think of tracing our family tree, we often envision following our surname back thousands of years to the first bearer of the name. In our neat and tidy dream, each successive generation bears the same surname - spelled exactly the same way in each and every record - until we reach the dawn of man. The dream comes to an end, however, when confronted with the cold hard facts of genealogy research. For the majority of human existence surnames were not even used. According to legends, China first initiated the custom of using surnames during the reign of Emperor Fu Xi (2852BC), but their use didn't begin in the European world until about the eleventh century, with some patronymic surnames in Scandinavia bestowed as late as the nineteenth century. Surnames, for the most part, evolved during the past eight hundred years to help distinguish one person from another as the world's population grew. The acquisition of surnames has been influenced by many factors, including social class, naming practices and patterns, and even unusual events.

Even tracing your ancestors back to the point where they first acquired surnames can be a challenge as surname spelling and pronunciation has evolved over centuries, making it unlikely that your present surname is the same as the original surname bestowed on your distant ancestor. You may have a slight spelling variation of the original name, an Anglicized version, or even a completely different surname. This may have occurred for such reasons as:

- Illiteracy - the further back you go in your research, the more you will find cases of ancestors who couldn't read and write. Many didn't even know how their own names were spelled, only how to pronounce them. Therefore, when they gave their names to clerks, census enumerators, clergymen, or other officials, that person wrote the name the way that it sounded to him. Even if they did have the spelling memorized, the person recording the information may not have asked. Example: the German HEYER has become HYER, HIER, HIRE, HIRES, HIERS, etc.

- Simplification - Immigrants, upon arrival in a new country, often found that their name was difficult for others to spell or pronounce. Therefore, they often simplified the spelling or altered their names to relate them more closely to the language and pronunciations of their new country. Example: the German ALBRECHT becomes ALBRIGHT, or the Swedish JONSSON becomes JOHNSON

- Necessity - Those from countries with alphabets other than Latin had to transliterate them, producing many variations on the same name. Example: the Ukrainian surname ZHADKOWSKYI became ZADKOWSKI

- Mispronunciation - Letters within a surname were often confused due to verbal miscommunication or heavy accents. Example: depending upon the accents of both the person speaking the name and the person writing it down, KROEBER could become GROVER or CROWER

- Desire to Fit In - Many foreigners changed their names in some way to assimilate into their new country and culture. The most usual change of surname was to translate the meaning of their surname into the new language. Example: the Irish BREHONY became JUDGE

- Desire to Break with the Past - Immigration was sometimes prompted in one way or another by a desire to break with or escape the past. For some immigrants this included ridding themselves of anything, including their name, which reminded them of an unhappy life in the old country. Example: Mexicans fleeing to America to escape the revolution

- Dislike of Surname - People forced by governments to adopt surnames which were not a part of their culture or were not of their choosing would often shed themselves of such names at the first opportunity. Example: Armenians forced by the Turkish government

to give up their traditional surnames and adopt new "Turkish" surnames would revert back to their original surnames, or some variation, upon emigration/escape from Turkey

- Fear of Discrimination - Surname changes and modifications can sometimes be attributed to a desire to conceal nationality or religious orientation in fear of reprisal or discrimination. This motive constantly appears among the Jews, who often faced anti-Semitism. Example: the Jewish surname COHEN changed to COHN/KAHN or WOLFSHEIMER shortened to WOLF

*til next time*

*Janeice*

## **Angie Harmon featured on Who Do You Think You Are? Sunday on TLC**

**from Eastman**

The U.S. version of *Who Do You Think You Are?* continues this Sunday as Angie Harmon sets out to discover the roots of her beloved father, whose heritage is relatively vague.

On her journey, Angie uncovers the dramatic story of her five-times great grandfather, who endured hardship and danger as an immigrant coming to America. She discovers that he fought in the American Revolution and risked death for standing his ground. She makes modern connections with some of her own values that appear to have been in the family for generations.

Key details discovered in Angie's episode include:

- Angie traces all the way up to her 5x great grandfather Michael Harmon. She discovers that Michael was the first immigrant ancestor on the Harmon side, and to her surprise, from Germany.
- Angie discovers Michael Harmon gave up his freedom to come to America, fought for his new country's independence, and risked everything at a pivotal point in America's history.
- Angie finds out that Michael Harmon as an indentured servant once arriving in the US.
- Michael Harmon was released from servitude right in the middle of the Revolutionary War, and enlisted with the 4th Pennsylvania Regiment on May 10, 1777.
- Angie discovers that Michael Harmon camped at Valley Forge under the command of George Washington.
- However, Michael and his entire Pennsylvania line mutinied due to horrible conditions. Eventually the U.S. army met their terms, and the soldiers were able to leave service if they chose – Michael's war service ended after the mutiny. Michael owned multiple plantations and finally got married and had 7 children, perhaps starting the tradition of big Harmon families.