

Western Montana Genealogical Society



Sept. 2004

We Need More Execution

- Juliana Smith

Yes, you read that right. I've decided that we need more execution in our family history research. No, I don't mean we should be executing our ancestors. Most of them are dead already anyway. Let me explain.

This week my daughter and I went with my sisters and their girls to see *The Princess Diaries 2: Royal Engagement*. In the movie, I found a quote that pretty much sums up many of my problems. It wasn't exactly the kind of movie where I expected to find pearls of wisdom, but there it was. The lead character, Princess Mia is being chastised by her grandmother, the queen, for not grasping the concept that she needs to behave more like a princess. Princess Mia responds with something to the effect of, "The concept is grasped, but the execution is flawed." (My apologies to the writers if I haven't got it exactly right, but I scribbled the note to myself in a dark theater and couldn't read my own writing.)

That thought stuck with me, so in

today's "Family History Compass" column, I'd like to expand on this subject.

Seek Help

It seems that I could probably apply this response to any number of situations in my life. Case in point, tonight the time for dinner was fast approaching, and I needed to get it done quickly so that I could get my daughter off to her martial arts class. I still had a few loose ends to tie up at work, but when my husband asked if I'd like him to cook dinner, I swiftly replied that, no, of course I had it all under control.

I am, after all, a multi-tasking goddess and go by the title "Domestic Diva" around here. Why would I need help from him--a mere mortal? I threw the pork chops on the outdoor grill and started the rice. Salad and baby carrots were the veggie du jour, so that part was done. I grabbed the phone and made a couple quick calls, feeling rather smug that things were going so well. Need help? Humph!

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**WMGS Meeting,
Tuesday, Sept.
14th, 7:00 pm, at
the Missoula Public
Library Large
Meeting Room.**

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WMGS SEPTEMBER MEETING—HELP!

The WMGS will meet on Tuesday, Sept 14th, at 7:00 PM in the Large Meeting Room of the Missoula Public Library.

The September meeting will be devoted to getting organized for

the State Genealogical Conference which we will be hosting in September 2005. This is a VERY important meeting. We need everyone's help and input to make this conference a success, so please plan on attending.

In The Mail



BIG SKY ROUNDUP, Montana State Genealogical Society, Betty L. Marshall, P.O. Box 476, Chester, MT 59522; www.rootsweb.com/~mtmsgs, August 2004.

CENTRAL MONTANA WAGON TRAILS, Lewiston Genealogy Society, 701 W. Main St., Lewiston, Mt 59457-2501.

FADED GENES, Lewis & Clark Co. Genealogical Society, P.O. Box 5313, Helena, MT 59604' www.mth.mtlib.org/Local%20Information/L%20C20genealogy.htm.

FAMILY CHRONICLE, June 2004 "25 Top Sites for Canadian Genealogy", August 2004 "10 Top Websites for Scottish Research", October 2004 "Cracking the Da Vinci Code of Genealogy"

FAMILY HISTORY MAGAZINE, May/ June 2004 "Germany Then, Poland Now" "There's More to Church Records Than Parish Registers"

GEN-BUG NEWS, Yellowstone Genealogy Forum, % Parmley Billings Library, 510 N. Broadway, Billings MT 59101; July 2004

HERITAGE QUEST, June 2004 "Military Cemeteries on the Internet," "Researching Family Names"

JEFFERSON COUNTY GENEALOGY NEWS, Jefferson County Genealogy Society, P. O. Box 1094, Boulder, MT 59632; June 2004

NGS NEWSMAGAZINE, June/July 2004 "Was Your Ancestor a Spiritualist," "Civil War Photographs, Medical Reports, and Bones," NGS "Digital Bible Archives"

NGS QUARTERLY, Vol. 92, No. 2, June 2004 "Using Probate Law to Sidestep Missing Records," "Genealogical Research in Kansas," "Medical Pedigrees," "Your Virtual Library"

TALES & TRAILS, Columbia Gorge Genealogical Society, % The Dalles Public Library, 722 Court St., The Dalles, OR 97058-2270

TREASURE STATE LINES, Great Falls Genealogy Society, High Plains Heritage Center. 422 2nd St. South, Great Falls, MT 59405-1816; Vol. 29, No. 2

Missoula Public Library—
New Books

200 Years of Census Taking: Population and Housing Questions, 1790-1990. 312 BOHME

Ecclesiastical Courts, Their Officials and Their Records, by Colin R. Chapman. 262.983 CHAPMAN

Creative Projects, Writing Salable Life Stories, by Anne Hart. "Intergenerational writing is about recording salable life stories and family histories in a variety of formats: print, video, and multimedia, and in genres such as drama, poetry, music, novels, diaries, life stories, news features, and personal or corporate histories." 808.0669 HART

The Trail of the Huguenots, in Europe, the United States, South Africa, and Canada, by G. Elmore Reaman. "The fascinating story of the great exodus of Huguenots from France at the end of the seventeenth century and their subsequent dispersal ..." This book is mainly devoted to those who went to America and Canada, and "shows the way in which these families enriched the life of the places to which they fled..." 284.5 REAMAN

Online Roots, How to Discover Your Family's History and Heritage with the Power of the Internet, by Pamela Boyer Porter and Amy Johnson Crow. This National Genealogical Society Guide will help make the Internet work for you to "Search historic and current records around the country and the world; Locate photographs on the Web; Find clues to sources not on the Web; Contact distant relatives who have information you want; Learn more about different records and methods; Share your research." 929.1028 PORTER

Living Family History, Creating a Multimedia Biography, by David A. Beardsley. Topica included are: "Selecting computer and video equipment; Getting the most from software; The production process; Conducting interviews; Getting the family involved; A list of helpful resources and websites." 929.1 BEARDSL

A Student's Guide to German American Genealogy, by Gregory Robl. 929.1089 ROBL

A Student's Guide to British American Genealogy, by Anne E. Johnson. 929.1072 JOHNSON

Amish Mennonites in Germany, Their Congregations, The estates Where They Lived, Their Families, by Hermann Guth. 943.0088 GUTH

Genealogy and Indexing, ed. By Kathleen Spaltro. 929.1028 GENEALO

Bits & Bytes

National Archives Access to Archival Databases (AAD) System—New Searchable Database of WWII Enlistments

World War II Electronic Army Serial Number Merged File, 1938-1946

The World War II Electronic Army Serial Number Merged File contains records of approximately nine million men and women who enlisted in the United States Army, including in the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps. Although incomplete, the records contain data for a majority of the enlistments in the United States Army during World War II including:

- Serial number
- Name
- State and county of residence
- Place and Date of enlistment
- Grade
- Army branch
- Term of enlistment
- Longevity
- Nativity (place of birth)
- Year of birth
- Race
- Education
- Civilian occupation
- Marital status

The bulk of the records conform to the format found on War Department Adjutant General's Office (WD AGO) Form 317 (Enlistment Card) for the period ca. 1941-1945, and WD AGO Form 372 (Enlistment Card) for ca. 1945-1946. Additional records contain data originally recorded on Enlisted Reserve Corps (E.R.C.) Statistical cards.

http://aad.archives.gov/aad/whats_new.jsp Use this link and then click on the highlighted link to **World War II Electronic Army Serial Number Merged File**. Next SELECT: MERGED PROCESSED FILE ENLISTMENT CARD RECORDS and enter your search criteria (you only need enter a surname in the name category to do a search.)*****

General Register Office (England & Wales) has announced that they are extending their online certificate ordering service for birth, marriage, and death certificates in England and Wales to customers worldwide. They have an improved website with a new address and a more user-friendly format at: www.gro.gov.uk

You will need to provide a valid credit or debit card number, your full name and postal address, an e-mail address, and details of the registration event you are

applying for— birth, marriage, death, or adoption. If using the site for the first time you will need to complete a registration. The benefit of ordering online is said to be the reduced cost, and the automatic order receipt.

FAMILY HISTORY LIBRARY

COMPUTER RESERVATIONS

Call 543-6148

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

Both online computers can access Family Search and the Ancestry.com databases. 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.

MSGS CONFERENCE

The Montana State Genealogical Society Conference for 2004 will be Sept. 24-25th in Helena. Hopefully, you have all received Registration Forms for this event. The Pre-registration fee is \$75. The Keynote speaker will be Hank Jones.

BOOKWORM FROLIC

We need donations of books and other genealogy related items for the bookworm frolic at the state conference. This is a fund-raised for the MSGS. You can bring these items to the meeting on Sept. 14th, or get them to Paulett at the Missoula Public Library.

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Genealogy 101, How to Trace Your Family's History and Heritage, by Barbara Renick. 929.1 RENICK

The Organized Family Historian: How to File, Manage, and Protect Your Genealogical Research and Heirlooms, by Ann Carter Fleming. This NGS Guide includes a CD of Forms and Worksheets. 929 1072 FLEMING

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The concept was grasped, but the execution was flawed. As I sorted out some last minute work items with a co-worker, the house phone rang. I quickly ended the work call and dove for the other phone. It was my neighbor asking why my yard was filling with smoke. While I was extinguishing the pork chops, of course the rice burned.

And so it was that this multi-tasking goddess came crashing down to earth. I had two options open. I could try to pass them off as blackened cajun-style pork chops, or turn them over and hope that no one noticed the black crunchy side. The rice was pretty much hopeless, and we traded it for bread and butter. There had been another option open to me, but I had refused it. That was, of course, to take my husband up on his offer for help.

How often have we found ourselves in this situation in the course of our genealogy? We're lost in a library or searching for something but are too shy or proud to ask for help. We're working with a new tool, but prefer to learn by trial and error than read the manual or check the help pages.

As genealogists we have many avenues to choose when it comes to help. Librarians and archivists are the experts when it comes to the records we need in facilities, and while they won't do your research for you, they are typically more than happy to assist you in locating the materials you need.

Conferences like the upcoming FGS Conference in the States in Austin, Texas (8-11 September 2004), offer wonderful opportunities to get help with research problems. Lectures can give you an in-depth look at various record types and research techniques, and the face-to-face interaction with other researchers who are dealing with the same kind of problems is invaluable.

If you are stuck in a particular area of your research, genealogical societies may be able to guide you through interaction with members and through their publications. And speaking of publications, there are now hundreds of reference books available for family historians.

Mailing lists, message boards, and chat rooms allow for free and easy communication and interaction online with other researchers who share your research interests and may have had similar experiences. RootsWeb.com hosts both mailing lists and message boards. Cyndi's List hosts a section with links to chats and IRC.

For help using Ancestry.com, check out the Knowledge Base. The Knowledge Base is very important now that Ancestry.com has introduced its new "ranked search." To use it effectively, we have to understand it.

The "less is more" theory is advised for researchers using the "exact search" method. That is to say, the less information entered in the search template, the more results we would get. Using this method it's best to do a wide search and gradually zero in on our targeted ancestors, by adding small pieces of information a little at a time.

With the new ranked search method, researchers need to reverse that thinking. In this case we want to add more information to allow the search functions to best select the records that are the closest match to your ancestors. The concept is to bring the best results to the top of the heap.

Used in tandem, these are powerful research tools, but without a clear understanding of the tools and records we use, we really aren't grasping the concept, and, as a result, our execution will be flawed.

The Best Laid Plans

Since the day's events had conspired to put me behind with this column, I decided to take my laptop with me to my daughter's martial arts class. I figured the parking lot would be relatively safe from distractions, and I might actually accomplish something while I waited for her. No such luck. It turned out tonight was "family night," the one night a week when families of students are invited to come in and watch the class. My daughter was my first priority and work had to take a back seat for that hour. Life happens.

So often this is the problem I face when I begin research at home. Whether it be filing, searching online, reviewing research, reading, or entering data--it doesn't matter what it is--eventually "life happens."

Sometimes it's a phone call; sometimes it's the family or the animals needing something; sometimes it's an alarm reminding me to it's time to make dinner, pick up my daughter from school, or just be somewhere else. (Yes, I'm so bad that I need an alarm to wake me from my genealogical coma!)

Unfortunately, life typically doesn't wait until I'm at a convenient stopping point in my work. Even though I understand the value of marking where I left off, I would often end up leaving things open on my desk, the papers I was working with strewn about, or just close up and hope I remembered where I was when it came time to pick up again. This is a recipe for disaster.

Last week as I was shopping for school supplies, I took advantage of the sales and picked up a few things for myself. I grabbed one of those plastic pencil boxes that the kids use, which now houses post-it notes, post-it flags, and a small notebook pad and pen that I can use to quickly jot down where I leave off when I'm interrupted. I also replenished my supply of clear archival plastic sleeves and got a tray to keep them within

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ANCESTRY.COM UPDATE

Descriptions below are from ANCESTRY.COM

Montana Death Index, 1907-1953 (Update adding 1923, 1928-30, 1936, 1941, 1944 and 1950.)

Ranked Search Feature Added—Ranked search helps you find your ancestors quickly and easily by bringing up the best possible matches first in your list of search results. **Performing a ranked search also gives you the option of specifying a date and place of birth and/or a date and place of death in your search criteria.** And, to make it even easier for you to decide where to look first, the search results page reveals more information about your matches right away. You can now see the most relevant matches from all Ancestry databases on the initial search results page, complete with basic information about birth, marriage, and death events.

How Does Ranked Search Work? - Ranked search lists matches in descending order of relevance, with the most relevant matches appearing at the top. Relevance is determined by comparing your search criteria with the information found on a genealogical record. The closer the match, the more relevant that record is to your search.

Ranked search automatically returns alternate spellings and abbreviations for your ancestor's name(s). For example, a search for "Bill Smith" might return "William Smith," "Wm Smith," "Bill Smyth" or "B. Smith." An exact name match is the closest match, and therefore the most relevant, followed by common variants, misspellings, and nicknames.

How Do I Use A Ranked Search On ANCESTRY.COM—To get to the ranked search, click on the **Search Records** tab and then click on the **Best Matches (Ranked)** tab.

Get the most out of ranked search, type in as much information as possible. The more search criteria the search engine has to match against, the more likely it is to pull the most appropriate records up to the top of your results list. Not sure about an exact date? Take an educated guess. As long as you're within a few years, you'll get much better results than if you leave a date field blank. Try these general suggestions to improve your results:

- Add a middle name if you know of one (This will be included in the **First Name** field of the search)
- Add a birth and/or death year
- Add a birth and/or death place

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reach on my side desk. I don't want the glue from the post-it notes or flags to ruin important papers.

This kit keeps me from having to re-execute research and allows me to cling to the elusive concept that organization will help me retain my sanity.

No Regrets

A more somber note from my day was learning that my neighbor's mother had died unexpectedly. She was a sweet and lovely lady who loved to share her memories. Even though I knew her for only a couple years, I remember sitting with her at parties as she shared stories from the past. Her daughter's comment to another neighbor today is haunting me now. She said she wished she had just one more day with her mom.

We all have that wish when we lose a loved one, but the truth is that life is far too short. I would love another day with my grandmother, and although at the top of my list is a huge hug, I would also like to hear more of her stories. We have all grasped the concept that our family members are our most fragile sources, but have we shared all the hugs, stories, and love that we want to with them? I would hate to think that this is a place where our execution is flawed.

Juliana Smith is the editor of the *Ancestry Daily News* and author of *The Ancestry Family Historian's Address Book*. She has written for *Ancestry Magazine* and *Genealogical Computing*. Juliana can be reached by e-mail at ADNeditor@ancestry.com, but she regrets that she is unable to assist with personal research. *****

Narrow Your Search—After completing your initial search, you might want to narrow your search results to those found only in a particular category or database. Categories range from "Census" to "Trees & Communities" and include specific databases such as the "1930 US Federal Census." Simply click on the desired category or database listed above your search results. This will take you to a new search results page that shows results found only in the chosen category. Once you go down to an individual database, a new search box may appear at the bottom of the search results page. This will allow you to search exclusively within that database, letting you narrow your search. Please keep in mind that the search field options may vary depending on the category or database selected.

Wildcards—These are not currently supported in the ranked search.

"The "less is more" (information) theory is advised for researchers using the "exact search" method. With the new ranked search method, researchers need to reverse that thinking." *Julianna Smith*



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.

WMGS Elections

Elections will be held at the September meeting. The slate so far is President: Paulette Parpart; Vice President: Judith Field; Secretary: Terri Denny; Treasurer: ??? Open.

MSGs Logo Vests

The Broken Mountain Gen. Soc. In Chester is taking on a new project of selling fleece vests with the MSGS logo. This will be an ongoing project and they will be taking orders at the Conference. If vests are ordered by Sept. 14th (@\$35 + shipping) they will be available at the Conference and you can pick them up there, less the shipping charges. They can be ordered from Betty Marshall 759-5627, Pat Ludwig 759-5113, or by e-mail to Pat Ludwig at: 7patld@ttc-cmc.net. If you order a vest and aren't going to the conference, Paulette will pick up the vests at the conference so you will save the shipping charges.



WESTERN MONTANA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Please fill in as much information as possible - use 9 digit zip codes if known, and include your e-mail address if you have one. We would like to be able to contact the members this year with news about any special programs or workshops that may become available.

Membership Fees: Single Membership/\$11.00, Family Membership/\$13.00 (\$1.00 of membership fee goes to Montana State Genealogical Society)

Mail this form and a check for the membership fee, made payable to "Western Montana Genealogical Society" to:

Western Montana Genealogical Society
P.O. Box 2714
Missoula, MT 598062714.

Name:			
Address:			
City:			
State:		Zip Code:	
Phone:	()		
E-Mail:		URL:	

Check One: ___ Single Membership/\$11.00 ___ Family Membership/\$13.00

Check Amount: _____ Check Number: _____

Fill in to add surnames not previously submitted:

SURNAMES OF INTEREST	AREA: (Country, State, County)

COMMENTS: