

Western Montana Genealogical Society



Top 12 Tips for Genealogical Research Success

"Along Those Lines"
1/30/2004 — George G. Morgan

Whenever I deliver genealogy seminars, I'm often asked, "What are the key ways I can be more successful in my research?" That question is nearly impossible to answer. It depends on so many factors: where you are researching, at what period in time, which records you're seeking, what you're trying to prove/disprove, and others.

There are some strategies and methodologies that we can all apply. Some of these may seem like common sense, but I often find I have to stop and remind myself to examine all the angles. I need to slow down and remember the essentials of research.

In "Along Those Lines..." this week, I'd like to share my personal list of twelve tips that I

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WMGS MARCH MEETING

The WMGS will meet on Tuesday, March 9th, at 7:00 PM in the Large Meeting Room of the Missoula Public Library.

Guest speaker will be Christopher Daly, a Butte native who has practiced law in Missoula since 1984. He will discuss "Genealogy at the Missoula Courthouse." He will cover the various county offices and information/legal documents that are available to the public; where to find documents; documents that are and are not available to the public; how to access material (how to ask for documents); how to use the documents when found.

Christopher graduated from the

U of M in 1973 with a double B. A. degree in Geography and Russian language. He earned a Master's degree in Slavic languages from the University of Alberta in 1975 and a Ph.D. in the same field from the University of Michigan in 1979 before changing careers. He attended the U of M School of Law from 1981-1984.

Before becoming an attorney, Christopher was the first director of the Butte-Silver Bow Archives, a local records repository in Butte, from 1980-81. He has had a life-long interest in family history and genealogy and has worked on tracing all four of the grandparental roots.

March 2004

**WMGS Meeting,
TUESDAY, March
9th, 7:00 pm, at
the Missoula Public
Library Large
Meeting Room.**

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In The Mail

**CENTRAL MONTANA WAGON TRAILS**

Lewiston Genealogy Society, 701 W. Main St., Lewiston, Mt 59457-250; February 2004, Vol. 24, No. 2. This issue contains the 2003-2004 Membership List and their list of Montana and Fergus County Census Indexes for sale.

FAMILY HISTORY MAGAZINE, March/April




2004. This issue seems to focus on journaling and story telling. The story of how one woman's life story and journal records were put on CD can be found in "From Diary to Interactive Biography—the Story of the Pearl Bennett CD Project—Part I." "The Great Earthquake [of Missouri]" tells stories of this great event. "Did Your Mama Waltz in Australia" shows how to utilize Australian records. "Digital Age" will take you from how to initially record your information to putting it on your computer to preserving it for posterity.

GEN-BUG NEWS, Yellowstone Genealogy Forum, % Parmley Billings Library, 510 N. Broadway, Billings MT 59101; January 2004. This issue tells how the two Family History Centers in Billings have now been combined into one center at the LDS Church at 6th St. West and Ave. D. The *How I Solved It* feature in on adoption.

HERITAGE QUEST; February 2004. This issue focuses on travel records with "Locating Colonial Wagon Roads on a Modern Map," "Stop the Presses! What Will You Find in Newspapers," "Slaves, Servants, and Secretaries: Finding the Records of Travel," and "Using Passports to Reach Your Genealogical Destination." The *Getting Started* article by Donna Potter Phillips is "Homestead Records: A Lesson and a Story, Part I." For computers see "A Haystack Full of Needles" on using a computer to sort out a genealogical dilemma. "The Austro-Hungarian Buffet—Course 3: Researching Ecclesiastical Resources" get into the *do's* and *don't* of researching actual church records of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy.

TREASURE STATE LINES, Great Falls Genealogy Society, High Plains Heritage Center. 422 2nd St. South, Great Falls, MT 59405-1816; February 2004 Vol. 24, No. 1. This issue includes a

list of links for research in Wales, the Great Falls High School Class of 1907 Reunion Brief Biographies, the story of Ambrose Valencourt and Elizabeth (McGiffin) Cheney, and a reminiscence of life along the Kootenai River by Mrs. Myrtle Eskew Alex, who was born on a homestead near Havre and later moved to northwest Idaho/Montana.

Bits & Bytes   **DocumentsOnline - England**

DocumentsOnline allows you online access to the Public Record Office's (England) collection of digitised public records, including both academic and genealogical sources. Searching the index is free, and it costs £3 to download a digital image of a document (the cost per document will increase from £3 to £3.50 from 1 April 2004.) Documents are separated into topic-based categories, which you can search or browse. They are divided into two main areas - Family History and Other Records.

Society & Law—This category contains records relating to immigration, crime and disasters, as well as legal documents such as title deeds and depositions. Among the images are photographs of prisoners from the Victorian period, the Magna Carta, convict transportation registers and passenger lists, one of the latter including Charlie Chaplin.

WW1 Campaign Medals - NEW—Almost all of the men and women who saw active service overseas were awarded a campaign medal, making this essentially the most complete listing of all men and women, officers and soldiers who fought in the First World War. The index cards to the medal rolls for surnames beginning "A" and "B" are now available.

Wills—Find your ancestor's last will and testament from the complete series of more than 1 million wills proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury from 1384 to 1858. Or look at the wills of the some of the famous names, including Nelson, Napoleon, William Wordsworth, Percy Shelley, Henry Purcell and Captain Bligh (of "Mutiny on the Bounty" fame).

<http://www.documentsonline.pro.gov.uk/>

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hope will help you achieve greater success with your genealogical research.

1. *Research the entire family unit, not just your direct ancestor*, to gain an understanding of family dynamics and each member's personality. The fact that a child is born in a certain sequence in the family influences his or her development and familial relationships.
2. *Place your ancestors into context by learning about the history, geography, and social conditions of the places and times in which they lived.* If you don't understand the place and times, the historical and social forces, and the influences of other people and events, you won't really "know" your ancestor or family member.
3. *Understand what records might have been created for and about your ancestors (and which types were not) and trace the current location of those records.* History, again, plays an important factor. Consider the government in power at the time, the types of records it caused to be created and why, and what may have happened to those records. Use historical maps so that you're looking in the right place at the right time.
4. *Take advantage of libraries and archives by mastering the use of their online catalogs and understanding the classification systems and organization of their collections.* If you don't know how to immediately locate materials in these facilities, you can waste research time.
5. *Continually expand and hone your Internet skills in the use of search engines, databases, directories, metasearch engines, message boards, e-mail, mailing lists, people finders, and other tools.* Seek out classes at colleges, universities, libraries, genealogical society computer groups, and at online venues such as the Genealogy Training Workshops at MyFamily.com.
6. *Use all the resources available to you--books, magazines and journals, newspapers, microfilm, electronic databases, and the Internet--and integrate their use to obtain complementary information.* Use the resources you have in tandem to prove and refute information.
7. *Develop and employ your critical thinking skills to evaluate every piece of evidence you find.* Consider each fact for accuracy, credibility, authority of the source, primary vs. secondary source, original vs. derivative source, currency, and bias.
8. *Learn to locate and use alternative or substitute records when the ones you want can't be located.* When you hit a brick wall, don't just collapse and cry that you've reached a dead end. Look for other available records and evidence that include the same or similar information. Sidestep to a sibling or other family member and research that person; move up another generation from them, for instance, and then connect your way downward to the person with whom you are stalled.
9. *Document every piece of information you find using complete and accurate written source citations.* You will come back to these sources over and over again. They are every bit as important as the data that they document. Just like you see on *Antiques Roadshow*, source citations are the provenance of your data.
10. *Use the facts you have compiled to develop a timeline of data and life events for your key ancestors or those for which elude you.* Learn to read your ancestor's life chronologically like a biography to better understand him or her.
11. *Prepare in advance for every genealogical research trip.* Define who and what you want to research, where the materials you want are located, and set up appointments to meet with people who may be able to assist you.
12. *Periodically re-read all of the materials you have compiled for an individual in chronological sequence.* Each time you do so, you will view the person's life story more clearly.

If you focus on these essential tips for your research guidance, your success rate will improve. And the better you understand your ancestors, you'll be amazed at how many of your brick walls crumble away. Happy Hunting!

George

George G. Morgan would like to hear from you but, due to the volume of e-mail received, he is unable to answer every message and he cannot assist you with your individual research. Feel free to visit George's website for information about speaking engagements. Copyright 2004, MyFamily.com.

1935 Missoula County Times Classified Directory— Mileage Guide and Populations

MISSOULA COUNTY TIMES CLASSIFIED DIRECTORY

From Missoula To	Miles	Pop.
Town—		
St. Ignatius	44	800
Ronan	60	537
Folsom	74	1,455
B. P. O. E. Summer Camp on Flathead Lake	118	
Somers	120	750
Kalispell	130	6,094
Whitefish	146	2,803
Columbia Falls	153	637
Glacier Park—Belton Entrance	173	
Eureka	201	880
Canadian Border	213	

NORTH

From Missoula To	Miles	Pop.
Town—		
Stevensville	28	692
Hamilton	52	1,839
Salmon, Idaho	149	1,371
Halley, Idaho	342	1,500
Twain Falls, Idaho	418	8,787

SOUTH

From Missoula To	Miles	Pop.
Town—		
Butte	130	39,532
Dillon	192	2,422
Monida Pass	256	
Dubois, Idaho	289	313
Idaho Falls, Idaho	346	9,429
Pocatello, Idaho	398	16,471
Salt Lake City, Utah	581	140,267

SOUTH VIA BUTTE

From Missoula To	Miles	Pop.
Town—		
Frenchtown	17	320
Alberton	26	276
Superior	58	500
St. Regis	71	350
Wallace, Idaho	128	3,634
Coeur d'Alene, Idaho	183	8,287
Spokane, Washington	217	115,514
Seattle, Washington	544	365,583
Portland, Oregon	583	301,815

WEST

From Missoula To	Miles	Pop.
Town—		
Ravalli	35	300
Plains	74	522
Thompson	102	468
Sandpoint	198	3,290
Spokane	268	115,514
Seattle	625	865,583

WEST VIA SANDPOINT

United States Officers

Postmaster, Robt. T. Richardson.
 U. S. Commissioner, Ward H. Jones.
 Regional Forester, Evan W. Kelley.
 Bureau of Public Roads, Dist. Eng., A. C. Clark.
 Navy Recruiting Officer, O. Quande.
 Commanding Officer, Fort Missoula, Major W. H. Hammond.

Mileage Guide

EAST VIA HELENA-GREAT FALLS

Town—	Miles	Pop.
From Missoula To		
Milltown	6	500
Bonner	7	740
Bonita	27	100
Drummond	54	366
Helena	125	11,803
Great Falls	220	28,822
Lewistown	337	5,358
Roundup	419	2,577
Billings	472	16,380
Forayth	583	1,591
Miles City	630	7,175
Glendive	720	4,639
Beach, N. D.	762	

EAST VIA BUTTE

From Missoula To	Miles	Pop.
Town—		
Deer Lodge	86	3,510
Warm Springs	103	150
Butte	130	39,532
Whitehall	166	553
Three Forks	193	884
Roseman	225	6,855
Livingston	252	6,391
Yellowstone Park—North Entrance—Gardiner	211	500
Billings	369	16,380
Sheridan, Wyoming	512	8,536
Denver, Colorado	968	
Minneapolis	1,257	
Milwaukee	1,613	
Chicago	1,725	

ANCESTRY.COM UPDATE

1860 Census Index

This index is now being updated after a long hiatus and is fairly complete **except** for: Kansas Territory, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska Territory, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico Territory, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Utah Territory, and Virginia.

1870 Census Index

This is now fully indexed and linked to the actual census images.

New York Passenger Index

This is now complete for 1850 to 1891. The indexes are linked to views of the actual passenger lists.

1871 British Census

This project has just begun and now includes the following for England: Middlesex, London, Shropshire, and Worcestershire. Also indexed are Wales, the Channel Islands, and the Isle of Man.

Recently Added Databases:

Massachusetts Soldiers & Sailors in the Revolutionary War (Images Online)

Description:

Prepared by the Secretary of the Commonwealth, this is an indexed compilation of the records of the Massachusetts soldiers and sailors who served in the army or navy during the Revolutionary War. This is volumes 1-6 of a 17 volume series, and contains an alphabetized list of all surnames. The records in this database give, when available, the name and age of the individual, town of residence, rank, the date and location of enlistment, areas and length of service, date of discharge, and description of their physical features.

Source Information:

Ancestry.com. *Massachusetts Soldiers and Sailors in the Revolutionary War* [database online]. Provo, Utah: MyFamily.com, Inc., 2004. Original data: Massachusetts. Secretary of the Commonwealth. *Massachusetts Soldiers and Sailors of the Revolutionary War*. Volumes 1-6. Boston: Wright & Potter Printing Co., 1896.

Iowa Soldiers, Sailors, and Marines 1885

Description:

This database contains a list of ex-soldiers, sailors, and marines who were living in Iowa in 1885. These individuals were supposed to have served in the War of 1812, the Mexican War, or the Civil War. Information found in this list includes name of soldier, sailor, or marine; rank; company; regiment; battery or vessel in which they served, and present residence (in 1885). This database can be very valuable for researchers with ancestors living in Iowa in 1885.

Source Information:

Ancestry.com. *Iowa Soldiers, Sailors, and Marines, 1885* [database online]. Provo, Utah: MyFamily.com, Inc., 2004. Original data: Alexander, William L. *List of Ex-Soldiers, Sailors and Marines, Living in Iowa*. Des Moines: G.E. Rorerts, state printer, 1886.

FAMILY HISTORY LIBRARY

COMPUTER RESERVATIONS

Call 543-6148 during library hours.

FHL HOURS ***** NOTE NEW HOURS

Mon. CLOSED

Tue. 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM & 7:00 - 9:30 PM

Wed. CLOSED

Thurs. 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM & 7:00 - 9:30 PM.

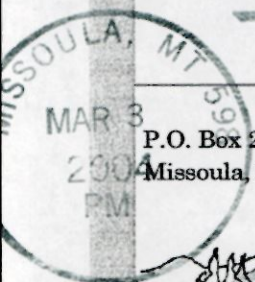
Sat 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Missoula Family History Center New Computer Online

The Missoula Family History Center now has 2 computers online, both of which can independently access the Internet to use FamilySearch, Ancestry.com, and other great genealogy websites..

Both computers are now seeing good use so please try to call ahead or come into the library and sign up to insure you will be able to use a computer when you visit.

Need a ride or want to car pool? Call Judith Field at 728-1628 if you need a ride or can volunteer to pick up people who need a ride.



P.O. Box 2714
Missoula, MT 59806-2714



PAULETTE K. PARPART 04
2206 1/2 W. SUSSEX
MISSOULA MT 59801

Dues & Queries

Dues are \$11 a year for individuals and \$13 for families, which includes a Newsletter (Sep, Nov, Jan, Apr, & May) and membership in the Montana State Genealogical Society. Queries are published free for members, \$2 for non-members.

We appreciate any submissions of articles on genealogy for the Newsletter including *How You Solved It*, local pedigrees, book reviews of local history/genealogy books, and any genealogy news items.

Note May Meeting Date

The Large meeting room of the Missoula Public Library was booked for another large meeting on Tuesday, May 11th, so we will meet on **Thursday, May 13th.**

Upcoming Conferences

15th Annual Montana State Genealogical Society Conference

This Conference, Sept. 23-25, 2004 in Helena. This conference will be hosted by the Lewis & Clark and the Jefferson County Societies. Guest speaker will be Hank Jones of San Diego, CA, the author of "Psychic Roots" and "More Psychic Roots."

Clark County Genealogical Society Spring Seminar 2004

This seminar will present Dr. John Phillip Colletta on Saturday, March 20, 2004, at the Washington State School for the Deaf, in Vancouver, WA from 9 am to 4:30 pm. The cost is \$45 for non-members (includes lunch.)

Federation of Genealogical Societies Conference—September 8-11, 2004, Austin, Texas.

We received 2 brochures with conference schedules and registration forms.