

As Stirpes

SKILL BUILDING:

Step Up Your Genealogy Game



Stirpes Contents

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Why Name our Journal Stirpes? Pronounced "STÛR'PEZ," it perfectly describes the core understanding of our passion in researching ancestry and family history: The phrase "... to my heirs, per stirpes" means that the legal heirs share their inheritance based on their relationship to the deceased." (See full story in *Stirpes*, 2016, Volume 55, Number 3-4)



Message from the President

TxSGS is excited about returning to the DFW metroplex to celebrate 60 years of genealogical leadership in Texas. From our first meeting in Fort Worth on 28 November 1960, our founders had a vision for supporting individual genealogists and societies on a statewide level through education, preservation, and building strong ties with entities that support genealogy.

At the same time, we're facing unprecedented challenges. In the midst of COVID-19, the world is navigating a vastly different landscape than we've ever seen, one that directly affects the genealogical educational experiences that distinguish TxSGS. Part of the challenge we're facing is the uncertainty of COVID-19 status in the fall and how it may impact our annual conference.

The TxSGS Conference Committee and Board of Directors have been closely watching developments. Our top priority is the health and safety of conference attendees, speakers, and TxSGS volunteers. We will continue to monitor the situation to ensure that we are able to provide a safe and rewarding experience.

Conversations with the Omni Mandalay, our conference venue, have reassured us that they are diligently working to maintain a safe environment. Omni Mandalay has developed a detailed process for managing events under social-distancing guidelines, addressing everything from seating to food service, including frequent disinfecting of surfaces. The conference committee is working with the Omni Mandalay to incorporate their guidelines into our conference plans.

With "Remembering Our Heritage" as the theme, TxSGS focuses on the rich tapestry of our ancestors' lives at the TxSGS 2020 Annual Family History Fall Conference. As genealogists, our passion is identifying and documenting that heritage and celebrating it in word and image.

Plan now to join us November 13-15 at the Omni Mandalay at Las Colinas in Irving, conveniently situated near the DFW airport. We'll have dozens of speakers on a wide variety of topics, each selected to help you in your own personal quest to remember your heritage.

Details about registration and the program are coming soon. Watch our website at www.txsgs.org for more information as it is released.

Sincerely,

Susan E. Ball
President, Texas State Genealogical Society

From the

Editors' Pen



In our review of newspapers for the article “TxSGS is 60!,” we came across one from 1963 with the headline “Hunt for Ancestors Relatively Easy Job.” Not so, when you hit a brick wall! Two other headlines were more accurate: “Like puzzles? Try This: Ancestor-finding is Tricky” and “Genealogist Says Compiling Family Tree Requires Care.” Tricky and requiring care are much more accurate descriptions of the challenges facing family history researchers.

Fortunately, genealogists have many opportunities to develop the skills needed to conquer those tricky lineages. In this issue, we address several aspects of skill building. The use of DNA to solve genealogical puzzles can be confusing, especially when using advanced techniques. Debbie Parker Wayne provides a host of sources for learning how to better use DNA as a research tool in “Building Genetic Genealogy Skills.”

Understanding records and reading old handwriting are extremely useful skills; Diane Richard shows how crowdsourced abstracting and indexing projects can enhance those abilities in “People Power – Crowdsourced Projects.” Other skill building articles include “Creating Custom Maps with Google” by Hannah Kubacak, “Adding

Context to Your Family Tree” by Jim Thornhill, and “Skill Building for Success: An Ongoing Process” by Susan Kaufman.

Articles incorporating good genealogical techniques show the reader how to apply their own skill set and identify areas that need enhancing. “The Paternal Ancestry of John Dent” by Dawn Stricklin and “Texas Garners ...” by Larry Garner both illustrate how to prove a generational connection with indirect proof.

Russ Rahn returns with “The Sheriff is in Town,” in which his research started with 1836 business correspondence, and “The Brick Wall,” based on a citizenship document from Oregon. In both, Russ explores the use of unusual documents in genealogical research. In “Warming up a Cold Trail ...,” Lauren Jacobs shares how she used unusual sources including movies, TV shows, novels, websites, and histories to write a biography of Sister Marie Jacobs, a Dutch nun who was interned in Indonesia by the Japanese during WWII.

Keeping with the theme of “Skill Building,” Bill Buckner’s book review features *First Families of Bexar County, Texas: Descendant Lineages of Residents of Béxar, San Antonio, and Bexar County Prior to 1850*, edited by Larry W.

Lockett and published by the San Antonio Genealogical and Historical Society. Books such as these are celebrations of the efforts and skills required to prove a lineage through careful research and documentation.

Shortly after COVID-19 social distancing restrictions were issued, TxSGS began discussing ways to help partner societies that were unable meet physically. Our response was to create a virtual meeting team that could assist Partner Societies with the technical challenges of meeting virtually; we salute that team and their efforts in this issue’s Volunteer Spotlight. In “Message from the President,” President Susan Ball discusses TxSGS plans for the 2020 Family History Conference in the DFW Metroplex in November and how TxSGS plans to prioritize the safety of attendees.

In commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the end of WWII, our September issue of *Stirpes* focuses on military research. We plan to include articles on military research and resources for any US military conflict. If you have a technique, tip, website, or resource you’d like to share or a story about your military relative, please contact us at stirpes@txsgs.org.

~ *Stirpes* Editors ★

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Volunteer Spotlight:

Virtual Meeting Support Team

In the midst of social distancing and venue closures, TxSGS quickly formed a team to provide virtual meeting support to Partner Societies. The program was announced on March 22, and in the first week of April, TxSGS facilitated four society events.

Stirpes salutes this group, spotlighting their efforts to keep Partner Societies engaged with their members. Led by Sandra Crowley, Director of Development, the team includes Tony Hanson, Director of Membership; Emily Richardson, Secretary; Randy Whited, District L Representative; and Susan Ball, President. TxSGS members Suzan Younger and Jim Thornhill provide additional support as needed.

Together, the Partner Society Virtual Meeting Support Team has facilitated over 50 meetings in April and May, including society general meetings, board meetings, demonstrations, and practice sessions. The team is currently working with 17 Partner Societies to provide for their members a virtual alternative to on-the-ground meetings.

Some of the societies who have taken advantage of this program have had little or no experience with virtual meetings.

The team has led them through the process, helping them become familiar with this experience and introducing society members to technology they never dreamed they'd use.

While the pace has sometimes been grueling, the team is thrilled to be able to help our Partner Societies weather the COVID-19 shutdown.

They have enjoyed the opportunity to meet the leaders of our Partner Societies and introduce a whole new audience to the benefits of virtual meetings. The Partner Societies have expressed their heartfelt appreciation for the opportunity to hold virtual meetings, and TxSGS joins them in saying "Thank You" to our Virtual Meeting Support Team. ★



New Members & More

**New Members since
March 2020**

Heritage Circle

Benefactor

Susan K. Thompson



Supporter

Susan E. Ball

Carol Brooks

Kitty M. Olson

David C. Taylor

Pam Bryant

Jamie Etakorn

Evaristo T. Garcia

Marta I. Garcia

Peter J. Gulden

Friend

Roseann Hogan

Joel K. Levy

Judi F. Levy

Kelvin Meyers

Bernd H. Strassner

Liz D. Strassner

James Westermeier

Dr. Carol Westermeier

Individual and Household Members

Joyce M. Anderson

Doug Mastin Bannister

Barbara Bernal

Timothy Bland

Keith Byron Boone

Rebecca Bryant

Sabrina A. Enyeart

Heidi B. Good

Dee Ann B. Kilbourn

Cletis M. Millsap

Danielle R. Shumaker

Bela B. Toth

Millie Toth

Dusky C. Waters

Calling All Descendants of Early Texans!★

Your Lineage Could be Included in
the Soon-to-be Published

Texas First Families Lineages, Volume III

Interested?

For more details, see the Heritage Certificate Application at

[http://www.txsgs.org/TSGS/wp-content/uploads/
2014/09/tsgs_cert_app.pdf](http://www.txsgs.org/TSGS/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/tsgs_cert_app.pdf)

Questions?

See the Frequently Asked Questions section of
the Heritage Certificate Application.

For further inquiries, contact Certificates@txsgs.org



*Open to direct and collateral descendants of persons who settled in or served the Republic of Texas prior to 19 February 1846.

The Paternal Ancestry of **John Dent**

by Dawn C. Stricklin, PhD

John Dent was an eighth-generation descendant of an English immigrant named Samuel Sherrill through his mother, Mary Caroline (Sherrill) Dent Gibson.¹ In 1858, Mary migrated to Texas with her second husband, her son, John Dent, from her previous marriage, and her children from her second marriage.² Researchers have already identified John's parents as Walter Dent and Mary Caroline Sherrill.³ However, little is known of Walter Dent other than his name and basic vital statistics.

In addition, researchers have not provided marriage dates or places for Mary Sherrill's two marriages. Who were Walter's parents and what happened to Walter Dent? This article builds upon prior research on the Sherrill family by examining Walter's brief life.

Walter Dent

Mary Caroline Sherrill's family and ancestry have been well documented, but Walter's ancestry is less so.⁴ The first census where Walter is enumerated is the 1850 census in St. Francois County. That year, the 23-year-old Walter, born about 1827 in Missouri, is enumerated with Mary.⁵ Directly next to them is the household of sixty-five-year-old Absalom Dent, his wife Malinda, nineteen-year-old Fleming, and twelve-year-old Leroy.⁶

Online family genealogies state that Mary and Walter married, but give no date or place for this assertion.⁷ Ancestry.com microfilmed the marriage records for St. Francois County. However, the early marriages for that county are written in light brown ink and are barely visible when digitized.⁸ Onsite research at the Recorder of Deeds office in Farmington, Missouri,

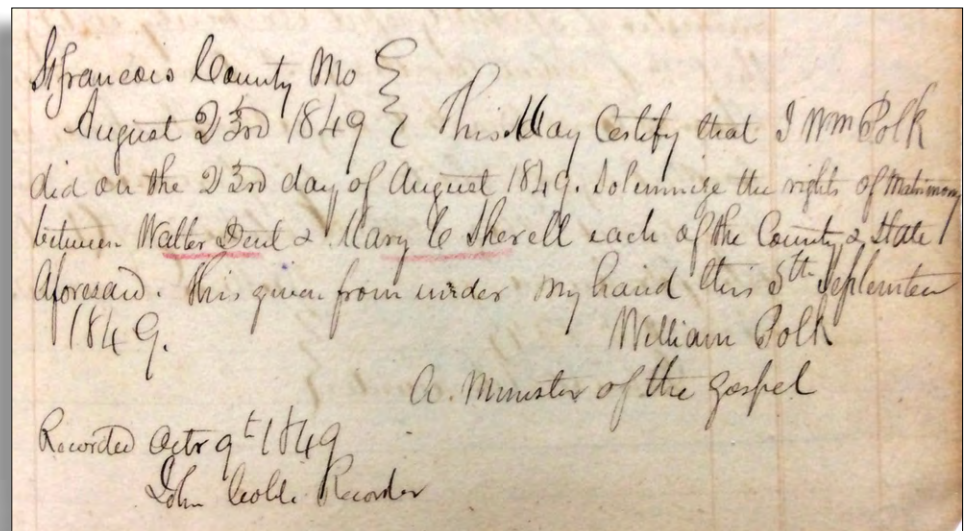


Figure 1: Marriage record for Walter Dent and Mary C. "Sherell."

revealed that Mary and Walter married on 23 August 1849 in St. Francois County, Missouri (figure 1).⁹

In the spring of 1851, Walter borrowed \$300 from Absalom Dent and traveled to California.¹⁰ Mary, who by this time was heavily pregnant, stayed behind in St. Francois County where her son John was born on 1 July 1851.¹¹

Walter migrated to California during the height of the gold rush and traveled there with his brother-in-law, DeLafayette Sherrill, and probably three other men from Missouri.¹² In September of 1852, Walter was

working as a miner in Yuba County and was enumerated next to his brother-in-law, DeLafayette, who was also mining.¹³ Walter's place of burial is of interest because he has no gravestone present in the Dent Cemetery in Bismarck, St. Francois County, Missouri.¹⁴ Dent Cemetery is an old cemetery in St. Francois County where many Dent family members were buried. While the possibility exists that he was buried there and that his tombstone is no longer extant, something in Walter's probate files begs for an explanation.¹⁵

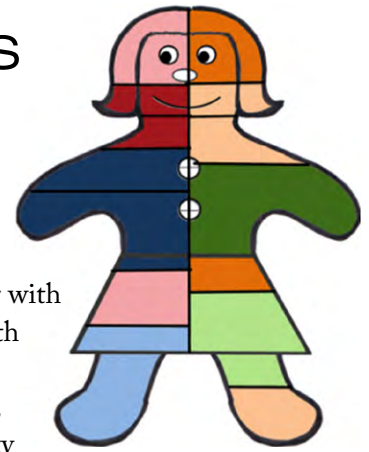
Building Genetic Genealogy Skills

by Debbie Parker Wayne, CG®, CGLSM

It can be overwhelming for even the most experienced researcher to learn the skills needed to be adept at using genetic evidence for genealogical conclusions.

It isn't necessary to become a mathematician or a biologist, but it is necessary to use some math and biology that maybe hasn't been used since high school days. Luckily, there are books, blogs, videos, and courses to help. You must start with a good foundation and

gradually add to your skills with experience and education. Some learn better with directed learning, such as with in-person classes, and some do well with studying books, blogs, and webinars. A variety of educational offerings are presented here, both free and for pay. This is a selective list limited by space, not a complete list.



Introduction to Genetic Genealogy

The first important concept to master is that there is more than one “kind” or type of DNA. Scientists would probably not view it this way, but for us non-scientists, this is the easiest way to think of DNA. The kinds of DNA we use in genealogy are Y-DNA, mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA), autosomal DNA (atDNA), and X-DNA. Each of these types of DNA has a different inheritance path, coming to us from different ancestors in our tree. Each type of DNA can only be compared with someone else who has done the same type of test. Determining which

type of DNA we share with someone on our match list can help us determine which shared ancestor that DNA may have been inherited from.

Each of these types of DNA may be measured in different ways. For some, we determine how many and which DNA locations (or markers) are different or the same. For others, we determine the genetic length and number of matching segments and total amount of the shared segments. As we get more advanced, we may learn to triangulate and map shared segments.

Best Way to Learn Genetic Genealogy

The absolute best way to learn how to use DNA for genealogical research is to test yourself and other family members and use your own data as you explore the concepts and tools. You probably already know how you are related to the people you will test, barring the existence of unexpected parentage.

Knowing how two test takers are related allows a researcher to gain experience with the tools and analysis techniques where the final conclusion is known. That experience makes it easier to explore the unknown relationships with hundreds or thousands of people at the testing company who share your ancestors. All researchers should be aware of the possibility of DNA uncovering long-held family secrets. Documentary records can also uncover those family secrets, but DNA may make unexpected, and sometimes unwanted, conclusions irrefutable.



Genetic Genealogy Testing Companies

Some of the testing companies used by genealogists are:

- **23andMe** – <https://www.23andme.com/>
- **AncestryDNA** – <https://www.ancestry.com/dna/>
- **FamilyTreeDNA** – <https://www.familytreedna.com/>
- **LivingDNA** – <https://livingdna.com/>
- **MyHeritage** – <https://www.myheritage.com/dna/>
- **YSEQ** – <http://yseq.net/>

For more companies and for specific information on the companies listed above, see ISOGG, “List of DNA testing companies,” *ISOGG Wiki* (https://isogg.org/wiki/List_of_DNA_testing_companies).

The words Certified Genealogist and designation CG are registered certification marks with the United States Patent and Trademark Office, and the designations Certified Genealogical Lecturer and CGL are service marks of BCG, used under license by certificants after periodic competency evaluations (and only during the current five-year period for which they are certified).

People Power – Crowdsourced Projects

by Diane L. Richard

The last few years have seen a plethora of “crowdsourced” projects that benefit genealogists. The usefulness of these projects is not just that researchers get quicker and more complete access to records that were mostly inaccessible—participation in such a project, as a transcriber, is a great skill-building activity!

What better way to get intimate knowledge of a record collection than to help transcribe it?

We better interpret records when we have a complete understanding of what is and is not included in a record set, how those who created the documents interpreted the requested information, the history behind the existence of the records, and so much more! This makes participation in a crowdsourced project a great opportunity to expand your personal skills as a family history researcher.

What are the Pros and Cons of Crowdsourced Projects?

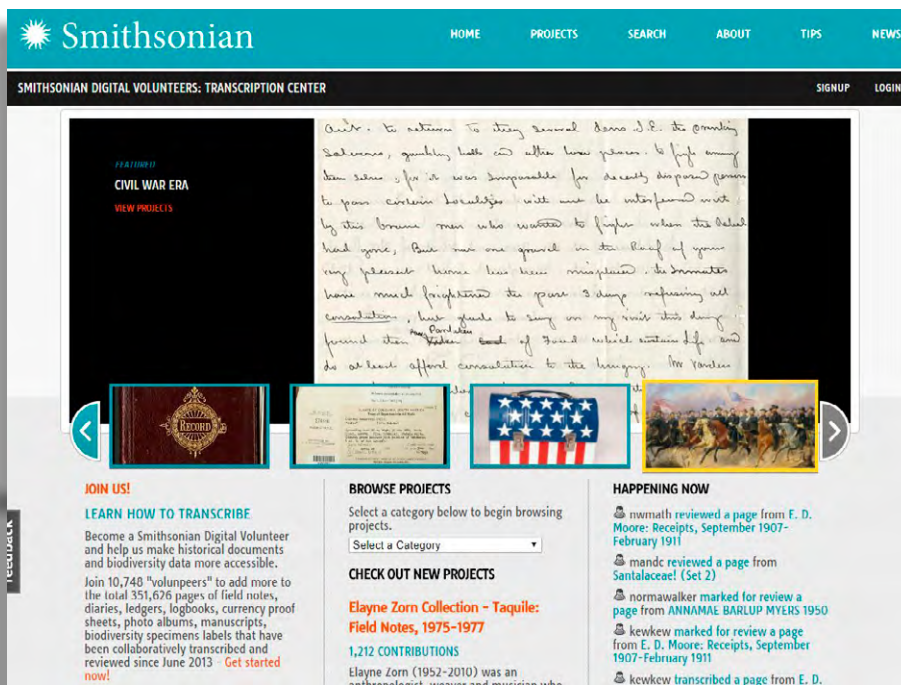
Recognize that while digitizing records provides increased availability, it doesn't necessarily provide increased access. Many researchers do not want to trawl through a large file to “maybe” find the information of interest to them. To have full access, indexing, abstracting, or transcribing is needed. Humans are needed for this. Though we have Optical Character Recognition (OCR) available, that

technology only works on typed items, and it is not perfect. With limited budgets and staffing, many archival institutions are not able to have their records indexed, abstracted, or transcribed. Crowdsourcing becomes a low-cost option. Additionally, institutions do not have all the expertise needed for these projects in house. By soliciting involvement from the community and organizations

within the community, these projects benefit any membership, engagement, education, and awareness initiatives being conducted by these groups.

Though there are wonderful benefits, there are also some possible pitfalls such as poor quality control, speed being prioritized over quality, inadequate checks and balances, awkward-to-use and unreliable platforms, and low priority level of a project. What is popular for the community to work on is not necessarily suited to the needs of an organization. Even with these challenges, crowdsourced projects have become increasingly popular.

Genealogists have benefitted greatly from such projects. Many will recognize some of the very large projects such as the 1940 census project, Freedmen's Bureau Records, the annual FamilySearch indexathons, and more. We also have the grandfather project of them all, Wikipedia, a resource that I regularly embrace. There are also many smaller projects or those that are narrower in scope that are just as valuable to our research. Some of these have directly benefitted my research.



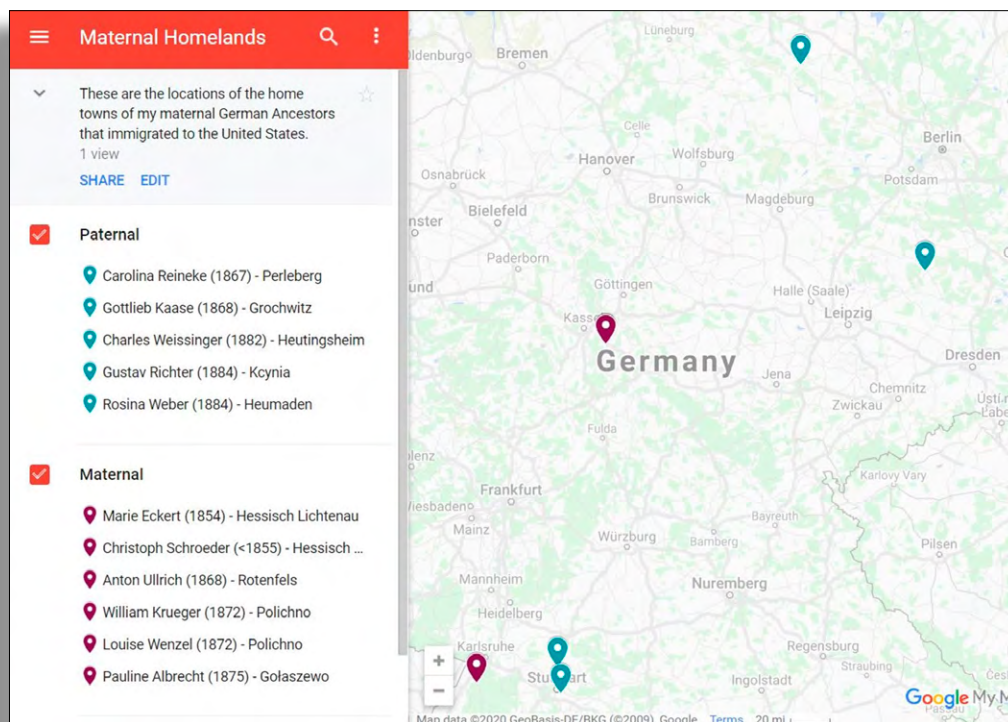
Creating Free Custom Maps with Google

by Hannah Kubacak

Creating custom maps allows you to visualize your genealogical data in new ways. Maps are also a great way to share information you have acquired with others.

Google offers several free mapping products including Google Earth and Google Tour Builder. While these are great products, the one that I found to be the simplest and most effective to use for genealogy is “Google Maps – Your Places.” “Your Places” enables family historians to create informative and interactive maps to assist in research and in sharing information with others.

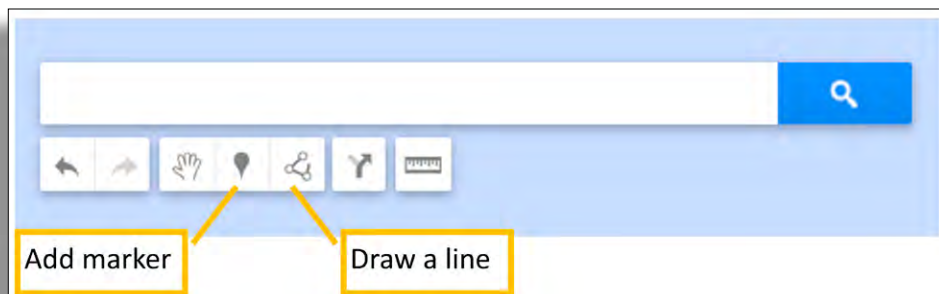
There are many ways genealogists can use this tool, but here is one of my favorites. After identifying my maternal immigrant ancestors, I began tracking down their towns of origin using resources such as immigration documents, family Bibles, and church records. The next step was creating a map to help keep track of all of this research. I used the descriptions of each place marker to make notes about my sources and added images of corresponding documents. This enabled me to have a better understanding of where in Europe my ancestors originated. I was also able to compare my map to the ethnicity estimate for my mother’s DNA to determine how closely the paper trail matched the DNA results.



“Your Places” map showing homelands identified with location markers.

The “Your Places” tool requires that you have a Google account (this is your Gmail account), which can be created for free, no subscription necessary. This account is what allows you to save your maps and return to them later from any device. To access the tool, visit maps.google.com. Click the menu icon (three parallel bars) in the top left, and select “Your Places.” At the top of the screen, there will be four options:

Labeled, Saved, Visited, and Maps. Select “Maps.” This will show you any maps you have previously created or any maps that others have shared with you. At the bottom of the screen, you have the option to “Create Map.” From here, you are provided with several tools to help you customize your map.



Google Maps “Your Places” tools

TxSGS is 60!

by Susan E. Ball



TxSGS formed in 1960 as genealogy interest took root across Texas. At that time, the most recent census available was the 1880 enumeration. Genealogists researched by posting queries in genealogy magazines, joining genealogy societies in their area to obtain serialized record abstractions, traveling to repositories such as courthouses and libraries, and corresponding by mail with cousins and fellow researchers.

Genealogical research was challenging and, at times, glacial in its progress. TxSGS formed out of a desire to provide state-level assistance to genealogists and genealogy societies throughout Texas.

across Texas primarily in Dallas, San Antonio, and Austin, as well as Galveston, Corpus Christi, Amarillo, Lubbock, Tyler, Victoria, and more. TxSGS brought genealogy luminaries to lead Texas genealogists in building their research skills.

Exhibits at the conferences were designed to introduce attendees to vendors and products that would improve their research skills and extend their family tree. In 1962, displays included an original tax roll on loan from Robert S. Calvert, Texas Comptroller, and a rare map of Austin provided by architect-author A. Watkins Harris. TxSGS gave away free copies of pedigree charts to all attendees. In the early years, TxSGS distributed over 30,000 pedigree charts per year, many ordered by mail from the president, Mrs. Edna Perry Deckler.

Early conferences also featured excursions to places of historical and genealogical interest in the conference city. Among these, attendees were treated to tours of the Texas State Library and Archives, LBJ Library and History Center, and the University of

Texas Library in Austin; the Degolyer Rare Book Room and Fondren Library in Fort Worth; and historic Goliad, Presidio La Bahia, and Mission Espiritu Santo in Victoria.

In a sign of the times, fees for the 1967 conference in Fort Worth were

Genealogical Society Set For First Annual Meeting

From its inception, the Texas State Genealogical Society focused on education and preservation, two key aspects of skill building for genealogists. The first annual convention, which we now call the Annual Family History Conference, was held on Thanksgiving weekend in 1961. Advance publicity for the convention touted book vendors, a large display on genealogical and Texas history, and workshops. According to one news article, 500 registered for the first conference and societies from four states attended.

A two-day workshop in April 1962 soon followed in Austin with the topic "Texas Local and Family History." Speakers were Texas Governor Price Daniel and Dr. Dorman Winfrey, director of the Texas State Library.

Succeeding conferences were held

across Texas primarily in Dallas, San Antonio, and Austin, as well as Galveston, Corpus Christi, Amarillo, Lubbock, Tyler, Victoria, and more. TxSGS brought genealogy luminaries to lead Texas genealogists in building their research skills. Seasoned genealogists might recognize names such as George B. Everton, editor of "The Genealogical Helper;" William Filby, well-known British genealogist; Pollyanna Creekmore, noted Tennessee genealogist and librarian; Milton Rubincam, past president of the American Society of Genealogists; John Insley Coddington, founding member of the American Society of Genealogists; Leslie G. Pine, former editor of Burke's Peerage; Dr. Ken Stryker-Rodda, former president of the National Genealogical Society; and Helen F. M. Leary, North Carolina genealogist, researcher, and lecturer. Also among the speakers were representatives from the National Archives and Records Administration in Washington D.C. and leaders of societies from across the US.

LBJ's Personal Papers Topic For TSGS Meet

\$1 for registration, luncheons were \$4, and the banquet was \$5. While that seems astonishingly low, the banquet price would be \$38 in today's dollars. The 1978 conference in Amarillo charged \$15 for registration, \$6 for lunches, \$10 for the banquet (\$40 today), and \$7 for the Saturday lunch. Adjusted for inflation,

registration would be \$60 today for what was essentially a one-track, 1.5-day conference. The 2019 conference provided 56 speakers in four tracks over three days for only \$135 for members at the early bird rate. It's gratifying to know that TxSGS has provided quality skill-building events for Texas genealogists at a reasonable fee for 60 years!

In addition to top-quality speakers, educational opportunities through tours, and an extensive exhibit hall, TxSGS introduced fresh ideas at each conference. The 1964 conference featured a free lecture by William

Filby. In 1967, the "Ima Blueblood" spoof award was given at the conference to genealogists as well as local church and state historians. Lists of those local residents winning the "award" were run in many newspapers throughout Texas. Special awards and

Texas conference should excite genealogists

recognition were given in 1971 to Texas librarians who headed history and genealogy departments as well as those who had distinguished themselves in the fields of archives, genealogy, history, and heraldry. In 2004, members of each of the 20 TxSGS Districts made quilt squares representing their districts; the squares were combined into a District Heritage quilt that was raffled.

In addition to conferences, TxSGS held regional events throughout the year. In February of 1975, TxSGS hosted a seminar in Fort Worth for editors, columnists, and writers of

genealogical material. The registration fee of \$15 included lunch and the syllabus. Topics included "Problems of the Editor of a Quarterly" and "Layouts and Paste-ups and Tools to do Them." Thinking of the time-consuming task of manually laying out a publication, genealogical editors the world over

appreciate modern digital layout tools! Events such as this and the TxSGS Awards program showed societies how to craft quality publications that preserve the history of their community and region for future generations of genealogists.

In 1978, a workshop on researching in archives was held jointly by TxSGS and the Texas State Archives in Fort Worth for a rapt audience. To the standing-room-only attendance of 200, Dr. David Gracy, state archivist, and Mike Dabrishus, archivist for processing and reference with the State Archives, taught how to

Founding Facts

Date: 28 November 1960

Name:
Texas State Genealogical Society
(a 501c3 corporation)

Where founded: Fort Worth

Founding president:
Mrs. Edna Perry Deckler

Number of members in 1961: 214

Highest membership: over 2,000

First conference: 27-28 November 1961

Periodical:
Stirpes, the Journal of the Texas State Genealogical Society

Publications:
First Families Volumes I and II

TxSGS Objectives:

- Research, record, accumulate, reproduce, distribute, and circulate genealogical and historical material.
- Assist in making such material available to those who are, or may be encouraged to be, in family and Texas history.
- Perpetuate the memory of Texans and their ancestors and inspire a wholesome regard for those who have been and are now part of the heritage of our state and nation.
- Stress the importance of accuracy through the careful documentation of research.
- Make donations by acquisition or memorial to research collections that are open to the public.
- Disseminate knowledge by sponsoring conferences, workshops, and seminars.
- Publish a journal titled *Stirpes* and other publications useful to researchers.
- Sponsor awards for writing and honors recognizing the efforts of individuals and organizations.

extract information from archives and how to preserve your own documents. This acclaimed workshop was held in two other locations in 1979; 130 attended the event in San Angelo.

From the beginning, *Stirpes*, the *Journal of the Texas State Genealogical Society*, delivered quality articles and, in the early years, abstracted records to subscribing members. The quarterly attracted praise from readers such as Winston De Ville, genealogical columnist in *The Town Talk* of Pineville, Louisiana. According to Winston in 1967, there was “no genealogical publication of higher quality than the Texas State Genealogical Society Quarterly *Stirpes*.” He referenced the excellent format and consistently useful material in articles such as “Republic of Texas Tax Rolls” and “Tracing Your Irish Ancestors.” In 1987, this same columnist called *Stirpes* “one of the most popular genealogical magazines in America.” We blush!

More than family history, genealogy is ‘study of man’

Interest in family history research has exploded since TxSGS was formed, making it one of the most popular hobbies in the US. In 1964,

Texas had 25 genealogy societies. Within a year, the number had grown to 35 societies, and some counts place the number today at well over 125. Starting with 214 individual, society, and library members, TxSGS grew to 1,000 members in 1967 and over 2,000 members by 1971.

TxSGS celebrates its 60th anniversary in November 2020 by reflecting on our past, including our mission, goals, and commitment to genealogical education and preservation. At the same time, now is the perfect opportunity to share our vision for the future as technological changes have expanded the audience

for genealogy research

and the need for new forms of education and communication. We are as excited about our future as we are proud of our past. We hope you join us on our journey. ★

The information in this article was taken from newspapers on Genealogy Bank, Newspapers.com, and Newspaper Archives including the *Austin American-Statesman*; the *Dallas Morning-News*; the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*; the *San Antonio Express*; the *Brownsville Herald* (Brownsville, Texas); *The Town Talk* (Pineville, Louisiana); the *Waxahachie Daily Light* (Waxahachie, Texas); and the *Victoria Advocate* (Victoria, Texas).

‘First Families’ available in November

TxSGS instituted the heritage certificate program in 1988 with the West Texas Pioneer Certificate, followed by the Gone to Texas Pioneer certificate in 1989. In 1994, the extremely popular First Families of Texas Certificate was introduced. TxSGS heritage certificates provide an opportunity for descendants to honor their ancestors for their role in Texas’ history and development. The certificate program fulfills both the educational and preservation aspects of the TxSGS mission, encouraging skill building in crafting a well-sourced lineage that preserves both the lineage and its supporting records for future generations.

The History of Texas State Genealogical Society

The article “Fifty Year History of Texas State Genealogical Society” written by Marynell Bryant, past TxSGS president, provides an excellent chronicle of TxSGS events and leaders from 1960 to 2010. Gleaned from the TxSGS archives, sources included official minutes; financial reports, representative and committee reports; *Stirpes* issues 1961-2010; and interviews with officers, fellows, and members of the board of directors from various years. Published in *Stirpes* in three parts in 2010 and 2011, the article is available on our website, www.txsgs.org.

The brief overview of TxSGS presented here is excerpted from newspaper articles, giving an external look at TxSGS, its mission, and efforts taken to achieve that mission.

Texas Garners

(The John R. Garner Branch of the Garner-Keene Family)

by Larry Garner

According to oral history, our Texas Garner lineage descends from John R. Garner, one of several brothers who immigrated from Virginia to Georgia in the early 1800s.¹

When I first started researching this line in 1992, I had in hand my great-aunt Sybil's research, her sixty-year-old Garner brick wall, the 1840 Georgia and 1850 Texas censuses, USGenWeb, RootsWeb, Ancestry message boards, and an intense desire to trace our Garner family origin. For years, my efforts to identify John R.'s ancestors were unsuccessful. On the plus side, I was able to find a cousin, Nora Kelly, who was also researching the ancestors and descendants of John R. and Elizabeth Garner and was writing a book about our common family.² Together, we were able to locate and connect with other descendants. This occasioned a family reunion bringing three sides of the family together for the first time in about one hundred fifty years.

I renewed my search in 2018 when my sister suggested submitting our DNA to Ancestry, which required me to reactivate my account. Of course, I immediately began searching the online trees for John R. Garner and discovered Garner family trees with two different parents for John R.: Joseph, son of Charles Sr., and William, son of Charles Jr. Each of these online lineages have varying degrees of conflicting and incorrect family information and sources identifying the father of John R. Only those trees that had no father for John R. appeared correct. All others seemed to be compiled by attaching the same wrong individual from other trees so that their Garner lineage appeared riddled with source errors, redundant misinformation, and a lack of due diligence.

For this reason, I decided to take a fresh look at the parentage of John R. Garner to answer the research question for those with this same brick wall: "Who was John R. Garner's father?"

The analysis presented in this article links John R. to his ancestors and provides a missing connection for his descendants, some of whom live in Texas in the same area where John R. settled in about 1843, while others scattered across Texas and the US to Arizona, California, Louisiana, Montana, Wisconsin, and beyond.

Analysis and Findings

To answer the research question, I expanded my previous research and began reviewing all early Georgia Garners through an examination of 1810 through 1870 census enumerations for any possible relationship between John R. and the early Garners of Georgia.

This analysis covers four generations:³

Charles Sr.	b. 1724	d. 1798
Charles Jr.	b. 1756	d. 1837
William	b. 1786	d. 1870-1880
John R.	b. 1818	d. 1856

Both *Garner-Keene Families* and *Southern Garners* offer information about the lineage of Charles Garner, Sr., but little for Charles Garner, Jr. *Dunkin-Reid* provides much of the following information on Charles Sr. and Charles Jr., which provides valuable clues for the inclusion of John R. in the four generations listed above.⁴ All three publications reference the probated will of Jale Garner, daughter of Charles Sr., which states that William was the son of Charles Jr., but does not provide marriage information or the names of their children.⁵

Could William, the son of Charles Jr., be the father of John R.? Is there evidence supportive of his marriage and children?

1. Charles Garner, Sr., was born in 1724 in Stafford, Stafford County, Virginia. He died in 1798 in Fauquier County, Virginia. He married Ann Darnell Williams, daughter of Waugh Darnell and widow of Jonas Williams. Ann was a widow in 1744; she married Charles Sr. on 22 July 1748. Born on 23 July 1716, in King George County, Virginia, Ann died in 1798 in Fauquier County, Virginia.⁶

Charles Sr. was a younger son of Thomas Garner and his wife, Mary Bushnell, daughter of Charles Bushnell. Charles Sr.'s estate was probated in 1798 and proved by James Wright in Fauquier County. Executors Joseph Garner and Charles Garner, Jr., returned the inventory of his estate in February 1798.⁷

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Adding Context to Your Family Tree

by Jim Thornhill

Many of the speakers I have heard recently have promoted adding context to our family trees. They have encouraged listeners to go beyond the names and dates of the major events of our ancestors' lives, and fill in the gaps with details of how they lived, what their daily lives were like, and what events had an effect on them during their lifetimes.

Defined as “the set of circumstances or facts that surround a particular event, situation, etc.,”¹ context is precisely what we want to learn about our ancestors as we seek to fill in the rest of their stories. What circumstances did they face in their daily lives? What can we learn about events in our ancestors' communities or major events from history that would have affected our ancestors?

The first step for adding context to your family tree is to use our old friend, the timeline. Timelines have a way of clarifying events in our ancestors' lives. Well-known genealogist Thomas W. Jones, CG, CGL, FASG, FUGA, FNGS, claims that the “timeline is the most useful tool that genealogists use.”² They enable us to see our ancestors' lives as a whole instead of a collection of many different parts. After constructing a

timeline of the documented facts in our ancestors' lives, we need to add in the major historical events that happened during that period.

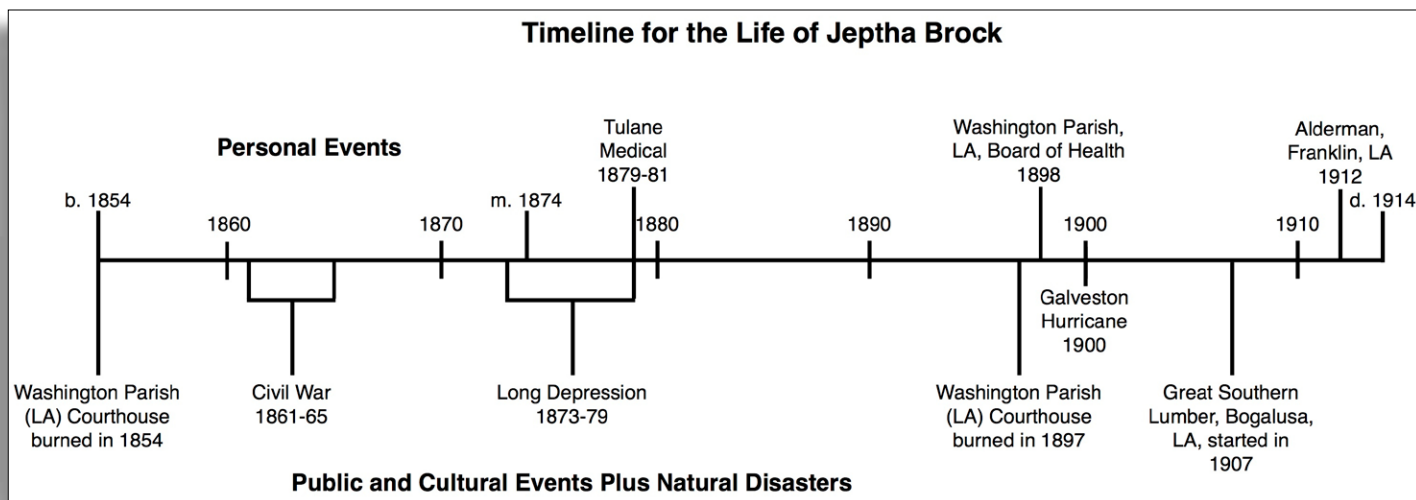
Many event timelines are online. Searching for “19th century US events” or “19th century Texas events” will bring up many results.

Once our timeline is complete, with documented milestones from our ancestor's life above the timeline and important events that might have influenced their lives below the timeline, we get an overall picture of the major occurrences during their lifetime. Now we need to add some new tools to our genealogy toolbox.

To find out if the historical events we have included in the timeline actually affected our ancestors' lives, we need to investigate each event. Consider, for example, the hurricane of 1900, shown on Jephtha Brock's

timeline below. While it devastated Galveston Island and came within a few hundred miles of Washington Parish, did it have any real impact on the residents of that locale? Apparently not. A cursory review of the *St. Tammany Farmer* for 15 and 22 September, the two editions after the hurricane passed by, resulted in no headlines reporting any major impact on the area.³

What about the Long Depression? Research shows that the Long Depression affected people worldwide.⁴ Looking at our timeline, we see that Jephtha got married the year after the depression started. If we do not have any evidence to tell us how the depression might have affected our ancestors, then we need to imagine what they must have been experiencing and look for the evidence to support our ideas.



Warming Up a Cold Trail: Retracing the Life of a Religious Relative

by Lauren M. Geppert Jacobs

Family reunions are excellent events to cull for news of our genealogical past. I believe it was at such a Jacobs gathering that I first heard that my husband's aunt, Sister Marie Jacobs (her religious name was Sister Bonaventura) was a prisoner of the Japanese in WWII. Last year I decided to look into that possibility.

My first step was to send an email to an elderly Jacobs cousin from the Netherlands [NL]. This man only writes in Dutch and broken English, so I had to translate the return message. He did confirm that Sister (Zuster in Dutch) was a Japanese prisoner in the war. He said that Sister Marie spoke very little about that experience, even when asked directly, but she did tell this man she had had no problem from the Japanese. Sister Marie also said she had been in charge of watching over children in the camp [known as a Jappenkamp] and that she kept in touch with some of these children, postwar, through a relief organization. At the end of the email, I received the address of Sister Marie's religious order in Maastricht, NL, plus a phone number and their website.

My next search took the form of an email to the cloister, seeking whatever facts I could get. Real information was slow in coming, and the religious and professional career track I was given for Sister Marie was sparse and incomplete. I did make an English-speaking contact at the cloister.

It did not take long for me to understand I would have a language problem and that the cloister archive would not be particularly helpful. These roadblocks did not deter me from eventually writing about her for my husband's family. The resulting article is "Sister Bonaventura/Sister Marie: a Lifetime of Devotion to Her Family, Her Church and Her Missionary Patients."¹

My next research step was to Google the unusual name of Sister's religious order, The Sisters of Charity of St. Charles Borromeo, also known as CBSisters. I followed one lead that turned out to be a spectacular resource. I believe this thirteen-page article that I found was part of a doctoral thesis at Cambridge University in England. I joined the university's publication site and paid for the pdf of the article, "There is so much involved..."² The author, Ms. Labbeke, lived with this order of nuns for a time in Indonesia, where Sister



Photo of Jacobus (Jake) and Sister Marie in 1955 taken when Jake went on a trip to the Netherlands to see his sister for the first time; he had immigrated to America before she was born. At their meeting, Marie was 44 and Jake was 64.

Marie's incarceration took place. Besides giving a history and some facts about the CBSisters, this article included two references that were particularly helpful. The first reference was a book, *Women Beyond the Wire: a Story of the Prisoners of the Japanese 1942-1945*,³ by Lavinia Warner, a television producer. She learned of women prisoners of war through a moving episode of a British version of the TV series, "This Is Your Life." The woman being honored in this episode had been a leader of British and

TxSGS Partner Society Programs

Virtual Meeting Support and Webinars

Even though Texas is beginning to open up again, it's going to take some time for social distancing restrictions to fade. TxSGS encourages all society leaders to consider ways your society can remain viable and in touch with members during 2020 and beyond. One approach is to offer virtual meetings, and we're here to help you with programs, technology, and support.



1) TxSGS Webinar Series for Partner Societies

Need program ideas that are adaptable to virtual presentations? Consider the TxSGS Webinar Series for Partner Societies, announced at the 2019 Family History Conference.

- TxSGS offers one free presentation video to each Partner Society.
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See a list of available recordings and learn more about the Partner Society Webinar Program at <https://www.txsgs.org/programs/webinar-series-partner-society/>. Pre-recorded webinars are available for access through December 31, 2020.

2) Virtual Meeting Support

Interested in virtual meetings for your society? TxSGS offers to facilitate virtual meetings using our meeting and webinar platforms for FREE. We provide the technical know-how; the society provides the program. Need to hold a meeting and vote? Want to provide announcements? We can make that happen. Read more about our offer at <https://www.txsgs.org/txsgs-helps-partner-society-members-by-offering-virtual-meeting-resource/>.

Not sure about virtual meetings for your society?

► *Try a Virtual Meeting*

If you'd like to experience a virtual meeting, contact president@txsgs.org for a link and instructions on how to register for a meeting held by a TxSGS partner society.

► *Schedule a Test for Your Board*

We are happy to host a "mock" meeting with you and your board of directors to demonstrate a virtual meeting. To schedule a "mock" meeting, email webinars@txsgs.org.

3) To request virtual meeting support or presentation videos,

complete the online Partner Society Virtual Meeting Request Form at <https://tinyurl.com/PSvirtualmeeting>.

To date, 17 societies have taken us up on our offer, and in April and May we facilitated over 50 meetings including society general meetings, board meetings, demonstrations, and practice sessions. We would love to include your society as well; we want to do our part to make sure your society is thriving in 2020 and beyond.

For those societies that have not resumed physical meetings, TxSGS has committed to offering virtual meeting support through September 30, 2020, at which time we will reevaluate the need for this program. If you have any questions, please send them to webinars@txsgs.org.

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