

Is Personal Ancestral File Best for Me?

by Allin Kingsbury

Personal Ancestral File (PAF) began as the only good choice of software for genealogy. It was inexpensive and had all the essential features to enter the data needed for research. It is true that the program was weak in several features, the most important of which was documentation. As better personal computers as well as low cost scanners became available, other genealogy programs added picture pedigree charts and family group sheets. A number of revisions to PAF added these and other features. The PAF program today is adequate for most genealogists and is probably the most used of all those programs available. It is estimated that more than one million individuals are currently using PAF.

One of the reasons PAF is so popular is that the program had a feature for sharing and exchanging genealogy using GEDCOM files. The GEDCOM format soon became a standard and soon was added to the other genealogy programs. The format is used so much today that it would make no sense for any of the genealogy software developers to try to create a new and better standard. The GEDCOM standard has been improved over the years, and in spite of the inertia that hinders change to such a widely used standard, it is possible to make needed changes. The standard has a great deal of flexibility which allows the addition of new

at some time, all PAF users may have to consider the question, "Should I change to another program?"

categories of events, although many genealogy programs are not capable of accepting the new categories.

The most important result of the GEDCOM feature is that provides communication of genealogy data, regardless of the computer and software used by those doing the exchange. Also, the format allows anyone to change genealogy programs or to use more than one program. A genealogist could use one program for gathering data and another for printing reports, for example.

The disadvantage of using more than one genealogy program is that it takes time to learn to use the features of a second program. Occasionally, the differences in features cause confusion for the user. Many individuals elected not to change to a later version of PAF for this very reason. They were too busy using PAF to cope with the many changes in the operation of the program, even though they needed the new features.

During the past few years, there have been no improvements in the features of PAF. After PAF 5.0 was released, there were several updates which corrected errors and annoyances. The only changes in features were to add additional languages for users who did not use English or one of

the other languages available.

The status of genealogy database programs today is that there are many excellent commercially-available programs. Most of these have useful features not found in PAF. Professional and expert genealogists are often using one of the commercial programs instead of PAF, even though they invested a lot of time using PAF. There are good arguments for switching to another program from PAF. Almost all available genealogy programs will offer some features not currently available in PAF. Many of the free or very inexpensive programs offer a significant number of new features not found in PAF.

PAF is a good program because it is simple to use. Those who use the high end programs such as The Master Genealogist are not reluctant to admit that such programs are complicated and at times difficult to use. The casual genealogist who just uses the program to read the database or to keep up records of the living generations of a family need a simple easy-to-use program. PAF was designed for the occasional user, but it has the features needed to build and maintain a large database of ancestors.

For me and for many others who continue to use PAF, the additional features found in

other programs do not provide enough incentive to change programs. In addition to not having time to learn a new program, and not having the time to evaluate the huge list of programs available, we feel that many of the features found in these programs are not immediately needed. They have a use for those who need such features, like a Jewish family would a field to record a bar mitzvah. There is little interest in this feature among non-Jewish families. Despite of all the tempting new features, PAF appears to have an adequate set of features that can satisfy most genealogists today. Many of the inadequacies can be "worked around."

Another reason many individuals using PAF find for not changing is that most of the individuals with whom they exchange data are relatives with a common interest in large portions of their data. They would be closely related. These family groups usually use the same program (PAF) and the few that use other programs do not present any significant problem.

The current status of genealogy programs may change. The companies that remain successful will certainly continue to add features to gain a competitive edge in the market. Hardware will become obsolete, but PAF is not dependent on hardware. The program may need upgrades to remain compatible with new operating system software, but the program works with files. It

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Personal Ancestral File

(Continued from page 9) church, its members and all interested in family history are best served by digitizing microfilm and improving in-home access to original records, primarily via the www.FamilySearch.org Web site. These efforts will benefit those working on family history immensely. There is nothing gained by competition with the commercial genealogy software producers. It was helpful to produce good genealogy software back when none was available. Now the LDS Church will not expend any funds to develop a modern version of Personal Ancestral File.

is extremely unlikely that file format will change. As long as there is a way to read old files and get the data into a computer, the PAF users can use their data, exchange it and print reports. The file format for computers has had some additional features added, mostly with the introduction of the first version of Windows. However, Windows has always been able to read all old Windows files. Other operating systems have maintained similar compatibility.

The future of the PAF program is quite clear. Except for the addition of new languages, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, who distributes the program will not make any more improvements in the future. Elder Marlin K. Jensen, the LDS Church Historian, in the keynote address at the Northern Utah Family History Conference and Symposium on October 6-7, 2006, said that it is obvious that commercial organizations are already providing excellent free and low-cost genealogy software. When leaders of the Church look at all the things that the Church could do to promote interest in genealogy and to provide resources to genealogists, the

This does not mean that the PAF program should be immediately abandoned by those using it. The program continues to be available. Many new users are starting their family history using PAF at this time. The change to another program will require concentrated effort to learn how to use the new program and become as efficient in using it as with using the old program. A good reason for waiting is that all the other genealogy software is changing, including prices. There is no hurry to change to new software in the near future unless there is a compelling need to do so. However, at some time, all PAF users may have to consider the question, "Should I change to another program?"

Ask the Doc — "I Give No Answers Before Their Time!"

By Dr. Cornelius J. PAF

Check/Repair Problems

Q I am a new PAF-user. Until this moment I put all my information about my ancestors (and this is quite a lot) in a Access-file (Microsoft ACCESS). I would like to import these information in PAF. How should I do this? I hope you know a way to do so.

A The only way available today for importing data into PAF from another source is through the use of the GEDCOM file format. The GEDCOM file format is a very rigid syntax standard that allows your data to be structured with a prefix code for each piece of information within a carefully crafted hierarchy that represents the family relationships.

It would not be impossible to generate a GEDCOM file from your ACCESS database, but it would take some time to perfect the file so that everything is perfectly accurate. The entire project would boil down to a question of how long it would take to generate the GEDCOM file versus how long it would take to enter everything by hand. Actually this notion intrigues me a lot. It would be sort of a test of one's skill at understanding the level of forgiveness that the GEDCOM import routine allows.

Part of the decision of generating a GEDCOM versus hand entering the data depends on:

- How many individuals you have in your ACCESS database, and how many families are there.
- How much detail you have entered into the ACCESS database, and what is the density of these details. For example, you may have a rich ACCESS schema with lots of potential fields, but there may not be data in very many of the fields, or the records may be quite full. If



the records are quite full, then that would imply going the GEDCOM route rather than hand entering the data.

- Whether the field formats are compatible with the PAF formats. For example, are your date formats compatible, or are your place names able to be parsed correctly?

You could consider doing the process in two stages. A GEDCOM file has two major sections.

The first contains all the details about each individual, i.e., name, sex, birth date and place, death date and place, etc. The second part contains the family details, i.e., who are the father and the mother, marriage date and place, then each of the children. This family part is mostly building a structure from the individuals in the first part by referencing their sequential reference number, and might be a difficult challenge to build in ACCESS. So you could create the first part using GEDCOM and then >manually link all the families together using the PAF program.

Quotable Quote

Men stumble over truth from time to time, but most pick themselves up and hurry off as if nothing had happened.

Sir Winston Churchill

1864-1965

British Statesman

Of Interest: New Scotland Genealogy Center to Create DNA Library, New Genealogy Center in Tennessee, ProQuest Obituaries

New Scotland Genealogy Center to Create DNA Library

Experts at Glasgow Caledonian University plan to have a genealogy center which will help people from around the world trace their Scottish roots and then offer the option of verifying blood relatives through DNA testing. The team also plans to do research that will eventually build up a genetic map of the clans of Scotland, allowing people to look into their Celtic ancestry. They hope the effort will also promote tourism. Dr. John Gow, director for forensic investigation at Caledonian, said, ". . . people with Scottish ancestors from around the world will be able to come to Scotland and trace their records, and, if they wish, we can make up their DNA profile for them,"

New Genealogy Center in Tennessee

The Germantown Regional History and Genealogy Center opened on November 15. The Tennessee Genealogical Society contributed more than \$1 million worth of books and materials to the new genealogy library, part of the Germantown Community Library. The society relocated its 14,000-book collection from its former home, on Davis Plantation Road, where development was encroaching on the property. The new genealogy branch will be managed by the Maryland-based Library Systems & Services which also manages the Germantown Community Library.

Germantown recently renovated the former Morgan Woods Children's Theatre on Poplar Pike east of Melanie Smith Lane to

be the new location for the Genealogy Center. When compared to the former location of the book collection, the new building has more parking, more visibility on the well-traveled Poplar Pike and more room for patrons and classes. The renovation included lighting and a ventilation system to protect the collection, a new roof, new offices for the society, and shelving and other furnishings donated from Rhodes College.

ProQuest Obituaries

ProQuest Obituaries™ is a new service from ProQuest Information and Learning which provides access to a collection of obituaries and death notices from major national newspapers dating back to 1851. The database contains about 10 million names, a small percentage of those who died since 1851. The company does not say, but the 10,000,000 probably includes many redundant obituaries of prominent people. Although ProQuest is owned by MyFamily.com, the parent company of Ancestry.com, ProQuest has not included obituaries from many of the small town newspapers in the Ancestry.com database. The two companies are independently managed.

ProQuest offers the obituary collection through their subscription service to libraries and if the library has the service available, it is probably free to patrons of the library and may be available on the library Web site. Small libraries may not offer the services, but the librarian may know of nearby libraries that have the service.

Hardware of Interest: Blu-ray Discs

A new disc technology promises a big improvement in storage of that to CD-ROM and DVD technology. The Blu-ray Disc Association that developed this new format consists of Apple, Dell, Hitachi, HP, JVC, LG, Mitsubishi, Panasonic, Pioneer, Philips, Samsung, Sharp, Sony, TDK and Thomson, all leaders in consumer electronics, personal computer, and media manufacturing. The new product has leading computer and gaming manufacturers and seven of the eight major movie studios quite interested in using the product.

Although both DVD discs and the new Blu-ray, or "BD", discs both use optical technology with a laser to read and write the data, there is a big difference. DVDs use a red laser which has a longer wavelength than the blue light at the other end of the visible light spectrum. The BDs use a blue-violet laser which can be focused into a much smaller spot than the traditional red laser, which enables the manufacturer to use a narrower track to write the data and a higher bit density along the track.

The new discs look like a CD-ROM. They are the same size. Internally, the structure is different. Panasonic has a 4-layer, 100-gigabyte Blu-ray disc which uses Te-O-Pd, a tellurium suboxide, palladium-doped, phase-change recording film. The 4 layer technology is an improvement over DVD technology which can use 2 layers. The film is said to have a high transmittance and crystallization rate. This enables the disc to last a long time without loss of data quality.

The first Blu-ray discs for sale in computer stores will only store about 25 gigabytes of data. Although this number is only 25%

of the capacity of the discs that Panasonic is developing, it is a remarkable improvement in technology. Each disc can store the equivalent of 167 CD-ROM discs or 71,428 floppy disks. Someone with a large library could reduce the storage space need to a few discs if they had the time to scan all of their books. This is an impressive increase in storage density.

The reliability of this technology is said to be much better than the technology used for CD-ROM and DVD manufacture. Reliability has traditionally measured by accelerating conditions which cause failure such as high temperature, vibration, temperature change, and high humidity. Failure under the accelerated conditions can be used to calculate a failure rate under normal conditions from a long period of time. This method of estimating product life has proven to be reliable over time. The new discs also have a coating more resistant to scratches than the currently used technology. The Blu-ray Disc Association member companies have estimated the lifetime of the new disks to be 100 years.

The Blu-ray disks also cost significantly more money than do CD-ROM or DVD-ROM disks at this time. That was also the case for CD-ROMs and DVDs when they were introduced. The price is expected to drop significantly once the Blu-ray discs are manufactured using mass production.

You should also consider that you will need a new disc drive with a blue laser to read and write the new discs. The price of the drives will take some time to be tempting for the family historian. We have to also wait for mass production and competition to drive the prices down.

Spider Webs:

Richmond Civil War Newspaper, Irish Genealogy Podcasts, Google Archived Newspaper Searches, Free Online Storage, Places in Canada

Richmond Civil War Newspaper

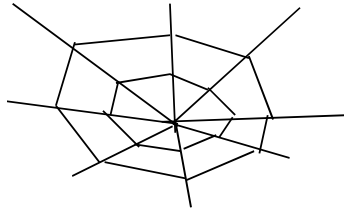
An IMLS grant and collaboration with Project Perseus at Tufts University has made it possible for the University of Richmond to digitize the Richmond Daily Dispatch newspaper for the Civil War years and place it online. The project is not yet complete, but the newspaper is on the Internet site. To visit the site, go to: <http://dlxs.richmond.edu/d/ddr/index.html>

Irish Genealogy Podcasts

Genealogy podcasts are audio broadcasts sent over the Internet. Users can listen to them at their convenience. Michael C. O'Laughlin, a well-known Irish genealogist and author, has created a series of podcasts about Irish genealogy research. The site has weekly podcasts under the byline of the *Irish Family Cafe*. For more information about the podcasts, go to: www.irishroots.com/podcast/rss.xml

Google Archived Newspaper Searches

Last September, Google began its "200-year" News Archive Search, with full-text content from The New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Washington Post, and third-party sources such as LexisNexis, HighBeam, and Thomson Gale. Some of these sources do not go back 200 years. If you are looking for something that may be



in the older newspapers, the Google News Archive is a good place to look.

The Google News Archive is free. However, much of the information is available from commercial services that charge fees for access. The search is free, but there may be charges to read the full articles available from these services. It is unlikely that any articles useful for genealogy research will require a fee to be read if they are recent, but almost all articles more than 100 years old are available from NewspaperArchive.com, which requires a subscription of \$95 per year. Some libraries subscribe to this service and it is usually free to all patrons. In some cases you may obtain access to NewspaperArchive.com by connecting to the library Web site.

To search the News Archive, go to: <http://news.google.com/archivesearch>, or click the "News archive search" icon on the Google News Web page.

Free Online Storage

DropBoks offers 1 gigabyte of storage

space to Web site users. However, all files stored there can be no larger than 50 megabytes. The sight is free, but the site owners suggest a \$1 donation.

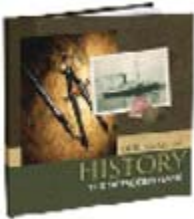
DropBoks works for users of Windows, Macintosh, Linux, and probably other operating systems. To use the site, log onto DropBoks, click on "Browse," and select the file(s) on your hard drive that you wish to upload. Then click on "Upload File." To download a file from the storage area, go to DropBoks, double-click on the file name, and follow the menus to store it in a folder on your local hard drive. To remove a file from online storage, drag and drop it in the trash icon. The site is very simple to use. It does not support file sharing or any other advanced features.

To visit the site, go to: www.dropboks.com

Places in Canada

A new Web site, *Places in Canada*, has a very comprehensive list of places throughout Canada and displays the location of the places on detailed maps. More than 28,000 places in Canada are listed. The places can be found in an alphabetical list by province (or territory) and the location on a map or satellite photo can be viewed with either Google Maps, Live Local, MapQuest, or Yahoo! Maps. To use the site, go to: www.johncardinal.com/ca

Recently Published: Our Name in History



Ancestry.com recently announced a hardcover book called, *Our Name in History*, which is about the history of your family name or the surname that you specify. Ancestry.com states that "Our Name in History provides interesting information on a selected last name such as origin, definition, popularity and other relevant historical facts." The book is made to order with information gleaned from the Ancestry.com database which includes the U.S. Census, immigration, birth, marriage, death and military records. The book is nicely bound and uses glossy clay-coated paper that is often used for art books and other books with a lot of color illustrations.

The book contains a historical timeline and family facts which tell about events and statistics pertaining to the family. For example, the book may list how many families there were with the surname listed in various U.S. census data, and which states these

families resided. The actual census data is not included in the book nor are the names of the heads of families. The book may also list when and where various family members immigrated to the U.S. and the places of origin. Also included are the numbers of individuals who held the surname who were involved in each of the wars in which the U.S. was involved. The information is interesting, but of little or no genealogical value.

Another chapter discusses the origin and meaning of the surname. Here you can learn if the name came from an occupation like "Smith," a place like "Kingsbury," a patronymic like "Johnson," or from some other source. The book is likely to mention the country where the name originated, although some names began independently in many locations.

The section called *Discover Your Family* is an eight page tutorial about how to get started with your family history. It is followed by blank pedigree charts, family group sheets, and a research log for you to fill out. The last few pages contain a glossary and a

bibliography.

The book has the same title as a made to order book published by a number of companies until they ceased publication to avoid jail time. These books claimed to be about your ancestors, but in fact, the same family jokes, recipes, and coat of arms were included in every book, regardless of surname. The pages that were truly different in the earlier books were the random phone numbers of individuals with the selected surname. There are no extracts from the phone directories in the Ancestry.com book.

Our Name in History will not be much help to the researcher, but it may be a nice "coffee table" book. For a few, the book may

bring back bad memories of a similar book with the same title which was marketed by the Halberts a few years ago, but the new book is honest. It makes no claims to be more than what you get when you buy the book. Each book is created "on demand." The book contains boilerplate text, and numbers and text are inserted after a computer counts the number of matching entries in the various databases. While each book is printed on demand, the hard cover binding is nice and has the look and quality of a "coffee table" book. Ancestry.com can create *Our Name in History* for almost 200,000 American surnames, which is about 85 percent of all U.S. households. The company is continually adding names and content to its database. The book can be ordered online from www.ournameinhistory.com and is priced at \$49.95 plus shipping.

Tracing Ancestors Who Lived Before U.S. Independence

by Lesly Klippel

The first known capitalistic venture in the world's history landed in Jamestown, Virginia, in 1607, a shipload of passengers who were mainly younger sons of aristocratic families. These young men had been raised in households with servants and didn't know how to work. The dire situation in the struggling colony gave rise to Captain John Smith's famous saying (roughly translated) "No workee, no eatee!"

From this inauspicious beginning has grown the greatest nation in the World's history (in my unbiased opinion). Those lucky researchers who trace their pedigree to the host of intrepid colonists who populated the eastern shores during the 17th and 18th centuries will find that the researching is a bit tricky since the records are few, the script practically unreadable and the language unfamiliar. Hopefully, this article will give you a few guidelines to make it a bit easier to put your colonial genealogy puzzle together. For that is what colonial research is, a puzzle in which you pick a piece from this record and another piece from that record and try to put them together to make a logical, cohesive, convincing and true picture of your ancestors.

History of Each Colony

The first principle of colonial research is that the laws and regulations differed from one colony to another and that in the beginning, many records were kept on the colonial level, except in New England and most of New York, where they were kept on the town or village level. This first principle gives rise to the second principle: you must study the history of the colony of interest to understand what records were created and where they are located. A quick lesson in the history of your colony can be obtained in: 1. *The Handy Book for Genealogists* which has a brief history of each state at the beginning of that state's section; 2. the Research Outline for your state found at www.familysearch.org and read onscreen or downloaded in "pdf" format; 3. a book on research in the section of the colonies in which you are interested such as New England, Middle Atlantic States or Southern States; 4. a search with Google for the colony which will yield many interesting articles about the early history, such as in *Wikipedia*.

An example of interesting colonial history is the fact that the Pilgrims had a patent from the London Virginia Company and were headed for Jamestown when a storm blew them so off course that they took refuge in what became Massachusetts Bay. It is probably a good thing since the life style of the Pilgrims was

radically different from the life style of the elitist cavaliers who populated colonial Virginia. Each colony had a unique ambiance created by the people who established it. Examples of colonization by groups of people include the Puritans in Massachusetts, the Dutch in New York, the Quakers in Pennsylvania, the Catholics in Maryland, the cavalier royalists in Virginia, the wealthy proprietors in North Carolina and the convicts in the penal colony of Georgia.

Immigration

Every Colonial researcher wants to know when their first family arrived in the colonies. Before the Revolutionary War, immigration was controlled by each of the original colonies and there was no need of recording the names of immigrants since nearly eighty percent of the white immigrants were British. However, original settlers were recorded in other records and for many years, researchers have been compiling lists of immigrants from these ancillary documents, including lists of departure from Britain. It is estimated that at least one member of seventy to eighty percent of colonial white immigrant families has been identified in Colonial records, but not usually in a passenger list. All of the early passenger lists that have survived have been published and are indexed in *Filby's Passenger and Immigration Index* (available as set of books and a Family TreeMaker CD).

Some important colonial lists include the Pennsylvania oaths of allegiance (required by Pennsylvania starting in 1727 and mainly containing the names of German male immigrants - wives and children weren't listed), lists of indentured servants sent to Virginia and other colonies and lists of headrights (acreage) granted for transporting persons to Virginia. Nugent's book, *Cavaliers and Pioneers*, has been a standard resource for many years to locate early Virginia colonizers. Peter Coldham has used British sources to locate and publish the names of many immigrants, the bulk of them to Maryland and Virginia. Both of these authors' works are on the shelves of most genealogy libraries. The Great Migration Begins, a database at www.ancestry.com, is an ambitious project to list a biography and genealogy of all immigrants to New England between 1620-1633. Since one of the good things about U.S. Colonial research is that most surviving records have been microfilmed and/or published, books containing these early lists of immigrants are readily available in genealogy libraries.

Naturalization

During the Colonial period, anyone not of British extraction was considered an alien and had to become naturalized in order

to vote, own a ship, run for public office, own land and transfer property and real estate to heirs. Citizenship was granted by letters of denization or through an act of Parliament. To find any surviving naturalization records for your colony of interest, search the Family History Library Catalog under both the colony name and the county name, then click on Naturalization. I was able to find the naturalization record of my German immigrant who arrived in Philadelphia in 1743. He was naturalized in the county in Pennsylvania where he settled.

Vital and Church Records

In New England, vital records were kept by the town clerks beginning in the 1600s. These have been preserved and published in both books and in the *New England Historical and Genealogical Journal*. Except in New England, vital records were not kept in the colonies and the governing body depended upon the churches to record christenings and burials. In some colonies, the churches were required to report these events to the civil authorities.

You can determine the denomination your family favored in several ways: family tradition; Bibles, baptismal certificates and other papers in the family; name of the clergyman who officiated at family weddings (usually listed in the county marriage records) - look him up in a county history or city directory to determine denomination; ethnic origin of family (most countries had a state church in Colonial days). If your ancestor was married by a justice of the peace, check the marriages of siblings to see if any were married by a clergyman. Follow the same procedure with the clergyman who officiated at funerals as found in obituaries and on death certificates. Study the history of the time and place to determine which religions were predominant in the area. Remember that immigrants tended to attend churches where their native language was spoken.

Once you have determined which churches were in the area, check the Family History Library Catalog (FHLC) under "the State" and "Church Records." Be sure to check all the records in the area as people tended to cross over if they didn't have a church of their favored denomination available. Baptism of children was such an important ordinance that parents would seek a minister of another faith in order to have the ordinance performed. Be especially sure to check the records of the established church for the colony: the Congregational Church in New England, the Protestant Episcopal Church in the South, and the Presbyterian in some frontier communities. Quakers, Lutherans and Presbyterians shared Pennsylvania and the Methodists and Baptists prospered west of the Appalachians.

Many church records are in the archives of their particular denomination. In his book, *Survey of American Church Records*, E. Kay Kirkham described the origins of the various denominations and the church records that are available in each state, the years covered and their location at time of publication (1971). Volume II covers the minor denominations. On the FamilySearch web site, if you click on Search, Research Helps, "U" for United States, then scroll down to and click on "Research Outline," and then on "Church Records," you will see a list of the names and addresses of the archives of the major religions. Many early church records have been microfilmed and are available for rent from the Salt Lake Family History Library through your local Family History Center.

The earliest marriage records were kept by the office of the governor. The surviving records are in the state archives and

some have been published. The colony either required a declaration of intent to marry, the reading of banns (intent to marry) in church on three successive Sundays or a license issued by the colonial governor. In the FHLC, look in "the State" and "Vital Records" and look for marriage records in the colonial time period.

Tax Records

The colonies raised revenue by assessing a poll tax on white males of certain ages (generally 21 to 50 or 60), also called a tithable. The annual poll tax lists show the names of males in the family and the year the sons turned the taxable age. The poll tax ages varied both by colony and year so the tax laws of each colony must be studied. Women were not subject to a poll tax but could be taxed for land that they owned. Poll taxes continued into the 1800s. Combined with property tax lists, poll tax lists can create a census substitute and are especially useful to differentiate men with the same name living in the same locality since the clerk usually added some identifier to their names such as residence or a physical characteristic.

Excluded from the poll tax were ministers, children, slaves and indentured servants, paupers, militia officers, tax assessors and those exempted by a colonial or state law for some reason such as a reward for military service.

Real property tax lists contain the names of the property owner, acreage, assessed valuation and the amount of tax. Personal property tax lists contain the names of heads of households, males over 16 (or whatever age dictated by the law), number of slaves by sex, cattle, horses, and sometimes other types of personal property. Sometimes real property and personal property lists are combined into one list and sometimes they are separate records.

Land Records

The colonies offered the opportunity for immigrants to own their own land, something that was reserved for the upper class in European countries. Land in the colonies was controlled by the English monarch through a governor or a private citizen or group of citizens or the land was granted to and sold by a corporation. Land was acquired from the government by first filing a petition proving your eligibility for getting the land such as military service, payment of the passage of an immigrant, payment of the purchase price of the land or by being granted land as a favor. The second step was the issuing of a warrant that certified the right to the acreage and authorized an official survey. After the survey or plat was filed, the patent or grant was issued. The petitions have not usually survived, but the warrants and patents exist as well as many surveys. They are housed in the state archives or land office and many have been microfilmed.

Land was granted to New Englanders as a reward for immigrating to the colonies. Virginia granted acreage as headrights for paying the passage of immigrants to the colony. Many headrights were sold so the person claiming the acreage was not necessarily the person who paid the passage. North Carolina was governed by a representative of the Crown but the land was sold by the proprietors who did not issue headrights (except briefly by the Calverts). Only about half of indentured servants survived their period of servitude and very few received land at the conclusion of their service. The English king tried to get the colonies to fulfill the promise of land, but they consistency refused except in North Carolina for a short period of time.

The boundaries of land parcels were delineated by a system called "metes and bounds," listing landmarks and the distances between them. Neighboring landowners were often mentioned and drawing a plat map of your ancestor's property and the adjoining properties can reveal much about possible relatives and associates. There are books that will show you how to draw a plat map, a time-consuming but rewarding project. Platting software is also available to draw plat maps.

Remember that in some colonies, the law of primogeniture prevailed wherein all the entailed (limited in inheritance to a certain class of heirs) real property was inherited by the eldest son. Property which was not entailed or marked as a dower (the portion of the estate reserved for the widow) could be inherited by other children and heirs. Entailed or dower property was not taxed by the state.

Early land records contain other information such as ear marks, animal brands, slave manumissions, apprentice papers, petitions, depositions, tax lists and occasionally even vital records such as marriages.

Apprentice, School and Business Records

The Old World system of binding young people to learn a trade was carried to the colonies. Most apprentices were boys in the pre- or early teens and they were indentured until age twenty-one. The length of the indenture in the document will give an indication of the age when the agreement was signed. Girls were sometimes indentured to learn "housewifely" skills.

Apprentice records and other business records such as account books, licenses and other professional records are usually housed in the town, county or state historical societies or archives. A few have been published, but most exist in manuscript form. The holdings of many of these societies are listed on their web site.

Schools in the colonial period were private and any records that can be located would give valuable information about families. Business records are being discovered in odd places and constitute a major new source for the colonial time period.

Stranger than Fiction: Amusement Park versus Graveyard

A waterslide is being built next to an old cemetery in Saco, Maine. The building code says that a structure must be 25 feet from the property line. The amusement park owner claims that the airspace over the cemetery isn't included in the 25-foot rule. The Code Enforcement Officer issued a building permit in spite of the state law, and no attempt has been made to keep the heavy equipment from the edges of the cemetery. The district attorney claims the law doesn't indicate whose responsibility it is to enforce the law, so it is basically unenforceable. The state Center for Disease Control is responsible for most cemetery regulations. Clough Toppan, An agency staff member, believes the waterslide is being built in clear violation of the law and the city could have made more of an effort to negotiate a compromise. The assistant attorney general admits that the law has been broken, but has been unable to stop the illegal encroachment. The Maine Old Cemetery Association is working with others to protect this and other old cemeteries.

In the cemetery are buried several veterans of the Civil War,

Colonial Legislatures and Courts

In every colony, the proceedings of the governing body were recorded either as the State Archives or the Acts of the Legislature. Court proceedings were likewise recorded. These records have been published and are housed in the state library as well as many other libraries. These records contain the acts passed by the legislature (often to benefit individuals) and the dealings of the courts which mention colonists by name and describe things such as disputes, fines, marriages, divorces, guardianships, and grants of privileges.

Probate records

One of the best sources of names and relationships are the probate records which were recorded first in the colonial courts and then in the county courts as they were formed. All surviving probate records have been microfilmed and are available from the Family History Library. Study the court system in your particular colony to know where the probate records were recorded.

Internet Lists

There are some e-mail lists you can join for your particular colony through which researchers can pool information. Check www.cyndislist.com under your particular state for links to them and for other helpful sites that might include colonial information.

Search for Less Common Records

While most Colonial records have been located and microfilmed or published, records such as family Bibles, journals and diaries, letters, biographies and histories may be available in regional archives and libraries. Successful Colonial research depends in great measure upon making friends with both the county and state archivists and librarians who can guide you to the treasure trove of less commonly searched records, many of them in manuscript form, located in their facility. Colonial research is tedious, time-consuming and expensive, but if you were to stand on the Atlantic Coast looking longingly across the water at America, you will know it was worth the effort to get there.

three World War II veterans, a person of Native American blood, many early settlers of Saco, Maine, and probably some veterans of the American Revolution. The cemetery has been at the formerly peaceful location for 150 years.

Bob Phillips, a retired postal worker, comes to Maine several times a year to tend his family's burial plot. The small collection of headstones has now been completely surrounded by Funtown. The topsoil has been scraped clean almost even with the fence around the cemetery. A 10-foot-deep trench passes within 10 feet of the property. Bob Phillips is frustrated because none of the government agencies involved are willing to do anything.

The state legislature is looking at the problem and there may be enough interest in rewriting the law. During the last few months, similar conflicts involving encroachment have surfaced in Woolwich and Freeport. However, it will be difficult to apply the new law retroactively.

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SV-CGG meets monthly, except December, on the second Saturday of the month from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints building, 875 Quince Avenue, Santa Clara, CA. We offer classes and sponsor guest speakers at meetings to help family historians with computer technology and research techniques. Membership dues are US\$15 per year (US\$20 for Canada and US\$25 for other international). Members are offered classes at meetings, mentor help, *Silicon Valley PastFinder* (a monthly newsletter published each month there is a meeting).

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