

Genealogy Pointers (01-25-11)

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“Maps – Essential for Research,” by Joe Roop Brickey

(This article originally appeared on our blog, <http://www.genealogyandfamilyhistory.com>, on November 13, 2008.)

Are you using maps when you work on your genealogy? If not, you are missing out on one of the most important and useful tools available to us.

Maps contain vital information to help us find, and understand, the reasons why and how our ancestors moved from one place to another. If you look at a topographical map, you will discover the lay of the land in your ancestor’s geographic location. Mountain passes, valleys, rivers and broad plains – all played a role in determining the route they took to find a new home. Visit the [US Geological Survey](#) website for historical topographical maps; purchasable printed maps, aerial photographs, and satellite images; and the ability to download digital scans. Their FAQ concerning historical maps warns that the only way to determine the availability of an historical topographical map in your specific area of interest is either to call them at 1-888-ASK-USGS or email them at ask@usgs.gov. Check out the historical topographical maps available at [MapTech](#). A sample search there for Huntington, Massachusetts, identified seven quadrangle maps pertaining to this town. The Blanford quadrangle offered a choice of 1946 and 1955 maps in the 7.5 minute series. The Chester and Granville maps date to 1895. While landowner names are not included, the location of houses and other buildings and sites of interest are indicated. The maps are available in jpg. format with file sizes averaging about 2MB. If you center the map, you can print a small section on your desktop printer. You may also order a map printed in one of a variety of finishes, personalized with added information. Prices begin at \$9.95 and maps will be shipped within 24 hours of your order.

Maps of migration routes are useful in tracing your ancestors from one location back to a previous one. If your ancestors were living in Kentucky or Kansas, how did they get there? There were many established migration routes, and this type of map can give you an idea how they may have traveled from the coast into the interior of the country. One useful source is William Dollarhide’s *Map Guide to American Migration Routes, 1735-1815* (Precision Indexing, 1997). Another very useful set of maps, published in the centerfold of the May/June 2008 issue of *Ancestry* magazine, illustrates how Missouri served as a gateway to the west for many of our migrating ancestors. The article predicts, based on 1860, 1870 and 1880 federal census data, where your ancestor might be living depending on his or her state of origin.

If your ancestor was “on the move” after federal census enumerations began in 1790, Thorndale and Dollarhide’s [Map Guide to the U. S. Federal Censuses, 1790-1920](#) (Genealogical Publishing Co., 1987, reprinted 2007) is a great book to use. For each census year, county boundaries from that year are superimposed on a map of current county lines for each state so that it is easy to see which county lines may have changed and when. Tracing your ancestor’s likely route through the counties along a specific migratory road will help you identify possible earlier stopping places of interest to your research.

Did your ancestor live in a more urban area? Check out the Library of Congress’s [fire insurance map collection](#) that documents the plans of cities and towns made by the Sanborn Map Company. Your local library, or a larger library in your region, may also have an online subscription to the Sanborn fire insurance maps either for the entire country, or perhaps for your state. These maps will locate a specific address that you have associated with your ancestor, either residential or commercial, and will provide you with a “snap-shot” of the neighboring houses or businesses on your ancestor’s street. A detailed description of Sanborn maps can be found in Diane L. Oswald’s *Fire Insurance Maps: Their History and Applications* (Lacewing Press, 1997) and further information can be found in the Library of Congress’s *Fire Insurance Maps in the Library of Congress: Plans of North American Cities and Towns Produced by the Sanborn Map Company*, a checklist compiled by the Reference and Bibliography Section, Geography and Map Division (Library of Congress, 1981).

If you are looking for historical maps of the United States, be sure to check out the Library of Congress’s [extensive map collection](#). In addition, visit [Jonathan Sheppard Books](#) online. On sale right now at this website are an 1860 map of Boston and a 1901 map of Milwaukee. If you are researching in a public land state, be sure to consult [Arphax Publishing Company](#). (More detailed information was provided in a previous [GenealogyandFamilyHistory.com article](#).) You will also want to exhaust all of the map collections in the courthouse of the town or city in which your ancestor lived. Local tax offices often have great maps as will the fire department. Both the fire and police departments are often good sources of information about the location of old cemeteries or abandoned houses, particularly in rural areas, where they may use them as landmarks. Check the inside covers of county histories or family histories. Used bookstores and antique shops may have old maps. Do your local library and your state archives have map collections? You will want to check any map that might identify land owners. If you are fortunate enough to live in the New England area, landowner maps for towns may be available from early time periods. Other maps, such as Civil War battle maps, often note homeowners in the area being surveyed. See *The Official Military Atlas of the Civil War* (1983, Barnes & Noble Books, 2003).

Are you researching geographical locations in Europe? Again, [Jonathan Sheppard Books](#) provides a vast collection of maps at reasonable prices. Examples include a series of maps of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and an 1875 map of Germany. Working in Ireland? Check out the [PastHomes](#) website for maps of the Republic of Ireland and of Northern Ireland. These maps may be purchased in a variety of sizes as well as on disc. If you are researching in England and/or Scotland, check the [Ordnance Survey](#) website. The OS is currently changing its mapping services and will reply to orders only for the four hundred seventy-seven 1 inch to 1 mile scale historical maps, but provides alternative sources for other maps on its website.

Maps are especially useful if you are facing a brick wall. According to my grandmother, her family had never lived anywhere outside of the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Maps became essential in tracing this family back from Kentucky, through the Cumberland Gap, into Virginia. I used migration maps, county outline maps, and topographical maps, along with county histories, the census, and good old-fashioned sweat-equity to take the family from Garrard County, Kentucky; back to Harlan County Kentucky; Lee County, Virginia; Augusta County, Virginia; and finally to Stafford County, Virginia.

I took the county outline maps from the [Map Guide to the U. S. Federal Censuses, 1790-1920](#) and plotted the counties in which I found the surnames for which I was searching, as I found them in the censuses. I did a state search for the surname (lucky me, it was not too common!) and noted the number of families by that name in each county where I found them. Working backwards from 1850, it did not take long to plot their reverse route of migration, from west to east, through Kentucky, and back into Virginia. If your surname is more common, choose a relative, or neighbor with a less common surname, and research that individual to see if you can narrow the number of counties in which you might find your ancestor. People often moved in groups with members of their community or church, so there is a good chance that you may find these names together in more than one place.

Where do you find maps? What are your favorite sources? How have they helped you solve a problem? Let us know. We would love to learn from you on www.genealogyandfamilyhistory.com!

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Discount on Famous New England Genealogy Books

If you have New England ancestors and want to acquire a reliable collection of genealogy references to consult over and over again, here are a handful of titles that easily fill the bill! Even better, you can save between 30% and 50% on each of these works if you order your copy(ies) before 11:59 p.m. EST, January 27, 2011.

[A Genealogical Dictionary of the First Settlers of New England. In Four Volumes](#)

James Savage's *Genealogical Dictionary of the First Settlers of New England* (originally published in four volumes between 1860 and 1862) is still regarded as the greatest piece of scholarship in New England genealogy--nearly 150 years after its original publication. Savage's achievement was to identify virtually every individual who arrived in New England before 1692, giving the date of each male settler's marriage and death; the dates of birth, marriage, and death of his children; and the names and birthdates of his grandchildren--thus recording the beginning of the third generation in New England.

Was \$185.00 Now \$99.95

[Female Index to James Savage's Genealogical Dictionary of the First Settlers of New England](#)

Because Savage's *Dictionary* was originally published one volume at a time, in alphabetical order, the author never produced an index to the work as a whole. This limitation has always

made it difficult to find female ancestors. Now, however, thanks to the heroic efforts of the late Patty Barthell Myers, the difficulty of finding females in Savage's *Dictionary* is a thing of the past. In her book, Mrs. Myers identifies every woman/girl to be found in the *Dictionary*. Each female appears in the Myers *Index* under a maiden name and, separately, under the name of her husband.

Was \$35.00 Now \$19.95

[Genealogical Dictionary of Maine and New Hampshire](#) (Low in stock)

This indispensable reference is the northern New England equivalent of James Savage's four-volume compendium of 17th-century New England settlers (see above), *A Genealogical Dictionary of the First Settlers of New England*. The *Genealogical Dictionary of Maine and New Hampshire* contains extensive biographical and genealogical data on every family established in those colonies/states before 1699. Listed are the births, marriages, and deaths of the settlers through the third generation and sometimes into the fourth. Also included are data on places of origin, residences, wills and deeds, court cases, and highlights of lives and careers.

Was \$40.00 Now \$27.95

[The Planters of the Commonwealth in Massachusetts, 1620-1640](#)

Scrupulous in every detail, this work contains the names of 3,600 passengers on the 96 ships that brought them to New England between 1620 and 1640. Author Charles Edward Banks here pulls the several classes of records together to form the most complete and authoritative collection of passenger lists for the period ever published. In addition to the names of passengers and ships, places of origin, and places of residence in America, the book includes indexes to surnames, ships, English parishes, and New England towns.

Was \$25.00 Now \$17.50

[Topographical Dictionary of 2885 English Emigrants to New England, 1620-1650](#)

Also compiled by Mr. Banks, the *Topographical Dictionary* contains notes on nearly 3,000 emigrants, giving their English homes, the names of ships in which they sailed, the New England towns in which they settled, and references to the printed or manuscript sources from which the information is derived.

Was \$21.95 Now \$15.25

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Definitive Source on the Founding Families of Maryland

On November 22, 1633, the 358-ton *Ark* and the 26-ton *Dove* departed from the Isle of Wight carrying the founders of the Maryland colony. (The *Dove*, badly damaged in a storm, returned to England for repairs before rejoining the *Ark* several months later in the Antilles.) The two ships ultimately landed at St. Clement's Island in southern Maryland on March 25, 1634.

The 125 passengers of the *Ark* and the *Dove* sailed at the behest of Cecil Calvert, the Catholic Lord Proprietor of Maryland, who stocked the vessels with enough food and supplies to last, hopefully, for an entire year in the wilderness. At the outset, Lord Baltimore, as the proprietor was also known, expected Maryland to become a Catholic refuge for his co-religionists. In the

end, he was remarkably successful in attracting far more Protestant countrymen "by offering them free land and the customary political rights that landholders in England enjoyed. Calvert also promised real religious liberty for virtually all Christians." In fact, it was Calvert's Maryland--and not Roger Williams' Rhode Island--where religious freedom and the separation of church and state first gained a foothold in the New World.

Given this heritage, nearly three centuries later, in 1910, a number of descendants of Maryland's founding families formed The Society of The Ark and The Dove in order to perpetuate the memory of its pioneers and to promote fellowship among their descendants. Over the years, the Society has encouraged research in early Maryland history and supported a variety of commemorative institutions, such as the Historic St. Mary's City Foundation.

Our publication, [The Ark and the Dove Adventurers](#), published under the auspices of The Society of The Ark and The Dove, is the organization's latest contribution to Maryland genealogy and history.

Edited by noted Maryland genealogists George Ely Russell and Donna Valley Russell, *The Ark and the Dove Adventurers* furnishes "documented accounts of the first settlers of Maryland in 1634, followed by compiled genealogies of their descendants, if any, extended to the fifth generation when possible."

The first part of the book describes the family and descendants of Sir George Calvert (Cecil's father), the first Lord Baltimore. The remainder traces the progeny of the following passengers: James Baldrige, Major Thomas Baldrige, Anam Benum, John Briscoe, William Brown, Leonard Calvert, Thomas Cornwallis, Ann Cox, William Edwin, Cuthbert Fenwick, Captain Henry Fleete, Richard Gerard, Richard Gilbert, Thomas Greene, John Hallowes, Nicholas Harvey, Richard Lowe, John Neville, Richard Nevitt, John Price, Robert Smith, Ann Smithson, Robert Vaughan, and Robert Wiseman. *The Ark and the Dove Adventurers* concludes with a list of passengers who are known not to have had descendants and some later arrivals previously and erroneously claimed as 1634 descendants.

Complete with a name index to 6,000 individuals, *The Ark and the Dove Adventurers* is the starting point for 17th-century Maryland genealogy. For more information, visit the following URL:

http://www.genealogical.com/index.php?main_page=product_info&item_number=5042

Students of 17th-century Maryland genealogy should also consider the following works by leading Maryland genealogist Robert Barnes:

[Maryland Marriage Evidences, 1634-1718](#)

A companion volume to his 1975 work, *Maryland Marriages, 1634-1777*, this book by Robert Barnes is a collection of 6,500 marriage records found in sources other than church records, closing the gap in the historical record and providing a clear alternative to traditional genealogical sources. The records in this work are based on both direct and indirect references. With a bibliography and a full-name index of brides and others mentioned in the text, this work completes the tableau of sources available to the researcher in the area of colonial Maryland

genealogy--the final installment of a resource that began to prove its usefulness more than 30 years ago.

[British Roots of Maryland Families](#)

In this comprehensive collection of genealogies, noted Maryland genealogist Robert Barnes has put together the most authoritative account of the British origins of Maryland families. Source materials on which these genealogies are based derive from a combination of Mr. Barnes' own extensive research over the past thirty years and the pioneering work on the origins of Maryland families made by earlier researchers such as Henry F. Waters, Harry Wright Newman, and, more recently, Peter Wilson Coldham. The result is a world-class combination of genealogical source materials that extends the reach of Maryland genealogy well beyond what has been known up until this point.

[British Roots of Maryland Families II](#)

This work contains research undertaken after the publication in 1999 of the first volume in this series, *British Roots of Maryland Families*. Using the same format as the parent volume, *British Roots of Maryland Families II* discusses the British origins of an additional 203 Maryland settlers and establishes connections to 120 settlers in other colonies.

Featured Titles for January

[The German Element in the Ohio Valley: Ohio, Kentucky & Indiana, by Gustav Koerner](#)

For this publication Dr. Don Heinrich Tolzmann translated and edited selected chapters from Gustav Koerner's *Das deutsche Element in den Vereinigten Staaten von Nordamerika, 1818-48* covering the states of Kentucky, Ohio, and Indiana and adding extensive and references to additional sources. For the most part, however—and genealogists are the beneficiaries--the work portrays the German element through the lives of individuals. Accordingly, Koerner offers a wealth of biographical information about people such as Martin Baum, Wilhelm Nast, Dr. Joseph H. Pulte, Heinrich A. Ratterman, Georg Walker, Ludwig Rehfuss, General Gotfried Weitzel, Nikolaus Hoffer, Pastor August Kroll, Gustav Tafel, Christian Heyl, Wilhelm Schmidt, Johann H. Ropke, G. W. Barth, Albert Lange, Johann Georg Rapp, and many others.

[Cape Cod Library of Local History and Genealogy. A Facsimile Edition of 108 Pamphlets Published in the Early 20th Century. In Two Volumes](#)

The Cape Cod Library of Local History and Genealogy was a series of 108 genealogy pamphlets published at Yarmouthport by Charles W. Swift in the early part of the 20th century. The series never reached a large audience, and today it is virtually inaccessible. No library in the country holds the complete collection of 108 pamphlets. With great diligence, Col. Leonard Smith put together a complete collection for himself, arranged the pamphlets in the order in which they were published, and then, to make the material usable, compiled an index of names. In just over 2,000 pages he has managed to put together a reference work that compensates for the chronic shortage of printed Cape Cod source material, and it is available now in this splendid two-volume consolidation.

[The Pension Roll of 1835. Indexed Edition in Four Volumes](#)

The Pension Roll of 1835 is the most complete roll of Revolutionary War pensioners ever published. Compiled by the War Department under Senate resolutions of 1834-35 from lists of pensioners who had been enrolled under all previous acts of Congress, as well as from replacement records for those lists of pensioners that had been destroyed in fires at the War Department in 1801 and 1814, *The Pension Roll of 1835* contains the names and service records of approximately 60,700 soldiers, both regulars and militia. Information given for each soldier, in tabular form, generally includes rank, annual allowance, sums received, description of service, date when placed on the pension roll, age, and date of death or date of the law under which the pension was granted. Also included in some instances are statements giving the names of family members!

[Index to the Prerogative Wills of Ireland, 1536-1810](#)

All of the Prerogative Wills of Ireland were destroyed by a fire in the Dublin courthouse in 1922, but before that Sir William Betham had made abstracts of the genealogical data in the wills from 1536 to 1800. From these abstracts he prepared 39 volumes of "will pedigrees," drawn up as genealogical charts, which he called his "genealogical analysis" of the abstracts. In 1897 Sir Arthur Vicars prepared this index to Betham's abstracts (and in effect an index to the "will pedigrees"). The index has 40,000 entries arranged alphabetically by the name of the testator, showing his rank, occupation, or condition; his town or county of residence; and the year when the estate was probated.

[A Digest of the Early Connecticut Probate Records. 3 vols.](#)

Based on records of the General Court of the Colony of Connecticut, on records of the Particular Court, and ultimately on probate records of the Hartford County Court, these three meticulously compiled volumes cover the wills, inventories, distributions of estates, and court records of the men and women who settled in that fecund district of Connecticut embracing Hartford, Wethersfield, and Windsor. Officially established in 1666, the Hartford probate district alone, at one time or another, covered 40 separate Connecticut towns. Residents of those towns had their wills proved in Hartford, and this work contains not only accurate transcriptions of those wills but also transcriptions of all related documents, including administration records, inventories of estates, records of estate distributions, and associated court records. In total, some 30,000 persons are named in the wills and associated records, which span the period from 1666 to 1750.

[The Colonial Clergy and the Colonial Churches of New England](#)

The work in hand is an annotated, alphabetical list of about 2,000 clergymen of colonial New England. The annotations furnish such useful genealogical information as place and date of birth and death, names of parents, college of matriculation, date of ordination, religious denomination, names of parishes, with dates in which livings were held, and a variety of similar matter. Also included is a complete list of colonial New England churches.

[New York Historical Manuscripts: Dutch Kingston Papers](#)

The old Dutch records of Kingston, New York, commonly referred to as the Kingston Papers, are fundamental to the study of New Netherland and constitute the historical basis for virtually all that is known of the local administration of the region of Esopus, formerly the village of Wildwyck, named Kingston by the English, during the formative years 1661-1675. The records

consist of court minutes and secretary's papers, providing a record of hearings and trials as well as a record of legal and administrative transactions, and are of far-ranging historical and genealogical significance. The "Secretary's Papers, 1664-1675" contain legal transactions (contracts, agreements, bonds, wills, powers of attorney, and other declarations) and transfers of real estate (leases, conveyances, and bills of sale) and provide the researcher with an abundance of data pertaining to the inhabitants of Kingston.

[The Old and New Monongahela](#)

The compiler extracted liberally from early and contemporary newspapers of Monongahela and adjacent regions and counties, some in Pennsylvania and some in West Virginia. These include the *Pittsburgh Gazette*, *Williamsport Chronicle*, *Monongahela Republican*, *Village Informant*, *Monongahela Patriot*, *Pennsylvanian*, *Carroll Gazette*, *Daily Republican*, and *Bellevernon Enterprise*. Also included are lengthy sketches of the early families of the Monongahela Valley.

[Index to the 1810 Census of Kentucky](#)

This index to the 1810 census of Kentucky contains references to some 50,000 heads of households, showing the county of residence and the page number of the census schedule wherein full data on the household and its occupants may be found. The household heads are listed here in a single alphabetical sequence, thus eliminating the need for a tedious county by county search.

[Virginia Valley Records. Genealogical and Historical Materials of Rockingham County, Virginia and Related Regions](#)

This volume is largely a sourcebook of genealogical and historical materials compiled from public records of the counties of Rockingham, Augusta, Greenbrier, Wythe, and Montgomery. Contents include Rockingham Marriages, 1795-1825; Rockingham Landowners, 1789; Augusta County Church Records, 1756-1844; Men in Service Against the Indians, 1774; Rockingham Petitions in Richmond, 1778-1798; Rockingham Militia, 1788; Rockingham Regimental Book, 1813-1824; Early Settlers in East Rockingham; Extracts from Augusta Court Records; and Rockingham Wills (prior to 1864, when many of the wills were destroyed).

[The History of Roane County, Tennessee, 1801-1870](#)

Wells' *History of Roane County* is the best introduction to the county we are ever likely to have. The book is divided into five sections, the first four of which constitute a sourcebook of genealogical material--early tax lists and lists of voters, militiamen, justices, veterans of the Revolution and the War of 1812, marriages, church members, and communicants. The fifth section, "Records of Early Families," occupying a full two-thirds of the work, contains scores of family histories, with references to more than 10,000 related persons.

[Reminiscences and Memoirs of North Carolina and Eminent North Carolinians](#)

Essentially a continuation of Wheeler's *Historical Sketches of North Carolina from 1584 to 1851*, this scarce work contains extensive genealogies of over sixty-five eminent families, with reminiscences of their times and additional biographical and historical material. The principal North Carolina families treated by Col. Wheeler are as follows: Alexander, Ashe, Avery, Barringer, Barnett, Battle, Blount, Bragg, Brevard, Brickell, Carson, Caswell, Clark, Clinch, Cotten, Craighead, Crowell, Davidson, Davis, Donnel, Dudley, Forney, Gaston, Graham,

Hawkins, Haywood, Henderson, Hill, Iredell, Johnston, Jones, Lillington, Locke, Lowrie, McDowell, Mebane, Montgomery, Moore, Morehead, Morrison, Nash, Osborne, Pearson, Pettigrew, Phifer, Polk, Ruffin, Saunders, Settle, Sheppard, Shepperd, Shipp, Slocumb, Spaight, Stanley, Steele, Stokes, Strange, Taylor, Turner, Williams, Williamson, Wright, Wynns, and Yancey.

[Marriages of Robertson County, Tennessee 1839-1861](#)

The marriage abstracts given here are arranged in chronological order under the surname of the groom, the balance of each entry containing the name of the bride, the date the marriage license was issued (and often the date of the marriage itself), and the name of the officiating minister or J.P. Altogether more than 3,000 marriage records are abstracted in this work and the names of brides, grooms, and others mentioned incidentally in the entries appear in the index.

[Marriages of Rutherford County, Tennessee, 1804-1872](#)

The marriage records published here are arranged in three sections, some in alphabetical order, some chronological. Each entry contains the names of the bride and groom, the date of issue of the marriage bond or the license, and, sometimes, the name of the person who stood surety to the bond, usually a relative of the bride or groom. Nearly 25,000 persons--brides, grooms, and sureties--are listed in the index to the work.

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Blog: Early American Handwriting

Carolyn Barkley's latest article for our blog, www.genealogyandfamilyhistory.com, takes some of the mystery out of reading old, handwritten documents. If you are about to examine some 18th- or 17th-century original sources (or their microfilmed equivalents), Carolyn's overview of this topic could be a godsend!

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To order other than online, you can:

1. Order by mail: 3600 Clipper Mill Road, Suite 260 - Baltimore, Maryland 21211-1953
2. Fax your order to 1-410-752-8492
3. Call toll-free to our sales department at 1-800-296-6687