Fairfield Genealogical Society
NEWSLETTER

Volume 13   Number 1 + 2   March, 2000

Please continue to submit articles for the newsletter:
* Queries
* Lineage Charts
* Bible Records
* Cemetery Surveys
* Short Family Histories
* and any other items you feel will be helpful to others.

BIBLE RECORDS

We are continuing to collect Bible records for publication. We are in the process of typing/proofing the records we have to date. The following information is needed: (1) a photo copy of the Bible, (2) have a family member to transcribe the information, (3) photo copy Bible pages, (4) photo copy of title page [publisher and date], (5) information on who owns the Bible and who transcribed the information and (6) preferred Bible records prior to 1920.

For more information, contact: Henrietta Morton, 167 Rutledge Road, Greenwood, SC 29649. Phone: (864) 223-7374; Charlie Beach, PO Box 696, Winnsboro, SC 29180 or Linda Frazier, PO Drawer 89, Winnsboro, SC 29180. Phone: (803) 754-1123; email: **lfrazier@sc-online.net.**

HISTORY OF FAIRFIELD COUNTY/BIOGRAPHIES OF ITS PEOPLE

In future issues, we would like to include information about our historic county and its people. **The Fairfield Genealogical Society** requests your help with this. Do you have a favorite story of someone/something of Fairfield County that you would like to share? We welcome information/suggestions from our readers for topics and material for our newsletters.

Let us know where helpful web sights are located. If you have found some web sites that have been helpful, please let us hear from you.

If errors are noted in these newsletters, please advise and we will make corrections in the next newsletter. Linda S. Frazier, Newsletter Editor; PO Box 89, Winnsboro, SC 29180 or email: lfrazier@sc-online.net.

Members e-mail addresses – If you would like your email address published, please send it and other information you 'd like included to: lfrazier@sc-online.net

NOTICE: Our treasurer, Mr. Charles Beach has resigned due to health concerns. We will be holding a special meeting to discuss filling his office. If anyone is interested, please advise us as soon as possible.

Fairfield County Genealogical meeting – Our next regular meeting is scheduled for April 30. Our speaker will be Edith Purvis who will speak about her ancestor "General A.H Gladden." We hope to see you there!

QUERIES

JORDAN, O'NEAL – Does anyone know the parents and siblings of these three JORDAN women who married these O'NEAL men? (1) MARTHA JORDAN, b 1811, married EVANDER O'NEAL; (2) REBECCA JORDAN, b. 1813, married JAMES (JIM) O'NEAL; AND (3) NANCY JORDAN, b. 1820, married PETER O'NEAL. Fannie Jordan Puvis, 2710 Pine Manor Lane, Albany, GA 31707, email: fpurvis@msn.com.

SOME HEREDITARY SOCIETIES

A recent article in Heritage magazine noted there are at least 117 hereditary societies today. Information on some of the best known societies was developed from the Editor's files and other sources, including THE ABRIDGED COMPENDIUM OF AMERICAN GENEALOGY.

Clan Societies – there are many clan societies with organizations in America. Information may be obtained from genealogical resources in libraries. The Internet is also an excellent source to research.

Huguenot Society of America – lineal descent from Huguenot (French Protestant) families who migrated to America prior to promulgation of the Edict of Toleration, 28 November 1787, or who left France for countries other than America prior to that date.

Mayflower Descendants – lineal descent from one of the passengers of the Mayflower. Well-documented list of passengers.

National Society of Colonial Dames – lineal descent from an officer or soldier who served in the Continental Army prior to 1750 and who made a conspicuous contribution to his community, i.e. serving in civil and/or church governing bodies.

National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) – membership is open to any woman who is a lineal descendant of an ancestor who assisted in establishing American independence, either as a military or naval officer, soldier or sailor, or civilian, with endorsement of two members of the Society.

National Society Sons of the American Revolution (SAR) – any man age 18 or older and a citizen of good repute in the community who is a lineal descendant of an ancestor who rendered military service, civil service, patriotic service, and many others, with endorsement.

National Society Children of the American Revolution (CAR) – same as the membership for the DAR or SAR for any girl or boy under 18 years.

The Society of the Cincinnati – Established 13 May 1783, membership is based on male lineal descent from an officer of the Continental Line. Originally based on primogeniture (oldest son only).

The Society, Daughters of the Colonial Wars – lineal descent from a soldier who fought in one of the Colonial Wars in South Carolina: the Tuscarora Expeditions 1712-13, Yemassee War 1715, St. Augustine Expedition 1740, French and Indian Wars (also Virginia, Pennsylvania, Maryland & the "western frontiers") 1754-60, Cherokee Expedition 1759-60.

Sons of the Confederacy – descent from an ancestor who served in the Confederate Army or navy to the end of the war or who died in prison or while in actual service.

United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) – descent from an ancestor who served the Confederate States of America as above.

NEW BOOKS AT THE SOUTH CAROLINA ROOM

Memories of Old Simpsonville
Index to Georgia Confederate Pensions: Supplement
Edgefield County, SC, Deed Books 30 and 31
Forsyth County, Georgia, marriage records 1833-1933
Floyd County, Georgia, Marriages v. 2, 1921-1939
Collection of Photographs from the Rammage Family of Laurens County, South Carolina
The Pension Lists of 1792-1797
Petitions for Land from the South Carolina Council Journals, Vols. VI-VII
Genealogical Abstracts from Marion, South Carolina, Newspapers 1858-1886
Genealogical Abstracts from 18th Century Virginia Newspapers

NEWS FROM OUR MAIL BAG

A new Rootsweb mailing list called OBIT-LOOKUPS is looking for volunteers to help do obituary lookups in old newspapers all over the world. The website can be accessed at http://members.aol.com/sjhcamp/index.html.

2000 SCGS SUMMER WORKSHOP AT SC ARCHIVES, JULY 7-8. The 29th annual SCGS Summer Workshop will be held on Friday and Saturday, July 7 and 8 at the South Carolina Archives and History Center located at 8301 Parklane Road, Columbia. Friday's sessions will include Beginning Genealogy, Advanced Family Tree Maker, behind the scenes tours of the Archives, and an evening Speakers' Reception and Book Signing. Saturday's sessions will include sessions on SC Civil War Research, Minority Participation in the Revolutionary War, Computer Genealogy, Research in the SE Branch of the National Archives, Lutheran Records, SC Court Records, NC Land Records, Research at the South Caroliniana Library, Huguenot Research, and Cemetery Preservation and Restoration. A lunch buffet will be offered on Saturday. Because of last year's overflow attendance, early registration is encouraged. Additional information will be forthcoming in the *CAROLINA HERALD.* Make plans now to attend.

The Hilton Head Island Genealogical Society has a website through The Island Packet until they can get their own site established. Please visit them at: www.islandpacket.com. From the Packet's homepage, click the icon for *OurTown.* Then click on *Clubs.* You will find their website listed under *Social Clubs.*

Thomas J. Jenkins has submitted an updated descendancy chart for the family of Thomas Jenkins (1695). Anyone that is interested in a copy of this, please advise and I will mail a copy immediately. These charts were originally run in our March and June, 1997 newsletters.

USING THE AVERAGES – If you are at a dead end trying to trace early pre-1850 ancestors, here are a few clues that may lead to finding that elusive documentation.

1. Generally there are three generations per century.
2. The average age for men to marry was about 24 – seldom before the age of 20
   The average age for women to marry was 20 – seldom before the age of 16.
3. First marriages were usually between couples near the same age.
4. Women usually outlived their husbands, but older widowers frequently married much younger women who had never been married.
5. Births usually occurred at two-year intervals.
6. Frequently the first child was born a year after the marriage.
7. Child bearing generally ended about age 45.
8. Men usually married women from their neighborhood, but if a "non-local" woman shows up, check the man's former home. Often men returned to their former residence to find a wife.
9. Families and neighbors usually migrated from their old homes together, and women rarely traveled alone.
10. If you find an ancestor with a "virtue" name (Patience, Hope, Charity, etc.) consider a New England heritage.
11. If you can't find an older parent, changes are he/she "went west" with a son or daughter and son-in-law.
12. Children were often named for grandparents, both male and female.

Old naming patterns –
First son named after father's father
Second son named after the mother's father
Third son named after the father
Fourth son named after the father's oldest brother
First daughter named after the mother's mother
Second daughter named after the father's mother
Third daughter named after the mother
Fourth daughter named after the mother's oldest sister.

Cousins –
The child of your parents' brother or sister is your first cousin. Your first cousin's child is not your second cousin, but your *first cousin once removed.* The child of your first cousin once removed is your first cousin *twice removed*, and his child is your *first cousin three times removed.* Your *second cousin* is your grandparents' brother's or sister's grandchild. That second cousin's child is your *second cousin once removed*, and his child is your *second cousin twice removed.* And your *third cousin?* It's your great-grandparents' brother's or sister's great-grandchild. The third cousin's child is your *third cousin once removed*, and his child is *your third cousin twice removed.*

The grandchild of your brother or sister is your grandnephew or grandniece. The sister or brother of your grandparent is your grand-aunt or grand-uncle. The sister or brother of your great-grandparents is your great-grand-aunt, or great-grand-uncle. The sister or brother of your great-grandparent is your great-grand-aunt, or great-granduncle. Thoroughly confused? (*The Brass Key* Vol. 16 No.3 Winter 1994)

THREE NEW PUBLICATIONS FROM
OLD DARLINGTON DISTRICT CHAPTER
SOUTH CAROLINA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY, INC.

FLORENCE, SC BIRTH AND DEATH REGISTRATIONS, 1895-1906
Transcribed by John L. Andrews, Jr.

South Carolina genealogical researchers have been hampered by a lack of vital statistics. Although there are notable exceptions, statewide birth and death records were not kept by the State of South Carolina until 1915. However, several municipalities kept records of births and deaths prior to the mandate for statewide records. The City of Charleston is probably the best known example. Beginning in 1895, three additional cities began to record births and deaths, Aiken, Newberry, and Florence. The Florence records are presented in this book. The birth records are remarkable for their detailed picture of each event. Beginning in June, 1895, these records reveal for each birth: the date of birth, the child's surname, the name of the physician or midwife present, the child's gender, race, and place of birth, and the parents' names, residence, place of birth, and occupation. In addition, information is provided on stillborn births, illegitimate births, and multiple births. It should be noted that in many cases both the names of the mother and father are provided for illegitimate births. State law prohibits release of information contained on birth records for 100 years, thus no birth records after December 31, 1899, are contained in this publication.

The death records contain similar information. For each death within the City of Florence, detailed records were kept. The name of the deceased, date of death, race, residence, place of death, age, birthplace, time of residence within Florence, the attending physician, and place of burial for each event is given. Among the cemeteries noted are the Fraternal Cemetery and the Potters' Field Cemetery, both of which are now abandoned and largely forgotten. Other burials were in better-known cemeteries, however permanent tombstones never marked many of these. It is believed that the City of Florence kept these death records until 1915. However, the records located by the Old Darlington District Chapter, SCGS end in 1906. © 2000, 172 pages, soft cover, spiral bound, indexed, Library of Congress Number 99-075922. Price $20.00 plus $3.50 for mailing.

MOUNT HOPE CEMETERY, FLORENCE, SC: LIST OF BURIALS, 1885-1947
Transcribed by Robert M. DeFee

In 1997, the Old Darlington District Chapter, SCGS published Volume III of its Darlington District, SC Cemetery Survey. The vast majority of that volume contained a survey of Mount Hope Cemetery. This survey detailed the information found on every marked grave in the cemetery. While this was a massive undertaking, the genealogical chapter was aware that not every grave was marked within the cemetery. In the spring of 1999, Mount Hope Cemetery gave the Old Darlington District Chapter, SCGS permission to publish the information contained in their burial record book. This record book completes the picture of the first sixty years of burials at Mount Hope. The years prior to 1915 are of particular interest to genealogists. The state of South Carolina did not record deaths until 1915, so information concerning the deaths of individuals prior to that date is sometimes difficult to obtain. The Mount Hope Burial Book helps to fill that gap. In addition to listing the name of the deceased individual, the record book lists the date of death, the date of burial, the lot number, the cause of death, the attending physician, and the name of the lot owner (most often a close relative). In late 1899, the age of the deceased was also listed. The record book also details the removal of individuals from other cemeteries to Mount Hope. Included in these removals are individuals who were first buried in the Presbyterian Church Cemetery and

the Fraternal Cemetery. Also, individuals from several family cemeteries were removed to Mount Hope Cemetery. The publication of this book also removes any doubt concerning those who are buried in unmarked graves in the cemetery. The single exception to this would be the identity of those Confederate soldiers who died at the Wayside Hospital during the War Between the States and were originally buried at the Presbyterian Church Cemetery in unmarked graves. These graves were removed to Mount Hope Cemetery and remain to this day unidentified. ©2000, 192 pages, soft cover, spiral bound, indexed, Library of Congress Number 99-069268, Price $20.00 plus $3.50 for mailing.

DEATHS AND MARRIAGES FROM 19TH CENTURY FLORENCE, SC NEWSPAPERS
Transcribed by Robert M. DeFee

Newspapers are of particular importance to genealogical researchers interested in nineteenth century South Carolina. South Carolina is well known for the almost total absence of vital statistics and marriage records during this time frame. Faced with this void, many researchers turn to extant newspapers in an effort to discover information concerning deaths and marriages. This publication extracts these notices, as well as legal notices and other interesting articles, from a variety of newspapers published in Florence, South Carolina. Until 1888, the city of Florence was located in Darlington County. In that year Florence County was formed from parts of Darlington, Clarendon, Marion, and Williamsburg Counties. The newspapers published in Florence, the county seat, are a valuable resource for information from these areas of South Carolina. Over one dozen newspapers were published in nineteenth century Florence. Despite the apparent abundance of newspapers in Florence during the last century, few copies of actual newspapers survived. This publication presents information from the following Florence newspapers: Florence Pioneer, Florence Times, Farmers' Friend, Florence Messenger, Florence Messenger-Times Messenger, Florence Daily Times, and Florence Weekly Times. The majority of the information presented is between 1895 and 1899. Below are two notices from the July 9, 1895 issue of the Florence Daily times:

DEATH OF MRS. McCALL
Mrs. Margaret McCall died at her home near Mars Bluff at 2 o'clock this morning. She had been in feeble health for some time but the summons came suddenly. After only one hour's serious sickness, she quietly passed away. The funeral services will be held tomorrow morning at 11 o'clock at Hopewell Church, in whose cemetery many of her family sleeps. Mrs. McCall leaves a family of seven children.

MARRIED
Judge C.S. McClenaghan exercising the authority within him invested, officiated in a marriage ceremony this morning. The contracting parties were Richard Allen Jenkins and Charlotte Warley.

© 2000, 218 pages, soft cover, spiral bound, indexed, Library of Congress Number 99-069775, Price $20.00 plus $3.50 for mailing.

THREE NEW PUBLICATIONS FROM
OLD DARLINGTON DISTRICT CHAPTER
SOUTH CAROLINA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY, INC.

ATTENTION LIBRARIES - OUR FEDERAL I.D. NUMBER IS 23-7348141

Please send me
(Number of copies)

_____ FLORENCE, SC BIRTH AND DEATH REGISTRATIONS, 1895-1906

_____ MOUNT HOPE CEMETERY, FLORENCE, SC: LIST OF BURIALS, 1885-1947

_____ DEATHS AND MARRIAGES FROM 19TH CENTURY FLORENCE, SC NEWSPAPERS

_____ TOTAL NUMBER OF BOOKS   @ $20.00 EACH $_____

Postage/Handling $3.50 for the first book, $1.50 for each book thereafter $_____

My check/money order made payable to **Old Darlington District Chapter** is
enclosed for : (Libraries can be invoiced) $_____

Name_____

Address_____

City_____State_____Zip_____

Mail all orders to:

        Old Darlington District Chapter, SCGS
        PO Box 175
        Hartsville, SC   29551-0175

FEDERAL CENSUS HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

A nationwide population census on a regular basis dates from the establishment of the United States. Article I, Section 2, of the United States Constitution required in 1787 that

> Representatives and direct Taxes shall be apportioned among the several States which may be included within this Union, according to their respective Numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole Number of free Persons, including those bound to Service for a Term of Years, and excluding Indians not taxed, three-fifths of all other Persons. The actual Enumeration shall be made within three Years after the first Meeting of the Congress of the United States, and within every subsequent Term of ten Years, in such Manner as they shall by Law direct.

In subsequent decades, the practice of "Service for a Term of Years" died out. "Indians not taxed" were those not living in settled areas and paying taxes; by the 1940's, all American Indians were considered to be taxed. The Civil War of 1861-65 ended slavery (abolished legally through the 13th Amendment in 1865), and the 14th Amendment to the Constitution, ratified in 1868, officially ended Article I's three-fifths rule. Thus, the original census requirements were modified Direct taxation based on the census never became practical

The 1790 Census

The first enumeration began on the first Monday in August 1790, little more than a year after the inauguration of President Washington and shortly before the second session of the first Congress ended The Members assigned responsibility for the 1790 census to the marshals of the U.S. judicial districts under an act that, with minor modifications and extensions, governed census-taking through 1840. The law required that every household be visited and that completed census schedules be posted in "two of the most public places within [each jurisdiction], there to remain for the inspection of all concerned.." and that "the aggregate amount of each description of persons" for every district be transmitted to the President. The six inquiries in 1790 called for the name of the head of the family and the number of persons in each household of the following descriptions: Free White males of 16 years and upward (to assess the country's industrial and military potential), free White males under 16 years, free White females, all other free persons (by sex and color), and slaves. Marshals took the census in the original 13 States, plus the districts of Kentucky, Maine, and Vermont, and the Southwest Territory (Tennessee). There is no evidence of a 1790 census in the Northwest Territory.

Into the 19th Century

Starting with the 1800 census, the Secretary of State directed the enumeration and, from 1800 to 1840, the marshals reported the results to him. From 1850 through 1900, the Interior Department, established in 1849, had jurisdiction.

The 1800 and 1810 population censuses were similar in scope and method to the 1790 census. However, Members of Congress, as well as statisticians and other scholars both within and outside the Federal Government, urged that while the populace was being canvassed, other information the new Government needed should be collected The first inquiries on manufacturing were made in 1810 and, in later decades, censuses of agriculture, mining, governments, religious bodies (discontinued after 1936), business, housing, and transportation were added to the decennial census. (Legislation enacted in 1948 and later years specified that the various economic, agriculture, and government censuses would be taken at times that did not conflict with those in which the population and housing censuses occurred) The census of 1820 covered the subject of population in somewhat greater detail than the preceding one. This census is notable for having obtained, for the first time, the numbers of inhabitants engaged in agriculture, commerce, and manufacturing.

The 1830 census related solely to population, but its scope concerning this subject was extended substantially. The marshals and their assistants began using uniform printed schedules; before that, they had to use whatever paper was available, rule it, write in the headings, and bind the sheets together.

The census act for 1840 authorized the establishment of a centralized census office during each enumeration and provided for the collection of statistics pertaining to "the pursuits, industry, education, and resources of the country." The new population inquiries included school attendance, illiteracy, and type of occupation.

Through the census of 1840, the household, rather than the individual, was the unit of enumeration in the population census, and only the names of the household heads appeared on the schedules. There was no tabulation beyond the simple addition of the entries the marshals had submitted, and there was no attempt to publish details uniformly by cities or towns, or to summarize returns for each State, other than by county, unless the marshals had done so.

Census Expansion

The act which governed the taking of the Seventh, Eighth, and Ninth Decennial Censuses (1850-1870) made several changes in census procedures: Each marshal was responsible for subdividing his

district into "known civil divisions," such as counties, townships, or wards, and for checking to ensure that his assistants' returns were completed properly. The number of population inquiries grew; every free person's name was to be listed, as were the items relating to each individual enumerated For the first time, in 1850, the marshals

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

collected additional "social statistics" (information about taxes, schools, crime, wages, value of estate, etc.) and data on mortality. Decennial mortality schedules for some States and territories exist for 1850-1880 and for a few places in 1885; see page 12 for text and location of records.

Noteworthy features of the 1870 census were the introduction of a rudimentary tallying device to help the clerks in their work, and the publication of maps, charts, and diagrams to illustrate the most significant census results.

The general scope of the 1880 census was expanded only slightly over that of 1870, but much greater detail was obtained for many of the items -- such detail, in fact, that beyond the basic counts, which were made and released promptly, it took almost until the 1890 census (because of budget constraints) to tabulate and publish some of the 1880 data The census act for 1880 replaced the marshals and their assistants with specially appointed agents (experts assigned to collect technical data, such as on manufacturing processes), supervisors, and enumerators, every one of whom was forbidden to disclose census information. Ever since the first census in 1790, some people had regarded many of the questions as an invasion of privacy, but before the 1880 census, there was no law limiting the extent to which the public could use or see the information on any schedule. (Subsequent demographic and economic censuses, as well as most surveys, have been carried out according to statutes that make compliance mandatory, with penalties for refusal; and responses confidential, with penalties for disclosure. Congress codified these laws in 1954 as Title 13, U.S. Code.) For the first time, enumerators were given detailed maps to follow so they could account for every street or road and not stray beyond their assigned boundaries. The National Archives' Cartographic and Architectural Branch has a collection of these maps.

Again, in 1890, there was a slight extension of the decennial census's scope, and some subjects were covered in even greater detail than in 1880. Data were collected in supplemental surveys on farm and home mortgages and private corporations' and individuals' indebtedness. The 1890 census also used, for the first time in history, a separate schedule for each family. Herman Hollerith, who had been a special agent for the 1880 census, developed punchcards and electric tabulating machines in time to process the census returns, reducing considerably the time needed to complete the clerical work. Hollerith's venture became part of what is now the IBM Corporation. Both the cards and the machines were improved progressively over the next 50 years.

The 1890 census was historic in another way. In the first volume of the results, the Superintendent of the Census wrote these significant words:

> Up to and including 1880 the country had a frontier of settlement, but at present the unsettled area has been so broken into by isolated bodies of settlement that there can hardly be said to be a frontier line. In the discussion of its extent, its westward movement, etc., it can not, therefore, any longer have a place in the census reports.

Commenting on this statement in a classic paper delivered in 1893, one of America's great historians, Frederick Jackson Turner, wrote, "Up to our own day American history has been in a large degree the history of the colonization of the Great West. The existence of am area of free land, its continuous recession, and the advance of American settlement westward, explain American development."2 The censuses that followed 1890 reflected the filling in rather than the expansion of the colonized areas, and this meant a turning point in American life.

COMPUTER CORNER

Twenty Ways to Avoid Genealogical Grief

http://www.rootsweb.com/roots-l/20ways.html

Here are some suggestions to help beginners prevent misfortune when learning how to do genealogical research. Many of these tips are "old hat" to experienced genealogists, but it is always worthwhile to remind ourselves of the basics of sound research.

1. Always note the source of information that you record or photocopy, and date it too. If the material is from a book, write the name, author, publisher, year of publication, ISBN or ISSN (if it has one), and also the library where you found it (or else photocopy the title page). Occasionally you'll find that you need to refer to a book again, or go back to great aunt Matilda to clarify something she told you.

2. Talk to all your older-generation relatives (before they're all gone and you're the older generation!) Even a distant relative can be a goldmine of information about your ancestors.

3. Make photocopies or keep backups of all letters and e-mail messages you send. This will save you from wondering which of your correspondents' questions you've already answered, and which of your questions they have or haven't answered.

4. Don't procrastinate in responding to letters or messages you receive. If you don't have time to write a detailed reply, send your correspondent a quick message or postcard to acknowledge receipt and tell her/him approximately when you'll send them a more complete reply. Then be sure to write back as you've promised.

5. Make frequent backups of your computer disks. Store your backups and photocopies of your irreplaceable documents where you work or at someone else's home.

6. When searching for relatives in records, don't pass over entries that are almost (but not quite) what you're looking for. For example, if you're searching for the marriage of John Brown and Mary Jones in 1850, make a note of the marriage of John Brown and Nancy Smith in 1847: this could be a previous marriage in which the wife died shortly after.

7. When writing to libraries or to genealogical or historical societies in your areas of interest, ask them for the names and addresses of out-of-print booksellers in the area. Write to the booksellers and ask if they have any old local histories or family histories pertaining to the area.

8. Remember that just because information is on computer or in print, it ain't necessarily fact! Information in recent family histories is often based on that from older published works. If the older books are incorrect, the wrong information simply gets repeated and further disseminated.

9. The earlier the time period in which you're researching, the less consistent our ancestors were about the spelling of their surnames. Also, some of them were illiterate and couldn't tell a record keeper how their names should be spelled.

10. Family traditions of close connections to famous people are usually false, but there may be a more obscure relationship involved. For example, perhaps the famous person spent a night at your ancestor's inn instead of (as the legend goes) marrying into the family.

11. Try not to let your research get behind. Establish a filing system for your papers (using file folders or 3-ring binders) and file each page of notes, document, photocopy, etc. as you acquire it. There are few things more disheartening than contemplating a foot-high stack of unfiled papers, wondering if the birth certificate you desperately need to refer to is buried somewhere in it.

12. Double-check all dates to make sure they are reasonable, for example, a woman born in 1790 could not have become a mother in 1800.

13. Be on the lookout for nicknames. A request for a birth certificate for Sadie White may be rejected by a record office if the name in their files is Sarah White.

14. Beware of mail-order promotions offering what might purport to be a personalized genealogy of your surname with a title like *The Amazing Story of the BLANK Family, BLANKs Since the Civil War* or *Burke's Peerage World Book of BLANKs*. These books are not properly researched and documented genealogies; instead they are often little more than lists of names from phone directories or other readily-available sources. Notify the Better Business Bureau, postal authorities and consumer advocate agencies if you receive one of these. For more about these, see the ROOTS-L FAQ file FAQ SCAMS. If you're looking for occurrences of a particular surname, national and international phone listings are widely available on CD-ROM and can be viewed in many public libraries or purchased.

15. Don't assume modern meanings for terms used to describe relationships. For example, in the 17th century a step-child was often called a "son-in-law" or "daughter-in-law," and a "cousin" could refer to almost any relative except a sibling or child.

16. Remember that indexes to books rarely include the names of all persons mentioned in the book and, in addition, occasionally contain errors. If it appears that a book is likely to have valuable information, spend some time skimming its contents rather than returning it to the library shelf after a quick glance at the index.

17. Boundaries and place names change constantly over the years. Always verify them in historical atlases or genealogical texts pertaining to the area. For example the boundaries of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania have changed four times since it was first colonized.

18. Be precise when making notes and especially when sharing information with others. Write dates using an unambiguous format: Americans interpret 5/6/1881 as 6 May 1881, but in many other countries it would be read as 5 June 1881. Always capitalize or underling surnames, some of which can be mistaken for given names, e.g., HENRY, HOWARD. Note place names in full, including parish or township, county, state or province, and county.

19. You'll often encounter conflicting information, for example, you might discover that your paternal grandmother's birth date on her gravestone is different than her birth date as told to you by your father. Note the source for each piece of information, but don't feel you have to decide immediately which date is the correct one. In fact, both of them may be wrong! Further research may reveal a more credible birth date, for example, the one on her birth certificate. Take time occasionally to review and verify the conclusions you've reached concerning each of your ancestors' lives: this will prevent you from wasting time following blind alleys.

20. Whenever you can, advertise the surnames you're researching by posting them electronically (for example, on the RootsWeb Surname List) and submitting them to genealogical directories and surname lists published by genealogical directories and surname lists published by genealogical societies that you belong to. This will put you in touch with others who are researching the same surnames-possibly for a much longer time-and save you from reinventing the wheel. After all, the most rewarding genealogical research is the kind that no-one else has already done!

The original copy of this article is located at http://www.rootsweb.com/roots-1/20ways.html.

FAIRFIELD GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY
~~P.O. BOX 696~~ 418 EVANS Street Extension
WINNSBORO, SC 29180-0696