

Genealogy Gems: News from the Fort Wayne Library  
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Autumn Musings  
by Curt B. Witcher

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The end of the year is rapidly gaining upon us, and with it comes the holiday season and rich opportunities to gather with our families. I hope you will take every chance to create memories, share stories, and record family history.

The construction and finishing details at our newly renovated and greatly expanded Main Library are coming along very nicely. New digital microtext reader-printers have arrived; nearly all of the shelving for our ever expanding book collection is installed--and that includes a nearly a sea of moveable stacks; and a new installation of microtext cabinets is nearly complete. Reference and information areas are nearly finished, and staff members are hard at work ensuring the technology to complete the picture is operating nicely on opening day. These are truly exciting times. Even if you reside in an area quite removed from Fort Wayne, some time in '07 you really must make the Genealogy Center of the library your destination! Bring a friend or two--there will be plenty of room!

For those who may not have seen the announcement in other places on web, October saw the official launch of RootsTelevision.com. What a truly wonderful asset to the genealogical community--to watch television programs of high quality and current interest on your computer screens and HD projection devices! Programs about the genealogical research process, DNA, leaving a legacy, and more. This is certainly one of *\*the\** sites to watch over the coming months for additions of outstanding content.

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Ancestral Roots: An Important and Easy First Step to Royal and Noble Genealogy  
by John D. Beatty

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Tracing descent from medieval forebears of the royal and noble houses of Europe can be an interesting and appealing part of genealogical research. It is easy, however, to be misled by

erroneous research, especially if one puts too much faith in some published genealogies of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, in which authors attempted to trace the lineages of American families to royal or biblical antecedents and made other claims that were neither documented nor provable. Genealogists are urged to exercise caution when consulting them, as they should with any secondary source that is not documented.

That said, there are also several well-documented secondary sources on medieval and royal genealogy in print that are highly acclaimed for reliability and widely accepted in the genealogy field. None of these is more renowned than *Ancestral Roots of Certain American Colonists Who Came to America before 1700*, now in its eighth edition. Created by the late Frederick Lewis Weis and continued and greatly expanded by the late Walter Lee Sheppard Jr., the book is often nicknamed the "Weis" book and is considered a basic source for doing medieval genealogical research. Genealogists interested in royal genealogy should make it a place of first resort because of its solid research, excellent documentation, and ease of use.

First published in 1950, the Weis book initially contained data on sixty English immigrants to early New England whose lineages could be reliably traced to royalty in British and continental sources. Subsequent editions authored by Sheppard and more recently edited by William R. and Kaleen E. Beall have revised that number to seventy immigrants, several of whom lived outside of New England. Later editions have also included numerous corrections and additions that are cumulative, and for this reason, researchers should consider only the latest edition, published in 2004, as the most authoritative.

If you have traced your ancestry successfully to one of these so-called "gateway" ancestors whose lineage has been documented in Weis, it is a relatively simple matter to trace that line to European royalty and nobility. Looking first in the book's index, one is guided not by page numbers, but by the corresponding lineage and individual numbers beside each name. Each line appears in numerical order in the text, and each line contains multiple generations that are also individually numbered. The eighth edition includes 398 lines or lineage summaries, most which are tied to other lineages in the volume.

For example, the "gateway" immigrant Gov. Thomas Dudley (1576-1653) of Massachusetts has many thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands of descendants living today in the United States. While these descendants are not traced in Weis, Dudley himself appears as number 40 in Line 143, which traces his lineage back twenty-five generations to Louis II, King of the Franks, who flourished about the year 860. Other ancestors in this pedigree are linked to other lineage numbers in the book, including that of Louis himself, who, in addition to being number 16 in Line 143, is also number 16 in Line 148. Turning to Line 148 allows one to extend Dudley's lineage back to Charlemagne, whose ancestry, in turn, is extended back even further as number 13 in Line 50. Users of Weis will find themselves jumping from line to line in this way as they gather additional data. They will also find documentation for each generation in notes that are imbedded in brackets throughout the text, and are encouraged to consult these references for "proof" of descent. A bibliography of sources, along with a list of abbreviations, is included in the front of the book. Research into royal and noble lineages remains on-going, so be sure to look for newly corrected and revised editions of the Weis book to appear in the future.

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## Passport Applications

by Timothy Dougherty

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The Historic Genealogy Department recently received microfilmed copies of passport applications housed in the National Archives. This eagerly anticipated acquisition is composed of four collections. Two comprise the records themselves, and two make up the index. While we only have the first of the collections (M1372) processed and ready for use, we anticipate having the other three collections available before the end of the year.

M1372, *Passport Applications, 1795-1905* is reproduced on 694 rolls. These are the "regular" applications. Early, letter-format requests gave way to primarily standardized forms by the 1860s. Content includes: date and place of birth, physical description, occupation, foreign destination, and naturalization. The quality of information varies from entry to entry.

M1834, *Emergency Passport Applications (Passports Issued Abroad), 1877-1907* is a separate 56 reel collection. These applications were issued for emergency purposes, usually as means of identification, and were valid for only six months. Content is similar, but not identical to that of the regular applications.

M1371, *Registers and Indexes for Passport Applications, 1810-1906*. These nine reels cover Dec. 21, 1810-Oct. 7, 1817; Feb. 22, 1830-Nov. 15, 1834, and Nov. 14, 1834-Feb. 28, 1906.

M1848, *Index to Passport Applications, 1850-52, 1860-80, 1881, 1906-23* is a 57 reel collection of several smaller index groups.

While passport applications can be genealogical goldmines, there are certain limitations in using them. Though 19<sup>th</sup> century overseas travel was more common than we may suppose, many of those travelers did so without a passport. Until June of 1941, U. S. citizens were not required to have one for travel abroad, save for periods during the Civil War and Great War. A further limitation is that aliens, with few exceptions, were not eligible for passports. Naturalized citizens were generally eligible.

For illustration, the name Benhard Stein was plucked randomly from the index. Much can be gleaned from scrutiny of his application. Mr. Stein was born at "Strassburg, Germany" on April 4, 1851. He arrived in the United States April 15, 1881, in his words, "on a steamship, the name of which I cannot recollect." He reported further that he had resided in Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York City, Boston, San Francisco and Chicago, was a "merchant," and intended to return to the States within one year. When the application was filled out in March of 1897, Mr. Stein was 45, with stature of 5 feet 3½ inches, low forehead, and hazel eyes. His mouth was small, with no teeth, chin pointed, and his hair, dark brown. He had a dark complexion and an oval face.

Researchers will relish this unique opportunity for glimpsing their own ancestor.

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Countdown to Conference 2007!

by Elaine Kuhn

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As we near the holiday season, some tasks tend to fall by the wayside in favor of the bigger projects such as cooking the Thanksgiving dinner, preparing for holiday visitors, and shopping for holiday gifts. One task you might want to leave on your to-do list in red letters is your reminder to plan for the FGS/ACPL 2007 Conference to be held August 15<sup>th</sup> through the 18<sup>th</sup> in Fort Wayne, Indiana. You'll be glad you made time for four days of outstanding speakers, valuable workshops and many hours of research time in one of North America's premier genealogical collections. You can start your plans to attend the conference by downloading the informational brochure at <http://www.acpl.info/genealogy/FGS07AnnouncementFlyer%20FinalWeb.pdf>.

Also remember that the holiday season is a perfect time to gather more information for your family tree. If you are fortunate enough to have older relatives who are able to answer family history questions for you, by all means, ask! You'd be surprised at what Aunt Mary might be able to tell you about older family members long since past and what life was like when she was a little girl. Not sure of what kind of questions to ask? Try some of the questions provided in books such as "To Our Children's Children" by Bob Greene and D.G. Fulford (Call no. 929 G83t) and "Reaching Back" by Alice Chapin (Call no. 929 C35r). Answers to some of the questions you ask may give you a better idea of how your ancestors lived, where they worked, where they traveled, how they worshipped. Plus, spending some extra time with Aunt Mary and listening to her stories could very well make her day, and isn't that what holiday gatherings are really all about? In any event, enjoy the upcoming holiday season!

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Preservation Tip of the Month

by Becky Schipper

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ACPL's Preservation Technician Becky Schipper offers advice on conserving your documents:

The last place you should consider storing archival materials is a low-cost storage facility without temperature or humidity controls. Items stored in these type facilities are also at risk for theft, fire or flood.

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## AREA CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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Allen County Genealogical Society of Indiana (ACGSI)

Refreshments at 6:30, meeting at 7:00. Questions: contact Katie Bloom

kathrynabloom@verizon.net

Wednesday November 8, 2006, Aboite branch: James DeVinney will speak on the topic "'WILD CARROT' The story of the William Wells family."

Computer Users Group

Questions? Contact Marge Graham, [gramar57@aol.com](mailto:gramar57@aol.com) or 672-2585.

November 15, 2006, Aboite branch, ACPL, 5630 Coventry Lane, 7 p.m.

Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR)  
First Wednesday of each month in the Genealogy Department 9am - 7pm.  
Expert help from members of the DAR in becoming a member of that organization

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**ACPL LIBRARIANS ON TOUR**

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John Beatty  
November 14: 7pm, at Main Library, 200 East Berry Street. John will participate on a panel discussing the Art of Writing Local History, with examples from the new Allen County history book. Sponsored by the Reader's Services Department of the library.

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**DRIVING DIRECTIONS TO THE LIBRARY**

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Wondering how to get to the library? Our exciting transition location is 200 E. Berry, Fort Wayne, Indiana. We will be at this location until late 2006. We would enjoy having you visit the Genealogy Department.

To get directions from your exact location to 200 E. Berry, Fort Wayne, Indiana, visit this link at MapQuest:

<http://www.mapquest.com/maps/map.adp?country=US&countryid=250&addtohistory=&searchtab=address&searchtype=address&address=200+E+Berry+St&city=Fort+Wayne&state=IN&zipcode=46802-2706&search=++Search++&finditform=1>

**From the South**

Exit Interstate 69 at exit 102. Drive east on Jefferson Blvd. into downtown. Turn left on Barr Street to Berry Street. The library is located on the corner of Berry and Barr Streets.

**From the North**

Exit Interstate 69 at exit 112. Drive south on Coldwater Road, which merges into Clinton Street. Continue south on Clinton, the library will be on your left when you cross Berry Street.

**From the West**

Using US 30:

Drive into town on US 30. US 30 turns into Goshen Road. Coming up to an angled street (State Street.) make an angled left turn. Turn right on Wells Street. Go south on Wells to Wayne Street. Left on Wayne Street. When you cross Clinton, the library will be on your left on Wayne Street.

Using US 24:

After crossing under Interstate 69, follow the same directions as from the South.

**From the East**

Follow US 30/then 930 into and through New Haven, under an overpass into downtown Fort Wayne. You will be on Washington Blvd. when you get into downtown. Turn right on Barr Street. Turn left on Berry Street. The library is on your left on Berry Street.

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**PARKING AT THE LIBRARY**

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Lot in front of the library, east side of the lot.  
Available for short-term library parking. Limited to one hour.  
There are handicapped parking spots near the door.

**Tippman Parking Garage**

Clinton and Wayne Streets. Across from the library, however the skybridge is NOT accessible.  
Hourly parking, \$1.25 per hour up to a maximum of \$5.00 per day.

**Park Place Lot**

Covered parking on Barr Street at Main Street. This lot is one block away from the library. Hourly parking Monday through Friday, 9am to 6pm.

**Street (metered) parking on Wayne Street and Berry Street.**

On the street you plug the meters 8am - 5pm, weekdays only. It is free to park on the street after 5pm and on the weekends.

**Visitor center/Grand Wayne center**

Covered parking at Washington and Clinton Streets. This is the Hilton Hotel parking lot that also serves as a day parking garage. For hourly parking, 7am - 11 pm, charges are .50 for the first 45 minutes, then \$1.00 per hour. There is a flat \$2.00 fee between 5pm and 11pm.

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**GENEALOGY DEPARTMENT QUERIES**

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The Historical Genealogy Department hopes you find this newsletter interesting. Thank you for subscribing. We cannot, however, answer personal research emails written to the e-zine address. The department houses a Research Center that makes photocopies and conducts research for a fee.

If you have a general question about our collection, or are interested in the Research Center, please telephone the library and speak to a librarian who will be glad to answer your general questions or send you a research center form. Our telephone number is 260-421-1225. If you'd like to email a general information question about the department, please email: [Genealogy@ACPL.Info](mailto:Genealogy@ACPL.Info).

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**PUBLISHING NOTE:**

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This electronic newsletter is published by the Allen County Public Library's Historical Genealogy Department, and is intended to enlighten readers about genealogical research methods as well as inform them about the vast resources of the Allen County Public Library. We welcome the wide distribution of this newsletter and encourage readers to forward it to their friends and societies. All precautions have been made to avoid errors. However, the publisher does not assume any liability to any party for any loss or damage caused by errors or omissions, no matter the cause.

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Curt Witcher, editor pro-tem