



Scan either of the above Quick Response (QR) codes with your QR code smartphone reader and you will be taken to the genealogy blog I author for the library titled "Tony's Genealogy Blog at the Schaumburg Township District Library".

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May 14, 2019 Schaumburg Township District Library Genealogy Program "Handouts"

Hi Everyone,

This document should be considered as the program "handouts" document for our May 14, 2019 Schaumburg Township District Library Genealogy Program.

What does this really mean?

Prior to this "new" process, our program handouts would actually be paper handouts that were based on me often printing up the first page related to a web site that I wanted to mention. Then on the paper for the web site I would handwrite what things of importance are associated with the web site that the researcher should know. Maybe it was a new web site or maybe an important date related to a significant event or maybe a new database was released. Whatever it was I noted it on the paper of the first page of the web site.

The source for the vast majority of what is in the Handouts is the monthly Schaumburg Township District Library Genealogy Newsletter. From within this larger document I extract information on upcoming genealogy programs local to our area, important items from Dick Eastman's Online Genealogy Blog, as well as I summarize some key periodical articles of interest that I think are important to be aware of. The Handouts simply provide me with the opportunity to focus in on what I consider are important genealogical bits of information important to the researcher as well as to share my own personal thoughts on why it is of note.

You will also see a small redesign of the PDF Handout package. You will now see a Table of Contents on Page 1 listing what the following "handouts" are by topic. Within the Table of contents you can quickly access the handouts by using the hyperlinks and bookmarks that will get you quickly to your handout of interest. You will no longer have to scroll through the entire package of handouts to get to the one you want.

I also plan on use the "yellow highlight" tool within Word and highlight certain areas of these notes that I think are important to note. The visual highlighting will take your eyes to areas of importance to note. Please let me know if you think this OK or if it may be a distraction? I thought I would give it a try.

Going forward I plan on creating this document on a monthly basis that will include my notes regarding a web site of interest and a link to the web site itself.

The reader of this "handout" list can themselves then read my overview summary of the site and then link to the site directly themselves to get more details or print out what they want from site.

I will clearly identify my own comments when the handout is a combination of material that came from some other source such as Dick Eastman's blog as well as my own comments. I will indicate my comments in Italics, clearly marked so the

reader can distinguish between the original verbiage and my own comments. If a handout item was completely created by me then you will see that noted at the top. In this case, the entirety of the handout was created by me and will not be shown in Italics.

This program "Handout" information will then be uploaded to the Schaumburg Township District Library Genealogy Blog that is titled "Genealogy with Tony". This blog will be accessible from the library's main web site page at www.schaumburglibrary.org. Select "Local History and Genealogy" at the top of the page, then look for the icon on the Local History and Genealogy page that says "Tony's Genealogy Blog". Open the blog link and then look at the right hand sidebar of the blog and you will see the "Handouts" information. The direct web address for the blog I author is <http://genealogywithtony.wordpress.com>

Here we go with the list of "handouts"!

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Handout #1 – VISIT THE SCHAUMBURG TOWNSHIP DISTRICT LIBRARY GENEALOGY BLOG

I will continue to remind participants of our library’s genealogy blog. You can access it through our library home page at www.SchaumburgLibrary.org by looking for the tab called “Services”, pull down for “genealogy”. This will take you to my genealogy page at the library. Scroll down a little and look for the bi-colored blue and black box. In the black part of the box is a hot link titled “Tony’s Genealogy Blog”. Click on the link for the blog title and you will get to my blog.

Or you can just go directly to the blog at:

<http://genealogywithtony.wordpress.com>

You will find postings on upcoming programs, both at our library, and elsewhere in the area. You will also find a myriad of other kinds of postings, especially those that I offer on “Genealogy Tips” to help make your research efforts more productive.

You will also find our Schaumburg Township District Library Genealogy Newsletter and our “Program Handouts” at the blog as PDF files for you to view online, or download and save to your own computer for future referral.

Please remember that the blog will be the place to retrieve the newsletter and the “handouts”. I do not plan on making paper handouts of these available for distribution at the program or for mailing to individuals.

Try to visit the blog frequently to see what is going on. Subscribe to the blog via the icon in the lower right part of your screen that simply states “Follow”. By clicking on the “Follow” link you will subscribe to the blog and will receive follow-up e-mail notices when I publish a new post.

Our blog is the way of the future and the future is here now!

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Handout #2 – NEXT MEETING OF THE NORTHWEST SUBURBAN GENEALOGY SOCIETY WILL BE ON AUGUST 24 (?), 2019

THE SOCIETY WILL NOT BE MEETING DURING THE MONTHS OF JUNE AND JULY 2018. THEY WILL RE-GATHER AGAIN ON A STILL UNDETERMINED DAY POSSIBLY IN AUGUST 2019 (POSSIBLY AUGUST 24, 2019) INSTEAD OF A SEPTEMBER PROGRAM THAT WOULD CONFLICT WITH LABOR DAY.

The next meeting of the Northwest Suburban Genealogy Society will take place on Saturday morning "To Be Determined" 2019. The program for the morning is titled "To Be Determined". The speaker for the morning will be To Be Determined.

This meeting will take place at the Arlington Heights Senior Center, 1801 W. Central Road, Arlington Heights, IL 60005 at 10:00 AM. There is a round table discussion that takes place at 9:00 AM prior to the main meeting/program that starts at 10:00 AM. Participants are invited to attend this round table and bring their research questions for discussion.

You may visit the society web page at:

<http://www.nwsgenealogy.org/>

Please note that it has happened once in a while that the society may change a program schedule without actively sharing that fact. Checking their web site may also not give you notice of such a change if they do not change the web site. That is still the first place to check. You may also want to contact someone at the society if a phone number is available to verify that a program is still scheduled as they had advertised. That is always not available either.

We do our best here to try to be sure that information we convey about programs is accurate. However, sometimes we are unable to convey changes unless we are made aware of those changes.

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**Handout #3 – DUPAGE COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY NEXT
REGULAR SOCIETY PROGRAM ON MAY 15, 2019**

Please note that meetings that will take place for the society will occur between September 2019 and May 2020. The September 2019 program will occur at the DuPage County Historical Museum located at 102 E. Wesley Street in Wheaton, IL. The October 2019 through May 2020 programs are once again taking place at the Wheaton Public Library in the Lower Level. The address of the library is 225 N. Cross St. in Wheaton, IL. Please note the times for refreshments and the program. Refreshments are offered at 6:30 PM. The meeting will start at 7 PM and last till no longer than 8:45 PM.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the DuPage County Genealogical Society will take place on Wednesday evening, May 15, 2019 between 7:00pm to 8:30pm at the Wheaton Public Library. Refreshments are offered at 6:30pm. The program scheduled for that evening is **"Dusting Off Those Old Court Records"**. The speaker for the program will be **Jane Haldeman**.

More than birth, death, and marriage records are waiting to be discovered in the courthouse. Wills, probates, deeds, and court cases are some of the wonderful information and stories to be found in those dusty old books. Learn what records are available, where the records can be found, and what to do to get ready for that courthouse trip.

You may visit the society's web page at:

www.dcgcs.org

The society also has a blog that you can visit to find out about "this and that" related to the society as well as find genealogical tips. You can visit the DuPage County Genealogical Society blog at:

<http://dupagecountygenealogicalsociety.wordpress.com/>

Please note that it has happened once in a while that the society may change a program schedule without actively sharing that fact. Checking their web site may also not give you notice of such a change if they do not change the web site. That is still the first place to check. You may also want to contact someone at the society if a phone number is available to verify that a program is still scheduled as they had advertised. That is always not available either.

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Handout #4 – COMPUTER ASSISTED GENEALOGY GROUP OF NORTHERN ILLINOIS (CAGGNI) NEXT PROGRAM ON MAY 18, 2019 AT THE NIU CONFERENCE CENTER IN HOFFMAN ESTATES

The next regular meeting of CAGGNI will take place on Saturday morning, May 18, 2019 at the NIU Conference Center in Hoffman Estates between 10:30am to 12:30pm. The program scheduled for this day is "**Genealogy Trivia Game**". The speaker will be **Robert Allen**.

Here's a chance to find out how much you and others know about the world of genealogy. We'll look at DNA, Resources, Databases, Internet sites, Terms, Organizations and Special Secrets about the hobby we all love so much.

Bob received a B.A. in Political Science and an M.B.A. from the University of Kansas. He then graduated from the University of Texas Law School in Austin, Texas.

He held positions with Container Corporation of America and Baxter Healthcare.

Bob lives in Barrington with his wife, Audrey. They have 4 children and 5 grandchildren.

He is the co-leader for CAGGNI's Colonial America SIG and recently served as treasurer of CAGGNI. He has been conducting genealogical research for 30+ years.

You may visit the organization web page at:

www.CAGGNI.org

Please note that it has happened once in a while that the society may change a program schedule without actively sharing that fact. Checking their web site may also not give you notice of such a change if they do not change the web site. That is still the first place to check. You may also want to contact someone at the society if a phone number is available to verify that a program is still scheduled as they had advertised. That is always not available either.

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Handout #5 – SCHAUMBURG TOWNSHIP DISTRICT LIBRARY NEXT GENEALOGY PROGRAM ON JUNE 11, 2019

Our next genealogy program will take place on Tuesday evening, June 11, 2019.

We will have another “break-out” session for our gathering on June 11, 2019. Our previous attempts proved to be quite a good success. I would like us to build on those successes and afford those participants the opportunity to meet with those again or sample other groups.

After an initial introduction of new participants at the start of our normally scheduled meeting, we will establish our “breakout” groups at approximately 7:45 PM. We would have these breakout discussions from about 8:00 PM until about 9:30 PM. These groups would consist of about 7 to 8 participants. They would discuss some common topic of genealogy that interests them or from which they could learn even more to assist their research from sharing with others in the group and learning from others within the group.

The groups we previously tried seemed to work out quite well. I want to go with those same groups and am open to suggestions to attempt to add others or delete those that may not have a following.

I want to reconvene the following groups:

Polish Researchers
German Researchers
Czech Researchers
Irish Researchers
Italian Researchers
British Researchers
Scandinavian Researchers
Colonial Americans Researchers
DNA/Adoption Researchers (NEW as of 12/16!)

I also will have a Beginner’s Group that I will lead.

We will also have the computer in the room for anyone to access the internet.

I would also encourage participants to bring their personal laptop or netbook to these sessions and tap into the internet via our WiFi network. I saw many researchers doing this at our last breakout session and they found it very productive to access internet information while being in one of the groups if they wanted to show something to someone else at the table.

Please remember that the group’s composition is based on the numbers that will participate. If only one person is present to participate in the Polish group, then we cannot have a Polish group that evening. I cannot guarantee there will be enough participants to form a group. In that case I would always recommend participating in another ethnic group of interest if that is also in your research interests or join me at the Beginner’s Group.

The key to this effort is to be flexible in selecting a group to work with.

I look forward to our next "break-out" session on June 11, 2019.

Doors will open at approximately 7 p.m. so you can pick-up handouts, review books and journals, and network with other participants. Tony Kierna will start the program at 7:30 p.m. with introductions of new participants and a brief review of handouts and genealogical matters.

For further information, contact Tony Kierna at 847-923-3390.

You may visit the library's web page at:

www.SchaumburgLibrary.org

to view a Calendar of Events section of the library web page for this program and for many more non-genealogical programs offered by our library.

You can also visit the Genealogy Blog of the library that is authored by Tony Kierna. Visit the blog at <http://genealogywithtony.wordpress.com> for all things related to genealogy and the genealogy programs at the Schaumburg Township District Library.

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Handout #6 – NEW TYPE 2 DIABETES REPORT FROM 23ANDME

The following was found at Dick Eastman's Blog at www.eogn.com dated April 1, 2019.

[Dick Eastman](#) · [April 1, 2019](#) · [DNA](#) · [No Comments](#)

I wrote about this new report briefly (at <https://wp.me/p5Z3-7ez>) a couple of weeks ago. Now 23andMe has released a bit more information that will interest anyone with Type 2 Diabetes themselves or if Type 2 Diabetes is found in his or her family tree.

The new announcement states:



23andMe's new Type 2 Diabetes report* offers customers insight into their likelihood of developing one of the most prevalent, pernicious, and yet preventable health conditions in the United States.

This new report will impact more 23andMe customers than any other Health Predisposition report the company has ever released. In part, this is because the likelihood of developing type 2 diabetes is so high in the general population.

"Diabetes is a significant health issue in the United States that is expected to impact nearly half of the population," said Anne Wojcicki, CEO and Co-Founder of 23andMe. "When customers learn about their genetic likelihood of developing type 2 diabetes, we believe there is an opportunity to motivate them to change their lifestyle and ultimately to help them prevent the disease."

You can learn a lot more in the 23andMe web site at:

<https://blog.23andme.com/health-traits/type-2-diabetes>.

Comments by Tony Kierna

This is really an eye-opening piece of news. Such a development by 23andMe is really right on the mark because so many individuals actually have this disease. Sometimes, I wonder when I see new medical developments for various diseases that turn out to affect such a tiny percentage of our population. I am not making light of such small numbers because if you or your family are one of those you always hope for miracle discoveries even if the prevalence of the disease is so small among the general population. It is actually a wonderful feeling to see a development on a disease that affects so many. Granted, it is not a cure, but

knowing you may be significantly more pre-disposed genetically for disease development is very helpful to know.

23andMe is very clear to also state that Type 2 Diabetes can also be positively affected by life-style changes an individual can do to keep it from taking hold in an individual. Weight loss, increased level of activity, diet changes are all things we can control that lead to Type 2 Diabetes from becoming a disease affecting us.

Quoting from the 23andMe blog post on the topic:

“Diabetes is a significant health issue in the United States that is expected to impact nearly half of the population,” said Anne Wojcicki, CEO and Co-Founder of 23andMe. “When customers learn about their genetic likelihood of developing type 2 diabetes, we believe there is an opportunity to motivate them to change their lifestyle and ultimately to help them prevent the disease.”

Also quoting from the 23andMe blog post on the subject:

“Note: The 23andMe Type 2 Diabetes report is based on 23andMe research and incorporates more than 1,000 genetic variants to provide information on the likelihood of developing type 2 diabetes. The report does not account for lifestyle or family history and has not been reviewed by the US Food and Drug Administration. Visit www.23andme.com/topics/health-predispositions/type-2-diabetes for additional important information.”

I would strongly encourage you to take a look at the link in the above Dick Eastman blog post about the 23andMe blog post details on this report. Maybe you want to know how you stand regarding Type 2 Diabetes if you do not have it already. It too is one of those diseases that does not show forth obviously in your day to day life, especially when statistics show that 90% of people who have do not even know they have it!

I am not sure if current 23andMe Health customers will receive an updated Type 2 Diabetes report or if only new 23andMe customers will start receiving this report. Perhaps this availability may encourage untested individuals to consider testing with 23andMe just to get this report since Type 2 Diabetes is so devastating of an illness to develop.

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Handout #7 – FACEBOOK LAUNCHES NEW TOOL TO HELP MEMORIALIZE LOVED ONES

The following was found in Dick Eastman's Online Blog at www.eogn.com dated April 10, 2019.

[Dick Eastman](#) · [April 10, 2019](#) · [Online Sites](#) · [9 Comments](#)

This may be a new method of memorializing your deceased ancestors and other family members. Facebook has launched a new tool to help users memorialize loved ones.

Facebook on Tuesday announced changes to how it handles the profiles of users who have died, including using artificial intelligence to help keep the profiles of deceased people from showing up in places that might cause distress.

Facebook is also creating a separate section on profiles of the deceased that will be dedicated to tributes. By clicking on different tabs, users will be able to switch between the deceased person's preserved, original timeline and a second feed where others have left memories, photos or other posts in remembrance.

More than 30 million people already view memorialized profiles every month, the company says.

You can read more in an article by Michael Cappetta and David Ingram in the NBCNews web site at: <https://nbcnews.to/2G2tmZD>.

Comments by Tony Kierna

First off, I am not a participant with Facebook. I do not experience the interactivity that occurs among Facebook participants. Yet I did think this was a very interesting development that is connected to how our online lives can still live on after we are actually gone. It does appear that over the years there are measures in place among so many online venues to keep a deceased person still present in these forums. Facebook is no different and in fact does appear to be taking this form of participation to an even more refined manner.

You may remember that Sheryl Feinberg, a high level Facebook executive, suffered the loss of her husband in 2015. It was a sudden, unexpected death that fell heavily on Sheryl. Sheryl has been a major contributor to Facebook's efforts to keep the deceased online in some capacity. Now they have refined the interaction process with the online account of a deceased person to make it better and less awkward and less painful to surviving family.

There was a weakness inherently built into the Facebook that would still allow the formation of "friends" even with the deceased. That can be painful for family.

Sandberg's husband, Dave Goldberg, died suddenly in 2015. Though she's the No. 2 executive at Facebook, Sandberg didn't have the power to keep her late husband's name from appearing on the platform in unexpected places. The network's systems weren't designed, for example, to take death into account when making friend suggestions.

Facebook is also creating a separate section on profiles of the deceased that will be dedicated to tributes. By clicking on different tabs, users will be able to switch between the deceased person's preserved, original timeline and a second feed where others have left memories, photos or other posts in remembrance.

Quoting from the article from NBC News:

"We weren't able to really distinguish sometimes when someone was alive years ago," Sandberg told NBC News in a phone interview.

"And so it would show up as if he were still alive, or suggest a friend, and there were things that were happening that I think were really painful," she said.

Sandberg said the updates resonated with her more than typical product updates at Facebook.

If you have a presence on Facebook and would like to live on after your death you may want to check into all the ways you can arrange this after you are gone. Think of how great all of your genealogical research can still be preserved and available for others to add to their research or connect to your own lineage through being online long after you are gone. Now, Facebook has set this up in a better way so that surviving family do not have to suffer any pain because the system was somewhat flawed in the "friends" process after someone passes away.

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Handout #8 – INTERNET ARCHIVE HAS UPLOADED 450,000 SONGS COLLECTED BEFORE MYSPACE’S MASSIVE DATA LOSS

The following was found in Dick Eastman’s Online Blog at www.eogn.com dated April 4, 2019.

[Dick Eastman](#) · [April 4, 2019](#) · [Music](#) · [No Comments](#)



I have written before learning about the music your ancestors enjoyed. (See <https://blog.eogn.com/?s=music> for a list of some of my previous articles about music.) Myspace used to be a good source for both old-time and modern music but last month, it became widely known that MySpace has lost much of the user data uploaded to it before 2016, including potentially million of music tracks from between 2003 to 2015. It is estimated that up to 53 million songs from 14 million artists were deleted.

Luckily, there is a **free** alternative.

A huge music archive was compiled by “an anonymous academic group who were studying music networks and grabbed 1.3 terabytes of MP3 music files to study from MySpace in roughly 2008-2010 to do so.” After learning about the data loss, the group offered the collection to Archive.org and it is now available to everyone, **free of charge**. This is in addition to the millions of songs already available on Archive.org before this latest contribution.

To listen to old and modern music and to even download it to your own computer or iPod or other music player, go to <https://archive.org> and click on “audio.”

Comments by Tony Kierna

To be honest, I was simply not aware of what formerly was in the possession of MySpace regarding audio files and music files and has been lost. Thanks to another group of music aficionados a good amount of what was lost has now been resurrected and is present in Arhive.org.

I remember as a young boy growing up with my mother that she actually had a records case that contained a significant number of 78 rpm records. Because I was young and not interested in such media at the time, I did not pay close attention to all that was in her possession. For whatever reason, I do remember there were a

significant number of "Perry Como" records that she had. Plus, I remember some "Gene Autry" 78's. She did not have an overwhelmingly large collection but as a child she had "a lot", maybe 80 to 100 78 rpm records. As I got a little older and was myself getting into 45 rpm and 33 1/3 rpm records, I realized I could play some of the older records she had because turntables at the time often played all 3 kind of records, 78 rpm, 45 rpm and 33 1/3 rpm records.

And like so many of us, we think all of that "stuff" will be around forever. Guess what? That did not happen. Why? Because when I was young, the music of my time was "king". What about the music of the 1930s and 1940s? That was old and simply got pitched. If only I had the chance to do it all over again and wish that I knew then what I know now! Famous last words!

But at least there was an interest in the music of our ancestors that was captured and saved. Now that saved amount has seen new life through a donation to Archive.org.

Here is a direct link to the Archive.org "audio" vault https://archive.org/details/opensource_audio. Go ahead and take a look at what is there or use the search box to see what you can find of old artists and songs that maybe you grew up with or your parents grew up with.

Since I had Perry Como on my brain, when I searched the archive it appears that most of the hits I received for Perry Como are songs that look to have come from some Christmas album of his. Here is one of them "The Little Drummer Boy" https://archive.org/details/PerryComoTheLittleDrummerBoy_201811

Perhaps you are not even aware of Archive.org. If not, visit the site and listen to some of the saved music of our parents and grandparents. Also, browse around all that is on Archive.org. Look for family histories, old books that could help your research and

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Handout #9 – “THE PROBLEM OF HALF-TRUTHS: WHITE LIES AND GENEALOGY”

The following review and comments were created by me, Tony Kierna, based on my having read an article that was seen in the March/April 2019, Volume 5, Number 1 issue of Your Genealogy Today.

I thought that a good article in this issue of Your Genealogy Today is titled “The Problem of Half-Truths: White Lies and Genealogy”. The author of the article is Sue Lisk.

Are your family histories compiled of half-truths because of the discoveries of ancestors’ lives shows them to not have been the best-behaved individuals they could have been? Have you discovered an ancestor that was an alcoholic and that his disease contributed to the frequent job changes you discovered in your research in him?

If you have been researching for a while I have no doubt you have come across many individuals in your family tree, man or woman, that have not led the best of lives by our generally accepted standards of what those are. I know I have discovered some criminal aspects in my own research on my ancestors. If you are new to genealogy your research slate is clean for now but expect you too will make such discoveries over time in your research.

So what do you do with these discoveries? Your discoveries should put some hesitation in the family histories you are using for your own research. If you felt uncomfortable, how did they handle similar discoveries that you may never know about? As you research, you should bear in mind that family histories produced by others could be at least partly incorrect due to intentional omissions of “creative” alterations of the truth.

The author offers 5 things for you to consider:

- **Could a story be true?**
 - Many stories involve great subjectivity.
 - An author’s social class, economic status, relationship to the person described and other factors will always color the way as story is.
 - Does a family historian note that a birth of a child occurred 9 months after the marriage rather than 3 months based on discovered evidence?
 - Did the family historian have a motive to alter the facts?
 - Was the family historian a direct descendant of the people he was describing?

- o Perhaps a mistake was made by the family historian, but you have to consider altered facts were created for various reasons.

- **Does an ancestor seem too "perfect"?**

- o Have you encountered a "rags-to-riches" individual in a family history? Is he always the victim with no shortcomings? Maybe time for you to be suspect of the story written about the person.
- o Perhaps the original writer about the individual had some bias. Maybe blame was transferred from the individual to others such as wife, brothers etc.
- o Maybe it is time to peek under the hood of such a family history of an individual because if it sounds too good to be true it may not be.

- **Are explanations given?**

- o Are citations omitted from a family history you are using? Maybe there are actually none because it was the story that was documented and not the facts.
- o Perhaps they were lazy in their own research and just took the story as it was told to them.
- o Sometimes family historians go out of their way to state that everything they discovered is true. Consider this a warning sign when no citations have been provided.
 - Maybe a little bit of research on your part can prove it out, totally disprove it, or discover some is accurate and some is inaccurate.

- **Is an argument sound?**

- o You may see sources for research but it is wise to still look at how the resources tie into the research.
- o Are the sources reliable?
- o Are there other trustworthy sources that were not consulted?
- o Maybe the original researcher did not discover the resources you did. Or, were they discovered but ignored in order to perpetuate the story of the individual as the original family historian wanted it to be portrayed?
- o Sometimes family historians make educated guesses but fail to point those out.

- **Is an error likely inadvertent?**

- o All family historians make honest mistakes.
- o Always look for what seem like pre-determined assumptions and then the research follows that assumption e.g. a genealogist believes that prior to the Civil War, slaves were found in the South and may not even consider that an ancestor

of the researcher who lived in New York might have actually owned slaves themselves.

- o If a researcher presents a well-reasoned argument using dependable sources but draws an illogical conclusion then it could be a simple mistake.
- o However, "strings" of mistakes, especially those leading to a "desirable" conclusion could imply that the family history may have been "doctored" by the researcher.
- o Quoting from the author, "No genealogist is obliged to reveal every family secret. But purposely misleading others is different than omitting certain uncomfortable or inconvenient details. Yet even in the latter case, can the tale be considered to be true. It's hard to say, when one hears only part of the story."

Just like in your own reach, uncomfortable discoveries will be made that you may be reluctant to document. The same applies to family histories and trees you may be accessing to help in your own research. Researchers that did those family histories most certainly discovered material that they may have slanted in what ultimately was reported. Just know that and you will be able to keep your eyes open and see some of those slanted research reports.

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Handout #10 – “SURNAME STUMBLERS: DON’T GET TRIPPED UP!”

The following review and comments were created by me, Tony Kierna, based on my having read an article that was seen in the March/April 2019, Volume 5, Number 1 issue of Your Genealogy Today.

I thought that another good article in this issue is one titled “Surname Stumblers: Don’t Get Tripped Up!”. The author of this article is Susan Aucoin Clark.

One of the most universal genealogical research difficulties revolves around the surnames of our ancestors. They certainly knew their names and their spellings but in our modern day of looking at their documents, transcribing records, using surnames as search terms we have discovered that a simple name we enter does not produce results for us. The author notes that here are the things we immediately have to know about how those surnames can be difficult to discover:

- Surnames are misheard
- Surnames are mispronounced
- Surnames are misspelled
- Surnames are incorrectly transcribed
- Surnames are illegibly recorded
- Surnames are deliberately altered
- Surnames can follow unfamiliar naming traditions

The author provides some key points and some things to consider within these key points to help you overcome problems with finding or reading the names on original documents:

- **Tripped Up By Spelling Inconsistencies and Errors?**
 - Surnames are at the mercy of such things as degree of illiteracy of the person writing them down on original documents, rushed or careless officials, language barriers, even simple names show up in many different varieties:
 - Clark
 - Clerk
 - Clarck
 - Glark
 - Lark
 - Cluck
 - Suggested Considerations To Help
 - You must be flexible in your research approach and realize the way you spell a name is not always the way it shows up on documents:

- Perhaps you know you are looking for MATHEWS but you have to realize it could show up as MATTHEWS (with 2 T's).
- Create a Soundex code for your surname so you will discover surnames that could be created not in the original spelling variety.
- While searching, speak the surnames you read out loud. This will alert you to consider entries that sound like your surname.

• Tripped Up Over Pronunciation?

- Sometimes we simply do not know how to pronounce a surname e.g. FRAY/FREY. Maybe such a name should actually be pronounced like FRY.
- Suggested Considerations To Help:
 - Listen to online spoken dictionaries for your ancestral language so you get a better feeling of pronunciations.
 - Speak your surname out loud rapidly to detect if characters or syllables might have been omitted e.g. ABRAHAM may sound like ABRAM.
 - Speak your surname out loud with different vowel and consonant sounds to determine if the spoken surname might have led to unexpected spellings e.g. WREN could be heard as RING.
 - Spell your surname by substituting letters with consonants or vowels that approximate the sound of the original letter e.g. K, C and G; B and P; D and T; E, I and A.
 - Consider whether a consonant in your surname was silenced when spoken e.g. KASTNER might become KASSNER; STAADT might become STAAT.
 - If your surname ends with a silent "e", replace it with a vowel to produce an extra syllable e.g. KEENE might have been KEENA.
 - Did your surname once harbor an "H"? HEIDT might be EIDT; WEHRMANN might be WERMANN; HOGAR might be OGAR; CHRYSTAL might be CRYSTAL.
 - Did your surname once harbor a "W"? WRENN can become RENN; CARTWRIGHT can become CARTRITE.
 - Try dispensing with the letter "s" at the end of a surname. PETERS might become PETER.
 - Consider the pronunciation of characters in other languages which lead to spelling errors e.g. "W" in German is pronounced with a "V" sound. WERNER could become VERNER.

- Consider the pronunciation of characters with umlauts in other languages which may have led to spelling changes. The letter ö in Swedish can sound like a short “u” and hence SÖDERLUND might become SUTHERLAND. The character ü in German can sound like “oo” and so KÜHN can become COON.

• **Tripped Up Over Deliberate Alterations?**

- Perhaps the surname you are researching might have been deliberately altered by your ancestors.
 - Could they have abandoned the traditional spelling of their surname for a less troublesome version?
 - The German name KÜHNE may wind up as KEENA for ease of understanding.
 - Could your family have altered their surname because of cultural pressures or fear of discrimination?
 - Think of Acadian families who, following deportation, were immersed in a largely anglophone environment.
 - AUCOIN became O’QUINN, DUFFENAIS may have become DUFFNEY, BENOIT may have become BENNETT.
 - Could your surname be an abbreviated version of a once lengthier and more cumbersome one?
 - WILLENBRECHT became WILLEN, WOLFENSTEIN became WOLF.
 - Perhaps your ancestor’s surname was not anglicized, but entirely translated from its original language to English.
 - An Acadian example might be of a French name translated to English
 - LEBLANC became WHITE

• **Tripped Up Over Faulty Transcriptions?**

- Plenty of mistakes happen at the hands of transcribers. These may be mistakes that using Soundex Code searching will not help. Examples the author has seen have been FREY showing up as TRACY, KENNA become THOONE and COOMBE became COOLE.
- Handwrite your surname using traditional alphabet script, the sloppier the better!
 - Original “y” could look like “ng”, “g”, “lj”
 - Original “e” could look like “o”
 - Original “M” could look like “w”
 - Original “n” could look like “u”
 - Original “K” could look like “H”, “TH”, “B”

- Original "v" could look like "u", "n"
- Note where your letters in your surname sit on the keyboard and which characters are adjacent to them. A hurried transcriber could incorrectly press one of the adjacent keys and not verify for accuracy.
- Rushed typing can also result in the deletion of a double letter or the doubling of a single letter
 - PEPPER could become PEPER, PETER can become PEETER
- The letters in your surname could have been transposed during transcription.
- Spacing between two word surnames can vanish with rushed typing or if they are conjoined in the original could have a space inserted.
 - VAN PELT could become VANPELT

• Tripped Up Over Old Handwritten Scripts?

- What if you are not relying on a transcriber and it is you trying to figure out the horribly written words?
 - Start learning about paleography focused on the geographic regions and timeframe associated with the document.
 - Familiarize yourself with old styles of abbreviations which can trip you up in interpreting the handwriting.
 - Acquire paleography charts which display each letter of the alphabet both in lower case and upper case style.
 - Look at other parts of the handwritten document to see if you can discover words you recognize that could be applied to parts you do not recognize. Then take those letters you recognize and start looking in other parts to decipher.
 - Obtain a digital image of the record and open it up with some photo editing software. Use the software to adjust such things as contrast, darkness, brightness or size to see if there is more clarity.

• Tripped Up Over Unfamiliar Naming Traditions?

- What if your ancestors started injecting an unfamiliar naming process into the names of their family?
 - Did your ancestors come from a country that used the patronymic naming system?
 - Is there a blending of the father's given name with a suffix to denote the sex of the child?
 - Maybe in Sweden NILS became NILSSON?
 - Did inheritance play a part in a surname change?

- In Germany, the surname of a woman who inherited a farm would be taken by her husband at marriage.
- In England, legal surname changes could be made to agree with the stipulations of a will in order to inherit.

- **When All Else Fails**

- Search by given names, provided you have narrowed a time-period by dates.
 - Narrow down you hits by applying other known criteria e.g. you know the spouse name, the parents, other family or occupation.
 - Perhaps an ancestor had a common given name but that a sibling had a more unusual given name. Track the sibling name to uncover more about the family.
 - Research siblings rather than focusing on the ancestor to make family discoveries.
 - Was your ancestor born illegitimately? Try searching with your with the mother's maiden name instead.
 - Use only portions of your surname in search fields, using wildcard methods of searching.

This is a great article that can really open up your mind to possibilities on why you cannot find someone using the methods you do. Creativity is required based on how things could have gone wrong in the way something was written. As you can see it almost appears that more can go wrong than can go right for you to be able find ancestors and then be able to read the documents where there name appears.

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