Kansas Council of Genealogical Societies

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Hello,

Here it is the end of March. These warm and windy days and nights herald the onset of spring. Hooray!

Kansas Council is working hard on our June conference to be held in Western Kansas this year. We hope to encourage more of our members and fellow genealogists to attend and we also hope you will be willing to drive a little further to meet and fellowship with us all.

You will be receiving brochures and information very soon so be on the lookout.

Meanwhile, I have been reading some interesting stuff:

5 Tips For Finding Your Ancestors' Occupations

Michael J. Leclerc's Genealogy News

One of the ways we can make our ancestors come to life is by identifying their occupations. There are a number of different ways you can find this information. One of the first sources that come to mind is directories, which often list occupations as well as addresses. Here are a few sources that perhaps you haven't thought of, or that you might think of using in a different way.

1. Probate Records

Yes, when a person's estate is entered into probate, the record usually records the occupation and place of residence with the name of the deceased. But sometimes it does not. And even if it does, you can still find more details about his occupation by examining the full record. Most especially, look for the inventory of the estate. The inventory will usually list all possessions, including those used for following one's occupation. Examining the list of tools can help you to determine your ancestor's occupation. You might even be able to discover more specifically what trade it was. For example, you might know what an ancestor was a smith, but was he a blacksmith, whitesmith, or goldsmith? Examining the tools may help you determine this.

2. Land Records

Once again, a person's occupation is often listed at the start of the document. But other clues can lurk in land records. For example, look at the property being purchased. Is it farmland? Is it meadow that might be used to feed livestock? Are they are buildings on it? What types of buildings? Farms? Tenements? A forge? All of these can provide clues to the occupation of your anctor.

3. Assessor's Records

Tax records are a huge boon for genealogists, and very underutilized in many areas. Not only can they put an ancestor on the ground in a particular place and time, they can tell you a great deal more about the ancestor's life. By looking at what types of taxes are being paid, you can often get clues to an ancestor's occupation. Taxes for large amounts of livestock, for example, could be a clue that the ancestor was a farmer. Or there might be taxes for different kinds of manufactures.

4. Association/Organization Records

Many social organizations were created by members of professions. Members practiced the same, or similar occupations. Determining what organizations your ancestor belonged to may help you determine what occupation they followed. For example, The National Grange of the Order of Patrons of Husbandry (commonly called "The Grange") is a fraternal organization promoting "the economic and political well-being of the community and agriculture." An ancestor who was a member of the Grange might have been a farmer, or any of a number of occupations involved in agriculture.

5. Local Histories

Many local histories mention any number of people involved in particular occupations. The odds are even greater of a mention if your ancestor was the sole practitioner of an occupation in the town where he lived, such as the village blacksmith. They are also a wonderful source for identifying the associations and organizations mentioned above that formed in the area where your ancestor lived.

HistoricGraves.com - An Online Graves and Graveyards Finder for Ireland

The Historic Graves project is a community focused grassroots heritage project. All information is contributed by volunteers and all information on the site is available to everyone, free of charge. The volunteers are located in Ireland and are part of local community groups who have been trained in low-cost, high-tech field surveys of historic graveyards and recording of their own oral histories. Together, they have built a multi-media online written, visual, and audio record of the historic graves in their own areas and have contributed the information to the Historic Graves project.

This is a great resource for anyone researching Irish ancestry. It is a "work in progress." That is, not all graveyards have been surveyed yet but new information is being added frequently. You can see a map of the completed graveyards at http://historic-graves.com/graveyardsmap. Click on an area of interest on the map to "zoom in" and see the details.

The The Historic Graves project may be found at http://www.historicgraves.com.

Map of US Ancestries by County

The U.S. Census Bureau has a map and a lot of text information that may interest many people who are beginning to research family history. It shows the top reported ancestries in the United States, as provided by the 2000 census. Areas with the largest "American" ancestry populations were mostly settled by some English, French, Welsh, Scottish and Irish; but by an overwhelming majority of Scots-Irish.

Obviously, this doesn't prove that your ancestors settled in these areas after arriving in the U.S. as there were many exceptions. However, it does show many of the more likely locations where you might start your search for records. I also find it to simply be very interesting for most all Americans to show "where we came from."

A small image of the map is shown above. You can click on it to see a larger version. You can also see the same map and a lot of detailed text information about immigration on the Census Bureau's web site at http://www.census.gov/

Special Issue of Clann Newsletter

Dick Eastman .

The following announcement was written by the Irish Family History Foundation:

Friday, March 25, 2016

To mark the centenary of the Easter Rising of 1916 a Special Issue of CLANN, the Irish Family History Foundation's quarterly online newsletter, has been released. It features the results of painstaking research on the families of the seven signatories to the Proclamation of the Irish Republic, the declaration read out by Patrick Pearse at the beginning of the insurrection on Easter Monday, April 24th 1916.

There is a year long programme of events taking place throughout the country in every village, town and city; in schools, libraries, and theatres. Our contribution is to combine family history with the events of 1916. The seven signatories, Ceannt, Clarke, Connolly,

and family history with the events of 1916. The seven signatories, Ceannt, Clarke, Connolly, Mac Diarmada, MacDonagh, Pearse and Plunkett, have been household names   theatres. Our contribution is to combine fin Ireland for the past century. The seven men came from different backgrounds. Their stories touch on twenty counties and reveal the diverse strands of nineteenth century Irish society.

The research was conducted over several months on behalf of the IFHF by Paul Gorry, a Member of Accredited Genealogists Ireland. The records used are indicated throughout the 52-page newsletter and hopefully these examples will illustrate the range of sources available for Irish genealogical research. The various county databases on ROOTSIRELAND.IE played a central role in tracing the seven families, but the research involved other online sources as well as original records and printed material.

We would welcome any further information that people would like to share about the men and their family histories. We would encourage people to share this publication with schools, libraries, local and family history societies and across social media.

The Special Issue is now available at http://www.rootsireland.ie/clann-newsletters.

What the IRISH FAMILY HISTORY FOUNDATION does:

The IFHF is the coordinating body for a network of 34 local genealogy centres throughout the island of Ireland. Through its website, ROOTSIRELAND.IE, the centres' databases are available on subscription. New records are added as the computerisation of sources continues locally. The records cover baptisms, marriages and deaths of various religious denominations, many civil records and gravestone inscriptions.

The ROOTSIRELAND.IE databases cover most of the 'Catholic Parish Registers at the NLI' http://registers.nli.ie and provide links to the relevant registers. In addition, the databases cover more recent Roman Catholic records, in many cases well into the twentieth century.

They also cover a number of registers never microfilmed by the National Library.

As well as the online information at ROOTSIRELAND.IE the county genealogy centres hold other sources which they will research for enquirers. Their knowledge of local history and place-names provides an additional insight into ancestral research in Ireland.

Pascagoula, Mississippi, Public Library is Digitizing Valuable Items of Local History

Dick Eastman

Hurricane Katrina taught us many lessons. One is how quickly material things can be destroyed. Members of the Jackson County Historical and Genealogical Society became keenly aware of the vulnerability of one-of-a-kind records, books, maps and photographs housed at the Pascagoula Public Library's Local Genealogy and History Department. The society has raised funds for computer and scanning equipment to begin the task to digitize and organize these assets and back them up in safe locations.

The first project tackled hundreds of file folders containing local family histories collected over a period of years. These are heavily used by local and family history researchers. Future plans include digitizing approximately 7,687 books, 5,725 periodicals, 3,833 microfilm rolls, 2,600 microfiche, 750 maps, 2,860 scanned family vertical files, 2,030 local history vertical files, 60 oral histories, 1,365 photos, 130 slides from local newspapers, 59 VHS tapes, 34,408 scanned obituaries, and 194 boxes of archives from Jackson County.

Not only does this project make backup copies in case of future disasters, it also makes the materials more accessible to students, genealogists, historians, and others. The committee is working towards making the scanned materials accessible online.

You can read more about this great project in an article by Joanne Anderson in the GulfLive web site at http://goo.gl/HYLbZO.

The Irish Are Not Celtic!

Dick Eastman

I am not certain if I believe this or not. However, it certainly is an interesting claim. Slashdot has an article that claims, "The discovery of a burial site in Ireland has thrown into doubt all theories concerning the Celtic origins of the Irish. 'The DNA evidence based on those bones completely upends the traditional view,' said Barry Cunliffe, an emeritus professor of archaeology at Oxford who has written books on the origins of the people of Ireland. DNA research indicates that the three skeletons found behind McCuaig's are the ancestors of the modern Irish and they predate the Celts and their purported arrival by 1,000 years or more. The genetic roots of today's Irish, in other words, existed in Ireland before the Celts arrived. The article is quite detailed, and outlines the overall scientific problem of the Celts: [namely that it] is now quite unclear who they were, where they came from, and where they went. In related news: Scientists have found new evidence of a human presence in Ireland as far back as 12,500 years ago."
The article is available in The Washington Post at https://goo.gl/KAbR1V

Finding Maiden Names

Discovering the maiden name of a female ancestor can sometimes be difficult, but can lead to a whole new branch of your family tree. New surnames, new families, new connections. Try these ten places for clues to maiden names of the women in your family tree.

1. Marriage Records

The most likely place to locate a woman's maiden name is on her marriage record. These can include not only the marriage license, but also the marriage certificate, marriage announcements, marriage banns, and marriage bonds. It is generally necessary to know the spouse's name, marriage location and approximate marriage date to find these records.

2. Census Records

Check every census year available for your female ancestor, up until the year that she died. Young couples may be found living with the wife's parents; an elderly parent may have been added to the household; or brothers, sisters, cousins, or other family members may be found living with your ancestors' family. Families living nearby may also be potential relatives.

3. Land Records

Land was important, and often passed down from father to daughter. Examine deeds for your ancestor and/or her husband which include the Latin phrases "et ux." (and wife) and "et al." (and others). They may provide the names of females, or names of siblings or children. Also keep your eye out for a man or a couple selling land to your ancestors for a dollar, or other small amount. The ones selling the land are more than likely the parents or relatives of your female ancestor. Investigate the witnesses to any transactions in which a widow is selling land, as they may be relatives.

4. Probate Records and Wills

If you have a possible set of parents for your female ancestor, search for their probate record or will. Surnames of female children, along with the names of their spouses, are often listed. Since estates often involved the division of land, deed indexes for your female ancestor may be able to lead you to probate proceedings.

5. Death Records

If your female ancestor died recently enough to leave a death certificate, this is potentially one of the few places where her maiden name may appear. Since death certificates can often include inaccurate information, check the certificate for the name of the informant. The closeness of the relationship between informant and the deceased can help you assess the likely accuracy of the provided information. Seek death records for each of the women's children as well. Even if the death certificate for your ancestor doesn't include the mother's maiden name, others might.

6. Newspaper Research

Check newspapers for the locality where your ancestors lived for birth or marriage announcements or obituaries. Even if you can't locate an obituary for your female ancestor, you may find notices for siblings or other family members that provide helpful clues; she may be mentioned in the obituary of a brother, for example. Combining a list of your ancestor's siblings with census research can help determine potential families.

7. Cemetery and Burial Records

Tombstone inscriptions for married or widowed women may include their maiden name. Check surrounding tombstones as well, as it could be possible that parents, siblings, or other family members may be buried nearby. If available, funeral home records may include information on the deceased's parents or next of kin.

8. Military Records

Was your ancestor's spouse or children in the military? Pension applications and military service records often include good biographical information. Family members also often signed as witnesses. In certain circumstances, women could also file for military pension benefits on behalf of a deceased husband or unmarried son; these applications often contain copies of marriage records or affidavits that a marriage took place.

9. Church Records

Churches are a good source for birth or christening records which usually include the names of both parents, sometimes including the maiden name of the mother. Church marriage records will usually include the spouse's maiden name, and are an alternate source for marriage information for localities and time periods where civil registration was not in effect.

10. Naming Patterns

It is only a clue, but the maiden name of a mother can sometimes be found among the names of her children. Unusual middle names, among boys or girls, might be the maiden name of a mother or grandmother. Or the eldest daughter might be named for her maternal grandmother.

Macavo has Merged with FindmyPast

If you have had an account with Mocavo, you need to keep watching to see how this merger is going to affect your records. You may want to remove them right away.

Til Next Time

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