

Genealogy Pointers (11-16-10)

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“1620 and all that – Resources for Mayflower Research,” by Carolyn Barkley

(This article first appeared on our blog, www.genealogyandfamilyhistory.com on Nov. 20, 2008.)

Thanksgiving is a week away. In addition to the turkey and trimmings, the approaching holiday is inextricably linked to the voyage of the *Mayflower* and its landing at Plymouth on the coast of Massachusetts. My real purpose here is to share a portion of the wealth of resources available about the voyage and its passengers, but first, as a native of Massachusetts and a thirty-seven year resident of Virginia, I’m obliged to muse momentarily on the origins of the Thanksgiving event.

Growing up in Massachusetts, every school child’s attention is focused on the *Mayflower* passengers and their feast of Thanksgiving held in 1621. The New England tradition, of course, flies in the face of Virginia’s claim to the first Thanksgiving, let alone that of St. Augustine, Florida, where a Thanksgiving celebration was held in September 1565! In 1619 a group of settlers left Bristol, England, and landed three months later at the present-day site of Berkeley plantation on the James River in Virginia. The tradition is that immediately after reaching solid ground, they fell to their knees and thanked God for their safe arrival. A rivalry about whether the Virginia event in 1619 or the Massachusetts event in 1621 represents the “real” Thanksgiving continues. Both are re-enacted annually and I would suggest that they can coexist as different types of Thanksgiving events, although neither of them is the “first” in the New World. The Massachusetts event was a harvest festival in which the settlers gave thanks for the summer’s crops and their survival through the harsh first winter. They were joined by Wampanoag Chief Massasoit and about ninety of his men who brought venison and turkey. The Virginia event was a religious service of thanksgiving at which a meager meal of bacon, peas, cornmeal cakes and cinnamon water was served. (It is interesting to note that at the time of the *Mayflower*’s arrival, Massachusetts was considered to be a northern part of Virginia.) Thanksgiving proclamations were made by American presidents beginning with George Washington. In 1863 Abraham Lincoln formally designated Thanksgiving as a national holiday to be held on the final Thursday of November.

Who, then, were the individuals feasting and giving thanks in Massachusetts in 1621? They would not have referred to themselves as “Pilgrims,” a term applied to any travelers for religious purposes, but rather as “Saints.” Some were Puritans, some were not. They came to the new

world at the end of a long journey from England to Leyden, in Holland, and then back to England where they embarked for North America. Nicholas Philbrick's *Mayflower: A Story of Courage, Community, and War* (Viking, 2006) presents a very readable, comprehensive history of the voyage and landing of the *Mayflower* and the history of Plymouth Colony in the years after their arrival.

A story in my family had always tied one of my maternal lines to Thomas Rogers, a passenger on the *Mayflower*. One version said his nephew Joseph, who arrived after the first winter, was the direct ancestor; my later research suggested that the lineage descended from Joseph, one of his younger sons. For a number of years I tried to document the line conclusively, but have been consistently confounded by the several Noah Rogers who existed in later generations. In addition, the Joseph Rogers who many believe to be Thomas' son is not accepted by the [Mayflower Society](#) as a qualifying ancestor, so my research into *Mayflower* ancestry has not been successful to date. The Mayflower Society's website is a good place to start for anyone hunting for Separatist roots, listing the twenty-six men and three women who are accepted ancestors for membership purposes. The site's bookstore offers an extensive list of titles for sale, including the latest revisions of titles in the Five Generations Project.

Robert Charles Anderson's [Great Migration Study Project](#) is a seminal work for New England researchers in general and *Mayflower* enthusiasts in particular. The project's aim is to "compile comprehensive genealogical and biographical accounts of every person [twenty thousand English men, women, and children] who settled in New England. Such information will eliminate much duplication of research and make authoritative, well-documented material available to all researchers. The project publishes a series of volumes, each of which features sketches for about 200 individuals for the period 1620 to 1633; future volumes will cover 1634 and 1635. Sketches may include such information as origin, migration date, first residence, removes, occupation, education, offices, estate, birth, death, marriage, children, and more. In addition, a Great Migration newsletter supplements this work with "feature articles on a variety of topics, including the settlement of early New England towns, migration patterns, seventeenth-century passenger lists, church records, [and] land records." The first phase of the project, *The Great Migration Begins: Immigrants to New England 1620-1633*, can be searched by [New England Historic Genealogical Society](#) members at that organizations website.

Researchers will find an extensive list of resources for *Mayflower* ancestry at [Genealogical.com](#):

- Annie Arnoux Haxtun's [Signers of the Mayflower Compact \[1620\]](#) (1897-1899, Clearfield, reprinted 2007) provides lengthy sketches of the signers and their families including lineages, excerpts from wills and other contemporary documents, and historical and biographical data.
- Susan E. Roser's [Mayflower Increaseings](#) (2nd edition, Genealogical Publishing Co., 1995, reprinted 2001) provides a summary of what is known about the passengers and the first three generations of their families, as well as an appendix identifying fourth and fifth generation children, for a total of 6,000 references to individuals.
- Charles E. Banks' [The English Ancestry and Homes of The Pilgrim Fathers Who Came to Plymouth on the Mayflower in 1620, the Fortune in 1621, and the Anne and Little James in 1623](#) (1929, Genealogical Publishing Co., reprinted 2006) provides biographical

sketches of 112 passengers on the first four ships to New England. Also by Banks, [The Planters of the Commonwealth](#) (1930, Genealogical Publishing Co., reprinted 2006) provides the names of 3,600 passengers on 96 ships to New England. Entries include place of origin and place of residence in America, and indices to surnames, ships, English parishes, and New England towns.

- [Pilgrim Genealogies and Histories](#) (Family Archives CD) provides access to 18 books linked by a single index including many of the titles mentioned here as well as others now out of print. Check the title on [Genealogical.com](#) for viewing requirements. Other titles to consult include Charles E. Bank's [Topographical Dictionary of 2,285 English Emigrants to New England](#) (1937, Genealogical Publishing Co., reprinted 2002); James Savage's [A Genealogical Dictionary of the First Settlers of New England](#) (4 vols., 1860-62, 1873, 1884, Genealogical Publishing Co., reprinted 2008) and its companion [Female Index to Genealogical Dictionary of the First Settlers of New England](#) by Patty Barthell Myers (Genealogical Publishing Co., 2008); Nathaniel B. Shurtleff's [Records of Plymouth Colony, Births, Marriages, Deaths, Burials, and Other Records, 1633-1689](#) (1857, Genealogical Publishing Co., reprinted 2006), and Frederick Lewis Weis' [Ancestral Roots of Certain American Colonists Who Came to America Before 1700](#) (8th ed., Genealogical Publishing Co., 2004, reprinted 2008).

The Internet also provides a wealth of research information.

- A card catalog search for "Mayflower" on [Ancestry.com](#) yields 39 entries including birth, marriage and death records; stories, memories and histories; reference aids; directories and member list; and wills and land records. Given the small number of women who qualify as Mayflower Society ancestors, one interesting entry is for Annie Russell Marble's 1920 publication, [The Women Who Came in the Mayflower](#) (Pilgrim Press).
- [Cyndi's List](#) provides several screens of links to pertinent websites. Other links provide access to articles about *Mayflower* research, undertakings like the [Plymouth Colony Archive Project](#) at the University of Virginia, and the holdings of the [Plymouth Public Library](#). Several mailing lists exist, both broad in scope (Mayflower Mailing List or <http://www.feliixplace.com/genealogylists/firstships.html>), and more narrow (the [North Carolina Mayflower Society](#)'s discussion group).
- If you are planning to visit related historical sites, check out online sites for a [Walking Tour of Plimoth Plantation](#), the [Alden House Museum](#), or [Pilgrim Hall Museum](#).
- You may want to join a lineage society such as the [Myles Standish Society](#), [The Pilgrim Edward Doty Society](#), or [The Pilgrim John Howland Society](#), among others. Sites are also available for many of the state chapters of the Mayflower Society.

Whether you are from Massachusetts, Virginia, or elsewhere, you may have a *Mayflower* ancestor somewhere in your lineage. I hope that some of the resources here will help you begin your research journey back to Plymouth and beyond.

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Connecticut Military Record CD Reduced for Quick Sale

From today until 11:59 p.m. EST, tomorrow, November 17, 2010, you can save \$15.00 on a Connecticut CD-ROM publication that is chock-full of military source materials. It will not only enable you to locate your Connecticut ancestor and his unit in time and place but will also--as in the case of pension records--convey a great deal about each soldier's heirs and/or antecedents. Don't let this terrific sale pass you by! See below for details:

[Connecticut Military Records: Soldiers and Officers](#)

This CD contains images of the pages of various books published by GPC that provide a complete record of Connecticut men who served in the French and Indian War, the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, and the Mexican War, with the emphasis on Connecticut soldiers in the Revolution. The page images are united by a single electronic index to 167,000 individuals. For more information, go to

http://www.genealogical.com/index.php?main_page=product_info&item_number=7120.

Was \$39.99 \$24.99

2010/11 Catalogue of New and Popular Titles

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Genealogical Publishing Company and its affiliate, Clearfield Company, are proud to announce their 2010/11 combined catalogue. The catalogue is 34 pages long, illustrated, and features indexes to authors and subjects. Without a doubt, it encompasses the single best collection of current genealogical publications around.

We are delighted to offer a free copy of the new catalogue to our "Genealogy Pointers" subscribers. To download your copy, just click on the link

[http://www.genealogical.com/upload\\_images/GPCCatalog.pdf](http://www.genealogical.com/upload_images/GPCCatalog.pdf) and get ready to browse descriptions of the best genealogy reference books available.

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## "Land Records—More than Mere Conveyances of Real Estate," by Robert Barnes (© 2010 by the Author)

Researchers who take the time to go beyond an index to land records may find many items of interest in a particular volume that may not have been indexed by the clerks of the county court. For example, some indices may omit some references, such as depositions and 'posted wives,' but one should double check to be sure.

As the population of a county grew, some of these items were later included in a separate series of records. Some counties may have separate record series for Land commissions and Valuations of Minors' Estates. Apprenticeship records may later appear in 'orphans court proceedings' or 'Indentures,' or both. Other types of records may appear in records with names like 'county court

proceedings,' 'judgement records' or 'minute books.' In some areas they may be called Judicial records or Proceedings. Pennsylvania uses the term 'Court of Quarter Session records.' There is no consistency within a county, or between counties or from state to state. What applies in one jurisdiction may not work in another. The bottom line is that researchers should leave no stone unturned.

Following are some examples of valuable findings buried in land records. Most of my illustrations come from Maryland land records, but no matter where you may be searching, consider checking land records page by page for possible nuggets of information.

**Certified copies of entries from English parish registers:** In 1709 Anthony Workman of the City of Gloucester stated in a Queen Anne's County, MD land record that he was the nephew and heir of William *als.* Anthony Workman of the Isle of Kent, Maryland, dec. There followed a certificate from the Churchwardens of the Parish of Newland, Co. Gloucester, setting forth the names of the children of William Workman of Clifford, dec., and certifying that Anthony Workman was the heir of his uncle William who had come to Maryland.

**Chains of title within the deed:** A deed always contains a statement such as, 'A,' the grantor, for a valuable consideration, is conveying property to 'B,' the grantee. Modern deeds usually, additionally, contain the "Being Clause" which describes the property being conveyed as the same property that "Z" conveyed to "A." Eighteenth-century deeds may trace the ownership back to the original patentee, and in doing so state family relationships of previous owners or of the current grantor. Such chains of title present relationships among others who are not shown in deed indexes.

**Children being apprenticed by their parents** might have their indentures of apprenticeship recorded in the land records.

**Depositions:** When people testified, either in a land commission or some other court activity, they usually identified themselves by name, age, and sometimes occupation. These depositions often contained references to other relatives of the deponent. These depositions may be found in land records.

**Individuals registering the livestock marks for themselves or their children:** The first 74 pages of Liber B of Frederick Co. land records contain marks of cattle registered by thirty individuals.

**Land commissions:** Land grants in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were laid out by metes and bounds, and generally started with phrasing like 'bounded red oak' or a 'bounded white beech.' These beginning trees would fall down, decay, or otherwise become invisible, and it would become necessary for land owners to petition the county justices to appoint commissioners to take testimony from neighbors as to the location of these original trees. When any interested or knowledgeable parties had testified, the commissioners would determine what the beginning point of the land was and thus the land could be resurveyed. Most counties had a separate series of records called 'Land Commissions,' but from time to time the proceedings would be recorded in the land records. Many of these land commissions recorded in Dorchester

County, MD land records, for example.

**Lists of convict servants:** I have found these lists in the land records of Baltimore and Queen Anne's counties in Maryland.

**Oaths of office and appointments to office:** An early Frederick County land record liber contains the oath of office taken by Reverdy Ghiselin when he swore to uphold the Act for amending the staple of tobacco. Talbot County land records record the fact that in 1668 Charles Calvert appointed William Hemsley, Gent., to be clerk and keeper of the records for that county.

**Petitions:** Usually found in county court proceedings, petitions may appear in land records. In 1698, eight inhabitants of Cecil County recorded their petition to register their meeting house in Cecil County Land Records.

**Posting of errant wives:** In the days before newspapers, husbands whose wives had left them would often record a statement in the land records that they would not be responsible for the debts of their wives, who had 'eloped from the husband's bed and board.' Sometimes we might read that a couple had agreed to live apart.

**Powers of attorney:** Individuals living somewhere else would give a local inhabitant or someone planning to move to the locality a power of attorney, giving them the authority transact business for the grantors.

**Prenuptial contracts (sometimes called ante-nuptial contracts):** A recent article in a Baltimore newspaper told how many couples planning to marry in 2010 are drawing up prenuptial contracts. These documents are found in the 18th century, especially when one or both of the contracting parties had been married previously and may have had children by a previous spouse. These contracts were designed to protect the rights of the existing children.

**Protecting the rights of orphans:** In March 1711 David Richards, Nathaniel Stinchcomb and Henry Waters were bound to Robert, Ralph, Thomas, and Edmond Moss, orphans of Ralph Moss, late of Anne Arundel Co., dec. That land record stipulated that each orphan would be paid £68.16.2 when he came of age.

**Servants and their indentures:** Indentures (contracts to work for someone who would pay one's passage to America) were usually recorded in the country of origin, but land records can shed light on what happened to the servant once he or she arrived in the New World. A volume of Anne Arundel County land records in 1699 recorded that several servants of one Edward Rumley had been taken up by them as runaways and they expected to be reimbursed. In a 1674 Cecil County volume of land records, David Jenkins bound himself to work for a term of four years from his arrival in Maryland., if William Saunders would pay for his passage to America and provide him with meat, drink and apparel. Sometimes native-born settlers agreed to serve someone else for a specified term

**Ships' captains registering their cargo:** Both Annapolis and Baltimore were designated as colonial ports of entry, In 1705 two ships' captains published their rates for tobacco in the Anne

Arundel County land records. Benjamin Phillips, commander of the ship *John and Margaret*, published a rate of £16 per ton. James Bradby, commander of the ship *Ursula*, published a rate of £15 per ton.

**Valuation of the estates of minors** give a detailed description of the improvements on an estate, including physical dimensions and structure of the house, what crops were planted in the fields and the amount of livestock.

**Wills:** Wills were usually recorded in the county will books and in the Prerogative Court will books. From time to time a will was recorded in the county land records. In 1700/1 Rachel Kilbourne, widow of Anne Arundel Co. recorded her will in just such a volume.

Sometimes it is necessary just to go through each volume of land records, page by page, to discover these hidden treasures, especially if the items are not included in the index prepared by the clerks of the court.

Researchers using Maryland land records have two advantages. First are the many series of abstracts of county land records published by various individuals or societies. Among these may be counted the abstracts of land records for Anne Arundel, Cecil, Dorchester, Frederick, and Prince George's counties.

The second advantage is that all original county land records from the founding of a county to the present day have been scanned and are available at the Maryland State Archives' excellent series known as MdLandRec.net. There is no charge for the use of these records, but researchers who are not actually in the Archives search room or the county court house must register for a password. Go to [www.msa.md.gov](http://www.msa.md.gov), click on the tab "Family Historians," and on that page click on MdlandRec.net. The instructions are easy to follow.

Land records contain many treasures, indeed!

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*Speaking of Land Records: Sale on Select Titles*  
(The discounts advertised below will be in effect until 11:59 p.m., EST, Wednesday, 11/17/2010.)

The ten books and CDs described below illustrate the genealogical potential of American land records. The books typify the variety of land records. For example, Lloyd Bockstruck's extraordinary collection of colonial land bounties took years to assemble. Volume I of *Western New York Land Transactions* is a unique collection of land entries for Upstate New York that were generated by the Holland Land Colony. Still other featured volumes include land records pertaining to North Carolina, Kentucky, Virginia, and Rhode Island pioneers. The two CDs, in whole or in part, image the pages of books that contain many of the earliest land entries for the colony/state in question (New Jersey or Kentucky).

We hope that some of these land records will help you in your research. Be sure to take advantage of this 48-hour sale, which expires at 11:59 p.m., EST, Wednesday, 11/17/2010.

### [Colonial New Jersey Source Records, 1600s to 1800s \(CD\)](#)

This Family Archive CD includes the records of approximately 330,000 persons in a unique collection of church, court, marriage, land, military, and probate records. Made up of nine New Jersey reference works, this CD is the entry point for genealogical research in colonial New Jersey. Additionally, in light of the missing New Jersey census schedules for 1790-1820, this CD is probably the most important finding-aid available in this or any other format.

**Was \$39.99 Now \$29.99**

### [Kentucky Land Records, 1774-1924 \(CD\)](#)

This Family Archive CD is composed of four essential Kentucky reference books published by GPC. Naming approximately 150,000 individuals, the information includes the number of acres owned in Kentucky, entry date of record, nearest watercourse, and the landholder's official place of residence. For those individuals who were granted land based on their service in the French and Indian War or the Revolutionary War, information pertaining to military service is also provided.

**Was \$39.99 Now \$29.99**

### [The Home Lots of the Early Settlers of the Province Plantations \[Rhode Island\]](#)

This work establishes the precise location of "shares" or "home lots" of five acres each belonging to Roger Williams and the other original settlers of Providence, Rhode Island. Perhaps more importantly for genealogists, it also consists of short biographical and genealogical essays of the owners of the lots, virtually all of them containing references to the settlers' origins in England.

**Was \$17.50 Now \$12.95**

### ["By a Line of Marked Trees": Abstracts of Currituck County, North Carolina. Volume One, Deed Books \[1\], 1-3 \[1696-1773\]](#)

The original Currituck County includes present-day Currituck and Dare counties and parts of Hyde and Tyrell counties. Currituck's deed records are among the few sources from the county's colonial period that have not been lost to the ravages of time, and, thanks to the efforts of John Brayton, they are now fully accessible to genealogists. The deeds in Volume One give information concerning former owners, relationships between grantee and grantor, and other family connections. This book won the year 2000 Award for Excellence in Publishing from the North Carolina Genealogical Society.

**Was \$20.00 Now \$13.95**

### [The Beginner's Guide to Using Tax Lists](#)

This guidebook is Cornelius Carroll's primer for making the best genealogical use of tax lists. At the outset, the author differentiates between tax lists, quit rents, tithables, militia lists, censuses, and similar records and the laws that applied to them. Then, by focusing on the tax lists of Virginia, North Carolina, Kentucky, and Tennessee, he demonstrates how tax lists can be used for determining parentage, birth and death dates, indentured servitude, slavery, manumission, and racial status. Mr. Carroll provides a number of sample tax lists in order to introduce researchers to the legal and other factors affecting the ages and classes of people who were taxable at any given time.

**Was \$18.50 Now \$12.95**

[Virginia Land Records from the Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, the William and Mary College Quarterly, and Tyler's Quarterly. One Volume in Two](#)

The articles in this collection deal with early Virginia deeds, surveys, warrants, conveyances, patents, and grants, and virtually every article pertaining to the transfer and ownership of real property ever published in the leading Virginia periodicals is included. Most of the articles identify tenants, owners, and occupiers of specific parcels of land and thus place individuals and whole families in a particular place at a definite time.

**Was \$70.00 Now \$49.95**

[Landholders of Northeastern New York, 1739-1802](#)

This work forms a directory of all participants in all land sales and mortgage agreements in northeastern New York between 1739 and 1802. The area covered includes all land within the present-day counties of Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Warren, and Washington. The first part of the volume identifies original grantees, persons awarded land in the area between 1739 and 1775. The second part, and by far the largest, identifies about 9,000 landholders--grantees, grantors, mortgagees and mortgagors--whose land records were filed between 1772 and 1802 in the deed and mortgage books of Washington, Clinton, or Essex counties.

**Was \$24.00 Now \$17.95**

[Western New York Land Transactions, 1804-1824. Extracted from the Archives of the Holland Land Company](#)

The Holland Land Company was a stock corporation formed by six Dutch banking houses for the purpose of buying land in New York. By 1797 the Company had purchased some 3.3 million acres of land in western New York, west of the Genesee River. Known as the Holland Land Purchase, all this land was sold off by 1839. This work is an index to the records--the Land Tables--of the Holland Land Company from their inception in 1804 until 1824. Also covered are the land transactions in Morris' Reserve and a tract of land known as the 40,000-Acre Tract, both east of the Purchase. Touching on some 40,000 individual land transactions, the extracts given here provide each purchaser's name, location of the purchase, date of the transaction, type of transaction, and a citation to the original source and microfilm. The area covered extends from Genesee County west to the counties of Erie, Chautauqua, and Cattaraugus, covering such towns as Buffalo and Batavia.

**Was \$42.50 Now \$28.50**

[Old Kentucky Entries and Deeds](#)

This index encompasses the earliest land records of Kentucky. The information in the volume is arranged alphabetically according to the names of the grantees, and includes the number of acres, dates, locations, and references to the page references in the original records, which are now housed at the Land Office in Frankfort. There are more than 45,000 entries in the volume, most of which are devoted to Fayette, Lincoln, and Jefferson county records prior to 1792.

**Was \$47.50 Now \$34.95**

[Bounty and Donation Land Grants in British Colonial America](#)

This is Mr. Lloyd Bockstruck's latest book. When viewed in tandem with his Revolutionary War bounty land book, it closes the circle on all bounty lands awarded either by the British

government or by our newly independent states between 1607 and the aftermath of the Revolutionary War. All 6,500 soldiers known to have received land grants for their participation in the numerous conflicts with the French and their Indian allies, as well as in various colonial insurrections, are listed here with details about their place and dates of service, rank, military campaigns, location of bounty land grants and donation land grants, acreage, and, most importantly, assignment of title to heirs, relatives, and friends.

**Was \$50.00 Now \$37.50**

For a complete list of our land records publications, visit the following page on our website:  
[http://www.genealogical.com/index.php?main\\_page=index&cPath=10](http://www.genealogical.com/index.php?main_page=index&cPath=10)

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### **Blog: Leeks and St. David—A Discussion of Welsh Research**

If your ancestor came from Wales, or if they had a name like Smith or Jones, you may be intimidated by the prospect of finding them in Welsh records. Actually the odds may not be as long as you fear. Take heart by reading Carolyn Barkley's latest posting on our blog, [www.genealogyandfamilyhistory.com](http://www.genealogyandfamilyhistory.com), today. It's free so you have nothing to lose.

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### **CONTACT US**

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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