Genealogy Pointers (03-22-11)

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Four CDs Back in Stock and Priced to Move in March
(Sale Prices in effect until 03-31-11.)

There’s still time to get in on the terrific savings on four recently re-manufactured CD-ROM titles in our collection. We have reduced the prices on each of these products by $10 through the end of the month. Did your ancestors settle in New England or Kentucky? Are their ships’ passenger records buried in one of several obscure or inaccessible genealogy periodicals? Could you be the descendant of a royal, noble, or otherwise notable British family? If you are interested in finding out, the answer might reside in one of these specially priced CDs. Just don’t wait too long; sale prices expire at 11:59 p.m. EDT, March 31, 2011.

**English Origins of New England Families**
This CD contains images of the pages from hundreds of articles originally published in *The New England Historical and Genealogical Register* and subsequently collected and reprinted by Genealogical Publishing Company in six volumes under the title *English Origins of New England Families.* It treats over 1,500 families and references 150,000 individuals.
**Was $39.99  Now $29.99**

**Notable British Families**
Since the 1820s the Burke family has produced world-renowned books dealing with British nobility, aristocracy, and landed gentry. This CD contains images of the pages of the most celebrated works ever published by Burke’s, excepting only the various Burke’s Peerage volumes, and names over 550,000 individuals. Books included on the CD are *Burke’s American Families with British Ancestry; The Prominent Families of the United States of America; A Genealogical History of the Dormant, Abeyant, Forfeited, and Extinct Peerages of the British Empire; A Genealogical and Heraldic History of the Extinct and Dormant Baronetcies of England, Ireland, and Scotland; The General Armory of England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales; A Genealogical and Heraldic History of the Commoners of Great Britain and Ireland; A Genealogical and Heraldic History of the Colonial Gentry; and Burke’s Family Records.*
**Was $39.99  Now $29.99**

**Immigrants to America, 1600s–1800s**
This CD identifies 200,000 immigrants who arrived at Atlantic and Gulf Coast ports between the 17th and 19th centuries. Based on 20 volumes of ships’ passenger lists published by
Genealogical Publishing Company, it provides such details as name, age, occupation, place of origin, port of departure, name of vessel, names of accompanying family members, and date and place of arrival.

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

**Genealogies of Kentucky Families**
This CD contains images of the pages of 200 family history articles reprinted in three volumes by Genealogical Publishing Company and originally published in *The Register of the Kentucky Historical Society* (2 vols.) and *The Filson Club History Quarterly* (1 vol.). It includes references to approximately 51,000 individuals.

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

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**System Requirements:** In order to read the CD you must use version 4.0 or higher of the Family Archive Viewer, which is available on CD or as a free download at [http://www.genealogy.com/dlfav6.html](http://www.genealogy.com/dlfav6.html). You can also use Family Tree Maker for Windows. See our website for details: [http://www.genealogical.com/content/cd_help.html](http://www.genealogical.com/content/cd_help.html). (Family Tree Maker software can be ordered from [http://www.familytreemaker.com/](http://www.familytreemaker.com/).)

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"Death Records – Useful Sources If Used with Caution,' by Carolyn L. Barkley
(This article originally appeared on our blog, [www.genealogyandfamilyhistory.com](http://www.genealogyandfamilyhistory.com) on December 18, 2008.)

I had a dream the other night in which I was standing in front of a small group of individuals to whom I was saying, “Hi, I’m Carolyn and I’m addicted to indexing.” While for several years I have enjoyed creating indices for authors as they complete their manuscripts, this year I signed up to be a volunteer indexer for [familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org). My addiction did not manifest itself immediately. I could index U.S. census records, starting and stopping, often letting a few weeks go by between sessions. But when “Massachusetts Death Records, 1906-1915” became available for indexing, I was truly hooked. In just a few weeks, I’d indexed about 5000 death certificates and often found myself stealing time from other work in order to do just one more download of 25 certificates. I could sit down to do one download at 9:00 p.m. and suddenly, many downloads later, it would be midnight! What made this project so interesting? I have multiple family lines in Massachusetts. Vital record research in New England is always a joy when compared with other regions (like the South!), and while I have used “Massachusetts Vital Records to 1850” as well as the “Massachusetts Vital Records 1841-1910” database (both available on the [New England Historic Genealogical Society’s website](http://www.nehgs.org)) the familysearch.org project extends vital records access through 1915. Additional aspects draw me to these records, however. Normally, we are searching for a single death certificate for a specific individual. We may or may not locate a needed certificate and if located, we may or may not find useful information in the record. In indexing a chronological series of death records for one locality, however, it is possible to glimpse a snapshot of a community at a specific point in time, to understand trends in such areas as immigration and health, and to uncover the dramas and stories that make up the fabric of a community.
Death records provide primary information for some data and secondary information for others and as such should be used with caution and analyzed carefully. While all information is not provided for all years, and not all clerks and informants provided all the information requested, here are the broad categories of data that you will find:

1. Personal information: Name of individual, town or city in which the death took place, date of death, residence at the time of death, age, race, date of birth, and place of birth. Each certificate will include some combination of this information. Names can sometimes provide startling moments – if my name had been Tirzah Bagg, I think I might have considered changing it (my apologies if she is your ancestor)! Try to determine the relationship between the informant (the person providing the information to the clerk for the certificate) and the deceased individual. If the informant was the father, mother or the wife, the personal information provided will be reasonably correct – probably. If the information was provided by a neighbor, the doctor or a hospital or institutional record, or a more distant relative such as a nephew, grandson, etc., the information may be missing, incomplete, or at worst, incorrect. Whoever was the informant, consider the information carefully in light of other information you have documented about this individual. If the data is in conflict with your previous research, you will need to locate further documentation in additional primary resources.

2. Relationship information: A married woman’s death certificate may contain her maiden name (if known) as well as the given and middle name of her husband (if known). It is significant that the death certificate of a married man does not include his wife’s name, unless she is the informant and then she may be identified only as “Mrs. Harry Smith.” Of particular usefulness (although subject to the same caveat about informant knowledge) is the inclusion of an individual’s father, mother’s maiden name, as well as the birthplace of both mother and father. This information provides clues to the identification and geographical location of an additional generation. You will want to compare the birthplace of the deceased and the birthplaces of his or her parents. In this time period, many of the deceased are members of the first generation born in this country, thus providing you with additional information. Sometimes you will be given the town or county of foreign birth, but more often the entry is simply “Russia,” “Canada,” “Ireland,” “Finland,” etc. All such information can help you locate ethnic communities, churches and cemeteries, and newspapers in the area in which the individual resided at the time of death, thus leading to possible resources for additional information. It is sometimes disconcerting to realize how little is known (or how little an individual will provide to the clerk) about a deceased family member’s mother and father. Often only one antecedent is known which may mean that only that parent immigrated to this country.

3. Medical information. Medical history has become an important area of genealogical research in the past several years and the cause of death can provide an insight into family health issues. In indexing a series of certificates, I noted how many individuals, even then, suffered from cancer, stroke, and heart disease, although tuberculosis was clearly the significant disease of the time period. The number of still-births, premature babies, and children dying within a few months from “marasmus” and “inanition” – lack of nourishment – as well as pneumonia and other such diseases is a bit startling and underlines the lack of prenatal care and poor living conditions of the time. The prevalence of peritonitis after surgery would have made a person...
think twice about having an operation. Few homicides are reported, although several suicides are included. It was a decidedly more dangerous time in the workplace, as witnessed by the numbers of elevator, railroad, and automobile accidents.

Medical information is full of fascinating vignettes. There is the case of Annie L. Dixon, born in Boston, the daughter of James J. McGlenn and Mary Gibbons, both born in Ireland. She was the wife of Arthur B. Dixon, born in Rollo Bay, Prince Edward Island. They resided at 29 Dennis Street in Boston where on 5 February 1907, Annie committed suicide by poisoning herself with illuminating gas “during [an] aberration of mind.” Because I was indexing a series of certificates registered on the same day as Annie’s death, I discovered that she had also killed her four children by the same method: 5-year-old Margaret, 4-year-old George, 2½-year-old Mildred, and 1-year-old Mary. Felice Gulifa, a 34-year-old laborer, born in Italy; Morris Zackland, a Russian-born mason, aged 32; Meyer Arlook, a 56-year-old Russian-born carpenter; and Joseph Adler, a 32-year-old workman, all died in Boston on 25 August 1906 from multiple injuries after being buried beneath a falling wall.

On 24 January 1910, two Norwegian fishermen from the schooner Paragon, Olaf Abramson and Martin Nelson, drowned off the Quero Bank; six days later, Edward Severson of Sweden and Charles Edwards of Norway, fishermen on the schooner Florence E. Stream, drowned in the same location. A few days later, John Ribiero of Lisbon, a fisherman on the schooner Thalea, drowned off the Jeffries Bank. All of these drownings were documented in Gloucester death certificates.

These examples may have been significant enough at the time to prompt a newspaper report. Locate the newspapers in the town or city of the deceased. Read the paper for a few days before and after the death date to gain background information that might pertain to the deceased. For example, in the case of the drownings, was there anything unusual about the weather that created the circumstances surrounding these deaths? A death can be puzzling as in the case of a 30-year-old painter who died from accidental strangulation having gotten his head stuck between the pickets of a fence, or may be work-related as in the case of a 58-year-old painter who died of acute lead poisoning. A death can be tragic as in the case of a 72-year-old man who died of apoplexy just two days after his wife died of arterio-sclerosis, or in that of Patrick A Daley, who drowned, presumably as a suicide, and was found dead in Boston Harbor near the Congress Street Bridge on Christmas Day 1908. In another episode English-born Thomas Rawcliffe of Lawrence, Massachusetts, a 44-year-old widower, died of alcoholism about 26 April 1909, and was subsequently found dead in a freight car in Olneyville Station, Rhode Island. Regardless of the circumstances, the causes of death point to human drama and tell a story.

4. Miscellaneous information. A death certificate may also provide additional helpful information or clues leading to further research. If the individual died in an institution (tuberculosis sanitarium, state hospital, etc.), the certificate may indicate how long the deceased had been institutionalized prior to his or her death and whether or not the disease was contracted in the institution, as well as the location of the deceased’s former or usual residence. One interesting certificate reported an individual who died in the state infirmary in Tewksbury, Massachusetts, where he had been living for 2 years, having been in the state for 2 years and 10 days. Clues abound in this record as the individual, a linotype operator, had been born in Illinois,
his father in Pennsylvania, and his mother in Virginia. In addition, the place of burial or removal and the name of funeral director/company may also be included. I was surprised to find that a number of patients from the Bridgewater State Farm were sent to the Tufts Medical School following death. In some cases the cemetery name will suggest a specific religion and/or church and therefore lead to additional records. For example, in Springfield, burial in St. Michael’s Cemetery would prompt contact with St. Michael’s Cathedral (Roman Catholic) to determine if other records are available. In addition, funeral homes and cemeteries may also provide additional background information.

Death records, when analyzed with care, can be important documents for genealogical research. Several web sites provide access to online death records: [www.vitalrec.com/deathrecords/](http://www.vitalrec.com/deathrecords/), [http://www.germanroots.com/vitalrecords.html](http://www.germanroots.com/vitalrecords.html), and [ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com). “Cyndi’s List” also provides a series of links to death record information. If you are researching death records in earlier time periods, a keyword search for “death records” on [genealogical.com](http://www.genealogical.com) will yield a list of 350 titles covering a variety of time periods and geographical locations.

If you would like information on volunteering for the familysearch.org indexing projects, go to [https://giveback.familysearch.org/indexing](https://giveback.familysearch.org/indexing), where you will find all the necessary information – just remember that the Massachusetts Death Records project is mine!

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March Reprints

The following previously out-of-print publications were reprinted this month and are now available:

**Genealogies of Mayflower Families. Three Volumes**
This three-volume work represents a complete collection of articles from *The New England Historical and Genealogical Register* devoted exclusively to *Mayflower* passengers and their progeny. The three encyclopedic volumes contain hundreds of articles on families and individuals of *Mayflower* descent and comprise not only the largest body of such materials in print but the most comprehensive collection of writings of the foremost *Mayflower* scholars of the 19th and 20th centuries. The name indexes to the volumes list about 100,000 persons.

**American Migrations, 1765-1799**
Between 1765 and 1799 the American Claims Commission 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. The Claims Commission examined claimants and witnesses and amassed a mountain of documentary materials, which included applications, correspondence, depositions, affidavits, and legal transcripts. This book refers to 5,800 individual claims--the entire contents of the papers of the Claims Commission. Of the 15,000 individuals recorded in this work, some three-quarters took up residence outside the United States 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.
Daily Life in 17th-Century Virginia
Can you picture everyday living in America from 400 years ago? If not, you should get your hands on this classic work by Annie Lash Jester. The first half of this title lays the groundwork with accounts of the first dwellings at Jamestown, Virginia, the arrival of women to the colony, living off the land, construction of clapboard houses, and so forth. Part II takes an in-depth view of cavalier households, ranging from furniture, utensils, clothing, and jewelry; the status of women, including household servants; and pastimes or traditions such as horse racing, music, drinking habits, travel, and funerals/burials.

Side-lights on Maryland History, with Sketches of Early Maryland Families
This landmark of Maryland genealogy is a compilation of family histories and source records. Volume I contains 75 chapters, or articles, on a variety of subjects, among them the passengers on the Ark and the Dove, the first Maryland settlers, muster rolls of colonial militia, original members of the Society of the Cincinnati in Maryland, names of 1,000 early settlers and their land surveys in Maryland, Scots exiles in Maryland, etc. Volume II consists entirely of genealogical sketches, which trace more than 100 Maryland families back to their immigrant ancestors.

48-Hour Savings on The Georgia Frontier--Three-Volume Collection of Genealogies
(Introductory price in effect until 11:59 p.m. EDT, Wednesday, March 24, 2011.)

Following General James Oglethorpe's initial settling of Europeans from England, Scotland, and the Palatine to the Georgia Colony and the dissolution of the Georgia trustees' charter, the British Crown offered substantial land grants to entice other colonists to settle and work the Georgia countryside.

As early as 1752, colonists from New England, Virginia, and the Carolinas poured into Georgia, bringing with them their families, servants, and sometimes entire religious communities. By 1775 these "frontier" settlements had established extensive coastal cotton and rice plantations. After the Revolution, Patriot veterans established homesteads by taking up land grants for their war services. During the early 1800s, Georgia employed a series of land lotteries to attract even more settlers. Once the federal government had evicted Georgia's Cherokee and Creek populations during the late 1820s, the stage was set for a climactic state lottery of middle and western Georgia lands in 1832.

Set against this history of Georgia's advancing frontier, genealogist and author Jeannette Holland Austin assembled an unprecedented work that preserves the record of many of these pioneering families. Her three-volume The Georgia Frontier is nothing less than the culmination of a career spent tracing Georgia families. Mrs. Austin, who has been actively engaged in genealogy for more than 40 years, is the author of 60 collections of genealogies, county histories, and abstracts of genealogical source records. (From 1988 to 2000 the author also served as Staff Training Director for the Jonesboro, Georgia, Family History Center.)

The Georgia Frontier sets forth the genealogies of 591 families, referencing tens of thousands of
Georgia settlers. The families are divided into three convenient groupings: (1) families that settled prior to 1775, (2) families that first entered Georgia between the Revolution and before the Civil War, and (3) families that migrated to Georgia from Virginia, North Carolina, or South Carolina at various periods.

Available only in book form, Mrs. Austin's work is a landmark in Georgia genealogy. From today until 11:59 p.m. EDT, Wednesday, March 24, 2011, you can order your three-volume set of *The Georgia Frontier* at the introductory price $150.00, compared to the retail price of $175.00 thereafter.

Following is a partial list of the main families covered in the volumes. To see a complete list, please access the URL at the bottom of this article:


Library Journal Sings Praises of Three Recent Reference Books

The magazine *Library Journal* is the leading source of critical appraisals of new books for librarians throughout North America. We were recently very pleased to learn that the latest editions of three of our reference books (*International Vital Records Handbook*, Fifth Edition; *The Genealogist’s Address Book*, 6th Edition; and the *County Courthouse Book*, 3rd Edition) received very strong reviews in this prestigious magazine. (In fact, the *Vital Records Handbook* received a starred review, *LJ*’s highest mark of distinction.) Although we have drawn attention to these genealogical mainstays from time to time, we wanted to share these independent assessments of three of our most important reference works with “Genealogy Pointers” readers at this time. Please read on for details.


“A revision to the fifth edition, published in 2005, this one-stop guide has been revised to include the most current fax, phone, web addresses, and contact names for genealogical, historical, and religious societies across the United States. Bentley (Directory of Family Associations) judiciously divides contact information into three subject segments. The first organizes genealogical and historical associations alphabetically, initially by state, then county, and finally by society name. Essential for genealogists and regional historians.”


“Updated to incorporate procedural revisions, this essential compilation of administrative forms will significantly reduce the frustration associated with obtaining official documentation, such as birth certificates. Because documents vary dramatically by state, territory, and nation, the book is divided into these three major segments. The first offers approved-form facsimiles for the request of U.S. state-issued documents. The second segment covers request forms issued in U.S. Territories. The third details various procedures and forms necessary to attain official documents in foreign countries. When facsimiles are unavailable, contact information for municipal offices and national embassies is provided. A crucial, time-saving resource.”
By Savannah Schroll Guz, Formerly with Smithsonian Lib., Washington, DC -- Library Journal, 5/15/2009

“A fully revised update to the 1996 edition, this exhaustive compilation of local government offices is arranged alphabetically, first by state name. Bentley (Directory of Family Associations) then subdivides each state alphabetically by county. Bite-sized entries detail founding dates, relevant history, and the municipal entity from which each county was subdivided. Full contact information for every courthouse is provided, including fax numbers, clerk names, email addresses, and probate fees. An excellent companion to Bentley's Genealogist’s Address Book.”
By Savannah Schroll Guz, formerly with Smithsonian Lib., Washington, DC -- Library Journal, 6/15/2009

Blog : Genealogical Standards—A Review of the Basics from BCG

The Board for Certification of Genealogists (BCG) is composed of distinguished scholars whose mission is to set forth the standards of evidence and other aspects of genealogical investigation by which research can be measured. This week Carolyn Barkley describes a number of the key standards set forth by BCG in an article for our blog, www.genealogyandfamilyhistory.com.

CONTACT US

www.genealogical.com is the online home of Genealogical Publishing Company and its affiliate, Clearfield Company. For general information about our companies and their products, please e-mail us at info@genealogical.com. To order online, please e-mail us at sales@genealogical.com.

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