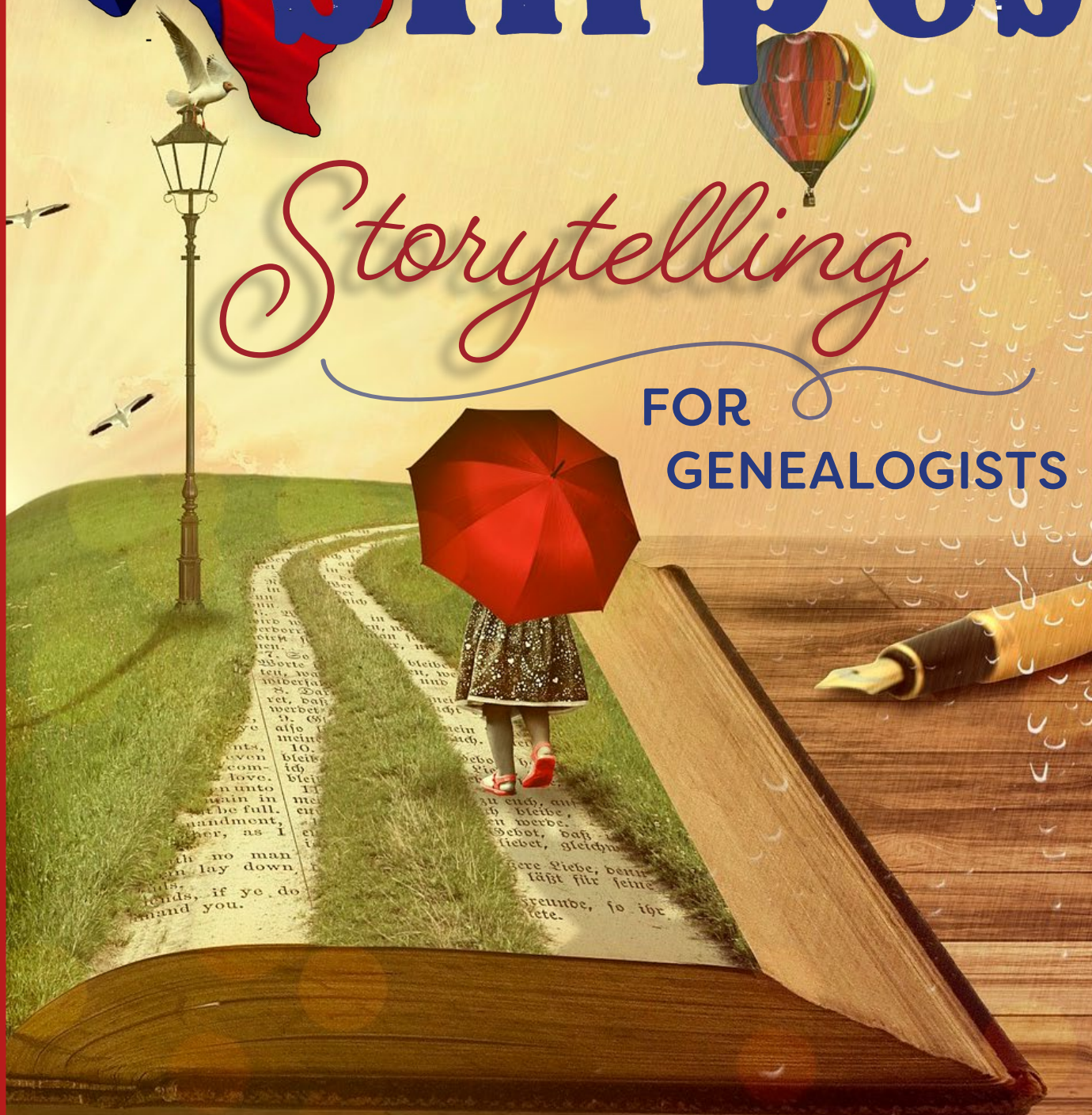


THE JOURNAL OF THE TEXAS STATE GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY INC.

Stirpes

Storytelling

FOR
GENEALOGISTS





Contents

Features

- 6** Family History as Story
by Donna Ingham
- 10** To a Bookcase
by Barbara Jo Thomas
- 12** When Your Last Name is Smith: Getting Out of the Rough
and Onto the Green
by Dreanna Belden
- 18** Informed Consent for DNA: Decisions, Decisions, Decisions,
and Sharing DNA
by Debbie Parker Wayne, CG®, CGLSM
- 23** Hiding From the Kiowa
by Carol Taylor
- 28** Let us Celebrate Together
by Russell A. Rahn
- 31** Enriching Family Stories Through Diaries and Letters
by Lisa Reed
- 35** This is My Greatest Journey ... a “Going Home” story
by Duane Helweg
- 41** The Elusive Andrew Lyday, 1804-1849
by Jana Walker
- 48** Colorful Family History
by Sandra J. Crowley
- 64** Two Family Histories You Should Be Writing Today
by Devon Noel Lee

Columns

- Editorial Policies **2**
- From the Editors' Pen **3**
- New Members & More **5**
- Volunteer Spotlight **5**
- Book Review **47**
by William D. “Bill” Buckner
- Partner Society Roundup **67**
- Texas Heritage Certificates **72**
- TxSGS Policies **76**
- TxSGS Society Leadership **78**
- 2018 Conference Information**
- Research Day **4**
- Workshops **50**
- Be An Exhibitor **51**
- Conference Schedule **52-57**
- Venue Floorplan **58**
- Andrew Carroll ... **59**
- Dining in San Antonio **60**
- Volunteer **61**
- Discovering Treasures
in the DRT Library **62**
- Hotel Information **63**

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)

From the

Editors' Pen



The September *Stirpes* focuses on storytelling, with great articles on a variety of aspects from techniques to examples. Donna Ingham evokes the soul of a storyteller in “Family History as Story” and shares how to include storytelling elements in your family history narrative. Additional tips are presented by Devon Lee in “Two Family Histories You Should Be Telling Today” and Lisa Reed in “Enriching Family Stories Through Diaries and Letters.” Duane Helweg describes his experiences with an old cabin in his family’s past with “This is my Greatest Journey Home...” and Barbara Jo Thomas illustrates her family’s history through a familiar object in “To a Bookcase.”

“Hiding from the Kiowa” by Carol Taylor shows how she verified the basic facts in a treasured family tale. Jana Walker describes the research

path she took to track down a particularly evasive ancestor in “The Elusive Andrew Lyday,” and Dreanna Belden shares her Smith research struggles and successes in “When Your Last Name is Smith...” In “Let us Celebrate Together,” Russ Rahn constructs the story of Rudolph John and Emilie Wenzel from a worship booklet crafted for their 50th anniversary celebration. All of these excellent articles incorporate storytelling in creating a research narrative that’s interesting to read and intriguing to even those non-genealogists in our families.

On a broader note, Debbie Parker Wayne brings us a very timely article, “Informed Consent for DNA,” that addresses issues raised by the recent spate of news articles on DNA. Looking forward to Christmas, Sandra Crowley shows how to turn family

history photographs into a coloring book - a perfect gift for sharing family stories with grandchildren (and artistic adults) at Christmas!

Thinking of Christmas and the New Year, the December issue focuses on projects genealogists should place on their list of New Year’s Resolutions and good habits we genealogists should develop. What habits do you have that streamline research, maintain organization, or improve results? What genealogy resolutions are you contemplating? Share them with us! As always, photos and examples are welcome. We’d also like to include articles on good habits all genealogists should develop. The deadline for the December issue of *Stirpes* is October 15. *Stirpes* submission details are on our website at www.txsgs.org.

~ *Stirpes* Editors ★

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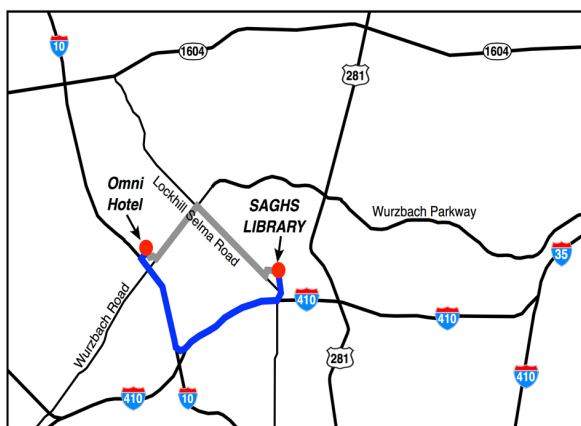
Research Day

San Antonio Genealogical & Historical Society Library

Join us for a day of research in partnership with the Texas State Genealogical Society's Annual Conference.

Thursday, November 1
Noon - 8:00 p.m.

- ✓ Light refreshments provided by TxSGS.
- ✓ Volunteers on hand to help with research.
- ✓ No registration required.



911 Melissa Drive - Only 5 miles from the conference hotel.

Library will also be open during normal hours:
Saturday 10:00 - 4:00
Sunday 1:00 - 5:00



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San Antonio, Texas 78213
Phone: (210) 342-5242
www.txsaghs.org

Volunteer Spotlight:

Mary Torres

Mary Torres is an active member of her local genealogical society in South Texas, the Texas State Genealogical Society, and the Hispanic genealogical community across Texas. She is the president of the Rio Grande Valley Hispanic Genealogical Society for her fourth year. In 2004, Mary joined the TxSGS Board of Directors as Representative for District 1 in South Texas, which is now District "S." Mary enjoys interacting with genealogists and learning what other societies are doing. When asked what challenges societies in her area are confronting, Mary replied: "Declining membership, staying connected through social media, getting people out to meetings, and getting younger people involved." RGVHS has tried several approaches to address those challenges, from changing the society's meeting date and times to adding summer programs so that teachers can attend.

A member of the Association of Professional Genealogists, Mary has presented programs on various genealogy

topics for local organizations and was a speaker on Hispanic genealogy at the 2016 Texas State Genealogical Society's Annual Conference and at the 2016 RootsTech Conference in Salt Lake City, UT. She is slated to present a topic at the Clayton Library on October 6 as part of Clayton's Hispanic Heritage Month celebration and at the 39th Annual Hispanic Genealogical and Historical Conference in San Antonio in September. Mary embraces the educational opportunities available at genealogy conferences, having attended the Hispanic Genealogical Conference every year since 2003 and most of the TxSGS Annual Conferences since then as well.

RGVHS hosted the 2012 Hispanic Genealogical Conference on South Padre Island, which had about 400 in attendance. "The destination helped bring them in," Mary confided. Her society is scheduled to host the conference in 2021 and, considering its popularity, RGVHS is again contemplating Padre Island as a destination. "Stay tuned for updates!" she encouraged.



Mary Torres

Mary, a native of Harlingen, Texas, earned a Bachelor's Degree in Management from St. Edward's University in Austin and was employed by the State of Texas in the field of mental health and mental retardation. She has 17 years experience in genealogical research, both in the U.S. and in Mexico. She is active with several organizations in her community and writes a weekly column for the *Valley Morning Star*, "Harlingen Happenings," for which she received TxSGS's first place award for columnist many consecutive years. ★

New Members & More New Members since June 2018

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Friend

Genevieve T. Harris

Roseann Hogan

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Jean Burns

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Teal Lisa Gray

Ruth Green

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Constance Sabo-Risley

Donna Hoffman Schultheiss

Ginger & Dr. Alan A. Seay

Thomas Shaw

Edwin M. Sykes

Corvin E. Tademy

Barbara J. Thomas

Valerie Vann

Helen M. Wall

Connie S. Webb

Rodney Witcher

Carrie Woolverton

Linda K. Worsham

Kathryn M. Wright

Family History As Story

by Donna Ingham

My career path has led me from being a journalist to a college English professor to a professional storyteller. Along the way, I have become increasingly interested in genealogy and what it tells me about my family.

In my experience, however, genealogical research seems to focus mostly on three of the five Ws: who, when, and where. The storyteller in me wants to know more about the what, why, and how. In other words, applying storytelling techniques can help me discover and record not only the family data but also the family narratives.

In a narrative, we generally start with what happened. Storytellers and writers call that the plot. We ask ourselves if there a compelling “hook” or theme or pattern. For example, a family narrative I heard in bits and pieces in oral histories I collected from my father and his younger brother and from county court records left me with at least a couple of questions that had to be answered before the story could come together. To begin, on the day my paternal grandmother was buried in Miami, Texas, my father, my sister, and I were sitting in a downtown café having a cup of coffee before we headed home. Seemingly out of the blue, my father said, very conversationally, “Pop killed a man once.” Definitely a hook. My sister and I, both grown women, were stunned. We’d certainly never heard this story before. Question one: Why now? We pressed for details.

It seems the Christophers, my family, lived neighbors to the Curtises in a small town in the Texas Panhandle. The Christophers had hogs, and the Curtises had dogs. At some point, one of the Curtises’ dogs “might near chewed the ear off of one of the Christophers’ hogs,” my father said, and that’s what started the feud. Later I interviewed my uncle Key Christopher, the real storyteller in the family, and got a fuller account that involved more than hogs and dogs. Rube Curtis, I was told, ran for county sheriff. The Christophers electioneered against him, and he lost. He vowed to get even and accosted one of the Christopher sons, my grandfather’s brother, on a downtown street, giving that son quite a beating. My grandfather, the



youngest son, was then left to do the family business. He shortly had a run-in with Rube in the bank but got the better of him, resulting in a threat from Rube: “I’ll get you for this, Christopher. I’ll get you for this.” And ultimately, Rube tried. Meanwhile, my grandfather, whose name was William or, more often, Willie or Billy, started carrying a pistol.

One evening, Willie returned from a business trip on the train and stepped into the depot. Some of Rube’s friends were there and suddenly Rube, armed with brass knuckles, attacked Willie from the rear. Willie turned and fired, the pistol still in his overcoat pocket. He missed. He fired again, and this time Rube went down. Rube died the next day, after saying, “Don’t blame Christopher. I started it.” So there’s the story, but question two is: What does one do with it? First, I preserved Uncle Key’s recorded telling of it and transcribed that story. Then I began trying to sort out the story to better understand it for myself.

I harked back to my training and experience as a teacher of writing and literature and drew from my current focus on oral storytelling to review the narrative elements essential for any good story:

- 1) Plot and theme. We know what happened, but why? Pride, revenge, the hero’s journey?
- 2) Characters. Clearly a protagonist and an antagonist.
- 3) Setting. A small Texas town in the early 20th century.

To a Bookcase

by Barbara Jo Thomas

It was my grandfather's bookcase I was told; I was quite young when it was moved to our house at the bay. At one time it had glass doors that, when cracked or broken, had been removed. You can still see the places where the door hinges once were.

The bookcase stands almost five feet high. I'm taller than it now, but as a child I would use it to judge my growth from year to year. I suspect others did too.

Some of the books on those shelves have been there always, probably a hundred years:

- A set of Charles Dickens works, fat and green, with strings unraveling at the edges;
- A set of the New World Classics, little blue books filled with the wonderful writings of the ages;
- An old 1857 volume of *Harper's Magazine*, no cover;
- A small leather-bound German/English dictionary, "entered by an Act of Congress" 1858;
- *A Swinton's Fourth Reader*, copyright 1883.

There's a ten-volume set of *The World's Best Essays* and a six-volume set of *The History of The United States*, copyright 1897. Both sets my father brought home to my sister and me in the 1950s, an antique store purchase. Mine were the history volumes, hers the essays. Then, my flutist friend gave me two sets of music volumes: twelve books on music history and six of *The Scribner Music Library*, full of piano music, of course. I think the little red



(Image courtesy of the author.)

books, the six volumes of *Masterpieces of Poetry*, *The Works of Edgar Allen Poe*, and the Rudyard Kipling book set were in this case from early days also, though they may have come from my other grandpa's collection.

I love the shelf of children's books with A. A. Milne's *When We Were Very Young* and *Now We Are Six*. I also love the tattered and brown-paged book of poetry my mother read to us and that I read to my children and grandchildren, with favorites like "Jonathan Bing" by B. Curtis Brown,

"Little Orphan Annie" by James Whitcomb Riley, and Rachel Field's "The Animal Store." The bookcase holds so very many more.

There's also a section of mostly biographies. On this shelf are journals of women pioneers and fascinating personal accounts: *Texas in 1837*, Windell's *Hill Country*, and *My Life and Times* by Doc LaBorde, my father's Odeco Company boss.

Another shelf holds old black leather Bibles handed down in the family and various hymnals, plus a

collection of books of faith, like *In His Steps* by Charles Sheldon and C. S. Lewis's *The Case for Christianity*.

Tucked away where there is room, even sideways, or behind in a second row, I see paperbacks of classics saved from college years and sundry mysteries, as well as several books on nature, like *The Birds of Texas*, Carson's *The Edge of the Sea*, and of course a copy of *The Snake's Advocate* by my naturalist uncle, A. C. Stimson.

Displayed on top and interspersed among the shelves are pictures, knick-knacks, and figurines collected over the years. There's a horseman with horse and hunting dogs that belonged to my

grandmother; a little Japanese flutist that was a gift from a childhood friend; a wooden carved Holy Family from Israel, a gift from my younger son; and a three-piece Loch Ness Monster that was my older son's. There is a bronze statuette of a Girl Scout, presented to my mother when she won the "Thanks Badge;" a leather sheathed slide rule of my engineer father's; a cigarette music box that three generations of toddlers played

with and amazingly still plays; and a souvenir Oklahoma Territory glass that holds a rusty metal case of eyeglasses and a barber's shaving razor.

This bookcase has made many cross-country moves to many family homes. Christmas stockings have hung on it when there was no fireplace.

Dust seems to settle comfortably on these shelves nowadays.

But to feel its dark walnut is to touch my family tree. ★

About Barbara Jo Thomas: Barbara attended Bellaire High School in Houston and graduated from SMU in Dallas. She is a retired elementary school teacher who has enjoyed tutoring as well as teaching GED and citizenship classes. She is presently living in Angleton, Texas, and Blairsville, Georgia.

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 10:00 a.m. - 8:30 p.m.

West Waco Library & Genealogy Center
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When Your Last Name is Smith: Getting Out of the Rough and Onto the Green

by Dreanna Belden

My maiden name is Smith, that most ubiquitous of last names and the despair of genealogists everywhere. Smith seems a humdrum name, but for my father, it was the rallying cry to overcoming difficulties in life, and a source of great pride.

Whenever some difficulty struck, he was effervescently positive that we would overcome, “Surely we’re in a tight spot, but we’ve got this. By God, we’re SMITHS!” In spite of this sense of familial pride, we really didn’t know much about *our* Smiths when I was growing up, and my father certainly didn’t either. He was raised by his paternal grandparents from the time he was eleven, and that was the last generation known to us.

Here’s what I knew about my great-grandfather, Charles J. Smith Sr., from the family stories my father told: Charles was from Jersey City and moved to Florida as one of the earliest golf professionals in the state and he designed and built some of the first golf courses in Florida. My father didn’t know anything about Charles’s parents or siblings, but Charles was staunchly Catholic and was disheartened that his children chose other religions in adulthood. Charles married Eleanor Nohrden in 1913 and had four children:

Helen, Mildred, Charles Jr., and Virginia.

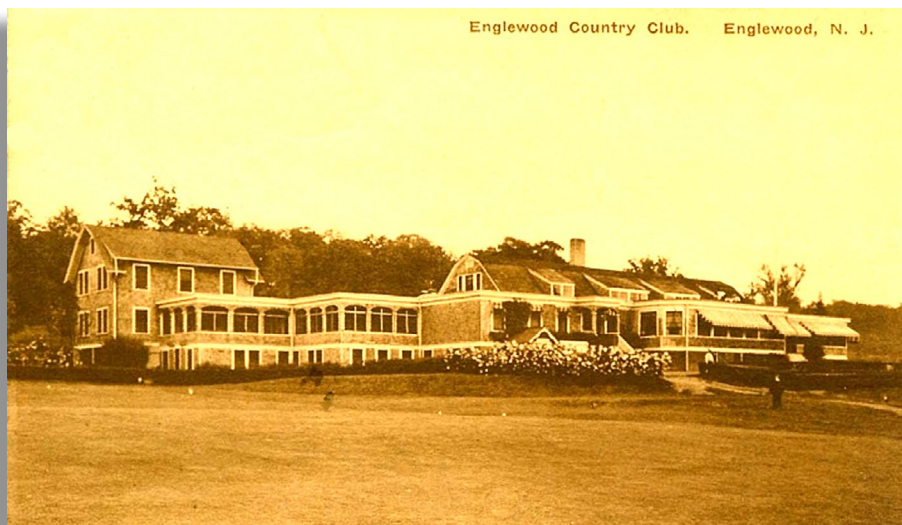
Unraveling details from this family story has been a quest for nearly two decades, with occasional help from friends and family plus discoveries that would not have been possible without extensive research. The first evidence I found that documented my great-grandfather’s life was a 1910 U.S. Federal Census for Jersey City. He was living at 100 Bright Street in the household of his mother, Ellen Mead, 52, and siblings William J. Smith, 27, a clerk with City Hall; Nellie Smith, 32, a clerk at a trolley company; and May Smith, 24, a clerk in a plumbing office. Charles J. was listed as a 30-year-old

golf professor,¹ eureka! I had found the right family. Other information gleaned from this record revealed that Ellen Mead was born in Ireland and the father of her children was born in Scotland. She had given birth to eight children, yet only four remained alive.

Through searching other census, birth, and death records along with newspapers, I established the names, birthdates, and death dates of seven of the eight children: Mary Ellen Smith (born 1871,² died before 1880), Jane “Jennie” Ivey Smith (1875³ – 1895⁴), Nellie J. Smith (1878 – 1978),⁵ Charles J. Smith (my great-grandfather, 1880 – 1958),⁶ William J. Smith (1882⁷ – 1921⁸), Mary “May” Smith (1885⁹ – 1962¹⁰), and John Smith (1887¹¹ – 1904). The parents of this family were Ellen O’Brien Smith Mead, an Irish immigrant, and James Smith, a Scottish potter. As it turned out, of James and Ellen’s offspring, only Charles J. and William J. had

children. William had one child—a daughter named Gertrude. She died when she was sixteen.¹² Out of this whole family of eight children, my great-grandfather is the only sibling to have surviving descendants.

Researching Smiths is very difficult to do



Undated photo of Englewood Country Club, Englewood, New Jersey. (New Jersey State Golf Association, <https://www.njsga.org/communications/news/njsgalostlinks/>.)

Informed Consent for DNA:

Decisions, Decisions, Decisions, and Sharing DNA

by Debbie Parker Wayne, CG[®], CGLSM

It is a lot more fun to talk about DNA tools and analysis techniques than terms of service and consent forms. However, recent developments in our community make it important that we all understand consent agreements, terms of service, ways others can use our shared DNA data, and potential revelations associated with those results.

Since 2015, our community has supported *Genetic Genealogy Standards* aimed at researchers

and related to ethical and privacy issues. The Future of Privacy Forum recently released *Privacy Best Practices for Consumer Genetic Testing Services* aimed at testing companies. Informed consent is an important concept for ethics, standards, and best practices for sharing DNA data and information found in family history documents. This article summarizes some of those issues, focused on DNA, that are even more important than determining the identity of an ancestor. DNA test results are less understood than traditional data from documents, but both can reveal situations affecting the living.

What is Informed Consent?

Medical ethicists teach that, “Based on the ethical principle of respect for persons, the goal of informed consent is to ensure that subjects are aware of the risks and potential benefits and make a voluntary decision about participating in the research.” The traditions of informed consent are sometimes in conflict with the need for shared information to enable discoveries. The need to “balance the obligation to respect and protect research participants with the larger social interest” may require changes in our traditional methods.³ Now that so many DNA tests are taken by genealogists, by those of unknown parentage, and by those curious about their ethnicity after seeing television commercials, we must understand the implications of the test results we are sharing so freely.

In the simplest form, informed



consent means you understand what you are sharing, how that shared information may be used, how that information may affect others, and that you freely agree to share that information. When we ask others to take a DNA test to advance our genealogical research, we *must* provide enough information to allow that person to make an informed decision. After all, it is *their* DNA we are asking

for. It is their decision as to how that information should be used, if at all. We should not force, coerce, or mislead anyone when asking for a DNA sample.

Several genealogists have created sample forms that can be used when asking a person to take a DNA test. These have Creative Commons licenses allowing you to modify the forms as needed for your own use.⁴

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

Hiding From the Kiowa

by Carol Taylor

Those fortunate to have ancestors who were storytellers can joyfully celebrate an extra source of genealogical information. The majority of those tales add to the depth of our knowledge of who our ancestors were, the conditions under which they lived, and vital knowledge of their lives. In this article it is my hope to share family stories and to provide clues that I used to verify the events.

Mary Emaline “Sissy” Hill and Sam Houston “Huse” Denning were my paternal grandmother’s parents. Both were born in Texas during the Civil War and Reconstruction. Both were children of subsistence farmers. Both experienced a rugged life on the Texas frontier.

My introduction to the stories happened one Sunday morning when I was about five years old. More than likely I talked or wiggled too much the previous week, because my paternal grandmother whispered in my ear, “Now Carol, if Grandma Denning could hide from the Indians all day while they watered their horses, you can sit still and be quiet for one hour.” The first part of that warning was heavenly to me. Grandma Denning actually saw Native Americans on their horses up close and in person. How exciting!

Over the years this grandmother (Minnie Denning Coley) relayed other stories her mother had told her as well as elaborated on the horse-watering episode. Sissy and Huse Denning were still living in the home they first occupied when they married in 1884. We frequently went to visit, but I was much too shy to ask any questions. My dad told me that Grandmother Coley told him the same stories, but not the part about being quiet and sitting still.

Sissy Hill and her older brother Newton were born in Parker County, Texas; they were the older children of Mary Jane Walden and John Tobe Hill. Newton was born in February 1866 and Sissy was born in October 1867. Four years after Sissy’s birth, Tobe Hill and his young family joined his in-laws in moving to neighboring Jack County. They built their log cabin along Rock Creek near the edge of the Western Cross Timbers.

At the time the Hill and Walden families moved to Jack County, the Cross Timbers were perceived as a frontier outpost of civilization. Post Oak trees and Black Jack Oak trees as well as vines and dense underbrush surrounded the



Samuel Houston Denning and Mary Emaline (Sissy) Denning on their wedding day, 4 December 1884, at Long Hollow community in Jack County, Texas. They settled about five miles west of there where the couple raised 13 children. The homestead was not far from the log cabin on Rock Creek where Sissy and her brother Newton hid from the Kiowa in the early 1870s. (Image courtesy of the author.)

Let us Celebrate Together

by Russell A. Rahn

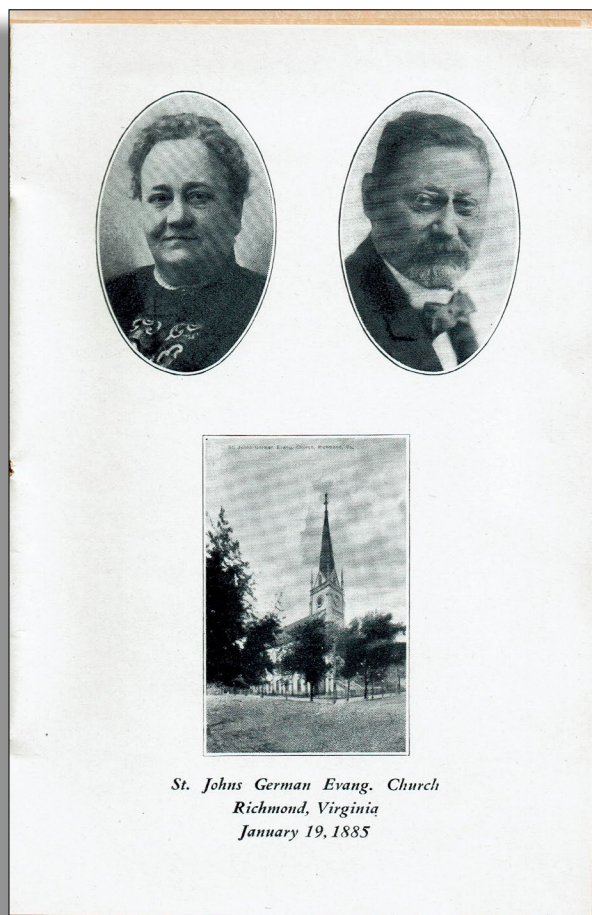
russandmarionrahn@gmail.com

On 19 January 1935, a group of people gathered in St. John's German Evangelical Church (as it was then known) to participate in a celebration of fifty years of marriage. The happy couple was the Reverend Rudolph A. John and his wife, Emilie Wenzel John. Considering that both of them had attained ages in excess of seventy years and that life expectancies in that day were not as great as they are today, this was a momentous celebration indeed.

The collection of Virginia Historical Society Papers contains a record of their marriage in the form of an index card. This card has the name of the groom given as "R. A. John" and an entry in the line for "married" which gives the date and the name of the bride: 19 January 1885 (Emilia Wenzel). Nothing else is given at that point.

I recently acquired a small booklet in the nature of a worship service folder that was used at their celebration in 1935. It does not appear to have been produced inexpensively. The first page contains two contemporary photographs of the couple and below them is a view of the church.

The actual view of the church is a picture postcard that was used for this purpose and the date or age of the photo of the church is unknown. Janke and Janke (1986) in their discussion of picture postcard history indicate that the type shown here dates from the 1930s. Thus, despite the label, it would be contemporary with



Cover of "Rudolph A. John, Emilie Wenzel, January Nineteenth, 1885-1935," worship service commemorative booklet. (Image courtesy of the author.)

their wedding anniversary rather than the wedding itself.

The center page of the folder

contains the order of service that was held in The Memorial Chapel of St. Paul's House of Worship. Dr. Timothy Lehman led the worship and Reverend Hans Haupt read the lesson and gave the sermon. He preached on the theme "When Memory Comes to Walk with Me." The congregation was asked to please remain standing during the postlude.

In view of the small amount of information on the index card in the Virginia collection, I thought it would be interesting to discover more about the immediate families of the couple, and the results of this are given below.

From the records that were located, Rudolph came from a family of five children, Rudolph being the oldest. Rudolph himself was a pastor, and his father—also named Rudolph—has been listed as a pastor or a teacher, depending upon which census report you are viewing. Emily was the second child in a family of eight, and her father is enumerated as a merchant.

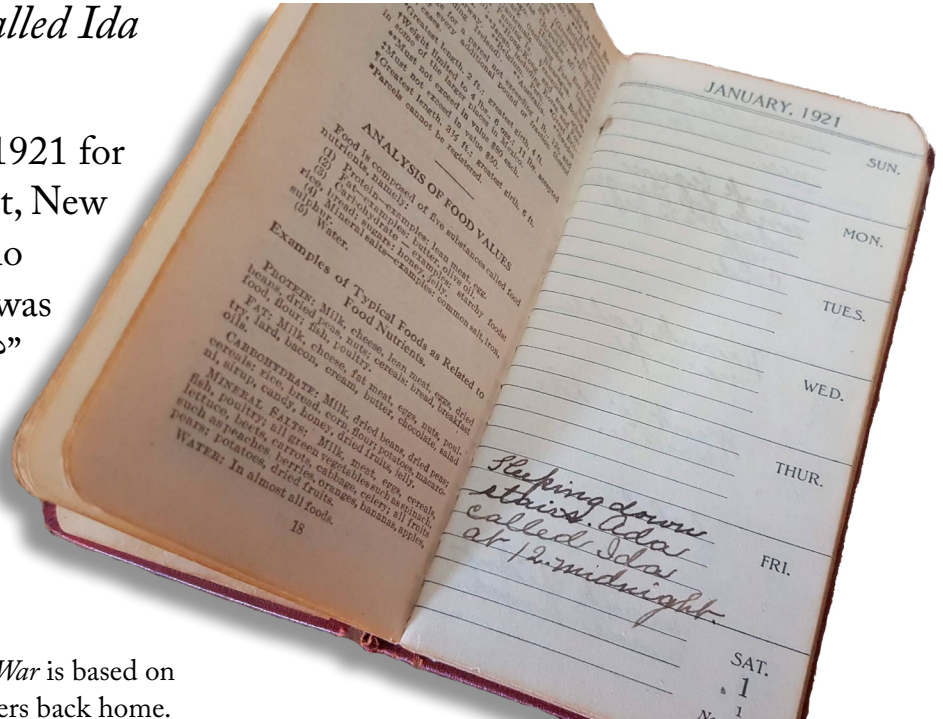
Now that we have them united in marriage for fifty years, I thought it would also be interesting to learn how they managed their courtship. Since Rudolph was born in Missouri and Emily in Virginia, and with the distance between St. Louis, Missouri, and Richmond, Virginia, being some 800 or more miles, it was clear that Rudolph was not courting the "girl next door." By the year 1880, Rudolph was living in the Chicago area—a situation not much

Enriching Family Stories Through Diaries and Letters

by Lisa Reed

“Sleeping downstairs. Ada called Ida at 12 midnight.”¹

Such began the first day of 1921 for a diary writer in Claremont, New Hampshire. Who was she? Who was Ada? Who was Ida? Why was the writer “sleeping downstairs?” Was she really in New Hampshire, or was that just where the small complimentary diary/almanac came from? What is her story?



Testament: A Soldier's Story of the Civil War is based on Union soldier Benjamin Webb Baker's letters back home. Author Benson Bobrick developed the 57 pages of printed letters into 187 pages of story detailing the soldier's family relations, the history of Cole County, Illinois, and the sweep of the War in the Western Theater. This *New York Times* Notable Book has eight pages of endnotes and five pages of bibliographic entries, indicating careful and thorough research.

How can a larger narrative be pulled from tiny pieces of revered family history and research? Examples focusing

on diaries show the “back and forth” approach required when working with family oral stories and written stories. As always, you start with what you have.

Start with a Story “Seed”

Somewhere between myth and truth is the story of my own great-grandfather, Fancher Luther Younger, who is remembered as having worked with the Civilian Conservation Corps to build a bridge. Did he really? I

have acquired a photocopy of a five-year diary he kept. Nowhere does it mention a bridge. Believe me. I have transcribed five years of short entries.

However, he repeatedly mentions “the Camp,” writing reports for a supervisor, the “Camp boys,” and his school. It turns



This is My Greatest Journey ...a “Going Home” Story

by Duane Helweg

My family has deep ties to Tennessee and the Shiloh National Military Park. There my Lewis Wicker family originally built a log cabin in 1848 in Hardin County. It survived the 6-7 April 1862 Battle of Shiloh. However, my second-great-grandfather, Roderick Wicker, did not survive the battle. His daughter, my great grandmother, Mary Lucrecia Wicker, brought stories of the battle to Texas.

In 2008 I wrote the history of the cabin in *Lone Survivor At Shiloh*, released in February 2009. That March I returned to the park to Shiloh Methodist Church, the only private entity remaining there, where I spoke in the church basement to the Sons of Confederate Veterans – Shiloh chapter. As I finished speaking I held up my book and said, “Mary Lucrecia Wicker, I’ve brought you home.” I use excerpts from my book throughout this story as I share my “going home.”

My greatest journey is in this “going home” story. It is a piece of me. It is a piece of those who came before me. It fills a niche in a place and in a time that no one else has filled. With stories abounding all around, telling the tales of the Civil War Battle of Shiloh, whirring about in the mind, covering what one would think, saying what one would say, all about an infamy unique in American history, one would think that no more could be said...but not so.

Lying quietly in the middle of a great battlefield is a simple log cabin. It

is just a wooden structure that once housed family, or families, in it. It is, however, a survivor. There it survived storm of shell and storm of nature. Perhaps crying out from its walls are the voices of all those who cried from the loss of their homes, who cried about the loss of possessions, and who cried the most over the loss of life.



The old War Cabin, with part of the Sunken Road in the woods behind the cabin. (Image courtesy of the author.)

In the now mostly fallow fields around it, many such losses occurred. The mandate by man there today is the military story. Mine is the poignant story of people, the people who lived

here, ones who lived in cabins like the one that survives. It cries out, “We were here, too. We suffered losses too—of flesh and fodder, of blood and bed, of mind and matter, of breath and beauty.”

This is my greatest journey, to tell the story of a simple cabin, simple families, and simple lives, complicated only by the closeness of the call of causes. Now envision the entry of invasion, the need to flee from fear, the sanctity of survival. While written words of wisdom have filled the hallowed highway of history here, the cabin has laid silent for most of that time. Now it speaks and I give it a voice. It is my unction, it is my honor. This is my greatest journey—listen to the words of those who had no voice

here, listen to the words of those who did, listen to the words of your heart and be still, all is well, safely rest within the cradle of the cabin. It still speaks, and in speaking for it, this has been my greatest journey.¹

We have a saying here in Texas where I grew up. When one sees an old vacated farm or ranch house that lies in ruin or a state of disrepair you say, “If only walls could talk, the stories they would tell...”

Such would truly be the case of the lone dwelling structure to survive the Civil War Battle of Shiloh, remaining within the battleground proper.

The old log “War Cabin,” as

The Elusive **Andrew Lyday, 1804-1849**

by Jana Walker

[Editor's Note: The research described in this article was awarded second place in the Dallas Genealogical Society's Writing Contest in 2016.¹ Here, Jana describes the intensive search that led to discovering Andrew Lyday's story.]

My ancestors have been easy to find. I've been grateful for the amount of "low-hanging fruit" that abounds for my family. It was with some surprise that my initial research on my third-great-grandfather, Andrew Lyday, found so little information to tell me about his life. Tracking down my ancestor has been a rewarding search, and I'd like to share the hunt for the information I've discovered.

First Steps

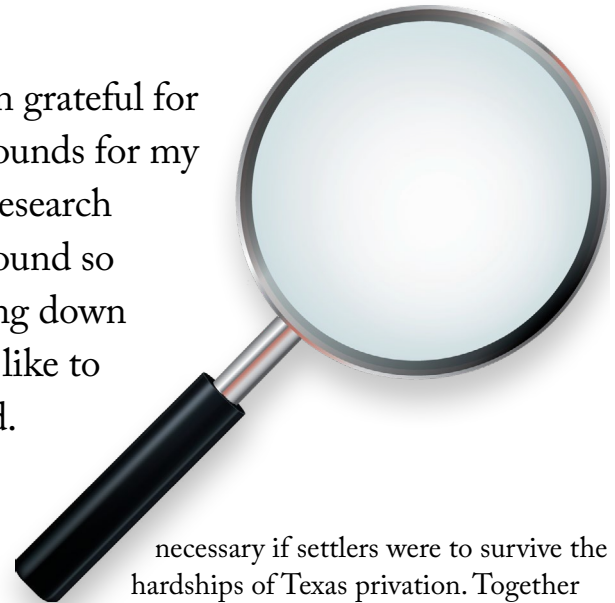
I started with a life sketch in *The Biographical Souvenir of the State of Texas*. The man featured isn't Andrew Lyday, but Andrew is mentioned. On page 503, another ancestor, my second-great-grandfather and Andrew Lyday's son-in-law, Robert Ward Lane, is described using some unusual punctuation, although the italics are mine:

Robert W. Lane left his native State with his father's family at the age of eleven and came to Texas (1836). He has lived in Bowie, Fannin and Hunt counties since coming here. He was married the first time in October, 1854, to Nannie, *daughter of Andrew Lyday*, one of the first settlers of Fannin county, Texas....²

Evidently, Andrew Lyday was one of the first settlers of Fannin County, Texas. Surely, as one of the first settlers, I might find ample information about him? Alas, no, but I was going to search diligently.

If he was one of the first settlers of Fannin County, then I hoped to find Andrew in the book *Fannin County Folks & Facts*. On page 251, John Avery wrote:

Indians and wild animals roamed the prairie when two brothers from Tennessee settled in Fannin County near the present town of Ladonia. Isaac Lyday, born 1813 and Andrew Lyday 1804 - 1849 realized that protection was



necessary if settlers were to survive the hardships of Texas privation. Together the brothers founded Fort Lyday, which served as a haven to hundreds of pioneers who moved into the county in early days of the Texas frontier.³

This brief paragraph gave me more information about my ancestor Andrew. I have a birth and death year for him. He had a brother named Isaac. They were from Tennessee, according to the writer, and this turns out to be true, and yet not true. Elusive, again, and I'll explain what I mean soon. Of course, all these "facts" need proof, but I have clues to track down. Further, this passage provides another mention of my ancestor having been in Texas during the early days of the Republic.

Mr. Avery's description of Andrew's brother Isaac Lyday provided many details, including Isaac's wife, her parents, and the names and birth years of Isaac's children. But about Andrew Lyday, he wrote, "Little is known about Andrew. His only child was Mary (1832 - 1847) and his wife is unknown. Perhaps he was a widower when he came into the country."

Andrew didn't remain a widower, because he was father to more children, including my second-great-grandmother, Nancy Ann "Nannie" Lyday. She married Robert Ward Lane, he of the life sketch in *The Biographical Souvenir of the State of Texas*. In that work,

The TxSGS 2018 Annual Awards Banquet Features Andrew Carroll

Founding Director of the Center for American War Letters

Lines of Fire – One Man’s Search for the Greatest War Letters Ever Written

7:00 p.m. Saturday, November 3

Words to family penned in a soldier’s hand—Revolutionary, Civil War, Desert Storm—illuminate the soldier, the conflict, and American ideals at the time of war. Andrew Carroll has dedicated himself to collecting and archiving these priceless pieces of American and personal history at the Center for American War Letters (CAWL). Along with showing the banquet audience extraordinary, original letters from CAWL’s collection, Carroll will discuss his latest book, *My Fellow Soldiers: General John Pershing and the Americans Who Helped Win the Great War*. Veterans and others with war letters they’re willing to donate to CAWL (either originals or photocopies) are encouraged to bring them to the event.

Carroll is the editor of several New York Times bestsellers, including *War Letters*, *Letters of a Nation*, and *Behind*

the Lines. Andrew also edited, on a pro bono basis, *Operation Homecoming: Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Home Front, in the Words of U.S. Troops and Their Families*, which inspired the Emmy award-winning film of the same name.

Since 1998, Andrew has traveled to all 50 states and more than 40 countries, including Iraq and Afghanistan, to seek out and preserve the most extraordinary letters ever written by American troops, veterans, and their family members. Andrew has collected, to date, more than 100,000 previously unpublished letters and emails from every war in U.S. history, and he donated the letters, free of charge, to Chapman University in Orange, California. The university has set up the Center for American War Letters to archive these correspondences forever and bring in more letters as well. Andrew serves as

the Center’s founding director.

Andrew is currently embarking on the “Million Letters Campaign” to find at least 1,000,000 war-related correspondences, including everything from handwritten missives penned during the Revolution up to emails sent from Iraq and Afghanistan.

Andrew’s most recent book is *My Fellow Soldiers: General John Pershing and the Americans Who Helped Win the Great War*, and Andrew was also recently featured in the critically acclaimed “American Experience” film on World War I, called “The Great War,” which was produced by PBS and broadcast nationwide.

For more information about the conference and to purchase banquet tickets, please see www.txsgs.org/conference/. For more information about donating war letters to CAWL, please visit www.WarLetters.us. ★

TxSGS Members and Society Delegates -
Join us for the

2018 TxSGS Annual Business Meeting

- Welcome
- Treasurer’s Report
- 2018 Accomplishments
- 2019 Plans
- Election of Officers for 2019-2020 Term
- Other business as necessary



Saturday, November 4, 2018

8:30 a.m. – 9:15 a.m.

Omni San Antonio at the Colonnade
San Antonio, Texas

TxSGS Wants You!

By Sandra J. Crowley

Volunteers are the lifeblood of non-profit organizations, and the Texas State Genealogical Society is no exception.

TxSGS is like a small business, and a small business requires teams of people to get things done. Elected directors and leaders fulfill major activities including membership, education, development, treasurer, secretary, and district representatives. TxSGS also has standing committees that contribute to ongoing programs such as Heritage Certificates, the annual conference, virtual conferences/webinars, marketing/publicity, *Stirpes*, and more. At times throughout the year, each of these areas has projects that may require additional volunteer support.

Being part of one of these committees or volunteering to help during the annual conference is a great way to become involved in TxSGS and “pay it forward” to the genealogical community.

Think about what you have to offer—expertise, skills, talents, and interests. Do you enjoy editing or proofreading, creating brochures or newsletters, working with social media? Are you the “meet and greet” type who thrives on event planning, publicity, and hospitality? Maybe you just want to help with pre-conference activities or serve as a room monitor for a lecture or two.

Whatever your skill, consider volunteering with TxSGS. Whether you are planning to attend the conference in San Antonio this year or live in the area, there are



opportunities for you. Check out our web site (www.txsgs.org) to learn more about how you can help at this year's event. It's a great way to get to know the organization and network with fellow genealogists. What do genealogists talk about when they get together? Family research! You might find a cousin (it happens every year!) or even pick up a tip or two.

TxSGS will be electing officers for the 2019-2020 term of office at this year's conference in San Antonio. Based on the approved changes to the Bylaws in 2017, half of the Board is elected each year. A complete list of open positions and

job descriptions will be published on our web site by September 25.

We are accepting volunteers and nominations and encourage you to consider submitting your name for consideration.

For more information:

Email nominations@txsgs.org if you know of someone you would like to nominate for a position, if you're interested in serving on the TxSGS Board of Directors, or if you have questions about a specific committee or board position.

Learn more about these opportunities on our website www.txsgs.org. ★

Discovering Treasures in the D.R.T. Library

by Barbara Froebel and Susan E. Ball

The oldest patriotic women's organization in Texas and one of the oldest in the nation, The Daughters of the Republic of Texas's mission includes encouraging research into early Texas records, preserving historic documents, and encouraging the publication of historic records.

As part of this mission, the DRT have amassed an impressive collection of materials focusing on the Texas Revolution, the Republic of Texas, and the men and women who were involved in that pivotal time. Housed in the DRT Library, the 38,000 item non-circulating collection has been developed and is supported and maintained by the DRT for the use of all researchers. Documents, books, maps, letters, and other artifacts pertain to the Republic of Texas, history of Texas, San Antonio, and the Alamo. Materials are in closed stacks with access provided through inventories and an online public-access catalog. The library collections are available to all researchers by appointment (210-784-1512).

The Collection is now located in the Bexar County Archives Building (former Federal Reserve Building) in downtown San Antonio at 126 East Nueva Street.

The DRT, Texas A & M University San Antonio, and Bexar County have partnered to preserve and maintain the collection so future generations will better understand the cost of freedom and liberty.

Library staff conduct small group tours of the collection and facility. If you are interested in scheduling a small group tour of the DRT Library, please email Leslie Stapleton at leslie.stapleton@tamusa.edu.

See the DRT library website at <http://www.drinfo.org/> for a wealth of additional information and their online catalog. **If you are visiting San Antonio during the TxSGS 2018 conference and want to visit the DRT library, plan to make your reservation now.** If you won't have time this trip, the website has a fee schedule for ordering copies.

Happy Hunting! ★



DRT Library (<https://www.drinfo.org/drt-library>)

Holdings at The Daughters of the Republic of Texas Library

The general collection: 17,000 book titles, primarily history, but including genealogy, politics and government, art, natural history and science, religion, folklore, and fiction, all associated with Texas. The library is fortunate to have received the extensive libraries of Dr. William Eager Howard, C. Stanley Banks, and Maury Maverick, Sr.

Archival collections: Approximately 450 collections of personal and family papers and organizational records dating from 1519 to the present. The "[Archival Collections](#)" page in the "Research" section of the DRT Library website provides an overview of these collections. The [National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections](#), lists 246 of the DRT Library's archival collections. Among the outstanding collections are: Newspapers: Bound volumes of consecutive editions, including Mexican War newspapers and the *Niles Register*, individual copies of newspapers associated with historic Texas events, and microfilm of early Texas newspapers.

Maps: More than 1,000 maps—land plats and world, national, state, county, and city maps, including a map dated 1579 by Abraham Ortelius; an 1827 manuscript map of Austin's Colony drawn by Stephen F. Austin, part of the *Cummings Family Papers*; and digital images of maps from the Robert L. B. Tobin Map Collection.

Clipping file: Approximately 400 linear feet of file folders containing newspaper clippings, letters, photocopies of documents, pamphlets, and genealogical charts. Files are arranged in two divisions, San Antonio and General, with each division subdivided by topic.

Sheet music: Approximately 200 sheet music titles relating to the Alamo, San Antonio, and Texas. Original pieces date from 1835 and include *Go Ahead: A March Dedicated To Colonel Crockett, 1835*; *The Flag of Texas : A National Song, 1836*; *The Texas Quick Step, 1841*; and *Smith's March, 1848*.

For more information about the DRT, see their website at <http://www.drinfo.org/>. To view the library catalog, see <http://www.drinfo.org/drt-library/research>.

Two Family Histories You Should Be Writing Today

by Devon Noel Lee

Writing your family stories can take multiple forms. One of them can be a traditional register style where you outline names, dates, places, and relationships. You've seen this in many early family history compilations. Another

To be perfectly honest, these family histories are boring. Yep, I said it. They are boring and were wonderful in the past before the age of computers and the internet. Today, if you hand me a book with either of these two styles of family histories, I'll smile and grab something else. Truth be told, your family members will as well.

You will have more fun and your family will enjoy your stories more if you write short stories and/or biographies. The EASIEST family histories to write are short stories. The best short stories are based on memories or the yarns families spin at reunions and other gatherings.

As my mom and dad passed away at a young age, my children have few if any memories of them. The burden is on my shoulders to tell them what they were like so they are real and not strangers in a picture on the wall or in a family group sheet. Since my children know so little about my parents, anything that I can remember is worth writing.

form is a proof report where you discuss the evidence pertaining to why you know ancestors lived, married, died, and so forth. These two are the most frequently published family histories, but do they make the best for reading pleasure?

I remember my mother telling me the story of how she met my dad, a typical question asked in family history interviews but few people take the time to preserve. Since I was not

present for the event, I think my memory is a little sketchy, but I'll do my best to share it here.

My mom was dating a guy named Moose. They went to a dance hall to

hear the band called *The Rebounds*. My dad happened to be at the dance because he was a roadie for the band. For whatever reason, Moose looked at my dad and said, "Here, hold this," and indicated my mother. I guess my dad didn't really understand what Moose meant because Bob and Penny held onto each other for the rest of their lives.

I loved this story as a little girl and my kids enjoy it too. Why was the boyfriend named Moose? What was his real name? I don't remember that mother ever told me the details. Yet, the fact that his nickname was Moose makes the story so memorable.

A word of caution—what if I got the location of



Bob and Penny in the 1960s. (Image courtesy of the author.)

Index

A

Admire, Chris 67
 Allen, John 5
 Anderson, Marie M. 5
 Anderson, Nina Wicker 38
 Avery, John 41, 43

B

Baker, Benjamin Webb 31, 33
 Baker, Bonnie 67
 Ballard, Paula 66, 77
 Ball, Susan E. 2, 75, 77
 Banks, C. Stanley 61
 Barnette, Mic 53
 Barron, John C. 49
 Bechhold, Rhonda 67
 Belden, Dreanna 3, 12
 Big Tree 25
 Bobrick, Benson 31
 Brewster, Jim 52, 57
 Brown, Phyllis 66, 67, 77
 Bryant, Marynell 77
 Buchanan, Flora 36
 Buckner, William D. "Bill" 1, 2, 49, 77
 Burns, Jean 5
 Byrd, F. G. 13

C

Christensen, Evan 53, 56
 Christopher, Key 6
 Christopher, Mattie 7
 Christopher, Willie 7
 Cody, Bill 14
 Coley, Minnie Denning 23
 Coley, Stewart "Pete" 26
 Collins, Jessica Horne 5
 Cooke, "Rube" 14
 Covington, William S. 67
 Coy, Earl H. 15
 Crowley, Sandra J. 2, 3, 47, 60, 77
 Crownover, Joseph 37
 Curry, Patricia 5
 Curtis, Rube 6

D

Dansberry, Harriet Louisa Eddie 15
 Dardashti, Schelly Tarlalay 55, 56
 Davis, David W. 5
 Davis, Linda Christie 5
 Davis, E. J. 25
 Davis, Jo A. 5
 Davis-Long, Trudie 5
 de la Vega, Tim 67, 77
 Denning, Sam Houston "Huse" 23
 Dionne, Peggy 5
 Downing, William H. 32
 Draper, Karen 5
 Dudek, Debra 53, 54

Durand, Sir Mortimer D. 13
 Durbin, Miss Lear 36

E

Eardley, Mary Ann 15
 Easterling, Don 67
 Eddie, Ellen 16
 Eddie, Janet 16
 Eddie, Janette Smith 16
 Eddie, John 15
 Eddie/Eddy, Joseph 15, 16
 Eddie, Joseph Jr. 15
 Eddie, Richard 15
 Eddie, William M. 15
 Edwards, William 37, 38
 Ellsworth, Fran 68
 Ellsworth, Frances M. 77
 Escobedo, Mary Esther 54

F

Fisher, Mark 25
 Flack, Teri 77
 Froebel, Barbara J. 68, 77
 Fuller, Elijah Webb 33

G

Ganch, Susie 5
 George, Manse 36
 Gibbeson, Rebecca E. 5
 Gillespie, Patti 53, 57, 66
 Gillins, Sharon 52, 54, 55
 Glen, Madeline 15
 Gorman, A. J. 24
 Gray, Teal Lisa 5
 Gredler, Sara 52, 56
 Greene, Colleen 53, 55, 57
 Green, Ruth 5
 Guenther, Valerie 5

H

Hall, Elizabeth Meadville Farrell 32
 Hanson, Tony 53, 57
 Harris, Genevieve T. 5
 Harvey, Josephine Janet Eddie 15
 Haspney, Baron 13
 Haspney, Baroness 13
 Hatty, Austin 37
 Haupt, Hans 28
 Helweg, Duane 3, 35, 39
 Helweg, Sharon 39
 Henderson, Suzi 44
 Herrington, Jack 67
 Hiepe, Edwin 15
 Hill, John Tobe 23
 Hill, Mary Emaline "Sissy" 23
 Hill, Mary Jane Walden 24
 Hogan, Roseann 5
 Hopper, Katy 5

Howard, William Eager 61
 Huggins, Sarah 30
 Humphries, Bert 14

I

Ingham, A. Y. 8
 Ingham, Donna 3, 6, 9

J

John, Emilie Wenzel 28
 John, Freidrich Rudolph 29
 John, Lydia P. 29
 John, Margaret C. 29
 John, Martha M. 29
 John, R. A. 28
 John, Reverend Rudolph A. 28
 John, Rudolph 3, 30
 John, Rudolph Augustus 29
 John, Samuel A. 29
 John, Theodore 29
 John, Theophile 29
 Johnson, Minnie Stearns 32

K

Kaufman, Susan 77
 Kilkeary, Nan 5
 Klaus, Kevin 55
 Kopf, Christine 29
 Kopf, Johannes 29

L

LaBorde, Doc 10
 Lane, David 43
 Lane, Nancy Ann "Nannie" Lyday 45
 Lane, Robert Ward 41
 Lane, R. W. 43
 Lavender, Jimmy 13
 Leach, Tommy 14
 Lee, Devon Noel 3, 52, 53, 63, 65
 Lee, Nicole Ashley 5
 Lehman, Timothy 28
 Lovelace, Janice 52, 55, 56
 Lyda, Henry 42
 Lyday, Andrew 3, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45
 Lyday, Henry 42
 Lyday, Isaac 41, 42, 43
 Lyday, Jacob 42, 45
 Lyday, Mary M. 45
 Lyday, Nancy Ann "Nannie" 41

M

Manse George 36
 Mason, Melissa Ann 5
 Maverick, Maury 61
 McCoy, Debbie Blanton 67, 77
 McGuffin, Tina 77
 McKinney, Collin 34
 Mead, Ellen 12

Mead, Ellen O'Brien Smith 12
 Meisner, Bernard N. 54, 55, 56
 Meyers, Kelvin 51, 52, 55, 57, 67, 68, 77
 Mills, Betsy 2, 56, 75, 77
 Mills, Elizabeth Shown 33
 Mize, Tami Osmer 2
 Moshier, Jeff 14
 Mulryne, Ellen Eddie 15
 Mulryne, Hugh 16

N

Needham, Tom 13
 Neighbors, Kenneth 25
 Neuman, Laurel 53
 Nohrden, Eleanor 12
 Nohrden, Eleanor Frances 15

O

Obelgoner, Nancy 5
 O'Brien, Ellen 15
 O'Day, Hank 14
 Oliphant, Jo Ann 5
 Olsson, Ofelia 5
 Owens, Dewey J. 5

P

Parker, Cynthia Ann 9
 Passman, David 54
 Patrick, John 13
 Patterson, Betty 5
 Patterson, Ron 5
 Perkins, Dorothy N. 5
 Perkins, Paula 77
 Perry, Leann 5
 Phinny, John Everett 67
 Pinciotti, Susan 5
 Pundsack, Kenneth Dale 5

Q

Quinby, Marion B. 15

R

Rahn, Russ 3
 Rahn, Russell A. 30
 Ramstack, Bryan E. 5
 Randle, R. M. 32
 Raney, Don 42, 43, 44
 Reed, Lisa 3, 28, 31, 34
 Reynolds, Linda 77
 Reynolds, Sarah M. 45
 Richard, Diane L. 55, 56, 57
 Rintoul, James 16
 Rintoul, Mary 15, 16
 Rippy, Edward 24
 Robertson, Kathleen 30
 Roberts, Ramona & J. B. 5
 Robinson, William R. 39
 Roddy, Mary Kircher 53, 55, 57

S

Sabo-Risley, Constance 5
 Salinas, Lisa Toth 53
 Sandra Crowley 2-5
 Satank 25
 Satanta 25
 Schott, Margaret Elizabeth 29
 Schultheiss, Donna Hoffman 5
 Seay, Dr. Alan A. 5
 Seay, Ginger 5
 Seery, James R. 15
 Seery, Janet Eddie 16
 Seery, John 15
 Seery, Thomas 15
 Shaw, Thomas 5
 Sherman, William T. 24
 Sherman, W. T. 24
 Siddens, Teri 66
 Smith, Andrew 15
 Smith, Carl 53, 55
 Smith, Charles J. 12, 13, 14
 Smith, Charles J. Sr. 12
 Smith, Charles Joseph 15
 Smith, Charles Joseph Jr. 15
 Smith, Donald William 15
 Smith, Eleanor Nohrden 14
 Smith, James 12
 Smith, James Jr., 15
 Smith, James Sr., 15
 Smith, Jane "Jennie" Ivey 12
 Smith, Janet 16
 Smith, John 12
 Smith, John C. 15
 Smith, Mary 16
 Smith, Mary Ellen 12
 Smith, Mary "May" 12
 Smith, May 12
 Smith, Mildred A. 15
 Smith, Nellie 12
 Smith, Nellie J. 12
 Smith, Norman Joseph 15
 Smith, Olive M. 15
 Smith, Richard 15, 16
 Smith, Samuel R. 15
 Smith, Timothy B. 36
 Smith, Virginia F. 15
 Smith, William J. 12
 Standlee, Larry 44
 Straity, Prince V. Gurdis 13
 Strauss, Kathy 55
 Strauss, Michael L. 52, 53, 54, 55
 Strawn, John 37, 38
 Strawn, Mary Lucrecia (Wicker) 36
 Strawn/Montgomery, Mary Lucrecia (Wicker) 36
 Sykes, Edwin M. 5

T

Tademy, Corvin E. 5
 Taylor, Carol 3, 23, 27
 Thomas, Barbara Jo 3, 5, 10, 11

Thom, Charles D. 13
 Thompson, Susan K. 5
 Thurman, Bill 44
 Thurman, Mary Ann 44
 Torres, Mary O. 5, 77
 Towk, Count A. 13
 Turner, Judy Lynn 69, 77

V

Van Henglemueller, Baron 13
 Van Henglemueller, Baroness 13
 Vann, Valerie 5
 Vaughn, Hippo 14
 Vestal, Pam 56, 57

W

Walden, Mary Jane 23
 Walker, Jana 41, 46
 Wall, Helen M. 5
 Warren, Henry 25
 Wayne, Debbie Parker 3, 18, 22, 53, 54, 55, 77
 Webb, Connie S. 5
 Wells, Eric 55
 Wenzel, Agnes 29
 Wenzel, Catherine 29
 Wenzel, Edward 29
 Wenzel, Emilia 28
 Wenzel, Emilie 3
 Wenzel, Emily 29
 Wenzel, Emma Louisa 29
 Wenzel, Frederick W. 29
 Wenzel, Henry 29
 Wenzel, Richard 29
 Westermeier, Dr. Carol 5
 Westermeier, James 5
 Whited, Randy 77
 Wicker, John W. 36
 Wicker, Lewis 35, 36, 37
 Wicker, Mary Lucrecia 35, 38
 Wicker, Mary Lucretia 37
 Wicker, Roderick G. 35, 37
 Wicker, Rufus 38
 Wilkins, Ari 53, 54
 Wilkinson, Tom 67
 Williams, Mary 42
 Wilson, Geraldine 64
 Witcher, Rodney 5
 Woolverton, Carrie 5
 Worsham, Linda K. 5
 Wright, Kathryn M. 5
 Wylie, John 77

Y

Younger, Fancher 34
 Younger, Fancher Luther 31

Z

Zimmermann, Heinie 13

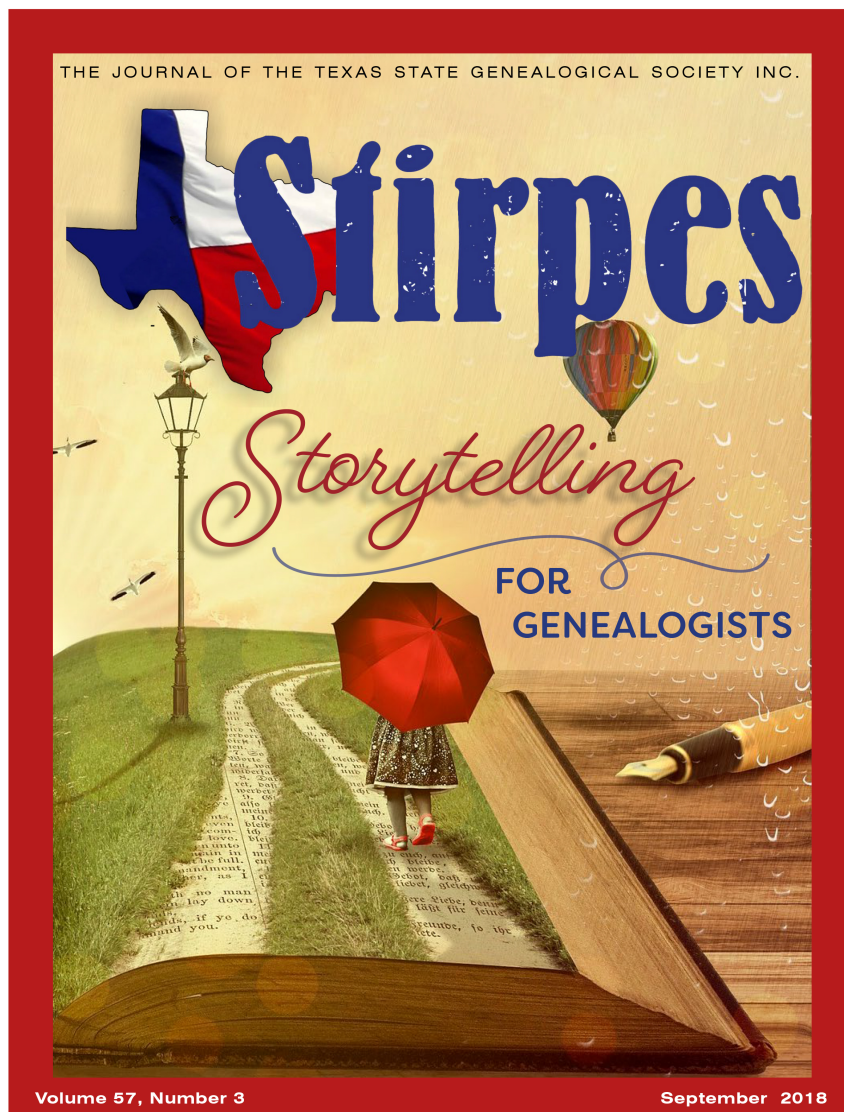
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