

NEWSLETTERS

MONTANA MAGAZINE

Western Montana Genealogical Society



Family History Compass

In Fifteen Minutes or Less...

by Juliana Smith

If the commercials on TV and the magazines in the supermarket are to be believed, we live in a pretty remarkable world. It's a world where in fifteen minutes or less, we can have our lunch delivered, get firm arms, abs, thighs, and glutes, make a gourmet meal for our family, get our oil changed, pay bills online, get quotes from every insurance company in the world, have banks competing for our business, soften our skin, get organized, lower our cholesterol, get all the latest news, and enjoy fleeting fame. Phew! Amazing how tiring fifteen minutes can be!

I started thinking about this and realized these magazines and ads are on to something. My biggest complaint is that I don't have enough time to work on my family history, but hey--fifteen minutes? That's doable! Is it possible to do family history in fifteen minutes? This week we're going to look at some family history projects that can be worked on in small incre-

minutes. Start your stopwatches!

Inventory an Ancestor

Pick an ancestor and make a list of all the records you have obtained for him or her. I found a checklist online on Rory's Genealogy page that makes this a quick and easy process.

Start a To-Do List

Use the inventory to start a to-do list for that ancestor listing the records you have not yet located for that ancestor.

Knock Off One Item from the To-Do List

If you can't complete the to-do list in one sitting, at least get the ball rolling. Investigate how to acquire the record if it's not yet available online. Then submit a request. If you don't start somewhere, you'll never see that record.

Read a Historical Newspaper

If you're fortunate enough to have access to a historical newspaper

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March 2005

**WMGS Meeting,
Tuesday, March
8th, 7:00 pm, at
the Missoula Pub-
lic Library Large
Meeting Room.**

WMGS Officers 2005

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WMGS MARCH MEETING

The WMGS will meet on Tuesday, March 8th, at 7:00 PM in the Large Meeting Room of the Missoula Public Library. We will finalize the list of presentations that the keynote speaker will give at the September Montana

State Conference to be held here in Missoula in September 2005. We have no set program for this meeting, so bring some questions, 'brickwalls' and solutions to genealogical problems for discussion.

In The Mail



CENTRAL MONTANA WAGON TRAILS

Lewiston Genealogy Society, 701 W. Main St., Lewiston, Mt 59457-2501, Feb. 2005. This issue includes the 2005 Membership Lists, and a reprint from *Geography and Geology of Fergus County, Fergus County High School Bulletin 2*, by O.W. Freeman, Chapter XII "Origin of the Geographic Names in Fergus County."

FAMILY CHRONICLE, April 2005. Articles include "Online Sources for Irish Ancestry" - 16 subscription/free websites, "Dating Photographs of the US Army" - from the uniforms, "100 Million Newspaper Pages Online" - 15 websites (mostly fee based), "Road to Nowhere" - how to find an address that no longer exists, and "Counties: The Backbone of Genealogy" - what can be found in county records.

GEN-BUG NEWS, Yellowstone Genealogy Forum, % Parmley Billings Library, 510 N. Broadway, Billings MT 59101, Jan. 2005. YGF volunteers are beginning a computer index of the obituaries from the Billings Gazette. See "Montana State Genealogical Society Report" by Verba Valentine on p. 5.

GENEALOGICAL HELPER, January/February 2005. See "Living History Illuminates Ancestor's Lives" - Colonial Williamsburg, VA, "Heirloom Musical Instruments" care and preservation, "Tracing the Scots-Irish", "Rock On!" - preserving tombstones, "They Came From the East" - tracking the western movements of our ancestors, "Publishing Family Histories, Large and Small—Let's Cook Up a Book" - excerpts from the book by Jennifer Johnson and Holly T. Hansen, part 1 of a 3 part series, this part shows how to organize your files and set up your book.

NGS NEWS MAGAZINE, Dec. 2004. There are feature articles on: "Thawing Your Swedish Roots" - an overview, "In Stitches" - preserving family history in needlework, "Hidden Gold" - exploring the University Library, "Messages From the Grave" - part II on tombstones, "U.S. Tax Records" - more than just census substitutes, and "Grandma's Plants" - saving house and garden heirloom plants.

National Genealogical Society Quarterly, Vol. 92, No. 4, December 2004. See "The Wives of Jonathan Turner: Identification of Women in Pre-Twentieth-Century South Carolina," "Assembling and Correlating Indirect Evidence...", "Using Records to Understand Ancestral Motives: The Thwarted Will of Christopher Lean of Cornwall," and the 2004 winner of the Family History Writing Contest "The Art, Trade, and Mystery of a Mariner: Captain William Greenway of Philadelphia, Mariner and Patriot."

TREASURE STATE LINES, Great Falls Genealogy Society, High Plains Heritage Center. 422 2nd St. South, Great Falls, MT 59405-1816, Vol. 30, No. 1, January 2005. This issue has "Roll of Citizens of Cascade County Subject to Military Duty—1896, Surnames C-D," "Cascade County Death Index 1907—1908," and "Official History of Operations of the First Montana Infantry, U. S. V. in the Campaign in the Philippine Islands" with biographical sketches of field and staff officers. They are planning a book on *The Early Settlers of Great Falls*. (See info p.4)

FAMILY HISTORY LIBRARY

COMPUTER RESERVATIONS

Call 543-6148

FHL 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. We have DSL access to the Internet which is much faster than the dial up modem. Also, the new computer has been programmed with the advanced viewer for Ancestry images (1930 Census only) so that they are now easier to manipulate and will print out well on the printer. 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.

Bits & Bytes

TOWN SEARCH - ShtetlSeeker - In Yiddish, Shtetle = small city, town or village.

Search for a town in Central/Eastern Europe. Then search a radius of miles around that town. Write down the latitude and longitude for the town(s) you have found. You can then search for other towns within a given distance of that location.

www.jewishgen.org/ShtetlSeeker

www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org/ for more on Shtetls worldwide—Poland, Ukraine, Central Europe, etc...

RAILROAD NICKNAMES -Montana Rail Link

Make a Right/Left??!

Merl (Haggard)

Milwaukee Road Lives

Monkeys Running Loose

For other railroad nicknames see:

<http://www.spikesys.com/Trains/nickname.html>

PALEOGRAPHY - Deciphering Old Handwriting.

Palaeography: reading old handwriting 1500 - 1800 - A practical online tutorial

Palaeography is the study of old handwriting. This web tutorial will help you learn to read the handwriting found in documents written in English between 1500 and 1800.

At first glance, many documents written at this time look illegible to the modern reader. By reading the practical tips and working through the documents in the Tutorial in order of difficulty, you will find that it becomes much easier to read old handwriting. You can find more documents on which to practice your skills in the further practice section. This tutorial has been developed in partnership with University College London.

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/palaeography/>

MONTANA STATE GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY REPORT

by Verba Valentine 1st

Vice-President

2005 Conference in Missoula at Ruby's Inn—September 16-17, 2005

J. Mark Lowe, Speaker

Make your plans to attend what is becoming a terrific conference. They are planning several other speakers on Montana Genealogy...(Full info on program and costs should be in the next Newsletter.)

The State Society is collecting names of people who will do research in Montana. As names become available they will be put on the state website which is: <http://www.rootsweb.com/~mtmsg> If you are interested in doing research for a fee please contact Betty Marshall at bubbles@ttc-cmc.net

The "First Families and Early Settlers" Vol. II is getting closer to the printer and will be available in the fall. If you missed out on getting your ancestors in either Volume I or Volume II you will have another chance. A new committee is being formed and you can begin sending entries anytime to Al Stoner, 44 Wonder Road, Clancy, MT 59634. If you have any questions e-mail Al at alasto@aol.com or to Verba Valentine at blgsmarket@aol.com

Montana State Genealogy has joined with the National Genealogical Society and the Federation of Genealogical Societies for the purpose of preserving public records. There will be a chairman from each state along with a state committee to help with this committee. Verba Valentine has agreed to chair the committee and Paulette Parpart from Missoula, Shawna Valentine and Jason Herman have volunteered to be on the committee. If you hear of any records being moved or in the process of possibly being destroyed please e-mail Verba at once so that action can be taken. This is something that affects us all and we need to be more aware of what is happening to our research data.

Missoula Public Library New Books

When Your Ox Is In The Ditch: Genealogical How-to Letters, by Vera McDowell, 929.1072 MCDOWEL

Norwegian Immigrants To The United States: A Biographical Directory, 1825-1850, Vol. 4 1849, by Gerhard B Naeseth and Blaine Hedberg., GenColl R 929.3089 NAESETH

Virginia Genealogy: Sources & Resources, by Carol McGinnis, GenColl R 915.55 MCGINNI

Ancestral Trails: The Complete Guide To British Genealogy and Family History, by Mark D. Herber, 929.1072 HERBER

Seattle Public Library

Seattle's newly constructed, 11 level steel and glass Central Library opened May 23, 2004 at 1000 Fourth Ave. The following are resources for History and Genealogy Research:

- The A. Scott Bullitt History and Biography Collection—has a strong emphasis on local history of US regions, states, counties and cities
- The Hugh and Jane Ferguson Seattle Room—contains materials on all aspects of Seattle history.
- The Genealogy Collection—focus areas of the US collection are New England, Mid-Atlantic, Old South, Upper Midwest and Pacific Northwest. All Genealogical materials, except pamphlets, are in the Library's on-line catalog.

Looking for Ideas to Jump-Start Your Research

The Ancestry.com Library now hosts nearly 9,400 free articles and tips to guide you through your research. You can look them up at home or on one of the FHL computers from www.ancestry.com/learn.

Early Settlers of Great Falls

(From Treasure State Lines)

To preserve the rich history of Great Falls, a book documenting stories of individuals involved in the development and growth of this community is being compiled. Included will be any family or individual that lived in Great Falls up to the year 1920. They need not have lived there permanently.

Suggested guidelines for your family stories...

- To begin...your family name...your name as the author...full names (including maiden names) of the person in your story...approximate dates (years) of the story. Include other family members in writing the history.
- Each story should be no more than 450-500 words.
- Stories will only be edited for spelling or space limitations.
- Include a few favorite photographs that would enhance the story. Place your name and address on the back of each photo so that they can be returned. Identify people in each photo and give year, if known.

About your ancestors (original Great Falls settlers)...

- What country or place did they come from and when?
- Their stories of moving and settling in Great Falls
- Occupations, honors, enjoyments, clubs, or organizations.
- Why did they stay?... or Why did they leave?
- What part of Great Falls did they live in?
- Your favorite stories of them.
- Names and birth dates of the children, including married names and name of spouse.

Send stories and photos to:

Early Great Falls Settlers
Great Falls Genealogy Society
High Plains Heritage Center
422 Second Street South
Great Falls MT 59405

Note: If you wish to submit stories on disk, Word format is preferred.

Let them know if you wish to purchase a copy when finished.

Please include your name, address, telephone number and email address, if any, with each submission.

** With contributor's permission, stories and photos will be made available to the Cascade County Historical Society for preservation.

(Continued from page 1)

from your ancestors' area, read one newspaper each day. Even if there isn't one from their hometown, reading a paper from that era can help give you a feel for the times and give you a first-hand account of history, unlike any other source. I'm currently going through the *New York Herald* that is online at Ancestry.com.

I have started an electronic newspaper file created in my word processor. I record the date I'm looking at and make note of interesting items I've run across. The electronic document gives me the ability to search the document by keyword when I need to reference something but don't remember the date it is from.

Read a Book or Periodical

I keep a stash of reading material in my car so that when I'm waiting for my daughter to get out of school or some other activity, I can be productive instead of watching the minutes tick away. I also keep a notepad with it, so I can jot down any ideas or interesting information that I run across. Now instead of fuming about all the things I should be doing, I look forward to my "quiet time."

Label Photos

If you're actually caught up on this task, you are my idol. It seems I can never get caught up with my photographs, and the project seems to be insurmountable now. At a recent scrapbooking party though, I picked up a good tip. The hostess showed how she would sort her photos into themes and put them in an archival sleeve in her album. Then whenever she got a few minutes, she'd take a sleeve and put together her scrapbook page. Since most of my pictures just go into a photo album, this is an even quicker process for me. I just label the pictures and put them into the plastic sleeves.

Record Heirloom Origins

As I look in my china cabinet, I see quite a few heirlooms from all branches of our family. Will my daughter know where all these precious things came from and the stories behind them when she inherits them? Not if I don't record the history of the items now. Starting one shelf at a time, I am documenting the pieces I have. I can even take a digital photograph of the item and insert it into a word processor and record the history that way. Once you get started, it's really kind of fun and can lead to memories that can help you in your research.

File That Pile

Don't look so guilt-ridden. We all have them. I've come to accept that I will never be completely rid of the piles and only seek to confine them now. I have a

multi-tiered bin on a side desk where I put my piles. When it gets too full, rather than getting a new bin or moving the pile to a larger receptacle, I get to work filing the papers contained within it. Fifteen minutes a day, can keep my desk relatively clutter free.

Google a Person, Place, or Thing

Ever wondered what great-grandma's hometown in Ireland looked like? Google the town. Need to know if a historical figure has ties to your family history? Google his or her biography. Is that disease great-grandmother and her sister died of hereditary? Google the disease. Where did grandma get that crazy teapot? Google the manufacturer's name that is on the bottom and add some descriptive keywords. In many cases, the answers to questions like these are much less than fifteen minutes away.

Join a Genealogical or Historical Society

That society that you've been meaning to join, but haven't gotten around to--you know the one--go to their website, download that form, and send it in. You never know what goodies you'll find in their periodicals and at their meetings until you check it out.

Check a Library Catalog

Do some investigating in a local library. Have you been meaning to check out that local university library? You may even be able to access their catalog from home, so take fifteen minutes to explore. Then when you have another fifteen minutes free, you can pop in and check out a resource that you've found.

Call a Family Member

Even if you don't have a prepared interview or agenda, just call to say hi. Share a memory with them and let the conversation take its course. You may pick up a few clues, or you may just have a nice chat. It's a win-win situation.

Record a Memory

Has an event or person from long ago popped into your mind? Did a recent snowstorm remind you of a childhood winter? Does that photograph of your nephew remind you of Uncle Joe? Reminisce and record your thoughts for future family historians. They'll love you for it!

Share a Family History Find

Have you located a record that might interest another family member? Why not take a couple of minutes to make a copy and send it to them? If the family member is online, they could even have a scanned electronic copy in fifteen minutes or less. And in another fifteen minutes or less, they could be emailing you back with a memory that the record prompted. Try it!

Begin an Outline for a Biographical Sketch

(Continued on page 6)

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



We're On The
Web
[www.rootsweb.
com/~mtwmgs](http://www.rootsweb.com/~mtwmgs)



MISSOULA PUBLIC LIBRARY
301 EAST MAIN ST.
MISSOULA, MT 59802

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 would 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.

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Don't worry about grammar and syntax yet, just start with the facts--vital dates and places, places you've found them in censuses and directories, occupations, historical events that took place and may have affected them--anything you have on record and any facts that come to mind. Arrange them chronologically and save them for your next free fifteen minutes, when you can fill in the blanks and put more meat on the bones.

So there we have it--fifteen family history projects that we can do in fifteen minutes or less, and the toughest part of these projects will be stopping when your fifteen minutes is up! Have fun!

Upcoming Conferences

2005 Montana State Conference - in Missoula at Ruby's Inn, September 16-17, 2005. The keynote speaker will be T. Mark Lowe, NGS/FGS Sate Liaison.

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.

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