



"Imaging"

The New Word That Has Evolved in Genealogy

Over the years, genealogists and family historians have constantly upgraded their software and hardware. In hardware, we have added color printers and scanners. In software, new upgrades allowed us to add photos to our genealogy software programs. Many new photo enhancer programs are now available.

Today, your camera film developer offers to put your pictures on a disk. We are bombarded with adds for digital cameras, whose images are processed electronically without the need for film.

Our next two meetings will deal with imaging. Glen will show a video on August 11 and Marvin will be with us on September 8 to bring us the latest information and technology on the subject.

Glen's first video is:
Digital Imaging for Genealogy

"In the 21st century the use of digital images has become

a very important tool to family history enthusiast.



Throughout this video, genealogist Richard Wilson will teach you how to use digital cameras, scanners and software to preserve and document your family history."

This video will not only be informative, but it will prepare you to better understand Marvin's presentation in September when he talks about the state of the art. He will be talking about digital cameras and scanners.





Charles Morman

Is your genealogical data organized? Painless Organization for Genealogists

The second video Glen will show on August 11
will help you organize your data.

"Here is a video to help you organize your genealogical notes, documents, research, books, and more. In a friendly and practical manner, professional genealogist Sharon DeBartolo Carmack shows you how to reduce and deal with the ever-mounting piles of papers, so you can spend more time researching and less time hunting for information lost somewhere on your desk or in your office. You'll save time, money, and space as you learn to organize everything from files to research trips to your work space. Whether you have a room dedicated to your family history papers or just a storage box, you'll find a system that puts the information you need right at your fingertips."

Medical Terminology for the Layman

Artery	Study of fine paintings
Barium	What you do when C.P.R. fails
Benign	What you are after you be eight
Cesarean	Section A district in Rome
Colic	A sheep dog
Coma	A punctuation mark
Congenital	Friendly
Dilate	To live long
Fester	Quicker
G.I. Series	Baseball games between teams of soldiers
Grippe	A suitcase
Hangnail	A coat hook
Medical staff	A doctor's cane
Minor operation	Coal digging
Morbid	A higher offer
Nitrate	Lower than day rate
Node	Was aware of
Organic	Church musician
Outpatient	A person who has fainted
Post operative	A letter carrier
Protein	In favor of young people
Secretion	Hiding everything
Tablet	A small table
Tumor	An extra pair
Urine	Belonging to you
Varicose veins	Veins which are very close together



Bill Reese



"GETTING THE MOST FOR YOUR INFORMATION DOLLAR,"

by Patricia Law Hatcher, CG, FASG

(Originally appeared in "Genealogical Computing" Summer 2000)

Recent years have seen dramatic growth in the number of computer products that supply information. Numerous CD-ROMs and Internet databases compete for the genealogist's information dollars. So where should you spend your hard-earned money?

GETTING STARTED

If you're just beginning to research your family tree, you have many promising new avenues to explore. It's not unlikely that each week you will unearth a new clue at the library or find a new set of distant cousins on the Internet. Your information technology dollars will be best spent on a dedicated phone line, a high-speed modem, and a reliable service provider. Use centralized sites such as Cyndi's List and search engines to explore the free resources of the Internet.

DON'T PAY FOR NAME COLLECTIONS

There is no reason to pay for compilations of names. Several commercial Web sites have free family tree sections. Thousands of people have created their own family Web sites-and the family member is a convenient e-mail address away. If the Web site does not contain documentation-and unfortunately most don't-you can contact the person immediately by e-mail to ask about his or her sources. Remember, at this point you are merely collecting suggestions or opinions about a lineage. Some are correct and some are not. Often you will have to verify the names, dates, and places yourself.

PERSI IS A MUST

Whether a beginning or an advanced researcher, every genealogist needs to use the Periodical Source Index (PERSI) routinely. PERSI is one of two major sources (the other is the Family History Library Catalog) that will help you find what's been published on families and localities.

A project of the Allen County (Fort Wayne, Indiana) Public Library, ERSI identifies the primary topic of each article in its genealogical and local history periodical collection-the largest in the world. PERSI contains more than one million entries.

Ancestry.com markets PERSI on CD-ROM and as a database on its Web site. PERSI on CD-ROM is substantially faster to use, plus creating and printing research checklists is easy. However, it goes out of date about once a year, when an updated version with thousands of new entries is released. PERSI on the Ancestry.com Web site doesn't go out of date-and you get access to Ancestry's other databases-but access can be slower (depending on your modem) and the Web version doesn't have all the features of the CD-ROM.

USE A FOCUSED, LOCALITY-BASED APPROACH

The time comes for all of us when we cannot merely collect and verify. Inadequate documentation, conflicting information, or a lack of already-compiled families means it's time to begin really researching.

Pick a single research problem (locality and time period) and focus on it. Narrowing your focus is tough. It was difficult to do in pre-electronic times, and it's even more difficult when the entire world is just a few mouse clicks away. In the long run, though, putting on blinders and looking at one small piece of your ancestry at a time will produce more valid additions to your family tree than jumping randomly from one branch to another.

RESEARCH YOUR PURCHASES

You'll get the most from CD-ROMs if you research your purchases. Begin by reviewing catalogs you've received in the mail and by reading ads in genealogical magazines and vendor Web sites. Check back issues of genealogical publications for CD-ROM reviews and ads. In some areas, you'll find there's more offered than you can afford to buy. Make a list of what's available. If it's a long list, you've got some choices ahead.

INVESTIGATE FEE-BASED WEB SITES

You don't have to join to learn which databases are on a particular fee-based site, and you can usually search the databases of surnames for free. You'll learn which databases have your name of interest. Decide if they are useful to you. If your research is stuck in Indiana, a large number of hits in Massachusetts and Virginia databases won't help-yet. But keep them in mind for later. Some Web sites specialize in traditional compiled genealogies; others focus on twentieth century data. Decide which Web site is right for you, based on your research problem. A one-month membership fee is considerably less than a single printed volume, hence a real boon for those residing far from a genealogical library.

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CENSUSES

Censuses are the mainstay of genealogical research. Both indexes and images are available on Web sites and CD-ROMs. Several companies are releasing images of census microfilm on a state-by-state basis. The first time you use one of these sources to do an extensive search, you'll appreciate it. Winding and rewinding microfilm and making numerous trips to and from the microfilm cabinet to swap rolls of film will be a thing of the past. Ease of use and speedy access mean you are more likely to explore all possibilities and track down all siblings and collateral relatives.

LOOK FOR ELECTRONIC VERSIONS OF PRINTED ABSTRACTS

Some book-form abstracts are classics-good examples are Massachusetts vital records, Hinshaw's Quaker records, or Maryland probates. Note that these are abstracts of primary data that cover a large, but defined area. They are basic resources genealogists use over and over. Publications such as these, especially those in a multi-volume series, are now appearing in electronic form (text, image, or database).

Since this information is available in print form, should you spend your information dollars on them? Some of the CD-ROM series are based on volumes originally published decades ago that aren't available in small or new genealogical collections. If you have a significant family cluster in the area, you will find them very useful. And if you ever exhaust their usefulness, they'd be a welcome donation to your local genealogical library.

If you have a good library nearby, the electronic version still might be a viable option. It depends on how often you use the print version. If you can walk directly to the right shelf at the library, then the CD-ROM version is an excellent candidate for purchase. If you know what color the binding is, you might want to get out your credit card now.

PERIODICALS

The introduction of CD-ROM versions of respected journals such as The New England Historical and Genealogical Register, The Mayflower Descendant, The National Genealogical Society Quarterly, and The Pennsylvania Genealogical Magazine has been a major boon to genealogists. And the good news is that other journals will be available in the near future.

Using CD-ROMs of periodicals is a joy. In printed form, each periodical volume has its own index. A cumulative

index might be created every quarter-century or so, but searching all index volumes and then checking all references can be time-consuming and tedious (and many libraries do not have complete runs). The combined index and easy access of the CD-ROM is a great time-saver.

SOME SOURCES ARE ONLY AVAILABLE ELECTRONICALLY

Societies and individual genealogists are finding that electronic media are an inexpensive way to publish. Many small projects are thus becoming available beyond a type-script at the local library. This category includes such valuable topics as cemetery and newspaper abstracts.

Some of these are marketed on CD-ROM, but more are on the Internet. Many of these small projects are available as part of The USGenWeb Project and on Ancestry.com.

IF YOU CAN'T IDENTIFY WHAT IT INCLUDES, DON'T BUY IT

Genealogists need to know what they've searched and what they haven't. Unfortunately, a number of hodge-podge compilations are on the market. All too often, the descriptions for CD-ROMs are vague-"Some marriage records." What is "some"? If the reference you seek is there, that's great, but if it isn't, what help was it? Some companies have become lax in describing their products. As consumers, we need to pressure them to describe the contents precisely-time period, locality, and source of information-in their ads, on the package, and in a read-me file or introduction on the CD-ROM.

NOW THAT YOU'VE BOUGHT IT, LEARN TO USE IT

Really learn to use your CD-ROMs. Don't just click the buttons on the screen. Explore the options on the menus. There are often tools that go beyond looking up names.

If a CD-ROM lets you "mark" entries from its index, learn how to print marked entries to create a research list before you begin checking the references. This is especially important when the index has a large number of entries. It's easy for a promising clue to distract you before you complete the search. If you have the partially checked-off list to remind you, you'll be more likely to resume your search and not overlook a valuable entry. If the index shows page numbers, this can also help you avoid repeatedly returning to a page that has multiple index entries.

If the CD-ROM or Web site is text based, learn how to
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copy and paste the text into your word processor or database software to avoid re-keying errors.

BUY SEVERAL CD-ROM SOURCES

The most powerful research payoff with CD-ROMs and databases is the ability to follow up on leads immediately. From the 1850 census, you can go to a vital record. From there, you can search a periodical. Then it's on to probate records to follow up on a possible collateral line—all without ever leaving your computer. Using more than one type of CD-ROM and database for a locality can be synergistic.

TECHNOLOGY CAN MAKE US BETTER RESEARCHERS

With information CD-ROMs, it's quick and easy to explore leads—all leads. We're more likely to search every option, reducing the possibility that we've latched onto the correct name, but the wrong person. We can track down all the siblings and investigate the neighbors, thereby learning more about our extended ancestral family. Information technology can help us be better genealogists.

Patricia Law Hatcher is a Certified Genealogist who writes and lectures on problem solving. Although she lives a quarter of an hour from a library with an excellent collection, she has found that judicious expenditure of information dollars has helped reduce the time required to solve problems and has increased accuracy with more thorough attention to collateral lines.

NOTE: This article originally appeared in the Summer 2000 issue of "Genealogical Computing" magazine. A one-year subscription to "GC" is available today in The Shops @ Ancestry.com for only \$19.95.

Have You Written Your Obituary?

What will appear in the newspapers about your life after your death? Who is most qualified to author your obituary? My sister-in-law, who just celebrated her 90th birthday, felt the obituaries of her friends were terrible. They were incomplete and contained errors. For this reason, she has written her own obituary, which is stored with her will, insurance policies, and other valuable papers.

Many genealogists have gleaned valuable information from published obituaries. In other cases, we have been disappointed when living children were not named or the mother's maiden name was not included. The column dedicated to your passing from this earth should be interesting, truthful, and informative. Future genealogist will appreciate your thoughtfulness.

1. Age is frequently given in years only. Give the birthdate also.
2. Include mother's maiden name
3. If it is a woman, give her maiden name and parents.
3. Where you resided during your lifetime.
4. List your children and their marriages.
5. List siblings, living and deceased.

Newspapers keep this information updated on celebrities. Think of yourself as a famous person. What would other people want to know about you? Also, keep it updated.



Vital Records Index — Western Europe

By Allin Kingsbury

The Vital Records Index-Western Europe is now available from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on CD-ROM disks. This set contains information on more than 12.5 million people in Western Europe from church records and civil registrations. The church records include christenings and marriages, and civil registrations include births and marriages and some other miscellaneous events. There are approximately 10 million birth or christening records and 2.5 million marriages records. The time period covered is from about 1550 through 1900. Any records within 95 years of the release date of the CDs are excluded to protect the privacy of the individuals.

Version 3.0 of the viewer software, included with the index, is updated from an earlier version included with the Vital Records Index-North America. If you are using the earlier version, the updated viewer can be installed without removing the earlier version. Version 3.0 adds several new functions that can also be used with the North American CD-ROM disks.

Most events include the name of the principal individual and the names of his or her parents along with the date and place. Some christening records include the names of the grandparents. The source of the information is also included so that you may check the original record on microfilm. Microfilms of original records are available through LDS Family History Centers. It is good practice to check the original records. Mistakes may have been made and additional information may be included which did not fit into the index. Additional information may include place or name of residence, date and place of the marriage of the parents (for christenings), and occupations. A careful examination of the original is necessary in getting the correct data when errors occur.

Because the boundaries of European countries have changed frequently, many people have changed countries without moving. The data on the CD-ROM index is divided into regions rather countries. The Alpine region covers present-day Switzerland and Austria. The BeNe-Lux region includes Belgium, Netherlands and Luxembourg. The French German region includes Baden, Bayam, HessenDarmstadt, Lippe-Detmold, Oldenberg, Pruessa, Turingia and Wuerttemberg. The Italian region covers Italy and Spanish region includes Spain and Portugal. Searching a region, particularly in the French German region where map shave had significant changes over time, will make it faster to find an individual.

Surnames are standardized into groups with variant name spellings listed under a common name. For exam-

ple, the name Smith would also include spellings as "Smyth" and "Smithe." Not all variant spellings of a name may be included in the group. It may be necessary to search other possible spellings to find an individual.

The search software has many useful features which can be used to help make a search more efficient. If you know a particular spelling was used, you can search for an exact spelling. If not, you can search using "sounds like" spellings. You can search for a specified time period by specifying a year, plus or minus a number of years. For names, which could be either male or female from misspelling (Francis or Frances), the sex can be specified to limit search results. Up to two wildcard characters (asterisks for zero or multiple characters and the question mark for one character) can be used in search when the spelling is uncertain. Boolean searches are available using the operators, "and", "or", and "not."

The parent search can be used to find the records of other children in a family once the parents' names are known. This is helpful when children were born in different localities. One must be careful, especially with common surnames, because multiple sets of parents may be found.

Some areas in Southern Europe use the last names of both parents for the child's name. For Spanish names, the first surname comes from the father and the second surname comes from the mother. For Portuguese names, the surnames have the opposite order. The two names are normally considered as a single name and a search would be for the combined names. Many records in the index do not have both names. This makes it necessary to search for the double surname and for each name singly. The latter can be done with a single search using both names separated with an "or."

Records can be saved as a GEDCOM (GEneological Data COMMunication) file. The GEDCOM file can be imported into your database or it can be sent to others on disk or by e-mail. Records can also be saved in a RTF (Rich Text Format) file that can be read by almost every word processor.

This index consists of 21 CD-ROM disks plus one disk with the software. The Spanish region coverage appears to be the most complete with eight CD-ROMs, or more than one third of the set. Be aware that this index only includes a small part of the microfilmed records for Europe and includes those records which have been extracted to date.

The entire set of 22 CD-ROM sells for \$27 including shipping in the United States. For more information about the Vital Records Index-Western Europe or to order it online via their secure Web server, go to:

www.FamilySearch.org Then click on "Order Family History Resources," then on "Software Products," and on "Census and Vital Records."

The above is a reprint from the December, 2000 issue of the PAFINDER, The Silicon Valley PAF Users Group publication.

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