

THE JOURNAL OF THE TEXAS STATE GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY INC.

# Stirpes



*From Shadows to Light.*



**RESEARCH TECHNIQUES  
for Female Ancestors**

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*On the cover:* This month's cover design includes some elements which were created with artificial intelligence (A.I.).

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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.)



## Editorial Policy

Neither the Texas State Genealogical Society, the board of directors, nor the editors assume any responsibility for information or material included in the publication *Stirpes*. We expect all contributions to be factually accurate and will print corrections as they are brought to our attention. We solicit material that is Texas related or of a general research nature. The editors reserve the right to accept or reject data submitted and to edit such material. Electronic submissions are preferred, as a Word document (.doc or .docx) or in rich text format (.rtf). For a copy of our style sheet, please contact the editors: Susan E. Ball and Sandra Crowley, [stirpes@txsgs.org](mailto:stirpes@txsgs.org).

## Submission Guidelines

*Stirpes*, a periodical of the Texas State Genealogical Society, Inc., is generally published four times a year in March, June, September, and December. The editorial board solicits articles and materials such as letters, diaries, photographs, and book reviews relating to genealogy, Texas, and history. *Stirpes* has no quotas with respect to authorship or content. Statements of fact beyond common knowledge should be documented with endnotes and located at the end of the manuscript. For specific questions about the use of endnotes, please contact the editors. Edited works may be submitted to the author for review at the end of the editing process prior to publication. The author retains copyright to his work. The Texas State Genealogical Society retains the right to print this material exclusively for one year dating from its first printing in *Stirpes*. The writer may use and distribute his material for presentations, lectures, seminars, or for similar purposes.

- One digital copy of manuscript sent to the editor at [stirpes@txsgs.org](mailto:stirpes@txsgs.org).
- Preferred manuscript length of 1,500-5,000 words, exclusive of source notes.
- Please use 11-point type and single spacing, both for text and notes.
- Photo images, illustrations, maps, and tables that enhance the article are encouraged.
- Images should be accompanied with captions, source citations, and permission from the image owner to publish or proof that the image is in the public domain.
- Do not embed images into text; the resolution is too low. Send each image in a separate file. See *Stirpes* submission guidelines for detailed instructions.
- Please follow *The Chicago Manual of Style* (16th ed., 2010) for general form and style, *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* (11th ed., 2003) for spelling and word division, and *Evidence Explained* by Elizabeth Shown Mills (3rd ed., 2015) for citation models unique to genealogy and history. *Stirpes* follows *Chicago's* recommendation with regard to the use of the ellipsis to indicate omissions.
- View submission guidelines online at [www.txsgs.org/publications/stirpes/submission-guidelines](http://www.txsgs.org/publications/stirpes/submission-guidelines)

**Deadlines:** January 15 for the March issue; April 15 for the June issue; July 15 for the September issue; and November 15 for the December issue.

## Back Issues

Copies of previous issues of *Stirpes* are available at the price of \$15.00 per issue, if available, which includes mailing. Contact: Betsy Mills, Treasurer (email: [treasurer@txsgs.org](mailto:treasurer@txsgs.org)), at Texas State Genealogical Society, attn: Treasurer, 2028 E Ben White Blvd #240-2700, Austin, TX 78741. **Claims for lost issues must be made within 60 days of the last day of the publication month.** Claims made after the 60-day period are handled as a sale.

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## About TxSGS

TxSGS is a non-profit, tax exempt 501(c)3 organization registered with the IRS. All donations are tax exempt to the full extent allowed by law.

From the

# Editors' Pen



Ladies—half our family trees—require well over 50 percent of our genealogical effort. Sometimes it seems more like 99 percent. We all know it's not their fault—the records are stacked against them. Despite the challenges and brick walls, we still want to know more about these women, what their lives were like, who they really were. This issue of *Stirpes* focuses on navigating the unique research challenges that the ladies in our trees present, pointing you to records and research techniques that can illuminate the women in your tree.

In “Tracing Female Ancestors: A Journey Through History,” Sandra J. Crowley addresses the challenges of women’s research, examines 16 different resources, and discusses strategies for success. Sandra follows up with “Using the FamilySearch Catalog to Discover Material on Women,” showing how to find a wealth of resources—many of which are online—for your ancestors.

“Headline Heroines: Discovering Her Life in Newspapers,” by Melody Hooper Woods, highlights newspapers as a source for not only the clues and facts but also for the connection that newspapers allow us to form with our female ancestors. Jim Thornhill shares research tips from an expert in “Finding Our Female Ancestors:

An Interview with Gena Philibert-Ortega.” Pat Gordon uses early Texas women to provide context for single and widowed females in “Women at Work: Exploring Paying Jobs in the 19th Century.” Pat emphasizes the resilience and resourcefulness of these women, whose efforts laid the groundwork for future generations to seek and achieve economic independence.

*Stirpes* readers responded generously to our survey on finding the ladies. Read their insights in “Discovering Women in Your Family Tree: *Stirpes*’ Readers Reveal Insights and Stories” by Susan E. Ball. Along with these tips are eight stories on research and favorite female ancestors you won’t want to miss.

In “Magic Wills,” Emily Coffman Richardson uses examples to show how to incorporate probate records in your research efforts. Take a deep dive into mtDNA research with Mic Barnette in “Genetic Genealogy: Using mtDNA to Reveal Your Female Ancestors.” After reading the article, you’ll see the magic that mtDNA can work in identifying unknown female ancestors.

Nancy Gilbride Casey shares the story of her second-great-grandmother in “The Lady in the Asylum: Catherine Gilbride at Danville.” As you read this fascinating article, consider how you might restore marginalized ancestors

to your family portrait. “Deeds and Siblings Identify Orasha Rebecca Smith’s Mother,” by Kari Kjonntvedt Weis, coalesces census, deed, and death records into an identification of a previously unknown female ancestor.

In his book review, Bill Buckner highlights *Chandler Cemetery and Its People: 1882 - September 2022* by Jaycie M. Smith, an excellent, in-depth look at those buried in this Henderson County cemetery.

Plus – the virtual 2024 TxSGS Family History Conference, “Navigating Your Family History,” is slated for November 1-2. Check out our exciting program of topics and speakers in this issue, watch our website for updates, and plan now to attend!

September’s issue, “Beyond Vital Records,” focuses on lesser-known records and research techniques to maximize your results. Would you like to share your insights? Watch for our survey! To submit an article, email [stirpes@txsgs.org](mailto:stirpes@txsgs.org) for more information. The deadline for the September 2024 issue is August 8. ★

—*Stirpes* Editors

# Lloyd DeWitt Bockstruck Inducted into the National Genealogy Hall of Fame

by Tony Hanson

Lloyd DeWitt Bockstruck has been selected by the National Genealogical Society for induction into the National Genealogy Hall of Fame. This award honors outstanding genealogists whose achievements in American genealogy have had a great impact on the field and who have been deceased for at least five years.

Their contributions to genealogy in this country need to be significant in a way that was unique, pioneering, or exemplary. Entries are judged by a panel of genealogists from across the United States.

Bockstruck was born on 26 May 1945 in Vandalia, Fayette County, Illinois; he died on 23 May 2018 in Dallas, Texas. With a thirty-year tenure as supervisor of the Genealogy Section (1979-2009) at the Dallas Public Library, he established the library's reputation as a leading genealogical collection in the United States—including records not widely available—with more than 100,000 books, over 40,000 rolls of microfilm, and nearly 20,000 microfiche. He compiled over fifty bibliographies covering various subjects including colonial Germans, church records, Hoosier genealogy, land memorials, military and pension records, probate records, Virginia Baptists, and many more.

Between 1976 and 2017, he authored ten genealogical reference books and monographs. He served for eleven years on the faculty of the Genealogical Institute of Mid-America, University of Illinois at



*Lloyd DeWitt Bockstruck*

Springfield (1994-2005); seventeen years as a weekly columnist for the *Dallas Morning News* (1991-2008); seventeen years as an instructor at the School of Continuing Education, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas (1974-1991), and thirty-nine years on the faculty of the Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research (IGHR) at Samford University, Birmingham, Alabama (1974-2013).

Bockstruck lectured throughout the country at genealogical society workshops, seminars, and conferences, influencing several generations of genealogists, family historians, and librarians. His honors

include being named a Fellow of the National Genealogical Society (1992), receiving the initial Filby Prize for Genealogical Librarianship (1999), and being named a Fellow of the Texas State Genealogical Society (2008).

When he died in 2018, Lloyd left his genealogy papers to the Dallas Genealogical Society. Society members digitized the collection and have made it available at <https://dallasgenealogy.org/bockstruck-papers/>.

TxSGS is gratified that Lloyd Bockstruck has been honored for his transformational effect on genealogy for both the professional and amateur genealogist, especially those who live and research in Texas. Researching at the Dallas Public Library under Lloyd's leadership represented more than a research trip; it was an opportunity to learn firsthand from someone who knew the collection and was dedicated to sharing his knowledge with others. His legacy lives on in Dallas Public Library's Genealogy Section and the relationship he developed between the Genealogy Section and the Dallas Genealogical Society.★



# TxSGS LIVE 2024

Friday and Saturday, November 1-2, 2024



***It's a Needle in a Haystack: Slave Research,***  
by Deborah A. Abbott, CG®

***Reconstructing Pre-1850 Census Families,***  
by Michael Neill

***Tracking an Ancestor Through Land and Tax Records,*** by Diana Elder, AG®

***Enhancing Genealogy with AI: Tips, Tools, and Techniques,***  
by Andrew Redfern

***Lesser-Known U.S. Immigration Records for Researching 20<sup>th</sup> Century Immigrant Ancestors,***  
by Colleen Robledo Greene, MLIS

***Follow Your Compass to U.K. Resources & Beyond Benefiting 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> Century U.S. Caribbean Research,***  
by Diane L. Richard

***Methodologies for Overcoming Brick Walls for Hispanic Research,***  
by Debbie Gurtler

***Following Migration Paths from Texas Civil Court Case Files,***  
by J. Mark Lowe, FUGA



***Breaking Maternal Brick Walls with DNA and Group Projects,***  
by Katy Rowe-Schurwanz

***The Road to Independence: Revolutionary War Research,***  
by Michael Strauss, AG®



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# The Lady in the Asylum: Catherine Gilbride at Danville

by Nancy Gilbride Casey

*I wonder if any one ever approaches an insane retreat without a feeling of oppression, almost of dread, a sense of unutterable sadness, a question as to what one shall see and find to shock and terrify them.*

—Miss Susan E. Dickinson, *The Clearfield Republican*, 17 Sept. 1879<sup>1</sup>

**O**ppression, dread, sadness—these feelings emerge inside us, too, when we discover that an ancestor suffered mental illness. In an instant, the rosy haze is stripped away from the past, and the curtain is torn back. We see the unexpected. It confuses and confounds us, and we ask, “Why?”

I had that question, too. My aunt Margaret spent many a year attempting to discover what became of our ancestor Catherine Ryan Gilbride, my second-great-grandmother. The known was that she married Michael Gilbride in 1875 at Holy Rosary Catholic Church in (then) Luzerne County, Pennsylvania.<sup>2</sup> The couple had one son, John Joseph, born in 1876.<sup>3</sup> But by 1880, Michael and John were living with his parents, and Michael styled himself as single.<sup>4</sup> The unknown was, “where was Catherine?”

Over time, her story slowly unfolded. Catherine bore a second child in March 1877, but it was stillborn. Three weeks later she was sent to Danville Asylum in neighboring Montour County, Pennsylvania. There, she was diagnosed with puerperal mania—a condition named in the early 19th century.<sup>5</sup> She spent the rest of her life at Danville, dying of pneumonia in 1881 at the age of 26.<sup>6</sup> She never recovered her mental health, and it is unknown if she ever saw her family again. She was supported at

Danville by the Directors of the Poor of Providence—later Scranton’s Poor Board—one of the numerous bodies formed to support the state’s indigent.<sup>7</sup>

How did this come to be? What was happening in Catherine’s place and time to account for her situation?

## Insanity in the 19th Century

Little was known about insanity in the mid-1800s.\* At the time, some physicians tended to think that

insanity could be inherited or “run in families.” If so, a woman’s pregnancy could function as the “straw that broke the camel’s back,” and cause a mental break.<sup>8</sup>

Other physicians believed that insanity was a “logical by-product of women’s reproductive functions,” or that most women suffered some mild form of mental illness throughout pregnancy or during phases in their reproductive lives.<sup>9</sup>

These beliefs informed Pennsylvania’s laws regarding the mentally ill. For example, upon admission, patients were routinely asked whether others in their families suffered from insanity. In 1877, when Catherine went to Danville, nearly 4% of patients suggested insanity was present in both or either parent,

INSANE RELATIVES.	STATE HOSP'L, DANVILLE.		PHILADELPHIA HOSPITAL.		RECAPITULATION.		
	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Total.
Both parents, . . . . .	4	2	1	3	5	2	7
On father's side, . . . . .	6	1	3	3	9	4	13
On mother's side, . . . . .	7	6	3	6	10	12	22
Mother insane, . . . . .	2	2	1	1	3	3	6
Father insane, . . . . .	1	1	3	1	4	1	5
Brother insane, . . . . .	4	1	1	1	4	1	5
Brother and sister insane, . . . . .	4	1	3	10	7	11	18
Sister insane, . . . . .	1	1	1	1	2	1	3
Cousins insane, . . . . .	1	1	6	2	7	3	10
Aunt insane, . . . . .	1	1	1	1	2	1	3
Not mentioned, . . . . .	1	1	1	1	2	1	3
<b>Total relatives insane, . . . . .</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>88</b>

Table 1: Danville patients identified relatives who suffered from insanity.

\*While the term insanity is considered insensitive and is no longer used to describe mental illness, this article on Catherine Gilbride, her mental condition, and her treatments relies on the terms in effect at the time to maintain the historic perspective of her situation.



# Tracing Female Ancestors: A Journey Through History

by Sandra J. Crowley

Tracing your family history can be an exhilarating journey, filled with twists, turns, and unexpected discoveries. However, discovering the lives of female ancestors can be a challenging task. Throughout history, women’s stories have often been overshadowed or left out of official records, obscuring their genealogical trail.

Until 1848 in New York and as late as the early 1900s in other states, women were considered their husband’s property. Women seldom worked outside the home, and when they did, their “women’s work” was less valuable and seldom recognized. Despite these obstacles, planning, perseverance, and the right resources can shine a light on the lives of our female forebears. In this article, we’ll explore strategies and resources to help you trace your female ancestors and bring their stories to life.

## Understanding the Challenges

Before diving into the search for your female ancestors, it’s important to understand the unique challenges you may encounter along the way. Historically, women’s identities were often tied to their male relatives, particularly their fathers and husbands. Consequently, their names might change multiple times throughout their lives, making it difficult to track them through traditional genealogical records.

Additionally, women’s roles in society were often undervalued,

leading to fewer records being kept about their lives. As a result, finding information beyond vital records such as birth, marriage, and death certificates is often arduous. Those records you do find may have limited or incorrect information. Researching your female ancestor requires using every genealogy tool in your tool kit as well as utilizing unconventional options for finding, recording, and analyzing the record itself. Sometimes, you just need a different perspective.

## Research Considerations

These guidelines apply to any genealogy research project but can be especially important when you’re searching for the women in your family. Don’t just read the record and accept what’s on the surface, dig deeper to discover every minute detail of your family and what it could mean in your search for the elusive female ancestor. Consider the following as you track the women in your family tree.

- **Direct Evidence** – A single piece of evidence that directly answers the research question.



- **Indirect Evidence** – Information that is relevant to your research question but does not by itself prove a relationship. Indirect evidence alludes to an event that occurred or a relationship that existed. This data must be combined with other research to reach a trustworthy conclusion.
- **Implied Relationships** – Usually, we are dealing with this concept in terms of implied marriages. No official records such as a marriage bond, license, or minister’s return may exist. Marriages may be inferred in later records that give the maiden name of a married or widowed woman. Documenting your findings using timelines or a narrative summary can be helpful in putting the pieces together and verifying a relationship.
- **Exhaustive Search and the Concept of Negative Evidence** – It is just as important to identify what information is not available as it is to document what you’ve found. For example, the record could not be found where it was expected, thus there is nothing to be added to your answer from that resource.

# Using the FamilySearch Catalog to Discover Material on Women

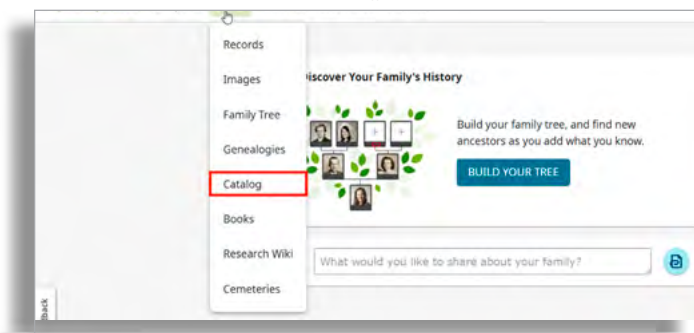
by Sandra J. Crowley

The FamilySearch catalog contains a listing of books, periodicals, record collections, and other materials that are available online, at a FamilySearch Center or Library. To learn more about the catalog, its contents, and how to use it, visit their website: <https://www.familysearch.org/en/library/our-catalogs>

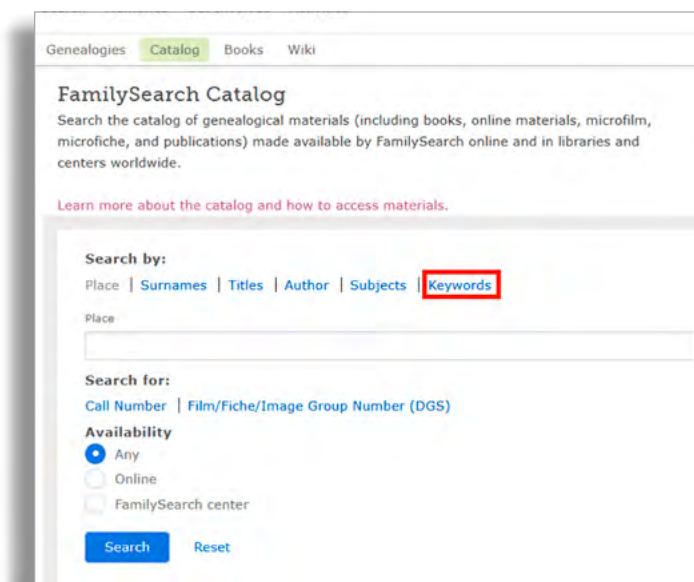
Not everything in the catalog is indexed; however, you can browse the catalog, or you can narrow your search by requesting information based on keywords, place, or other criteria.

Here is an example of using “keyword” to narrow your focus for female ancestors.

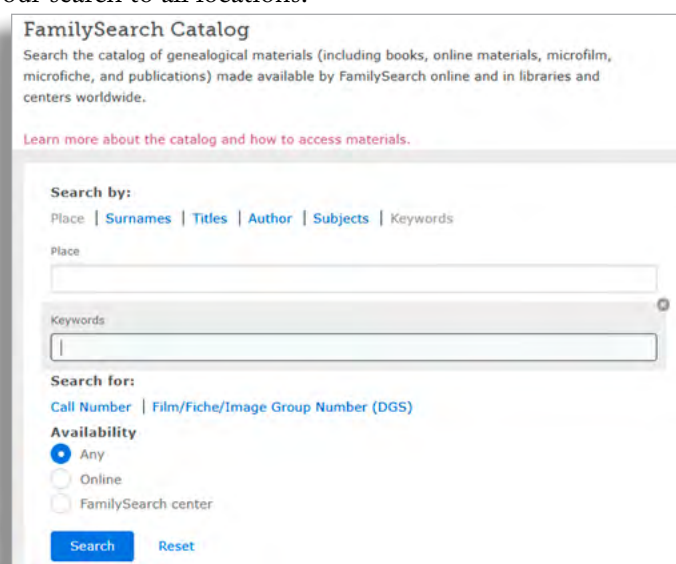
**Step 1:** Login to your FamilySearch account and select “Search > Catalog” from the top menu bar.



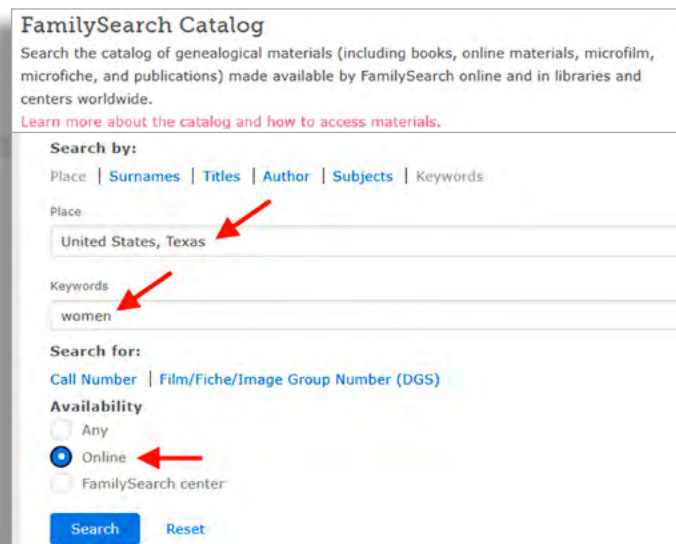
**Step 2:** You can enter a place and search, or you can select another option (surnames, titles, author, subjects, or keywords). I want to search by “keywords.”



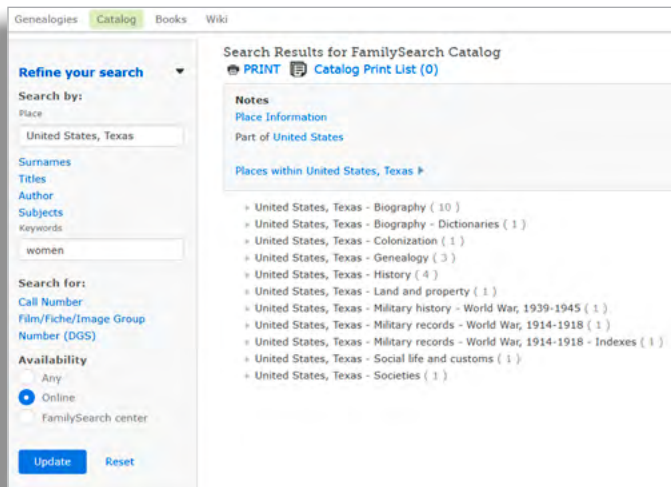
**Step 3:** Selecting “keyword” will open a second search box. You can narrow the “keyword” search by place or broaden your search to all locations.



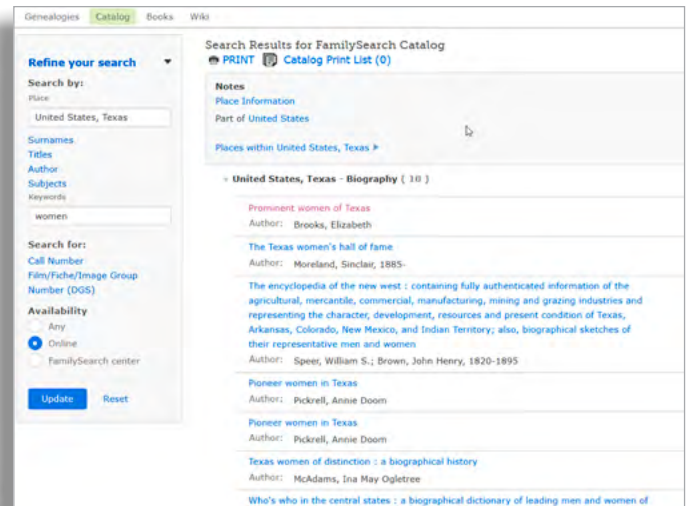
**Step 4:** Enter your search criteria. In this case, I want to search in “Texas” for “women.” I also want to search for information that is available online, so I click “online” under “Availability.”



**Step 5:** Click “Search” to execute the action, and your results will appear.



**Step 6:** Expand the category to see what is available in each group. Happy Hunting! ☆



## Deadline for TxSGS Award Submissions September 15, 2024\*



The Texas State Genealogical Society recognizes individual and society excellence in the genealogical community with several awards. Winners are announced year at our Awards Ceremony.

Visit the TxSGS website for categories, guidelines, and additional details.

[www.txsgs.org/programs/awards-grants](http://www.txsgs.org/programs/awards-grants)

Submissions must be received by September 15, 2024.

*\*Committee must receive submissions by deadline to be considered.*



**Texas State Genealogical Society**  
Impacting genealogy in the Lone Star State since 1960.

## **BOOK REVIEW** of First Place Winner, Category I: Books by Non-Professional / References, at the 2023 TxSGS Awards Ceremony

by William D. "Bill" Buckner, TxSGS Awards Chair

### **Chandler Cemetery and Its People: 1882 - September 2022**

by Jaycie M. Smith, 2022 (East Texas History, 2022): 511 pages, illustrated, arr. alphabetically. Available from Amazon.

If you read the newspaper obituaries before the comics, this book will delight and impress you. It is chock-full of history, overflowing in each entry.

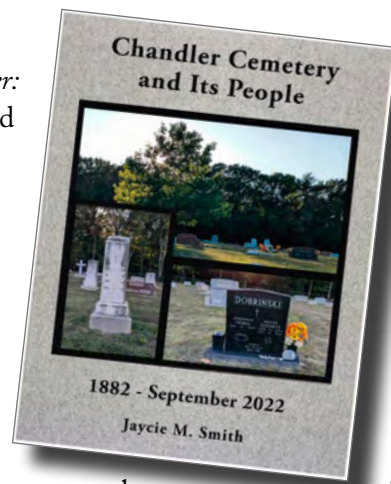
I read many of the entries of Jaycie Smith's book before I realized there were no photos of the grave markers, nor was there any identification of lot and block or a map to where the 1,600-plus burials were located. Smith's book is not your typical cemetery inventory index arranged in alpha order with birth and death dates transcribed from grave markers. The author states in the preface her intent: by writing this book and recording their histories, those buried in Chandler Memorial Cemetery will be honored and remembered. Smith's book is a different kind of community history. Established in the 1880s, Chandler cemetery and those interred there represent the collective history of the East Texas community of Chandler and surrounding area.

Smith states that there are almost 2,000 burials in the cemetery and very few graves are unmarked. Even some of the unmarked graves, such as "Mary Atwood 1859-1935," were recorded in this work. The alpha listing of entries includes the basic facts (birth, death, marriage, divorce) gleaned from vital records along with details of parents, siblings, spouses, and children of the deceased. This basic vital information research, though not sourced, is extremely valuable to those researching their female ancestors. Entry after entry includes maiden names. Additional biographical facts are sourced from census records, the deceased's headstone,

yearbooks, published material such as *Chandler: Its History and People*, and more.

Each researched biographical sketch includes details which every family historian gets excited about. For example, from "Ruby Bilka 1916-2003," we find that her marker in Chandler Cemetery is a cenotaph, and she is buried in Memory Park in Longview. In the entry for "Colin Blissitte 1964-2017," we learn that he was cremated and his ashes were buried next to his father. "Nicholas J. 'Pete' Brewer 1824-1905," includes this note: "according to family information ... was buried on the Brewer homesite and the tombstone later relocated to Chandler Cemetery." Smith also includes "Wayne Smith 1935-2023," her granddad, who was her inspiration and mentor.

Each entry also includes a sourced obituary, when available. Family historians know that not everyone has an official obituary. However, Jaycie Smith goes above and beyond in ferreting out obituaries and stories about those buried in Chandler Cemetery. She started with the local and regional papers in the Chandler, Texas, area, then found obituaries from across the state of Texas including Corsicana, Austin, Dallas, Houston, Marshall, and Fort Worth. She extended her search for obituaries to Legacy.com and reached out to funeral homes as well. Besides the Chandler Memorial Funeral Home, I counted an additional six funeral



homes in the first 100 pages. As a side note, tombstone images and additional information can be found at Find a Grave under the Chandler Memorial Cemetery.

Smith honors those who have served in the military by including branch, dates

of service, and other military facts such as battles fought. She also includes in each veteran's entry a 36-star U.S. flag for service in the Union Army, a Confederate flag for service in the Confederate States Army, and a U.S. Flag for all U.S. military service.

On her acknowledgement page, Smith thanks those who provided photos for her book. These photos are not sourced but do add to the book's value as a research tool. Some photos include the submitter's personal stories, such as the entry by Anita Pollard about "Terry Kidd 1968-1997." We learn that Terry worked in construction with his grandfather and uncles and built the covered pavilion at the Chandler Memorial Cemetery. His funeral was the first time the pavilion was used. Lisa Prather, whom Smith acknowledges, provided many stories and snippets of local knowledge throughout the book.

We have Jaycie Smith to thank for this well-researched look at those buried in Chandler Cemetery who were citizens of the greater Chandler area. It will be a sought-after Henderson County resource for years to come. ★

# Magic Wills

by Emily Coffman Richardson

Finding a will that mentions your ancestor’s name can add generations to your family tree, illuminate relationships, or validate your findings. A will typically contains the name of the deceased and the deceased person’s directives for disposing of their estate, including bequests to various family members, friends, or employees.

If you’re fortunate, the will defines the relationships between the heirs and the deceased. Sometimes, you find a lot more, so much so that the will expands your family tree in new directions as if by magic.

These “Magic Wills” disclose information that helps you determine more about individuals within a family unit. A man’s will might list all his living children including daughters, with the daughters’ married names. The will of a collateral unmarried or childless relative could direct bequests to nieces, nephews, or cousins. In this case, the courts might require that the heirs prove their relationship to the deceased, leaving that proof in the probate documents. The disposition of assets owned by the deceased might be handled by probate or through the sale of land. All of these provide direct evidence or clues that could untangle genealogy challenges and add generations to your family tree.

Here, we are highlighting four “Magic Will” case studies. The first provides maiden names for daughters and sisters. The second case study helps define the female children born of two different marriages. Looking at a probate, a third case study addresses a deed in which all the heirs agree to sell a parcel of land. In the final case, three generations are found, including sons-in-law, in a singular “Magic Will.”

## Case Study 1 – A Family Unit Created

An early “magic will” was found when researching Fredericka Rasemann, the wife of George Best, who lived in Marion County, Indiana, in 1900.<sup>1</sup> The parents and two children, John Best and Lillian Best, were enumerated on Jefferson Avenue in Indianapolis Ward 9 in the 1910 census.<sup>2</sup> Fredericka passed on 26 December 1911 and was buried in the Crown Hill Cemetery.<sup>3</sup>

When searching for Fredericka’s name, Frederick Rasemann, who also lived in Indianapolis in 1910, would often show up in the search results.<sup>4</sup> Little was

known about Fredericka’s background, but researchers believed that Frederick might be a brother, and that his information would shed light on the family.

Frederick’s last will and testament was found in the Marion County, Indiana, 1910-1913 will book. This will,

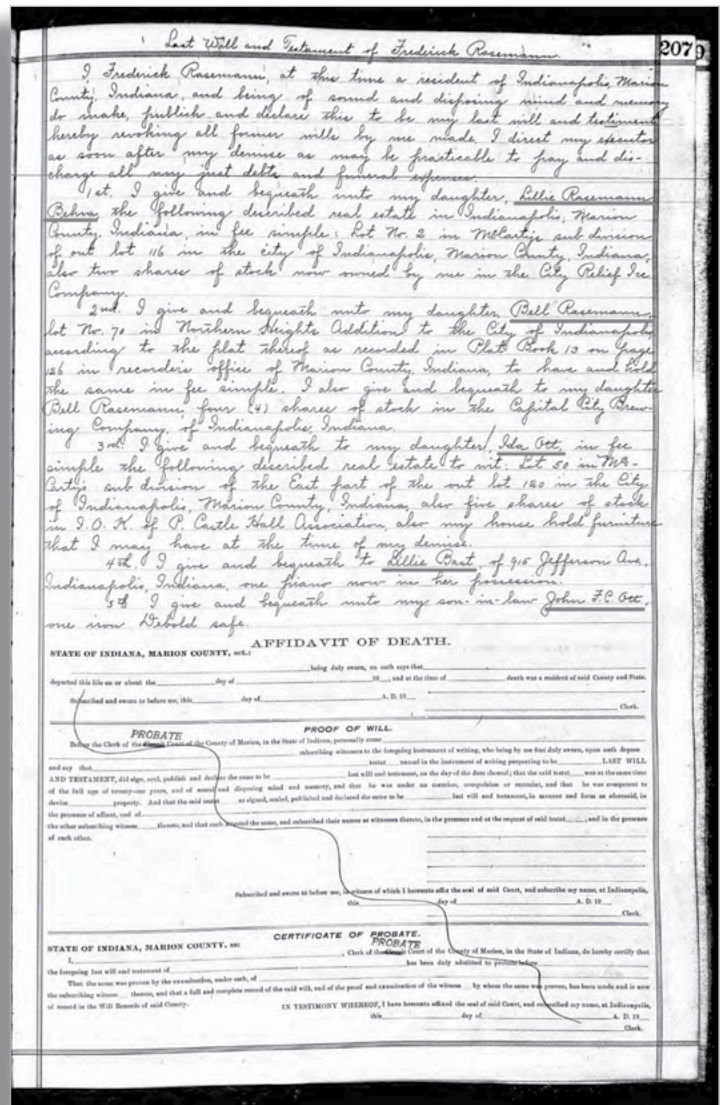


Figure 1: Undated last will and testament of Frederick Rasemann.

# Women at Work: Exploring Paying Jobs in the 19th Century

by Pat Gordon

**A**rtilleerist Almeron Dickinson rescued his young wife and small daughter from Mexican raids in San Antonio to what he thought was safety at the Alamo. Thirteen days later, Susanna Dickinson walked away from the massacre with her small daughter as a widowed mother.

Like widows and single women worldwide, she was totally unprepared to support herself and daughter Angelina. As girls, women grew up learning skills valuable as a wife and mother. No thought was given to what would happen if her male support disappeared from her life, whether through death, desertion, divorce, or disability. Susanna had no relatives in Texas who could take her in; they were all back in Tennessee. She was on her own.

How could she possibly make a living?

Jobs available to women always depended on when and where they lived. Urban areas had more jobs available than rural areas simply because of the difference in population size. The more wealth in a city, the more need for domestic help.

Women who lived in what was then the United States or most other places worldwide often found getting a job difficult. Especially during the early 1800s, only having domestic skills meant they were trained for such household jobs as washing and ironing, sewing, and housecleaning. Of course, these jobs were primarily held by women, meaning they were seen as less valuable work than men's jobs, so the women earned less than the men.

The Industrial Revolution

influenced women going to work outside the home. Early factory owners constantly sought help outside the area when local labor was inadequate. In 1840, 10 percent of women worked; by 1850, 15 percent, and every decade saw more women joining the paying labor force.

By 1830, many New England states had factories. In Massachusetts, women weren't allowed to work in six of the highest paying industries, including artisan tools, where men made an average weekly salary of \$12.02. The liquor industry (malt and distilled) paid men an average weekly salary of \$12.87.

Even when men and women did the same job, they were rarely paid the same. For example, in 1831 the cotton industry in Connecticut paid men 16 years and older an average weekly wage of \$4.50; women made \$2.20. Even in other states, men's wages were double that of women for the same job. Not until 1880 did women working in the Connecticut cotton industry finally start earning an average salary of \$5.91, which was closer in parity with what a man made for the same job, \$7.43.

One of the most lucrative jobs was prostitution. In 1820 Manhattan, women had few choices for a job and those that were available paid a low



wage. Most seamstresses earned only a dollar a week and factory workers, two dollars weekly. Educated women could teach, but those positions also paid only a dollar weekly. Comparatively, prostitution in Manhattan paid very well. Even the lowest paid prostitute, who worked in waterfront dives, earned \$20 weekly; streetwalkers who searched for customers along Broadway took in \$50 weekly. The highest paid prostitutes earned \$100 weekly by entertaining wealthy men in elegant brothels found in respectable neighborhoods. These prostitutes who lived at the fancy brothel were more refined and better educated than those who were paid lower wages.

Labor wages were higher on the frontier where smaller populations created a lack of workers. The frontier

# Headline Heroines: Discovering Her Life in Newspapers

by Melody Hooper Woods

Does information about your female ancestors' personal lives send you into a happy dance? Then three newspaper sections will have you dancing the Jitterbug: marriage notices, divorce notices, and obituaries.

These sections contain clues that can lead you to important records. They also feature intimate details—from descriptions of her lovely wedding dress to cringe-worthy accounts of her husband's abuse to timelines of her life story. As you read these stories, remember to check the bylines for the author of these articles as well; you just might discover that your ancestor was the one reporting these facts.

## Marriage Notices

Engagement and marriage announcements provide accounts of women, their families, and their FAN (Friends, Associates, and Neighbors) clubs. They may include details about the church where she married, her wedding dress and flowers, her bridal

party, wedding reception, honeymoon, and even a photo. This marriage announcement (figure 1) for Sarah Lee Bullock and Walter William Cameron from *The San Francisco (California) Call*, 1 January 1912, reports some of these details, including that the couple's wedding was the first to take place in the new Church of the Savior (Episcopal).

Sarah's sister, Lillian Lee Bullock, and her mother, Mrs. Vincent Castelli, are both named. This is valuable information for a descendant researching the women in Sarah's family. We learn that Sarah's mother and her sister, Lillian, went with her on the journey from Washington, D.C., to San Francisco, California, for the wedding. The names of the groom's

family and the people in the wedding party are also reported.

The announcement hints that the bride, Sarah, likely had a special relationship with her uncle, George C. Aydelott, and his family. It reports that Sarah met her groom, Walter, while visiting the Aydelott family. During the



Figure 1: Marriage announcement for Sarah Lee Bullock and Walter William Cameron.

**NEWS YOU MIGHT DISCOVER ABOUT YOUR FEMALE ANCESTORS**

**Marriage Notices**

- Bride's name
- Groom's name
- Parent's and stepparent's names
- Marriage date, time, and location
- Religious denomination
- Minister's name
- Current and future residences
- Parent's residences
- Education
- Occupation / place of employment
- Military service
- FAN Club: wedding party, relatives, guests
- Description of wedding ceremony and reception, attire, flowers, etc
- Photos

**Divorce Notices**

- Wife's married surname and/or maiden surname
- Husband's name
- Children's names
- Marriage date and place
- Date couple stopped living together as man and wife
- Date and location where divorce petition was filed
- Divorce court date and location
- Residence information
- Occupation / place of employment
- Allegations made by plaintiff against defendant / grounds for divorce
- Restraining orders and lawsuits

**Obituaries**

- Deceased's married and/or maiden surnames
- Birth year and location
- Age
- Death date, time, and location
- Parent's and stepparent's names
- Husband's name
- Marriage date and location
- Past marriages
- Children's / stepchildren's names
- Sibling's names
- Religious denomination
- Current and past residences
- Education
- Occupation / place of employment
- Spouse's occupation/ employment
- Military service
- Immigration information
- Hobbies
- FAN club: pall bearers, minister
- Burial information
- Photo

## Boost Your Society's Funds as You Expand Your Research Horizons:

# TIPS Program for Partner Societies

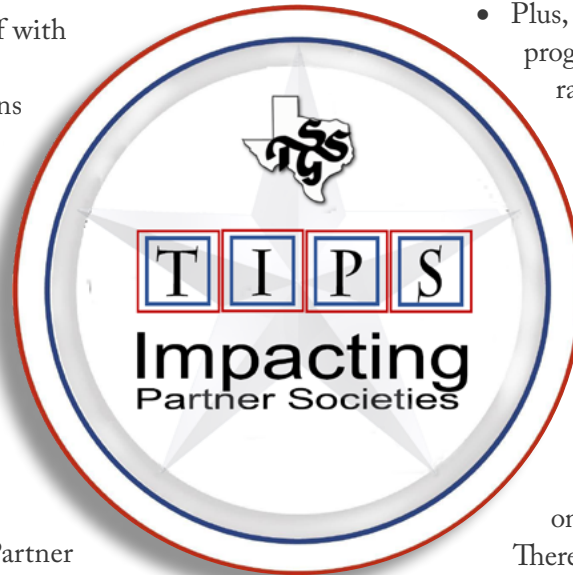
Thriving genealogical societies have passionate members who are excited about researching their ancestry and can't wait to share how they found their latest discovery. The 2024 TxSGS Family History Conference is the perfect opportunity to encourage local society members and give them the tools they need to make breakthroughs.

This year's conference kicks off with *TxSGS Live!* on November 1-2, which will include ten presentations with live Q&A by well-known genealogical speakers. These sessions will be combined with an additional 30 pre-recorded lectures and made accessible to registrants on-demand through midnight February 2, 2025. Learn more about this year's event on our website at [txsgs.org](https://txsgs.org).

TxSGS invites your society to participate in **TIPS (TxSGS Impacting Partner Societies)**, a Partner Society fundraiser through the 2024 TxSGS Family History Conference. Not only will you be encouraging your members to expand their research horizons, but you will also be raising funds for your society.

### Here's how TIPS works:

- Register your Partner Society with the TIPS program. You'll receive a unique society code to be used by individuals during registration.
- Promote the conference and your code to your members, associates, and friends.
- TxSGS will donate \$10 to your society for each person that registers with your code for the *TxSGS All Access* conference package between the time registration opens in July through October 15, 2024.



- Plus, societies who register for the TIPS program are eligible for a special TIPS rate to be an Exhibitor in the TxSGS Conference Virtual Expo Hall.

This offer is applicable to registrations at the *TxSGS All Access* package level.

### Getting the Word Out

You can publicize your society code any way you normally publicize events: Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), Instagram, email, on your website, or in your newsletter.

There's no need to keep your code private.

After all, the more people that see your code and register for the conference, the better!

To help you publicize the conference, TxSGS will be posting images, a flyer, newsletter articles, and more for you to download at the TxSGS Media Resources page at [www.txsgs.org/media-resources/](https://www.txsgs.org/media-resources/). Check back at this site often over the next few months—we'll be adding more items.

### Registering for the TIPS Program

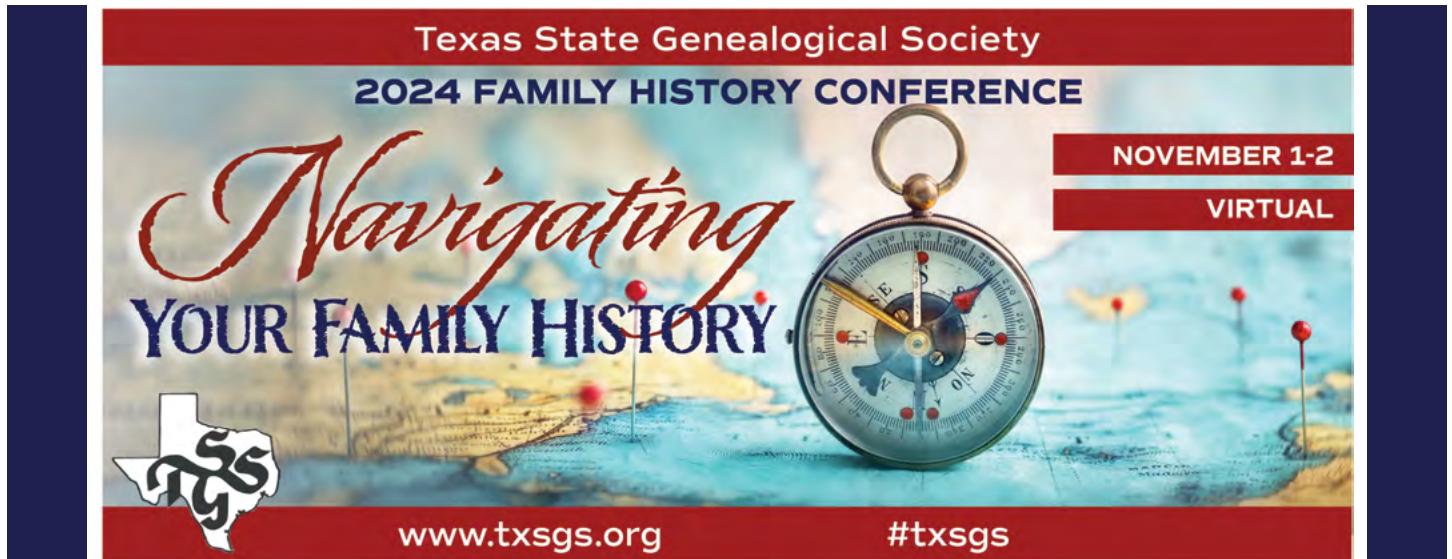
How does your society sign up for the program? The president of your society or their designee can [register for TIPS here](#). By signing up for the program, your society is agreeing to promote the conference to your members. Don't wait to get the word out—other societies will be promoting their code, too.

Check out the TIPS FAQs to learn more. If you still have questions, contact us at [conference@txsgs.org](mailto:conference@txsgs.org). ★



# *Navigating Your Family History*

## 2024 TxSGS Family History Conference



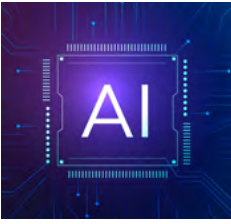
Join us this fall for the 2024 TxSGS Family History Conference to explore resources and techniques for *Navigating Your Family Tree*. This virtual event will feature *TxSGS Live!* on Friday and Saturday, November 1-2, featuring ten well-known speakers with live Q&A.

That's not all! These lectures will be recorded, including the live question and answer sessions. Thirty-six additional pre-recorded lectures will offer some of your favorite speakers and well-known presenters from across Texas and the U.S. You will be able to access these lectures online through midnight February 2, 2025. (Learn more about our speakers and topics in the article on page 41.)

Are you ready to take your genealogy research to the next level? The 2024 TxSGS Family History Conference, *Navigating Your Family Tree*, seeks to help you and hundreds of other attendees discover

tools and resources to answer your genealogy questions and guide you on your genealogical journey. In addition to 46 live and recorded speakers, TxSGS will also offer select bonus sessions from some of our sponsors, exhibitors, and select genealogy vendors.

This year's Family History Conference promises opportunities for learning in a variety of areas, or tracks. Use the tracks to plan your conference experience. Go back and review 2024 Family History Conference webinars as often as you like during the replay period.



**Artificial Intelligence:** Explore the intersection of genealogy and artificial intelligence as you discover how AI is transforming the field of family history research. From automated record transcription and indexing to predictive analytics and record matching algorithms, this track showcases the latest advancements in AI-driven genealogical tools and technologies. Learn how AI can streamline your research process, uncover new connections, and unlock hidden insights in your family tree.



**DNA:** Unravel the mysteries of your genetic heritage with expert insights into DNA testing and analysis. This track offers a comprehensive exploration of genetic genealogy by examining ways to use different types of DNA and leveraging advanced techniques for identifying genetic matches. Whether you're just starting your DNA journey or seeking to refine your skills, these sessions provide invaluable guidance for tracing your ancestry through DNA.



**Ethnic:** Embark on a journey of cultural discovery as you explore the diverse heritage of your ancestors. This track delves into the unique research challenges and resources associated with different ethnic groups including African American, Hispanic, and Irish. Uncover strategies for tracing your family's migration paths, identifying ancestral homelands, and preserving cultural traditions through genealogical research.



**Methodology:** Master the art and science of genealogical research with sessions focused on effective research methodologies. Learn proven strategies for analyzing records, resolving research challenges, and documenting your family history. Whether you're investigating female ancestors, navigating urban genealogy, or honing your research writing skills, these sessions provide practical tools and techniques to enhance your genealogical journey.



**Records & Resources:** Unlock the wealth of genealogical information hidden within historical records and repositories. Explore a diverse array of records, from land deeds and tax records to religious documents and voting registers. Discover strategies for accessing and interpreting genealogical sources and gain the skills to navigate archives and repositories with confidence.



**Technology:** Harness the power of technology to revolutionize your genealogical research. From utilizing online databases and search tools, to leveraging mapping software and social media platforms, this track explores innovative ways to uncover and share your family history. Learn how to optimize your research workflow, collaborate with other researchers, and preserve your findings for future generations using cutting-edge digital tools and techniques.

Visit our website at [www.txsgs.org](http://www.txsgs.org) over the next few months for more information including speaker bios, FAQs, registration, and more.

**Registration for the 2024 TxSGS Family History Conference opens in July 2024.**

# Discovering the Women in Your Family Tree

## *Stirpes'* Readers Reveal Insights and Stories

by Susan E. Ball

Tracing female lineage presents unique challenges to researchers, requiring research through a wide variety of records to answer even basic questions such as “What’s her maiden name?” and “Who were her parents?” A survey conducted by the *Stirpes'* editors polled readers about the resources they use to trace their elusive female ancestors.

The responses, seen in figure 1, show the popularity of record sets for researching women.

Census and vital records are readers’ most popular sources, followed by newspaper articles, wills and probate, and cemetery research. These records are easy to access and are more likely to contain women’s names, vital information, and family connections for a diverse group of women.

Land and court records are less commonly used. Many fewer women than men are found in these, but the records shouldn’t be overlooked. Land records often mention women as heirs, providing insights into their economic status and family connections. Court records can also be informative, as women might appear as plaintiffs, defendants, or witnesses. Divorce records, guardianships, and other legal documents also provide a wealth of information.

Church records, family stories, and published family genealogies are used less often, likely because they contain records only for specific families or groups of women. While many women belonged to churches, not all denominations kept records. Those whose families retained their stories or published family histories are fortunate; few researchers can

find such resources for their families.

Seldom used resources among the survey respondents include DNA and social media. While DNA can be used to resolve tough genealogy questions, many researchers find it difficult to work with. For more information on using mtDNA to trace female ancestors, see the article on page 54. Social media platforms allow modern

genealogists to connect with distant relatives, share information, and collaborate on family trees, allowing them to possibly locate those family letters and Bibles that were passed down in another branch of the family.

Survey respondents suggested additional records worth considering such as city directories, military pension records, and DAR genealogy records. City directories can place a woman in a specific location at a certain time, provide addresses and sometimes occupations. Neighbors might be family members. Military pension records often include detailed personal and family information when widows and dependents applied for pensions. The Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) have extensive genealogical records for members and their ancestors, invaluable for tracing female lines. For those fortunate enough to have access to them, family Bibles, lists of family members provided by previous generations, family photos, handwritten letters, and funeral programs can provide rich, personal details. African American researchers may find funeral programs and slave manifests particularly valuable.

Asked about unusual records in which female ancestors might be found, *Stirpes'* readers generously shared their

Resource	Survey Selection (%)
Census records	63%
Vital records	54%
Wills and probate	46%
Newspaper Articles	38%
Family Stories	33%
Court Records	29%
Cemetery Records	25%
Land records	17%
Published family trees	13%
Church Records	8%
DNA	8%
Books	4%
City Directories	4%
Family Bible	4%
Funeral Programs	4%
Google	4%
Military Pension Records	4%
Slave Manifest	4%

Figure 1: List of resources and their popularity with survey participants.

# Genetic Genealogy: Using mtDNA to Reveal Your Female Ancestors

by Mic Barnette

Tracing your matrilineal heritage using mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) will lead you on an adventurous, wild genetic genealogy journey. This journey uses your own mtDNA test results along with autosomal DNA (atDNA), X-DNA, and, if you have them, results from Y-DNA.

You will immerse yourself in genealogy research using matches and tools from various testing companies, creating family trees, and investigating descending trees. You will find yourself turning to resources such as Google and family trees databases: Ancestry, FamilySearch, WikiTree, Find a Grave, and individual personal and public websites. This process requires creativity and persistence, with no rules and no limits—just the determination to achieve your genealogical goals, guided by your own mtDNA results and those of your matches.

Tools like MyHeritage's Theory of Relativity® (TOR) and Ancestry's ThruLines® are invaluable for identifying matrilineal cousins descending from your ancestors. Though these tools are limited to ancestors up to fifth-great-grandparent, they do offer descending trees, allowing you to identify descendants of female ancestors who may be willing to participate in your mtDNA project.

This article focuses on my mtDNA journey of successes, failures, and tools I used in my quest to uncover my own matrilineal ancestors. I hope my experiences will encourage you to embark on your personal mtDNA journey. For more resources

on using mtDNA in your matrilineal research, see the sidebar, "mtDNA Resources for Expanding Your Knowledge." Acronyms are defined in the sidebar, "DNA Acronyms."

## Setting the Stage

I started my personal genealogy journey at the age of twelve, decades before DNA was a thing. My research began with family interviews and progressed into books, microfilm, CD-ROMS, and the internet.

From document-based research, I had identified my maternal line as shown below, moving backward in time:

Generation 1: Mother, Edna Jean McCown (1926, Hunt County, Texas – 1991, Fairfax County, Virginia)<sup>1</sup>

Generation 2: Grandmother, Edna Lorraine Dodson (1903, Hunt County, Texas – 1935, Hunt County, Texas)<sup>2</sup>

Generation 3: Great-grandmother, Mollie Lee Crawford (1879, Stewart County, Georgia – 1957, Hunt County, Texas)<sup>3</sup>

Generation 4: Second-great-grandmother, Mary Jane Howell (1860, Stewart County, Georgia – 1934, Hunt County, Texas)<sup>4</sup>



Generation 5: Third-great-grandmother, Nancy Cobb (1836, Houston County, Georgia – 189?, Texas)<sup>5</sup>

Nancy Cobb was the earliest known ancestor in my matrilineal line; identifying her mother has been a significant brick wall. Because of this brick wall, I abandoned research on this line. It stayed dormant for years until DNA entered the scene and revolutionized genealogy.

I began using DNA with my genealogy research in 2003. Incrementally, I expanded my DNA toolkit through the various types of DNA tests and the upgrades of Y-DNA, atDNA, HVR-1, HVR-2, and ultimately the mtDNA full genomic sequence, available as the mtFullSequence test (FMS) from FamilyTreeDNA. After years of procrastination, even after the FMS mtDNA test became available, I finally overcame my reluctance, became more confident of success, and decided to jump in and see what I could discover about Nancy Cobb's mother.

## Nancy Cobb's Family

The 1850 census shows Nancy Cobb, age 14, and Benjamin F. Cobb, age 13, living in the Muscogee

# Deeds and Siblings Identify Orasha Rebecca Smith's Mother

by Kari Kjontvedt Weis

*Orasha Rebecca Smith was born in 1862, and her mother died in 1864. Her father remarried and subsequently died fourteen months after her mother's death. The division of marital property with the sale of land and ties to her siblings identifies Orasha's mother by her given name.*



*Edward Franklin D. Orteg and Orasha Rebecca (Smith) Orteg, c1917.*

## Orasha

Orasha Rebecca Smith was born in Homer, Texas, on 2 March 1862.<sup>1</sup> At age fifteen, on 25 August 1877, she married Edward Franklin D. Orteg.<sup>2</sup> No records of Orasha's birth or marriage have been located to identify her mother.<sup>3</sup> When Orasha died, her daughter-in-law reported that Orasha's father was named Andrew Smith and that he was born in Mississippi; her daughter-in-law did not identify Orasha's mother.<sup>4</sup>

## Census Records Point to the Family of Andrew Smith

In 1850, Andrew J. Smith and his wife Rebecca lived in Hancock County, Mississippi, with six children between the ages of one and eleven, as seen in table 1, column 1, "1850 Census," showing the birth year and birthplace for the household's members. All of the children were born in Mississippi.<sup>5</sup> By 1853, the family relocated to Texas.<sup>6</sup> In 1860, the couple lived in Homer, Angelina, Texas, and the family grew to nine children, counting the two older girls no longer at home. Members

of Andrew's 1860 household are listed in table 1, column 2, "1860 Census." In this census, Andrew and William are incorrectly switched, with William as the 45-year-old head of the household and Andrew at age 15 years.<sup>7</sup>

## The Wives, the Children, and Andrew's Death

On 19 August 1864, Rebecca died.<sup>8</sup> Surviving Rebecca were eleven children, seven of whom were minors.<sup>9</sup> That's two more children than those enumerated in her home in the 1850 and 1860 censuses. Fourteen months later, in October of 1865, Andrew died.<sup>10</sup> He was survived by a widow, Nancy Jane Thompson, and several children.<sup>11</sup> Seven of the children who survived Andrew were minors.<sup>12</sup> Andrew's son, William H. Smith, petitioned for guardianship of six of the minors, including those children who were minors in 1866 who lived in Rebecca and Andrew's household in 1850 and 1860 (see table 1, column 3, "1866 Minor Heirs of Andrew J. Smith"):<sup>13</sup>

- Joshua A. Smith
- Melissa L. A. C. Smith

- Jephtha J. Smith
- James M. Smith
- Thomas H. Smith
- Rebecca R. Smith

Andrew's widow, Nancy Jane Thompson, petitioned for guardianship of Marion Smith, the seventh minor.<sup>14</sup> Jephtha J., Rebecca R., and Marion are the only minors who did not appear in Andrew and Rebecca's household in either the 1850 or 1860 censuses.<sup>15</sup> It was only Marion, William's half-brother, for whom the widow Nancy applied to be guardian.<sup>16</sup> Since Andrew is the proven father of William, it is evident that Marion was Andrew's child with his widow, Nancy.<sup>17</sup> Jephtha J. and Rebecca R. are likely the children of Rebecca, Andrew's other wife.

## Lawsuit and Division of Property

When Rebecca died, her children were not named.<sup>18</sup> However, all of Rebecca's children were eligible for her half of the marital property.<sup>19</sup> Although legally required, there is no evidence that Andrew ever filed

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