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Black History Month & the Importance of Ethnic Resources
by Curt B. Witcher

For quite a number of years, February has been recognized as Black History Month. It is a great time to recognize the abundance of resources available for African American family history research. It is also a good time for all to recall again and appreciate anew the importance of researching ancestors in an ethnic context. Ethnicity was determining factor in where your ancestors settled, and may have influenced what schools their children attended, what churches they attended, and what newspapers announced their births, weddings, burials, and social activities. I often refer to the ethnicity of one's ancestors as a research "fingerprint" that can guide us to clues and sources.

Engaging in African American genealogical research can be particularly challenging. Millions of African Americans can trace their ancestry back to slavery, increasing the importance of exploring property records as well as researching the European-American families associated with the slave families. In recent times, these challenges have been met with a dramatically increasing number of resources. And the Genealogy Center has one of the largest collections of research materials for African American genealogical research anywhere.

Beginning with local resources, researchers can find African American names abstracted from numerous Allen County, Indiana records on the GenealogyCenter.Info website. For other areas of Indiana, many thousands of records have recently become available. Names and abstracted data from the Jacobs Brothers funeral home records are being posted on that same GenealogyCenter.Info website. Funeral home records not only detail the specifics of the funeral arrangements but also have spaces to record family information including maiden names for wives and mothers. A joint project of the Genealogy Center and the Indiana Genealogical Society has

created an Indiana African American Settlements data file of more than seven thousand entries. In the fourth quarter last year, the Indiana State Archives posted mid-nineteenth century negro, mulatto, and slave registers for six Indiana counties. All these resources are linked from GenealogyCenter.Info.

Elsewhere, the number of online resources for African Americans is growing at an amazing rate. Ancestry, Footnote, and ProQuest's "African American Heritage" databases all provide significant data sets. The FamilySearch.org site also offers data sets of African American records as well as a tremendous in-depth guide to finding African American records from 1870 to the present. In addition to those popular sites, there are thousands of lesser sites on the Internet that contain remarkable collections of data typically available for free.

A good way to get a handle on the many online resources as well as many thousands of print resources is to engage the "African American Gateway" compiled by the staff of the Genealogy Center. Found on the GenealogyCenter.Info site at www.genealogycenter.info/africanamerican/, one can select a state, region, or country of interest as well as a number of subject categories. Upon selection, one is presented with two links--one to online resources and one to a bibliography of books, periodical titles, and microfilmed records from the Genealogy Center's vast collection of African American materials. The lists of online resources have brief descriptions and links to the sites while the lists of print and film materials provide content details and specific call numbers for the Allen County Public Library collection.

The Genealogy Center's print resources for African American family history research are indeed tremendous. The local history records and periodical publications from around the continent contain so much information. The collection of nearly six hundred African American history dissertations is packed with research discoveries and robust bibliographies to enhance nearly any genealogical endeavor. Many transcriptions, abstracts, and methodology articles can be found by utilizing the "Periodical Source Index" available through both HeritageQuestOnline and Ancestry.

I invite you to take every opportunity during February to hone your research skills and increase your successes by engaging the many ethnic resources available for your genealogical endeavors.

What Did They Mean By That?

by Delia Cothrun Bourne

If an ancestor's diary recorded that she had used a mangle on the family's clothes, would you wonder why she destroyed their wardrobes? And if she gave her husband a "diet-drink," was she helping him watch his weight? Using an unabridged dictionary, it might be possible to locate the definitions of many of the terms found while doing genealogical research, but some words or combinations may not be listed. While it may seem that one must continue to puzzle over phrases our ancestors used, there is hope for discovering the meanings of those mystery expressions.

"What Did They Mean By That? A Dictionary of Historical Terms for Genealogists" by Paul Drake (929 D78w) can help you solve the linguistic mysteries encountered in your research. A volume two (929 D78wa), as well as "More What Did They Mean By That?" (929 D78m), both also by Drake,

provide a wealth of information on additional terms and expressions. For example, one could learn that a mangle was a device consisting of two plates or rollers that smoothed or pressed cloth, aiding our ancestors in doing laundry. And a "diet-drink" was "medicated liquor...prescribed to promote general well-being." Other entries provide the meanings of legal terms such as matrix, "that edition of a document from which all copies must be made."

The first volume of this handy series also includes common abbreviations, a comparison of the English and Saxon alphabets, and a list of English regnal years used to date early documents. Fold-out reproductions of early financial accounts and an estate inventory allow researchers to see handwritten abbreviations and spelling in context. Volume two contains common abbreviations of first names and a map of Ohio's major land surveys, as well as an illustration showing various subdivisions of a section of land, with measurements in chains, acres and rods. "More What Did They Mean By That?" includes an expanded list of abbreviations, noting the difference between "sil" for son-in-law and "siL" for sister-in-law, and features abbreviations for Latin legal terminology such as "d.s.p." (decessit sine prole, or died without issue) and "d.s.p.m." (decessit sine prole mascula, or died without male issue). A fascinating list of obsolete twentieth-century terms, such as "curb feelers" and "fender skirts" is also included.

In the Genealogy Center, these three volumes are kept on the Ready Reference shelves near the Ask Desk. Help yourself to the books, or ask a staff member for assistance in finding them. Aside from being quite useful, they also are absorbing just to browse through to widen one's vocabulary and knowledge.

North Carolina Cohabitation Records
by Melissa Shimkus

Before the end of the Civil War in 1865, enslaved African Americans were the property of their owners and had virtually no rights concerning their belongings, their children or themselves. They could not purchase items, legally marry or form contracts involving employment. Although formal unions between slaves were not recognized until after the Civil War, many slaves did participate in marital ceremonies such as "jumping the broom." After the Civil War, the Freedmen's Bureau sought to legitimize the marital status of freed men and women in states that didn't have a legal precedent involving marriages between former slaves.

On March 10, 1866, the General Assembly of North Carolina passed "An Act Concerning Negroes and Persons of Color or of Mixed Blood," which required former slaves to have their marriages recorded by the Clerk of County Court or Justice of the Peace before September 1, 1866, to ensure the legality of their unions. The proofs of marriage for twenty counties in North Carolina are available on microfilm at the Genealogy Center under various names, such as "Record of Marriages by Freedman," "Negro Cohabitation Certificates," "Record of Cohabitation," or "Cohabitation Record."

In Bertie County, the record includes only brief notes about couples who appeared before the Justice of the Peace. For example, on August 27, 1866, Dick Rascoe and Delia Jones stated they had been man and wife for twenty three years. In Columbus County, an acknowledgment ledger

documents names, date of commencement, and date of acknowledgment of cohabitation. For example, on August 9, 1866, James Smith and Amey Nance declared they began cohabitating in 1855 and wished their relationship to be legally recognized. Records created in Rowan County mention former slave owners' names along with acknowledging the couple's marital status. In April 1866, Mack Davis, a former slave of George O Tarrh (or Tarr), and Lucy Thomason, a former slave of Jane Thomason, reported they had cohabitated together since July of 1864.

The North Carolina Cohabitation Records prove marriages that otherwise would be lost to time. For those researching enslaved people of color, evidence of a couple's union also may provide other valuable clues to their life before emancipation.

Technology Tip of the Month-- Photo Restoration with Adobe Photoshop, Version 9.02: The Nitty Gritty IV, Feathering.

by Kay Spears

Feathering is a technique that is often used in retouching (notice I said retouching, not restoring) a photograph. I'm sure you've seen old photographs or wedding portraits in which the image appears to fade into the background. This effect is called a vignette and a vignette can be created by feathering.

According to Adobe, "feathering blurs edges by building a transition boundary between the selection and its surrounding pixels." In Adobe, you can use the Marquee tool, Lasso tool, or Polygonal Lasso tool to feather. The feathering effect becomes apparent after you move, cut, or fill the selection.

How is this effect applied when restoring a photograph? Sometimes damaged photographs have large pieces missing, and these require some creativity to repair. We could use a Clone tool; however, the Clone tool only works if you have matching pixels. I have found that by using the feathering technique in combination with the Layers Palette the problem of a missing piece is easily fixed.

First, using the Marquee, Lasso, or Polygonal Lasso tool, select an area of pixels that might be a close match to the missing piece. While holding down the left button on your mouse, drag and draw a line around a selection of these pixels. Release the left mouse button. If you've done this correctly, you should see a moving dotted line around the area you selected. Next, without changing the tool, position the cursor on the selected area and right click. A menu will open; choose >Feather. The Feather Selection dialog box will open and give you the option of typing in the number of pixels that will be deleted from the selection. I suggest starting with a low number. Click OK to apply the feathering effect to the edges of your selection. Right click on the selection again and choose > Layer via Copy. You should now have two layers on your palette. In the Layers Palette, click on the new layer, then choose the Move tool from the toolbar. Choosing the Move tool allows you to move the selected pixels into place by using your keyboard arrow keys. When you start to use the arrow keys, you will be able to watch the pixels move across the image until they are positioned above the missing portion. Because you have feathered the edges of the pixels on the top layer, the patch will blend in with the bottom layer. Sometimes a little tweak is needed with the contrast, but you should

end up with a photograph that doesn't have any missing parts. When you are satisfied with the results, merge the layer down.

Next: Thoughts on Color Correction

Preservation Tip of the Month--How to Clean Soiled Pages
by Becky Schipper

Materials needed to clean soiled pages include a dull knife or micro spatula, art gum eraser, plastic eraser, and a document cleaning pad.

Remove pencil marks with the eraser type that works best on the paper you are cleaning. Use a very light touch and go over the marks several times rather than using pressure to remove stubborn marks.

Crayon marks are very difficult and in most cases almost impossible to remove. Sometimes the top layer can be removed using a dull knife. Ink or marker is also difficult to remove, but some can be lightened with the use of an eraser.

Soot and dirt are best removed using a document cleaning pad. This is filled with a slightly gritty material that you lightly rub over the surface of the paper. The residue is then removed with a soft brush.

All of the materials mentioned may be purchased at art supply retailers and through archival conservation supply catalogs. They are also available online at:

www.archival.com

www.Gaylord.com

www.hollingermetaledge.com

WinterTech: Photographs in February

No, a pixel is not a friend of Tinker Bell, a TIFF is not what you have with your neighbors on when the holiday decorations need to be taken down, and a JPEG is not a piece in a board game. These are all terms used in scanning photographs! Kay Spears will reveal these secrets and many more in the "Basics of Scanning Photographs," on February 10, 2010. She will share the essentials of organizing, scanning, and storing family (or other) photographs digitally, as well as provide suggestions on the equipment you may need. The session starts at 2:30 PM in Meeting Room C, and is the last of the Genealogy Center's WinterTech series for this season. For more information <http://www.acpl.lib.in.us/genealogy/programs.html> , and call 260-421-1225 or email Genealogy@ACPL.info to register. And remember to stick around for ACGSI's monthly meeting at 7 PM!

March Madness, Genealogy Style

As winter winds down (we hope that's happening by mid-March!), the Genealogy Center is ready to help you "rev up your research" with "March Madness, Genealogy Style." Running the week of March 14th to March 20th, we are hosting a week of daily events to prepare you for a summer's worth of research. Daily events:

+Sunday March 14, 2010, 1:00-2:00 PM: "Genealogy Center Tour" -- Genealogy Center Entrance
Join us for a tour of the Genealogy Center. If you ever have felt overwhelmed by the sheer size of the department, this tour will help familiarize you with the different areas and their contents, as well as research procedures. Space is limited. Call 260-421-1225 or email Genealogy@ACPL.Info to register.

+Monday, March 15, 2010, 2:00-3:00 PM: "How To Use the Genealogy Center Basics" -- Globe Room
Have you taken the tour of the Genealogy Center and still felt confused? Do you wonder how all the details make sense to other people? Spend time with a staff member who will explain the catalog, microtext area, and how to use the facility. Note: This session is not a beginning genealogy class, but rather an explanation of the collection. Call 260-421-1225 or email Genealogy@ACPL.Info to register.

+Tuesday, March 16, 2010, 2:00-3:00 PM, "Using Periodicals at the Genealogy Center" -- Meeting Room A
Why would anyone want to use those little newsletters for genealogy research? What can you find in those little newsletters? And where can you find those little newsletters? This lecture will discuss the benefits of using all types of genealogy and local history periodicals in the quest for your ancestors, provide a brief overview of how to use the "Periodical Source Index" (PERSI), and give information on how to locate the specific issue you seek in the ACPL Genealogy Center's massive collection. Call 260-421-1225 or email Genealogy@ACPL.Info to register.

+Wednesday, March 17, 2010, 10:00-11:00 AM, "Writing Your Family History: A Primer" -- Meeting Room A
This course will present an overview of some of the attributes of good genealogical writing and will offer some guidance on how to produce a book or article of lasting quality. The class will NOT discuss or review genealogy software. Instead, we will look at various forms of genealogical writing, the philosophy of documentation, and other aesthetic attributes that go into making a quality family history. Call 260-421-1225 or email Genealogy@ACPL.Info to register.

+Thursday, March 18, 2010, 10:00-11:00 AM, "Using Footnote.com" -- Meeting Room A
Learn how to browse through documents or search for an individual's documents or a specific historic event using Footnote.com. View, print, and save original historical and federal documents from the Colonial era to events of the 20th century. Footnote also allows you to share personal stories and upload digital copies of historic documents that you own. Call 260-421-1225 or email Genealogy@ACPL.Info to register.

+Friday & Saturday, March 19 & 20, 2010, 9:00 AM-4:00 PM, "Irish & Scots-Irish Genealogy: Part 2, A Two Day Mini-Course" -- Meeting Room B-C
This workshop is an excellent way for researchers with some experience in using basic Irish

records to learn about additional sources and techniques that lead to success. Topics covered include Irish local history publications and manuscript collections. There is a fee for this program. Call 260-421-1225 or email Genealogy@ACPL.Info for more information.

Beginning Genealogy

April showers bring the popular Beginning Genealogy seminar on Saturday, April 3, 2010, 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM. Margery Graham, C.G., will lecture on beginning research, methodology and organization, and finish with a tour of the Genealogy Center, but it's not just for those just starting to climb the family tree. Experienced researchers can also appreciate a refresher in basic techniques. This program is sponsored by the Allen County Genealogical Society of Indiana. Fee \$10. Pre-registration required. Call 260-672-2585 for more information.

Librarians on Parade

Dawne Slater-Putt

February 10, 2010, Heritage Jr./Sr. High School, 13608 Monroeville Road, Monroeville, IN, 12:30 to 1:30P. Presentation: "How to Begin a Genealogy Project after Interviewing Older Relatives."

Kay Spears

February 10, 2010, Allen County Public Library, 900 Library Plaza, Fort Wayne, IN, Meeting Room C, 2:30 p.m. Presentation: "Basics of Scanning Photographs"

Cynthia Theusch

February 10, 2010, Allen County Public Library, 900 Library Plaza, Fort Wayne, IN, Meeting Room A, 7 p.m. Presentation: "The Civilian Conservation Corps"

Area Calendar of Events

Allen County Genealogical Society of Indiana (ACGSI)

February 10, 2010, 6:30 p.m. social time; 7 p.m. program. Allen County Public Library, 900 Library Plaza, Fort Wayne, IN, Meeting Room A. Cynthia Theusch will present "The Civilian Conservation Corps."

Allen County-Fort Wayne Historical Society, 302 East Berry, Ft. Wayne, IN

February 7, 2010, 2:00 p.m. - Dr. Quinton H. Dixie will present "Migration of African Americans from Alabama to Fort Wayne."

February 20, 2010, 2:00 p.m. - Peggy Seigel will present "The Underground Railroad in Allen County."

Driving Directions to the Library

Wondering how to get to the library? Our location is 900 Library Plaza, Fort Wayne, Indiana, in the block bordered on the south by Washington Boulevard, the west by Ewing Street, the north by Wayne Street, and the east by the Library Plaza, formerly Webster Street. We would enjoy having you visit the Genealogy Center.

To get directions from your exact location to 900 Library Plaza, Fort Wayne, Indiana, visit this link at MapQuest:

<http://www.mapquest.com/maps/map.adp?formtype=address&addtohistory=&address=900%20Webster%20St&city=Fort%20Wayne&state=IN&zipcode=46802%2d3602&country=US&geodiff=1>

>From the South

Exit Interstate 69 at exit 102. Drive east on Jefferson Boulevard into downtown. Turn left on Ewing Street. The Library is one block north, at Ewing Street and Washington Boulevard.

Using US 27:

US 27 turns into Lafayette Street. Drive north into downtown. Turn left at Washington Boulevard and go five blocks. The Library will be on the right.

>From the North

Exit Interstate 69 at exit 112. Drive south on Coldwater Road, which merges into Clinton Street. Continue south on Clinton to Washington Boulevard. Turn right on Washington and go three blocks. The Library will be on the right.

>From the West

Using US 30:

Drive into town on US 30. US 30 turns into Goshen Ave. which dead-ends at West State Blvd. Make an angled left turn onto West State Blvd. Turn right on Wells Street. Go south on Wells to Wayne Street. Turn left on Wayne Street. The Library will be in the second block on the right.

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. Library Plaza will be on the right.

Parking at the Library

At the Library, underground parking can be accessed from Wayne Street. Other library parking lots are at Washington and Webster, and Wayne and Webster. Hourly parking is \$1 per hour with a \$7 maximum. ACPL library card holders may use their cards to validate the parking ticket at the west end of the Great Hall of the Library. Out of county residents may purchase a subscription card with proof of identification and residence. The current fee for an Individual Subscription Card is \$70.

Public lots are located at the corner of Ewing and Wayne Streets (\$1 each for the first two half-hours, \$1 per hour after, with a \$4 per day maximum) and the corner of Jefferson Boulevard and Harrison Street (\$3 per day).

Street (metered) parking on Ewing and Wayne Streets. 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 garage 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.

Genealogy Center Queries

The Genealogy Center 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.

Publishing Note:

This electronic newsletter is published by the Allen County Public Library's Genealogy Center, 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.

To subscribe to "Genealogy Gems," simply use your browser to go to the website: www.GenealogyCenter.Info. Scroll down toward the bottom of the first screen where it says, "Enter Your Email Address to Subscribe to "Genealogy Gems." Enter your email address in the yellow box and click on "Subscribe." You will be notified with a confirmation email.

If you do not want to receive this e-zine, please follow the link at the very bottom of the issue of Genealogy Gems you just received or send an email to kspears@acpl.lib.in.us with "unsubscribe e-zine" in the subject line.

Steve Myers & Curt Witcher, co-editors