



Arkansas Genealogical Society

AGS Ezine

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Susan G. Boyle, editor
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JOIN US!

If you are not a member,
this is your official
invitation to join AGS.

[AGS Membership Application](#)

If you are a member,
look at the back of your
Arkansas Family Historian.
Your membership expires
on the date printed under
your name.

It may be time to renew
your AGS membership dues!

October is here with a promise of fall in the air. That means it's time for the Arkansas Genealogical Society Fall Seminar. This year it is extra special because it coincides with the 50th birthday of AGS. Thinking back over the fall seminars I have attended, I remember mostly the things I learned while listening to a variety of speakers who lectured on many different genealogical topics.

The speakers varied greatly as did their teaching methods, but most of them were a lot of fun. They covered courthouse research, cemetery research, internet research, passenger lists, migration patterns, photographs, census records, military records, land records, Irish research, English research, Southern research, Virginia research, DNA research, methodology, source citation, and evidence analysis.

Is there more to learn? Of course there is. Family history never ends, it just keeps moving backward through the generations. So our learning never ends. There is always another record, another source, another facility we haven't utilized.

This is especially true now with the increasing number of records and books available to us online and the increasing number of gadgets allowing us to access it, thus our seminar title: "Moving into the Future, Looking back at the Past." Join us in listening to Barbara Renick tell us how to do it on October 27 at the Wyndham Hotel in North Little Rock.

Inside this issue

Coming Events	3-4
AGS Fall Seminar	5
UAMS Historical Research Center	6
News from Ancestry.com	7-8
Civil War Chat with James Johnston	9
Making Sense of the Civil War	10
Threat to close Georgia State Archives	11
From the Ancestry Insider	12-13
Book Review: Placenames of the Civil War	14

Tidbits – progress in VRs access

A Rhode Island law passed in 2011 and put it into effect in July 2012 allows adoptees over the age of 25 to acquire non-certified copies of their pre-adoption birth records for the first time. This heartening progress seems a reasonable, sensible, and fair way to allow thoughtful adult adoptees to gain some knowledge of “where they came from.” Hopefully, more states will see the light and follow suit. Depriving persons of the ability to know their history seems a denial of “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness,” especially in this day and age of DNA advances and medical advice to “know your ancestors’ health history.”

Arizona has improved vital records access by genealogists by providing images of birth certificates over 75 years old and death certificates over 50 years old. These are not certified copies, but they allow the family historian to view or print the certificate. Your query will bring up every listing containing any of your search items and the images are extremely clear. Check it out at <http://genealogy.az.gov>

In Pennsylvania, previously inaccessible vital records have been sent to the state archives and are more readily available with indexes online. See www.health.state.pa.us

Coming Events

October 6, 2012

Chat with James Johnston, “The Skirmishes at Woolum,” presented at Woolum, Buffalo National River, 5:30.

October 8, 2012

One Dress, Dyan Bohnert, civil war reenactor will present a program about the “one dress” many civil war women had to wear, Bob Herzfeld Memorial Library, 1800 Smithers Drive, Benton, Arkansas, 6:30-7:30.

October 9, 2012

Making Sense of the Civil War, Pine Bluff/Jefferson County Public Library, 5:30 pm, Dr. William Shea, Civil War Historian will lead the discussion; FREE and open to the public; phone 870.534.4802 to register.

October 11, 2012

Researching our German Roots, Pope County Library, Russellville, Heritage Hall, 6:00 pm, Dr. Peter Dykema, Professor at Arkansas Tech University will speak on German history and immigration. RSVP Kathy or Charity at 479.968.4369 or email kfowler@popelibrary.org

October 18, 2012

Researching our German Roots, Pope County Library, Russellville, Heritage Hall, 6:00 pm, librarian Kathy Fowler will explore researching German ancestors. RSVP Kathy or Charity at 479.968.4369 or email kfowler@popelibrary.org

Coming Events continued

October 23, 2012

The Shape of War, Pine Bluff/Jefferson County Public Library, 5:30 pm, Dr. William Shea, Civil War Historian, will lead the discussion; FREE and open to the public; phone 870.534.4802 to register.

October 26-27

Arkansas Genealogical Society Fall Seminar and Book Fair, “Moving into the Future—Looking Back at the Past” Wyndham Hotel, #2 Riverfront Drive, North Little Rock, Arkansas. Friday, registration 5:00 p.m., program 6:00-9:15 p.m. includes Russell Baker, “The Blue and the Gray”; special feature “Who Are Your People, Craig O’Neill?”; and Greg Boyd, “Arphax-HistoryGeo.com” about new online services of Arphax Publishing. Saturday registration 8 a.m., featured speaker Barbara Renick will speak 9-4:00 on genealogy using 21st century technology. \$50, includes box lunch on Saturday. Vendors open 5-9 p.m. Friday and 8-3 Saturday. For Wyndham Hotel reservations call 501.371.9000 or toll free 1.866.657.4458 [this is new information since the flyer went out]. For a registration form and additional information, go to www.agsgenealogy.org

November 6, 2012

War and Freedom, Pine Bluff/Jefferson County Public Library, 5:30, Dr. William Shea, Civil War Historian, will lead the discussion; FREE and open to the public; phone 870.534.4802 to register.

Arkansas Genealogical Society 50th Anniversary Fall Seminar and Book Fair

October 26 and 27, 2012 at Wyndham Hotel, North Little Rock, Arkansas



Please join us as the Arkansas Genealogical Society proudly presents Barbara Renick as the featured guest lecturer during the AGS 50th anniversary fall seminar, “Moving into the Future—Looking Back at the Past.”

Barbara is a genealogical computing instructor at the Regional Family History Center in Orange, California. She has taught genealogical computing classes since 1985 and frequently lectures at regional and national conferences. She writes for several genealogy publications and authored *Genealogy 101: How to Trace Your Family’s History and Heritage* for the National Genealogical Society’s 100th Anniversary. She specializes in 19th century research in Kentucky, Tennessee and the South.

Her lectures on October 27 will begin at 9:00 am with “How Computers and Gadgets are Changing Genealogical Research,” and continue with “Overcoming Idiosyncrasies of Genealogy Database Sites,” “Finding More with the New FamilySearch Catalog,” and “Tackling Tough Genealogy Tasks with 21st Century Technology.”

On Friday evening Russell Baker will speak at 6:00 p.m. on “The Blue and the Gray: Looking for Civil War Ancestors,” followed by a special program called “Who Are Your People, Craig O’Neill?” in which the KTHV anchor man will learn about some surprises in his family tree. The evening will be completed by Greg Boyd of Arphax Publishing who will inform us about “Arphax-HistoryGeo.com: A Revolutionary New Map Service from Arphax Publishing.”

If you did not receive a registration form in the mail, go to agsgenealogy.org and click on Registration Form.

UAMS Library's Historical Research Center Digital Collections has a New Look and a New Collection

The digital collections website of the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences Library Historical Research Center has a new appearance and new features. The new URL is <http://hrcdigitalcoll.uams.edu/cdm>.

A major change is the addition of a main landing page which provides descriptions and a sample image for each individual digital collection. Users will also find general information pertaining to all the digital collections, browsing and keyword search options, and suggested search topics on this page. Links to individual landing pages for each digital collection provide further information about the collection's scope and content as well as thumbnail images of recent additions. Users may also enable an RSS function to be notified whenever new items are added to that particular collection.

The Historical Research Center is also proud to announce the addition of a new digital collection containing page images and searchable text from journals published by the Arkansas Medical Society from 1870 to 1922. Consulted frequently for biographical research, these titles are also a significant source of information regarding medical knowledge, education, practice, and social attitudes toward the treatment and prevention of disease in Arkansas. The journal volumes are being digitized in-house using equipment purchased with a federally funded 2011 Digital Preservation Award (National Library of Medicine, National Institutes of Health Contract No. HHSN-276-2011-00007-C with the Houston Academy of Medicine-Texas Medical Center Library). After completion of this project in December 2012, the HRC staff plans to digitize other frequently consulted historical materials including yearbooks, matriculation records, and physician directories.

Check out our new website and let us know what you think. Your feedback helps the HRC staff prioritize digitization and preservation efforts. We may also be able to provide or recommend additional materials related to your topic of interest.

Suzanne Easley, Archivist

UAMS Library

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News from Ancestry.com: Archives.com and making corrections to online information



Ancestry.com announced late in August that it had purchased Archives.com for 100 million dollars in cash and will operate it separately as a lower priced option for researchers. Archives.com subscriptions have been, and apparently will continue to be, \$39.95 per year.

Archives.com was started only about two and a half years ago. Clearly, family history research has become big business. The Archives.com website obtained about a billion records from FamilySearch in the form of public family trees and census records. Remember that you can search for free on FamilySearch anytime. Archives.com also gives subscribers access to Free BMD, which are vital records from England and Wales, and to NewspaperArchive and the Social Security Death Index, also available without charge elsewhere.

On another front, also in August, the Ancestry.com blog, <http://blogs.ancestry.com/ancestry/2012/08/15/how-can-i-improve-the-1940-u-s-census/> outlined how searchers may correct, make changes to, or add information to 1940 census indexing. This appears to be in response to the outcry of disappointed researchers who found so many errors in the original indexing or could not locate their ancestors at all in the index.

It was previously possible to make comments about misread or mis-indexed entries on the “record page,” what Ancestry called their transcription of the names and ages of the persons in the household. Now, with the 1940 census, they are calling that the index page and allowing viewers to make changes there or on the actual image page.

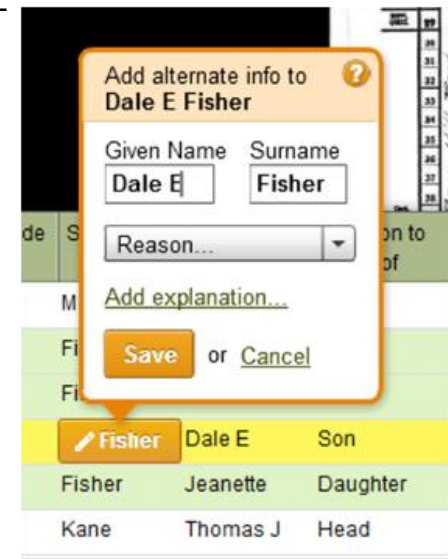
On the index page you can click under Page Tools on View/Add Alternate Info to get a list of options such as name, relation to head of household, age, birth year, birth place. Follow

A screenshot of the 'Page Tools' menu on Ancestry.com. The menu is titled 'Page Tools' and contains several options: 'Save record to someone in my tree', 'Save record to my shoebox', 'View/Add Alternate Info' (highlighted with a red box), 'Report Image Problem', and 'View printer-friendly'. Below these options is a section titled 'Share this record' with links for Facebook, Twitter, and Email. At the bottom of the menu is a 'Comments' section with the text 'There are no comments for this record' and a 'Leave a comment' button.

News from Ancestry.com continued from p. 7

the directions to change the item you choose, give a reason, and submit it. On the image page, you click on the line of interest and then hover over the name or other box in the index at the bottom of the page. An orange box will appear with a pencil in it. When you click on that a box will appear and give you the capability of changing the spelling of a name for instance, or changing the relationship or age.

In my case, Miller Street on which my grandparents lived was transcribed as Nuller. I changed it to Miller and now that is what appears in the index at the bottom of the image page. My grandfather's name Harry was spelled Hary in the index. The handwriting was very bad, and the second "r" had been incorporated into the first up-stroke of the "y", so the indexer is not really to blame. I changed the name to Harry and that's the way it appears now in the index on the bottom of the image.



The screenshot shows a pop-up form titled "Add alternate info to Dale E Fisher" with a question mark icon. The form contains fields for "Given Name" (Dale E) and "Surname" (Fisher). Below these is a "Reason..." dropdown menu and a text area for "Add explanation...". At the bottom of the form are "Save" and "Cancel" buttons. The form is overlaid on a table of names and relationships. The table has three columns: Name, Relationship, and another column. The rows are: Fisher Dale E Son (highlighted in yellow), Fisher Jeanette Daughter, and Kane Thomas J Head.

Fisher	Dale E	Son
Fisher	Jeanette	Daughter
Kane	Thomas J	Head

Ancestry suggests you can add nicknames or other identifiers to make the person more visible. I would be hesitant to change anything that was actually written on the page. But, when the handwriting is very bad and the indexing is affected, it seems like those most familiar with the family information could give others a leg up with a correction.

I recently found a McCants family recorded in the 1860 census as McLands. It was clearly the same family as in 1850 and 1870, with the same names and appropriate ages, but the surname was off by a lot. The handwriting was clear so the name wasn't indexed wrong. In this case, an addition of extra information that this family name is actually McCants and had, for one reason or another been recorded incorrectly by the enumerator might help future researchers of the family.

If the census image itself is a problem, you may contact Member Services at 1-800-Ancestry .

The National Park Service Presents Civil War Chat with James Johnston

October 6, 2012

Title: “The Skirmishes at Woolum”

Location: Woolum (Buffalo National River)

Time: 5:30PM

Abstract: Federal scouts in the Buffalo River watershed came across resident Confederate guerrillas who contested their passage. Two particularly hard fought skirmishes occurred just up Richland Creek on Christmas Day, 1863 and May 3 & 5, 1864 when Confederates annihilated a 40-wagon forage train of the 2nd Arkansas Cavalry (Union) out of Bellefonte. Other Union scouts to the vicinity would surprise small bands of Confederates or raid their saltpeter works, used to make gunpowder locally. Often both Union and Confederate participants in these skirmishes would be from the area.

Making Sense of the American Civil War from Mark Christ at Arkansas Historic Preservation

Making Sense of the American Civil War is a scholar-led reading and discussion program for public audiences, presented by the Arkansas Humanities Council, the National Endowment for the Humanities and the American Library Association's Public Programs Office.

The Pine Bluff/Jefferson County Library and the Arkansas Humanities Council will host a reading and discussion program in Pine Bluff, with sessions taking place every two weeks. At each session, the conversation will focus on a different facet of the Civil War experience, using one or more common texts as a foundation and touchstone.

The Pine Bluff sessions will begin at 5:30 and be led by Dr. William Shea, noted Civil War historian, author and professor of history at the University of Arkansas, Monticello.

The books provided by AHC are:

- Geraldine Brooks, *March*
- James M. McPherson, *Crossroads of Freedom*
- *America's War: Talking About the Civil War and Emancipation on Their 150th Anniversaries*, an anthology edited by Edward L. Ayers

Schedule:

- October 9 - Making Sense of War
- October 23 - The Shape of War
- November 6 - War and Freedom

The sessions will be held at the Pine Bluff/Jefferson County Library and are free and open to the public. Registration is required. Please contact the library to sign up and check out the required books. Phone 870.534.4802.

Georgia threatened to close state archives

The proposed closing of the Georgia State Archives was shocking news for genealogists in September. It would have been the only state archives in the nation to close.

The Georgia Governor's Office of Planning and Budget had instructed the Secretary of State to make additional 3% budget cuts for fiscal years 2012 and 2013 amounting to more than \$700,000. This would not be eliminating excess, but rather further reductions in services to the public.

You can read the state's public statement at <http://www2.wsav.com/news/2012/sep/13/breaking-georgia-closes-state-archives-ar-4538200/>

The Secretary of State's decision was to reduce archives staff that catalogs, restores, and provides reference services and to allow public access to the building only by appointment, which would depend on the schedules of the retained employees.

As with similar events in the past, genealogists quickly responded by signing a petition to oppose the restriction of access to records. Such opposition had previously prevented similar cutbacks or closings. As historians we must be ever vigilant and vocal about protecting access to records that allow the citizens of a democracy to be informed about their history.

Finally as this Ezine is readied to send, the Governor of Georgia has stepped up and declared he would not allow the Georgia State Archives to close. So we shall see if our vigilance is successful one more time.

Some good advice *From the Ancestry Insider* at <http://ancestryinsider.blogspot.com>

Evidence Explained and the Index Derivative Type

Posted: 19 Sep 2012 11:05 PM PDT

When it was recently released, I read Elizabeth Shown Mills's latest online lesson, "[QuickLesson 10: Original Records, Image Copies, and Derivatives](#)." While we often speak of sources as being originals or derivatives, real life is not always that tidy. Mills presents three caveats to consider when classifying a source. One thing that can be done is to distinguish between formats that preserve the original content and those that process the content and the form of the content. Mills lists about 10 of each type.

I want to emphasize the characteristics of one of the derivative types she presents: indexes.

I regard indexes (as they are called on [FamilySearch.org](#)) and databases (as they are called on [Ancestry.com](#)) as nearly the worst of all derivative types. Indexes are used as finding aids. To that end, publishers apply all sorts of treatments to the information found in the original records. The information originally in the records is interpreted and transformed, and conclusions are drawn. Some of these are made by keyers and indexers. Some are applied en masse by computer algorithms.

Names. Name parts are divided into given and surnames, sometimes incorrectly, even swapped. Indexers might be instructed to interpret abbreviations. Keyers and indexers misread names. You should also be aware that to increase findability, publishers standardize names—behind the scenes “Jack” becomes “John” and so forth.

Dates. Dates are often assumed to be Gregorian, regardless. Or dates from other calendar systems may be forced into Western Calendar format.

(continued on page 13)

From the Ancestry Insider continued

Birth Dates. Birth dates may be inferred from age. Birth years calculated this way for a June 1 census are wrong over half of the time.

Places. Abbreviations may be interpreted by indexers or computers. Indiana's "la" may become Iowa and its "In" may become India. Place names may be forced into a hierarchy of three jurisdictions (town, county, state for the U.S.) regardless of reality. As with names, publishers standardize place names behind the scenes, sometimes using pick lists, making it impossible to find some records.

Race. Race, color, nationality, and ethnicity may be confused, standardized, and reduced to pick lists that exclude and confuse many values.

The next time you use an index, remember these shortcomings. Indexes should be considered finding aids. When available, always view the image. When images are not available, always use the index information to obtain copies of the original record.

The other [nine lessons](#) can be found on the website [*Evidence Explained: Historical Analysis, Citation & Source Usage*](#).

Ed. See <http://ancestryinsider.blogspot.com> for other genealogy advice and news.

Book Review: *Placenames of the Civil War* by Karen Russ

Placenames of the Civil War: Cities, Towns, Villages, Railroad Stations, Forts, Camps, Islands, Rivers, Creeks, Fords and Ferries, by John D. Bennett. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Company, Inc. 2012. \$45.

With the US Civil War being fought in over 10,000 places, many of which no longer exist or have new names, it is hard to trace ancestral roles to specific locations in the War. Bennett's book attempts to bring together a list of places and describe their role in a critical part of American history. In addition to the obvious "places" like cities, towns, and villages, he has included geographic points that at the time were forts, ferry landings, and critical bodies of water.

Written like a gazetteer, *Placenames of the Civil War*, provides all its entries in alphabetical order without any breakdown by state or territory. Each entry explains the origin of each place name and its role in the War. For cities and towns, the county or parish is provided. Cross-references are provided for those locations which had different names in Union and Confederate documentation.

Appendix I provides a headcount, from the Eighth U.S. Census of Population (1860), for 414 cities and towns in Northern and Southern states. Because the 1860 numbers for the Southern states were not as reliable, it is noted that the table is supplemented with data from the 1870 Census. Unfortunately, no indication is made as to which city has data from which decade.

Appendix II provides a list of towns and military camps, by state or territory, for all states and territories that were involved in the War, as well as the camps in the District of Columbia.

A lengthy bibliography provides other sources for additional information.

The book lists for \$45 but Amazon.com dealers have it for as little as \$29.

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Administrative Stuff

Contributions: If you have news for the Ezine, send it! susanb1996@aol.com –Thanks!

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