



West Virginia Archives & History News



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WEST VIRGINIA'S 55 COUNTIES

From the Editor:

West Virginia's fifty-five counties evoke fierce loyalty in both native and adopted citizens. Home is always a special place in the human heart, whether left at an early age or the location of a long, full life. Many of the out-of-state Archives Library patrons who come to West Virginia, perhaps for the first time in their lives, still feel the ties that bind them through ancestry to a particular county. Often they will read county histories and sometimes peruse local newspapers to get a feel for the time and place in which their families lived. They search maps for the small communities or creek banks where the old homeplaces were located. By examining the households listed before and after great-grandpa's farm on the census, they form a picture of who the neighbors were. As you research your family history, try to learn as much as you can from the information available, to step beyond names and dates to the human beings they represent. Those who simply look for their ancestors' names in census rolls and on documents without stopping to wonder about who those people actually were and how they lived their lives are missing out on what I see as the real reason for tracing genealogy and studying history—learning about the hearts, minds and experiences that helped shape our own characters and the world we live in today, with the intent of passing on the best of our heritage to the newest generation. Write or call me and tell me

the reason *you* are climbing *your* family tree: **Susan Scouras, Archives and History, (304) 558-0230, Ext. 742.** (Descendant of the Preston and Daniels families of Johnson County, KY and the Baker and Brown families of Bourbon County, KY.)

West Virginia County Resources in the Archives

Archives and History salutes our own **Cathy Miller**, who just completed a six-month long project by compiling a bibliography of **West Virginia County Resources** available in the West Virginia Archives Library. Cathy compiled all the materials, evaluated the appropriateness of each title for inclusion, and typed a bibliography for each county. This extensive listing of materials, which has been placed on our Web site by **Joe Geiger**, includes books, periodical articles, pamphlets, newspaper clippings and microfilm (excluding county records) in the Archives collection for each of the fifty-five counties. Although county records are not listed on this section of the site, a direct link to a listing of each county's microfilmed records is located below the bibliography for that county. Links are also provided to any other materials on the Web site that are related, such as community histories. Copies of the clippings cited are available from the Archives Library through Cathy Miller, who can be e-mailed from the site.

Cathy says the intent of the project is to provide lists of resources that students and teachers may be able to find in their school and/or local public libraries when studying the history of their county in West Virginia. A county library will usually have the histories written about that county and will have local newspapers. Cathy hopes to supplement those local resources by offering copies of newspaper clippings from the Archives files. Also, if a researcher is planning a trip to the Archives Library, going over the list of available material beforehand will help him or her make best use of time while in the Library.

We also hope that if you or your organization have published material relating to your county that you will check West Virginia County Resources to see if the Archives has copies. Donations are always welcome to fill in gaps in the collection.

Tips for researching in West Virginia county records:

Records for the Virginia counties that became part of West Virginia were retained by those counties after separation. Therefore, all records available for West Virginia counties from their inception as Virginia counties can be searched through West Virginia sources such as the Archives or the county courthouses. Use the map included in this issue to determine the founding date of the county and the county/counties from which it was formed. For records prior to the formation of the county, check the records of the counties from which your county derived until you locate the one that includes the actual land area where your family lived. Also, if you do not find your family in the county you expected, check the map to see which counties are adjacent to the one you started with, and if any of those counties were separated from your initial county in the relevant time period. Your ancestors may not have moved, but their county government may have changed. For example, Grant County was formed in 1866 from Hardy County, which was formed in 1786 from Hampshire County.

Keep this in mind when studying the history of a county, also. To fully understand Grant County's history, you need to learn something about Hardy County's history, and perhaps Hampshire County's past, as well. Counties were divided into districts for voting, tax collecting, the census, and sometimes for recordkeeping. In searching county records, be sure you see all of the records for a specific time period. A single, county-wide record ledger was not always kept. Sometimes a magistrate in each district kept records for his district only, and each individual district's record list will be copied separately into the county ledger. In other words, if a list of births is indicated as being for a specific district, check the next few pages for additional district listings with births for the same time period.

Between roughly 1890 and 1920, many clerks used a filing system unfamiliar to modern researchers. The system is alphabet based, but is not in straight alphabetical order. Be sure to take a few minutes to look over any strange indexing arrangement, or to ask staff for assistance in understanding how to locate a particular surname. Don't overlook your ancestor because you didn't know how to use the index, or the *index to the index*. In the same time period mentioned above, the use of typewriters increased. Some county clerks took their old ledgers, typed the information onto sheets for new ledgers, and tossed out the original handwritten records. Although 18th and 19th century handwriting can be difficult for 20th century eyes and minds to interpret, the typewritten records have their own problems. Be on the lookout for copying mistakes and typographical errors in such records. Letters or numbers may be transposed, etc. (There is also always the possibility that a line may have been skipped in the copying process, and a record lost.) Even the handwritten record may have been rewritten over time, or compiled from lists made by district magistrates. Consider all these possibilities when trying to determine if a record is the one you are looking for. Be persistent and ask questions!

NEW TITLES

TITLE: *AUTHOR, PUBLICATION DATE.*

Farewell Appalachia, Farewell: Boone Salisbury, 1996.

The Ivory Hollyhock: Dreama Wyant Frisk, 1998.

Annual Report for Union Carbide: Union Carbide Corporation, 1921 through 1980.

The Ancestry of Anthony Morris Johnson, Vol. IX: Robert Leland Johnson, 1999.

Index to *History of Monroe County, West Virginia*: (Index to Morton's *History of Monroe County, West Virginia*) John H. Allen, editor, 2000.

Ancestor Tree: Volume III: West Virginia Genealogical Society, 1994.

Reflections from the Mount: Lillian Gangwere Cale, 1999.

The Declaration of Independence: Thomas Jefferson's Manuscript Draft from the Collections of the American Philosophical Society: Facsimile edition, 2000.

Three Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, 1804-1806: from the Collections of the American Philosophical Society: Facsimile edition, Edward C. Carter II, editor, 2000.

The Rending of Virginia: a History: Granville Davisson Hall: *with a new introduction by John Edmund Stealey III*, 2000.

The Cold, Cold Hand: More Stories of Ghosts and Haunts from the Appalachian Foothills: James V. Burchill, Linda J. Crider, and Peggy Kendrick, 1997.

West Virginia Resources and Research Sites: Mining Your History Foundation, 1999.

The Greenbrier Ghost: and Other Strange Stories: Dennis Deitz, 1990.

Unpuzzling Your Past: A Basic Guide to Genealogy: 3rd ed., Emily Anne Croom, c1995.

Tracing Your Roots: Locating Your Ancestors Through Landscape and History: Meg Wheeler, 1996.

The Chronology of the Descendants of John and Elizabeth Richards Beall: Dr. James Woofter, 2000.

Some Descendants of Jonathan Farrar 1790-1874 and Mary Kilby Farrar 1793-1852: William H. Farrar, 1980.

The Hulce/Hulse Families in America: Volume 1: *Descendants of Elisha Hulce/Hulse 1725-1796, Goshen, NY*; Volume 2: *Descendants of Elisha Hulce/Hulse 1725-1796, Goshen, NY*; Volume 3: *Descendants of James Hulce/Hulse 1791-1875, Somerset County, NJ*: Lynn C. Harper, 1998.

Backenstoss–Baggenstoss Family History: Elwood Bruce Backensto, 1993.

Addendum to Backenstoss–Baggenstoss Family History: Elwood Bruce Backensto, 1995.

The Colonial Riley Families of the Tidewater Frontier: Volumes I and II: A History of Several Riley Families of Maryland and Virginia: Robert Shean Riley, 1999.

Perkins and Early Related Families African-American: Part I and Part II: Edith E. Perkins, 1995.

Ohio County (WV) Index, Volume 5: Kenneth Fischer Craft, Jr., 2000.

Charles Clendinen of Virginia: His Parents: His Son Alexander...: John F. and Harriet M. Clendinen, 2000.

The Douglass Family from 1734: A Collection of Family Histories Compiled by the Descendants of William Douglass and Anna Davidson Douglass: Mary Clark, et al, 1999.

The American Revolution, 1775-1783: An Atlas of 18th Century Maps and Charts, Theatres of Operations: Compiled by W. Bart Greenwood, Dept. of the Navy, 1972.

Lexington in Old Virginia: Henry Boley, c1936.

Johnson Family of Pocahontas Co., Va (Wva): Anna M. (Totten) Dillen, (no date.)

Home Remedies from the Old South, 4th ed.: Emily Thacker, 1993.

The Iroquois in the Civil War: From Battlefield to Reservation: Laurence M. Hauptman, 1993.

Killing Waters: The Great West Virginia Flood of 1985: Bob Teets and Shelby Young, 2nd ed., 1985.

Windows on Hancock County, West Virginia: Biographical and Local History for 150 Years: 1850-2000: Tri-State Genealogical and Historical Society, 1999.

Beautiful Historic Monroe County: Special Edition 1999 Bicentennial Calendar: Monroe County Bi-centennial Committee, (no date.)

Highlights of Monroe County Schools: 1799-1999: Monroe County Bi-centennial Committee, 1997.

MEET OUR STAFF:

CATHY MILLER

Cathy has been an employee of Archives and History for thirteen years. In addition to staffing the Archives Library, she is responsible for the West Virginia State Documents Collection. As you can imagine, she is especially busy during Legislative sessions, making sure the Archives receives copies of all legislative documents, and making them accessible to our patrons daily. Cathy also maintains the periodical and newspaper collections, and has compiled an index of the Archives holdings in both areas. As discussed in our feature article this month, Cathy evaluated, compiled and typed all of the information for the *West Virginia County History Resources* project completed in July 2000. Her next project is to place the Archives' *Surname Files* (formerly called "Family History Files") contents on line. The *Surname Files*, as the name indicates, are collections of newspaper clippings, genealogy charts, brief family histories, etc., filed by surnames. Prominent West Virginia individuals have separate files within the overall file of their surnames. We know Cathy will do a thorough job with this project as well, and our patrons will appreciate the availability of another Archives resource on our Web site.

STILL AVAILABLE!!
WEST VIRGINIA HISTORY
 COLLECTORS EDITION, VOLUME 47
Special Sale Price: \$3.00
MEET OUR STAFF:
SUMMER VOLUNTEERS

Our newest student volunteer is **Jacqueline Nicole Canady** of Charleston. Nicole is a senior at Denison University in Grandville, Ohio, majoring in sociology/anthropology and minoring in history. While in the Archives she is receiving a wide range of experience, working with patrons in the Archives Library, researching letter questions, sorting donated letters and documents, etc. We are very pleased to have Nicole with us for the summer.

Congratulations to volunteer **Brady Blevins** on his July wedding! Brady has finished his volunteer work with us for the summer and is preparing for his senior year at West Virginia State, where his bride is also a student.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

C H E C K O U R W E B S I T E
 (<http://www.wvculture.org/history>) *FOR*
GENEALOGICAL and HISTORICAL SOCIETY
MEETING ANNOUNCEMENTS, AND FOR MORE
COMPLETE INFORMATION ON ACTIVITIES
LISTED BELOW:

2ND ANNUAL COL. GEORGE S. PATTON CIVIL WAR WEEKEND, AUG. 12-13. Craik-Patton House, Charleston.

LABOR DAY, SEPT. 4. Archives Library will be *closed*.

"PRESERVING HISTORIC RESOURCES WITH TECHNOLOGY AND ACTION," SEPT. 8-9. Conference sponsored by Preservation Alliance of West Virginia, Inc. and Weston Historic Landmarks Committee, Weston.

BERKELEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL HISTORIC HOUSE TOUR, SEPT. 9-10.

ROANE CO. GENEALOGY FAIR, SEPT. 30. "MILITARY CLAIMS AND PENSIONS," OCT. 17. John Lavery, KYOWVA Genealogical Society, Huntington.

"DISCOVERING YOUR WEST VIRGINIA ROOTS AND HISTORY," OCT. 28. Sponsored by Hacker's Creek Pioneer Descendants, Mining Your History Foundation and West Virginia Historical Society. For more information on this **major genealogy conference**, use the link through the *Upcoming Events* portion of our Web site, or go to <http://www.rootsweb.com/~hcpd/fair.htm>.

GENERAL ELECTION DAY*, NOV. 7. Archives Library will be open regular hours.

VETERANS DAY*, NOV. 10. Archives Library will be open regular hours.

"1910 CABELL COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA CENSUS," NOV. 21. Sheri Pettit, KYOWVA Genealogical Society, Huntington.

From the January 18, 1911 Charleston Daily Mail:

"Archives and History Department Good Place to Visit"

During the session of the State legislature the department of Archives and History will be open from 8 o'clock in the morning until 5 in the afternoon, and from 7 until 10 o'clock at night. The rule requiring the department to remain open during evening hours applies only to the time the legislature is in session, and the hours are fixed so as to accommodate the members of the legislature, their relatives and friends, visitors in the city and the public generally. State Archivist and Historian Virgil A. Lewis accords all a hearty invitation to visit the department at this time. Especially is a visit during the evening hours of interest. The rooms are brilliantly lighted by electricity, are comfortably warmed, and the many interesting displays present a doubly interesting appearance at night. The department of Archives and History

is located in the Capitol Annex and it is by far the most interesting department to the visitor in the city.

Although we are no longer open in the evenings, we think Archives and History is still "by far the most interesting" place to visit in Charleston. Most people who intend to drop in for a brief visit find themselves staying for hours. We have many sources of information in the Archives collection and we are ready and willing to share with you both the materials and our expertise in deciphering them. The "hearty invitation" still stands 89 years later.

DO YOU HAVE A BOOK FOR SALE?

Family researchers from all over the country visit the Archives and sometimes use addresses found in the books or obtained from our staff to order their own copies. (Great reason to donate a copy!) If you are publishing a book which will be for sale, be sure to include ordering information on the back of the title page. We regret that we can not accept advertisements in this newsletter nor on our Web site, but we can post your flyer on the Archives Library bulletin board at your request.

DONATIONS

Thank you to **Jean Thomas** of Poca for donating a variety of used books and pamphlets last month. We also greatly appreciate the donation of fourteen new copies of their publications by **Joy Gilchrist-Stalnaker** and the **Hacker's Creek Pioneer Descendants**. Your donations are always welcome, whether you have one title or a boxful. **Gift plates** are placed in all donated volumes with the name and town of the donor and the date of donation.

COPY PRICES AND POLICIES

The Archives Library now offers 11" x 17" microfilm copies from the laser printer at \$1.00 per copy. Coin-operated microfilm reader/printer copies are \$.25, while staff-produced 8 1/2" x 11" microfilm copies are \$.50. Standard photocopies of 8 1/2" x 11" or 8" x 14" are \$.25 per page. An 11" x

17" photocopy is \$.50. If a copying project requires more than 30 minutes of staff time, an additional charge of \$15.00 per hour applies after the first ½ hour.

ARCHIVES AND HISTORY STAFF

Fredrick Armstrong: Director
Debra Basham: Archivist (photographs, special collections)
Greg Carroll: Historian (Civil War, Native American history)
Dick Fauss: Archivist (microfilm and moving images)
Elaine Gates: Part-time Library Assistant (microfilming and microfilm repairs)
Joe Geiger: Historian (Web page, publications)
Ed Hicks: Photographer (archival photography, darkroom)
Mary Johnson: Historian (John Brown)
Jaime Lynch: Library Assistant (Records of the 1700's and early 1800's, Pennsylvania)
Cathy Miller: Library Assistant (WV State documents, periodicals)
Sharon Newhouse: Secretary to the Director.
Harold Newman: Library Assistant (microfilming, Revolutionary War)
Pat Pleska: Part-time Library Assistant (Clipping File)
Susan Scouras: Librarian (cataloging, Kentucky, library collection, newsletter editor)
Bobby Taylor: Library Manager
Nancy Waggoner: Office Assistant
 Contract employees working on special projects:
Constance Baston and Allen Fowler.
 Summer volunteers: **Brady Blevins, Jacqueline Nicole Canady and Lindsay Kaiser.** Summer interns: **Vickie Pleska, Lenora Kenwolf and Leah Stover.**

WE NEED VOLUNTEERS

If you or your organization would like to donate service time to the Archives, we have several projects needing volunteers. Projects can be arranged for a few hours, a week, or on-going volunteer work. High school students may be able

to use volunteer hours at the Archives to fulfill public service requirements for graduation. Please call Archives and History for more information.

Research Letters

We realize that many of you can not make the trip to the Archives often or at all, so we endeavor to assist you by mail. We always have a backlog of research request letters to be answered by our staff. If you write to us, please be as specific as possible in making your request and provide as much background information as you can. *Allow a minimum of four weeks for a reply.* The staff works on letters as they have time in addition to their other duties. Staffers who specialize in certain areas have even greater backlogs, such as Jaime Lynch for 18th century genealogy, and Greg Carroll for Civil War records and medal applications. In-state requests need not enclose payment (except with medal applications), and will be invoiced. Out-of-state requests must enclose a \$10.00 research fee per two specific requests, and will be billed for copying costs if necessary.

If the staff determines that a request is not within the scope of our time constraints, a list of professional researchers will be supplied for your convenience. Usually the cost of hiring an outside researcher will not be any more than you would have paid Archives and History for two specific requests per letter in a series of letters, and the information you seek will be received much more quickly.

For the best results when writing to us, be specific, provide supporting information if possible, and above all, be patient while waiting for a reply.

On the Web:

While all family historians will learn something, new genealogists in particular will benefit from RootsWeb's Guide to Tracing Family Trees, Lesson 8: "Why U Can't Find Your Ancestors: Misspeld Knames—A Commun Problem for Reeserchors," at

the following Web site link: www.rootsweb.com/~rwguide/lesson8.htm. The article urges getting over the "great hang-up" of spelling of names, saying "To insist your name has always been spelled a particular way is to set yourself up for defeat in genealogical research." Many helpful tips for figuring out possible variants of surnames are given, as well as practical advice on how to properly use indexes. A list of suggested readings and reference books provides additional guidance.

OVERSEAS BURIALS OF VETERANS

The Web site of the American Battle Monuments Commission at <http://www.abmc.gov> now has a database searchable by the names of World War I, World War II and Korean War dead buried at American military cemeteries outside the United States. Information provided: name, induction location, rank, service number, date of death and burial location. Cemetery profiles are also included, as well as an address to write for a free photograph of individual markers.

Virginia State Archives Microfilm Project

The Library of Virginia recently received a check from the Friends of the Virginia State Archives for purchase of *West Virginia* County records on microfilm. This is an on-going project for the Virginia Friends organization, with the intent of completing the Virginia Archives' collection of county records up to 1865 for those Virginia counties which became West Virginia. Prior donations were used to purchase the microfilmed court records of Hampshire, Hardy, Harrison, Monroe, Ohio and Pendleton Counties.

The West Virginia Archives would be delighted if any one in West Virginia would take on a similar effort for the benefit of *our* county records microfilm collection. For example, purchase of the

remaining 101 reels of personal property tax records for West Virginia counties available from the Virginia State Archives for 1851-1873, would be greatly appreciated. The price *per roll* is \$50.00. If you or your organization are interested in donating the rolls covering your county or more, please contact Fredrick H. Armstrong, Director, Archives and History.

CLEO ZIMMER SEARS

DONATES NEW MICROFILM READER FOR LIBRARY



Cleo Zimmer Sears and Virginia B. Johnson

The Archives and History Library recently received a new Bell & Howell Mark III Library Researcher microfilm reader with fully automatic controls through the generosity of Cleo Zimmer Sears, a Division of Culture and History West Virginia History Hero in 2000. The plaque on the machine reads: "Donated by Cleo Zimmer Sears in recognition of Virginia B. Johnson, Honorary Vice President General NSDAR, John Young Chapter, 1999." Both staff and patrons are very appreciative of the new reader and are finding it a pleasure to use. Be sure to check out the color photograph of the reader, its donor and the honoree on the Archives and History Web site.

 This newsletter is a publication of :
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