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GENEALOGY POINTERS (09-30-08)

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"CLUSTER GENEALOGY: Broadening the Scope," by Emily Anne Croom

[The following article is excerpted from Mrs. Croom's book, *THE SLEUTH BOOK FOR GENEALOGISTS: Strategies for More Successful Family History Research*. You may find more information about the book at the end of this article.]

Cluster genealogy is the idea that ancestors did not live in a vacuum but in a cluster of relatives, neighbors, friends, and associates. Studying the history of one person naturally puts the researcher in contact with members of this group, as witnesses to each other's documents, as neighbors, as in-laws, as fraternal brothers and sisters, as business partners or clients, and so forth. Our ancestors often migrated in family groups, as church congregations, or as a group of neighbors. They often lived very close to other family members. They worshipped with, went to war with, bought land from, and were buried near friends and relatives. Although we may not know the names of this group when we begin researching a focus ancestor, we must train ourselves to look for its members.

Some researchers call this the "whole family" approach or the "big picture" approach. Regardless of the name, the principle is the same: We cannot have long-term success if we limit ourselves to a one-name/one-person approach.

When research begins on a focus ancestor, the genealogist may know nothing more than the ancestor's name, with perhaps a date and place of marriage or an entry on a census record. If applicable, after 1850, the next effort is often to find that person in the context of a family in other census records. Then we move to other basic sources--such as vital records, wills and probate files, family Bibles, church records, and newspaper obituaries--to find names, dates, places, and relationships in the life of the target ancestor. We branch out into land records, military and pension files, naturalization documents, and other sources that sometimes identify the spouse, children, birth and death information, or parents.

We compile at least two family group sheets from this information: one with the focus ancestor as a parent in a family, the other with the ancestor as a child. These two nuclear families are the beginning of, and an important part of, the ancestor's cluster. Sometimes these charts are all we need to move back in time to the parent and grandparent generations.

When we cannot find direct statements of the events, names, dates, places, and relationships we need for our focus ancestor, we search for clues and evidence wherever we can find them to get the answers indirectly. The cluster is often the path toward these clues. Some clusters provide more help than others, and some are easier to identify than others. However, one thing is certain: a researcher has a much greater chance of success when studying the cluster than when clinging to one name as the sole subject of the research. The progress report in chapter seven and the case studies in chapters ten and eleven [of THE SLEUTH BOOK FOR GENEALOGISTS] are examples of the use of cluster genealogy to find answers.

WHY THE CLUSTER?

Why is the cluster approach necessary? For those who have never tried this approach or have not yet needed it to build pedigree charts, some convincing is often in order. Mostly, we use the cluster approach because we want solutions. As in mystery stories, the family and close associates may hold the key to the answer. True, some of the people you will research with this approach may not be related to you. However, if you stick stubbornly to a one-name-only approach, you may end up claiming as ancestors people not related to you.

Consider these reasons for the cluster approach:

In family papers and oral traditions, each child may remember or record different facts about a parent; we put the facts together to get a more complete picture.

1. For some ancestors, answers are simply not found in documents they themselves created. If Major Grace sells his land to Stark Brown, he may not mention that he inherited his land from his father. However, when Stark Brown sells the same land to Pleasant Luster, the deed may name Major's father as the original patentee of the land.
2. Some ancestors left few records themselves; the only way to learn about them is through records that others created. One Mississippi man "disappeared" for a few years from his researcher; then, in someone else's diary, she found that he had gone to California during the gold rush. Ancestors who owned no land, for instance, will not usually appear in the deed books, except maybe as witnesses to others' transactions. Why were they asked to be a witness? Maybe the seller was a brother-in-law, a cousin, or the nearest neighbor. The other person's transaction places the ancestor in that place at that time, alive. That one piece of information is sometimes very important.
4. When several people by the same name lived in the same county at the same time, their

nuclear families and close associates are sometimes the keys to sorting them out. We want to find the right elusive ancestor, not just anybody by the same name.

WHO IS THE CLUSTER?

When you run into that old brick wall in your search, what are your options? Give up on that line and go to one likely to have more information readily available? Get on the Internet with query after query: "I need the parents, grandparents, wife's maiden name, birth date and birthplace, and names of in-laws of Donald Doe of Whatever County, Iowa. I've looked everywhere, and all I can find is that he came to Iowa as a young man just after the Civil War. Will share information"?

A query such as this says several things: (1) The descendant may have little or nothing of substance to share in return, (2) the descendant probably has not looked everywhere, and (3) the descendant may not have a clue of what to try next. That is not an uncommon predicament for researchers at some point along the way. What about the option of researching for the next of kin?

The would-be researcher in the query needs to list everything known about the ancestor and make a research plan. This time, it is cluster time. The disclaimer is that some searches do come to a real dead end before you are ready, but the good news is that many tough searches can be solved. The successful ones often involve the cluster. The cluster includes the next of kin, extended family, neighbors, friends, associates, and other people of the same surname. [END]

The foregoing article was excerpted from Chapter Three of THE SLEUTH BOOK FOR GENEALOGISTS: Strategies for More Successful Family History Research, by Emily Anne Croom, recently published by Genealogical Publishing Company. For more information about the excellent suggestions for scaling brick walls found in THE SLEUTH BOOK, please consult the following URL:
http://www.genealogical.com/index.php?main_page=product_info&item_number=1221&NLC-GenPointers1

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ONE-WEEK SALE on Land Records on CD-ROM
(Sale Prices Expire at 11:59 PM, EDT, Monday, October 6, 2008)

Land records may lack the richness of wills or marriages in establishing relationships between family members because they are concerned primarily with the transfer or ownership of property. On the other hand, land records are often the only kind of record we have when trying to identify the early settlers of a colony or state. This attribute, along with the virtue of placing an individual in a particular place at a particular time, qualifies land records as a crucial source in genealogical research.

Author Val Greenwood cites two other factors accounting for the importance of land records: (1) since land was inexpensive in America until well into the 19th-century, "the great majority of [white] males who lived to maturity can be found in land records" and (2) unlike census and other records, the older the land record, the more genealogical information it is likely to contain.

The first six CDs described below illustrate the genealogical potential of American land records. Each CD, in whole or in part, images books that contain many of the earliest land entries for the colony/state in question (Kentucky, New Jersey, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Ohio, or South Carolina).

Land records figure prominently in the genealogy of other nations, too. For example, due to the destruction of so many records in the fire at the Four Courts in Dublin, Ireland, in 1922, the absence of census data prior to Irish independence, and the survival of a number of government enumerations of the owners or occupants of property in Ireland, land records play a critical role in the study of Irish family history. Each of the other two CDs listed here bears this out and is a key to some of the most important late 18th- and 19th-century records for Irish genealogy.

We hope that some of these land records on CD will help you in your research. Be sure to take advantage of the one-week sale on these CDs, which expires at 11:59 PM, EDT, Monday, October 6, 2008.

KENTUCKY LAND RECORDS, 1774-1924

This CD contains four essential Kentucky reference works published by GPC. Naming approximately 150,000 individuals, 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

http://www.genealogical.com/index.php?main_page=product_info&item_number=7650&NLC-GenPointers1

COLONIAL NEW JERSEY Source Records, 1600s to 1800s

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

http://www.genealogical.com/index.php?main_page=product_info&item_number=7518&NLC-GenPointers1

EARLY NORTH CAROLINA SETTLERS

Comprising a basic library of North Carolina genealogy, this Family Archive CD names some 200,000 individuals who lived in North Carolina during the 1700s and 1800s. It consists of numerous volumes of marriage records, death records, land records, historical sketches, and biographies. Combining personal recollections and biographies with source records and local histories, this CD contains a perfect blend of genealogical records and family history easily accessed by a single electronic index. Among the unique resources assembled here is the famous periodical edited by James Hathaway, the "North Carolina Historical and Genealogical Register," which contains 2,000 pages crammed with data on North Carolina's Old Albemarle region.

Was \$39.99 Now \$29.99

http://www.genealogical.com/index.php?main_page=product_info&item_number=7524&NLC-GenPointers1

PENNSYLVANIA COLONIAL RECORDS

The 10 books included on this CD contain newspaper abstracts, naturalization records, land records, court records, and family histories that identify approximately 200,000 people who lived in Pennsylvania during the colonial and Revolutionary War periods. Among other well-known Pennsylvania record sources included here are the most influential newspapers of the 18th century; land records compiled by William Penn's Commissioners of Property; indexes to the minutes of the Provincial Council and the Supreme Executive Council; lists of Germans who arrived in Pennsylvania from 1727 to 1775 and from 1786 to 1808; and genealogies of colonial and Revolutionary families, each starting with the first known Pennsylvania settler and proceeding in a direct line of descent to family members who lived in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Was \$39.99 Now \$29.99

http://www.genealogical.com/index.php?main_page=product_info&item_number=7512&NLC-GenPointers1

OHIO LAND AND TAX RECORDS, 1787-1840

With information on Ohio's earliest settlers, this magnificent CD contains the following five publications, all linked by a single electronic name index and a unique search engine: "Early Ohio Settlers: Purchasers of Land in Southwestern Ohio, 1800-1840," by Ellen T. Berry and David A. Berry; "Early Ohio Settlers: Purchasers of Land in East and East Central Ohio, 1800-1840," by Ellen T. Berry and David A. Berry; "Early Ohio Settlers: Purchasers of Land in Southeastern Ohio, 1800-1840," by Ellen T. Berry and David A.

Berry; "Early Ohio Tax Records," by Esther Weygant Powell; and "First Ownership of Ohio Lands," by Albion M. Dyer.

Was \$39.99 Now \$29.99

http://www.genealogical.com/index.php?main_page=product_info&item_number=7651&NLC-GenPointers1

EARLY SOUTH CAROLINA SETTLERS

This Family Archive CD includes a great many of the earliest surviving South Carolina source records, among them census records, ships' passenger lists, naturalization records, land warrants and grants, and probate records. Originally published in 11 books by GPC, images of every page of the 11 books can be accessed instantaneously on this CD by means of an electronic index of 125,000 names. Among the many great source records included on this CD are the first two censuses for the state of South Carolina (1790 and 1800), an index to all wills recorded in the state before 1782, a complete list of naturalization records extending from 1783 to 1850, and a list of lands (and grantors) granted by North Carolina for property now situated in South Carolina.

Was \$39.99 Now \$29.99

http://www.genealogical.com/index.php?main_page=product_info&item_number=7517&NLC-GenPointers1

AN INDEX TO GRIFFITH'S VALUATION of Ireland, 1848-1864

This CD is an index to the greatest of all Irish genealogical resources, Griffith's "Valuation, or the Primary Valuation of Ireland." Carried out between 1848 and 1864, this survey of Ireland was intended to determine the amount of tax each person should pay towards the support of the poor within their poor law union. The Valuation is arranged by county, barony, poor law union, civil parish, and townland and lists every landholder and every householder in Ireland--at that time about 1.25 million people. This index gives the full name of the householder and his/her county, parish, and townland of residence.

Was \$59.99 Now \$49.99

http://www.genealogical.com/index.php?main_page=product_info&item_number=7188&NLC-GenPointers1

IRISH FLAX GROWERS LIST, 1796

The Flax Growers List of 1796 is known officially as the Spinning Wheel Premium Entitlement List, or more commonly the Flax Growers Bounty List. At various times, the government introduced special incentives to encourage the production of linen, usually giving away spinning wheels and looms. In 1796 the Irish Linen Board published a list of almost 60,000 individuals who had received awards for planting a specified acreage of flax. Those who had planted one acre were awarded four spinning wheels, and those

planting five acres were awarded a loom. Arranged by civil parish in each county (except Dublin and Wicklow), the Flax Growers List contains the names of those individuals recognized by the Irish Linen Board as having planted specific acreages of flax.

Was \$39.99 Now \$29.99

http://www.genealogical.com/index.php?main_page=product_info&item_number=7271&NLC-GenPointers1

For a complete list of our land record publications, please visit the following:

http://www.genealogical.com/index.php?main_page=index&cPath=10&NLC-GenPointers1

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"INTER-COLONIAL MIGRATIONS," by David Dobson

Researchers having tracked their immigrant ancestor back to some port along the Atlantic coast may believe that the next step is to "jump the pond," that is to cross the Atlantic to Europe in search of their roots. While this is a reasonable assumption, in many cases it should be kept in mind that a significant minority of early immigrants spent some time in one colony before settling down in another. It may be that your immigrant ancestor first appears in American records as a resident of Boston; however, he or she did not necessarily arrive there directly from Europe but may well have arrived in New England via Halifax, Nova Scotia.

This is particularly valid for those who spent some time, possibly their period of indentureship, in the West Indies before moving to the North American colonies. During the 17th century, the Caribbean attracted about as many people from the British Isles as did the mainland colonies. Generally speaking, the northern colonies attracted families; the West Indies attracted single men, especially indentured servants. There were limited opportunities for semi- or unskilled workers in the plantation economies of the Caribbean or the American South, so many time-expired indentured servants found it necessary to move north in search of economic opportunity. Some islands, particularly Barbados, were relatively overpopulated, which resulted in an exodus, partly to some of the nearby islands but especially to South Carolina, from around 1660 onward.

This initial migration led to the creation of a network that facilitated subsequent movement of people. A. D. Chandler, in "The Expansion of Barbados" (JBMHS, Vol.13, 1946, pp. 106-7), reckoned that 30,000 whites left Barbados to all locations in the 17th century. Richard Dunn thought the figure to be 10,000 in his "Sugar and Slaves" (NY, 1972, pp. 112-3). John Camden Hotten's "Original Lists"--possibly the most famous book in genealogy--identifies a number of indentured servants leaving Barbados for other colonies during the 17th century. "The Calendar of State Papers, Colonial series, 1661-1668" lists migrants from Barbados to Virginia and Surinam between 1646 and 1658. Thomas Notley (1634-1679), for example, emigrated from Barbados to Maryland, where he was a merchant, planter, speculator, and attorney.

The diaspora of the American Loyalists in the aftermath of the American Revolution is another example of two- or three-stage migrations. The Loyalist claims (see Peter Wilson Coldham's "American Migrations, 1765-1799") provide much useful detail in tracking the movement of some immigrants of the 18th century. For example, Hector Berenger de Beaufain was a Huguenot whose family had fled to England after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685. In 1732, he went with Oglethorpe to settle in Georgia, but by 1742 he was Customs Collector at Charleston, South Carolina, where he died in 1766. His estate was claimed by his nephew in Brandenburg, Germany.

Two-stage migration is a common thread throughout the history of American settlement. In the 19th century, thousands of emigrants left the shores of Ireland bound for Canada, some to Newfoundland, some to Nova Scotia, and some to New Brunswick. However, many of these emigrants subsequently settled in New England or elsewhere in the U.S. So, though an immigrant ancestor may have lived in Massachusetts, he/she did not necessarily come there directly. One reason is that the Passenger Acts imposed by the American government were far stricter than laws imposed by the British government. In practice, this meant that more people could be shipped on board British ships than on American vessels, which made the cost of passage lower on the former. Emigrants, where they had a choice, generally went for the cheaper passage, and therefore many arrived in Canada onboard British ships. A significant number of these individuals then moved south to the U.S., either by rail or by sea, from ports such as St. John in New Brunswick.

Some of the Scots found in colonial North America arrived not directly from Scotland but via England, Ireland, the Netherlands, Scandinavia, and France. Some had no intention of emigrating but, as rebels, were shipped there unwillingly. This was especially true regarding the Jacobite and Cromwellian transportees, who were transported to the colonies via English ports. Some were two- or even three-stage migrants. Take the case of Donald Campbell, son of Malcolm Campbell of Fortingall, Perthshire. The Donald Campbell was a Jacobite captured after the Siege of Preston, Lancashire, in 1715, who was then transported to the West Indies as an indentured servant; later he moved to New England, where he died in 1747.

A substantial number of the Irish emigrants of the 19th century crossed over to Liverpool or, to a lesser degree, to Greenock, where they boarded ships bound for America and Canada. Newspapers would carry advertisements for passage to Canada and then sometimes indicate that a certain port, say St. John, New Brunswick, had shipping or rail links with other Canadian or American locations. A knowledge of such connections is vital to understanding the route taken by one's emigrant ancestor before he/she finally settled permanently. There is no doubt that the majority of emigrants settled permanently in the country where they landed, but there is a sizable minority that were two- or three-stage migrants who landed in one country and at some point moved on to another in the New World. [END]

The following books and CD-ROM publications could be helpful to researchers hoping to find their two- or three-stage immigrant ancestors.

BARBADOS AND SCOTLAND, LINKS 1627-1877

This book by David Dobson tackles the subject of Scottish emigration to the island of Barbados. Drawing on a wide range of manuscript and published sources originating in Barbados, Scotland, England, the Netherlands, and the U.S., Mr. Dobson here identifies about 2,500 Scots or their progeny who made their way to Barbados. Most of these emigrants left Scotland in the 17th and 18th centuries. Most Scots are identified by name, date/place of birth, baptism, marriage, or death; name of spouse or parents; and, sometimes, occupation, reason for transportation, ship, religious or political persuasion, miscellaneous pieces of information, and the source.

http://www.genealogical.com/index.php?main_page=product_info&item_number=9863&NLC-GenPointers1

GENEALOGIES OF BARBADOS FAMILIES

Records of Barbados families exist in a variety of places, and a great many have been written up and published in the turn-of-the-20th-century journals, "Caribbeana" and "The Journal of the Barbados Museum and Historical Society." This present work, compiled by James C. Brandow, contains every article pertaining to family history ever published in these journals. The combined articles, reprinted here in facsimile, range from conventional genealogies and pedigrees to will abstracts and Bible records and refer to some 15,000 persons, all of whom are listed in the index.

http://www.genealogical.com/index.php?main_page=product_info&item_number=658&NLC-GenPointers1

SCOTS IN THE WEST INDIES, 1707-1857 [Volume I]

Arranged alphabetically by surname, David Dobson compiled many of the entries in this work from Scottish newspapers like the "Aberdeen Journal," in which notices would appear seeking to employ managers and servants. In all, nearly 3,000 Scots are identified by full name, island inhabited, date and source of the information, and, sometimes, by occupation, parent(s)' name(s), and education.

http://www.genealogical.com/index.php?main_page=product_info&item_number=9246&NLC-GenPointers1

THE ORIGINAL LISTS of Persons of Quality [1600-1700]

Compiled by John Camden Hotten, this is the most famous of all ships' passenger lists and, historically, the most important single-volume list of English-speaking

immigrants of the colonial period ever published. Transcribed from the records of the British State Papers Office, it contains the names of more than 11,000 immigrants with their ages, former places of residence, and the names of ships in which they embarked. The book includes a 66-page index, which cites the given as well as the family name of all immigrants found in the various lists throughout the work.

http://www.genealogical.com/index.php?main_page=product_info&item_number=2870&NLC-GenPointers1

OMITTED CHAPTERS from Hotten's "Original Lists of Persons of Quality"

Based on parish registers, censuses, and militia lists found in the Public Record Office in London, compiler James C. Brandow identifies 6,500 immigrants who settled on Barbados before planting new roots on the North American mainland and who are not listed in John Camden Hotten's classic work described above.

http://www.genealogical.com/index.php?main_page=product_info&item_number=660&NLC-GenPointers1

BRITISH EMIGRANTS IN BONDAGE, 1614-1788 (CD)

This CD-ROM is the definitive record of 48,000 felons carried from the jails of England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland to help populate colonial America. For this CD, Peter Wilson Coldham, England's foremost authority on 17th- and 18th-century emigration to America, abstracted from every surviving record the names and histories of all those sentenced in England and Ireland to be transported to America for their alleged crimes. This CD also includes a separate section on transported Irish felons and runaways, a history of the British transportation system, an exhaustive account of the records used in this work, and a complete list of convict ships that sailed to America between 1671 and 1788.

http://www.genealogical.com/index.php?main_page=product_info&item_number=7012&NLC-GenPointers1

AMERICAN MIGRATIONS 1765-1799

For this volume, Peter Wilson Coldham examined the records of the American Claims Commission, which was responsible for compensating Loyalists for loss of land and property as a result of action taken against them before, during, and after the Revolutionary War. In all, Mr. Coldham transcribed 5,800 individual claims. Of the 15,000 persons recorded in this work, some three-quarters took up residence outside the U.S. after 1783--hence the title of the work--but the remainder, including many who had been classed as Loyalists, became honorable citizens of the new Republic.

http://www.genealogical.com/index.php?main_page=product_info&item_number=1122&NLC-GenPointers1

DIRECTORY OF SCOTS Banished to the American Plantations, 1650-1775

Between 1650 and 1775 many thousands of Scots were banished to the American colonies for political, religious, or criminal offenses. In the aftermath of the English Civil War, for example, Oliver Cromwell transported thousands of Scots soldiers to Virginia, New England, and the West Indies. Compiled by David Dobson, this directory cites for each person some or all of the following information: name, occupation, place of residence in Scotland, place of capture and captivity, parent's name, date and cause of banishment, name of the ship sailing to the colonies, and date and place of arrival in the colonies.

http://www.genealogical.com/index.php?main_page=product_info&item_number=1485&NLC-GenPointers1

SHIPS FROM SCOTLAND TO AMERICA, 1628-1828. Volume II

This work by David Dobson identifies ships plying their trade with North America between 1628 and 1828. The majority of American-bound cargo ships carried a small complement of passengers, and a number of these passengers are named in newspaper accounts and in records of the Exchequer now housed in the National Archives of Scotland. Volume II is based largely on these two sources, especially the Exchequer records, which identify vessels, masters, and cargoes on which duty was charged. Such records are virtually complete from the year 1742.

http://www.genealogical.com/index.php?main_page=product_info&item_number=1468&NLC-GenPointers1

NOVA SCOTIA IMMIGRANTS TO 1867 [Volume I]

Thousands of persons enumerated in the U.S. federal censuses--and New Englanders in particular--trace their ancestry through the Canadian province of Nova Scotia; however, Nova Scotia immigration records have been widely scattered--until now!

Col. and Mrs. Leonard H. Smith, Jr. labored over a decade to construct this vast index of heretofore widely scattered Nova Scotia immigrants from numerous archives in North America and abroad (Part 1) and from 450 articles in Nova Scotia periodicals (Part 2). This is easily the most comprehensive sourcebook on Nova Scotia immigrants ever published, and a great tool for New England ancestral research, whether the ancestor's origins are Scottish, Irish, English, German, or Loyalist.

http://www.genealogical.com/index.php?main_page=product_info&item_number=5474&NLC-GenPointers1

NOVA SCOTIA IMMIGRANTS TO 1867. Volume II

Whereas the first volume (see above) identifies immigrants to Nova Scotia who were named in selected manuscript sources, this volume identifies about 11,500 immigrants

reported in selected periodicals published outside Nova Scotia (Part 1) and selected published diaries and journals (Part 2).

http://www.genealogical.com/index.php?main_page=product_info&item_number=5476&NLC-GenPointers1

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"SO YOU THINK YOU CAN'T READ GERMAN," by Ernest Thode

You, the family genealogist, have a dilemma. You have discovered that your ancestry is German. Those old family letters in your possession are written in some kind of hen scratching that no sane person could possibly interpret, even though you have a vague feeling that those Germans of a century or two ago may have been successfully communicating with one another. To top it off, now you have researched back to your German-speaking immigrant ancestor couple. You can't even read the pre-printed part of that form you found in the attic that you think might be a passport, let alone the hand-written words that fill in the blanks. Why, for all you know, that passport might not be a passport at all, but a graduation certificate or a marriage license.

What do you, the designated family historian, do now? You don't know German other than "Gesundheit" and "Auf wiedersehen." You face a daunting task, probably an impossible task, or so it would appear to any reasonable person. Even though you have traced your English lines back to the 1600s with much satisfaction at your genealogical prowess, you are practically ready to abandon your German immigrants prior to the moment they set foot on American soil at Castle Garden in 1881 because of the "language barrier."

Actually, if you have half as much courage as that immigrant whose genes you so proudly bear, you are about to embark on an adventure into a new and different world, just as your ancestors did. After all, they had to learn a foreign language, an unfamiliar way of writing, and a new set of customs. If they were willing to take the plunge, you should be at least half as willing to learn how to read the documents that chronicle their lives. Believe it or not, you will learn to read German!

Fortunately, there is help. Even though I had the advantage of at least knowing the German language as I did my research, I became frustrated by the many different reference books I had to look through to find explanations of the words I found in genealogical documents. I had surname books, given-name books, gazetteers for place names, German genealogical guides and word lists, Latin word lists, French word lists, lists of weights and measures, lists of diseases, and guides to the old script. With such a plethora of aids, I saw the need for a "one-stop" German-English genealogical dictionary that could be used in conjunction with a basic German-English dictionary.

For nearly a decade, I pored through records that I had translated, genealogical periodicals, passenger lists, village chronicles, and historical documents, gleaning words and definitions, exhausting numerous German genealogical word lists. Finally, I compiled a reference book that I actually still use myself. (You should see the notes in

my desk copy!) My reference book, the GERMAN-ENGLISH GENEALOGICAL DICTIONARY, includes the genealogy-related words that regular dictionaries either miss or don't define in a way that applies to genealogy. There are no etymologies, pronunciation guides, parts of speech, etc.--just pure meanings for somebody translating, literally, word by word. It is just what someone needs to make sense out of a German genealogical document. [END]

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Ernest Thode is manager of the Local History and Genealogy Department of the Washington County Public Library in Marietta, Ohio. His research interest is German-Americana. He is a lecturer on the topic and the author of several books, including the "German-English Genealogical Dictionary" and the "Address Book for Germanic Genealogy." His award-winning genealogy column, "Family Tree," appears in "The Marietta Times." Another column, "Ask Ernie," appears as a feature in "The Palatine Immigrant," the quarterly publication of Palatines to America.

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GERMAN-ENGLISH GENEALOGICAL DICTIONARY

As Mr. Thode explained above, his GERMAN-ENGLISH GENEALOGICAL DICTIONARY is designed for the family researcher who has little or no knowledge of German but who nevertheless needs to make a translation of German-language documents. The DICTIONARY covers thousands of German terms and defines them in single words or brief phrases. Mr. Thode chose all words, symbols, and abbreviations in the DICTIONARY on the basis of their association with genealogy--having been used in church records, civil registration records, family correspondence, genealogical journals, ships' passenger lists, and emigration records.

Among the many categories of entries included in the DICTIONARY are family relationships, days of the week, map terms, legal terms, cardinal and ordinal numbers, roman numerals, signs of the zodiac, coins, liquid and dry measures, measures of length, place names, historical territories, geographical terms, occupations, titles, military ranks, types of taxes, illnesses, calendar days, male and female given names, heraldry, abbreviations, books of the Bible, and common genealogical words from Danish, Dutch, French, Latin, and Polish. In conjunction with a standard German-English dictionary, the user of this work should be able to make a word-by-word translation of any German document and understand it.

http://www.genealogical.com/index.php?main_page=product_info&item_number=5758&NLC-GenPointers1

As an added boost, read what the experts have to say about Ernest Thode's GERMAN-ENGLISH GENEALOGICAL DICTIONARY:

"The book is well organized; easy to use; a valuable addition to the library of anyone researching their German ancestry."--"Der Ahnenforscher," p. 3.

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"Researchers who wish to translate documents on their own will find this book invaluable."--"Federation of Genealogical Societies Forum," Vol. 5, No. 1, pp. 21-24.

Of Related Interest:

IN SEARCH OF YOUR GERMAN ROOTS. Fourth Edition, Updated [2008]

This guide is designed to help you trace your German ancestry not only in Germany but in all the German-speaking areas of Europe. First, it discusses the LDS Church's International Genealogical Index (IGI), which contains hundreds of thousands of entries from German parish registers. Then the narrative takes the reader back to the Old Country, where sources and archives are discussed in detail, especially Evangelical and Catholic Church records and records of state and city archives. Finally, Mr. Baxter presents a list of family archives, a list of genealogical associations in Germany, a list of German genealogical associations in the U.S., and a bibliography. The 2008 update to the fourth edition includes many websites for these records.

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GERMAN-AMERICAN NAMES. Third Edition (Temporarily out of print)

The third edition of GERMAN-AMERICAN NAMES by Prof. George F. Jones is longer than the earlier editions and has several thousand more entries. Like its predecessors, it attempts to explain the meaning of names borne today by Americans that derive from the German language or its dialects. Moreover, it deals with the Americanization of some of those names, explaining the social and historical phenomena that contributed to the distinctive character of German-American names. It deals as well with names many of us would never have thought of as German.

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ENCYCLOPEDIA of German-American Genealogical Research

This work concentrates on German genealogical research in America, with special focus on immigration records, German ethnic religious bodies in America, and manuscript and published source materials, both in America and Germany. One of the most important parts of the book is the section on the "Locations of German-Speaking Congregations in the United States, 1906," based on a federal religious census of the time. This census gives considerable data on a number of the larger German-speaking denominations,

enabling the researcher to establish the state and county in which German congregations were located.

http://www.genealogical.com/index.php?main_page=product_info&item_number=5442&NLC-GenPointers1

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BLOG: The American Memory Collection

In the second installment of an ongoing series of articles describing major websites for genealogists, Carolyn Barkley explores the wealth of information available at the Library of Congress's American Memory site. Among other things, this site includes a superb collection of maps. Learn all about them and much more in the latest posting on our blog, <http://www.genealogyandfamilyhistory.com>

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