



# BELL COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Volume 5, Issue 4, Winter 2019

The Bell County Genealogical Society (BCGS) publishes this quarterly newsletter for the benefit of members and anyone interested in genealogy. The publication is intended to support the society's goal to promote genealogical research and preservation of records to perpetuate the memory of our ancestors and their contributions to the cultural heritage of our country.

BCGS, formed in 1991 under the Texas Non-Profit Corporation Act, is a partner society of [Texas State Genealogical Society](#). Locally, the society supports Temple Public Library.

The society meets on the third Tuesday of each month, 6:30-8:00 p.m., in the McLane Room (third floor) at Temple Public Library, 100 West Adams Avenue, in Temple. Each meeting opens with an introduction of new members and visitors followed by a general session and a speaker or activity of genealogical or historical interest.

BCGS is for everyone, from the beginner to the advanced genealogist. Information about membership is available in this newsletter and at our website [www.txbcgs.org](http://www.txbcgs.org).

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Happy New Year!

Thanks to everyone who attended our annual Christmas party. As in past years, we celebrated the season with fun, friendship, and good food.

I also want to express my appreciation to our members and guests for supporting the society throughout the year. Membership dues enabled us to provide meeting programs and lend our support to Temple Public Library. An extra thanks to our officers and committee chairs for donating their time and energy to ensure the continued success of our organization.

Our meeting programs last year proved so successful that members voted to renew the society's subscription to Lisa Louise Cooke's online presentations for 2019. Nancy Kelsey and Kathy Taylor have developed a program schedule for the upcoming year that targets various topics associated with family research. The complete list of programs is available at [txbcgs.org/meetings](http://txbcgs.org/meetings).

*David Yeilding*

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Order a BCGS polo shirt! See [page 5](#) for details.

# INCORRECT U.S. CENSUS INFORMATION—WHEN THE CENSUS TAKER GETS IT WRONG

By Jan Mayer

On the first U.S. census day (August 2, 1790), 17 United States marshals and around 650 assistants began the task of finding and recording the population of the United States. These were the first U.S. census takers.

In 1880, specially trained census enumerators (census takers) were hired to replace the federal marshals in counting the population. A national census is taken every 10 years in the United States, and the information is then used to allocate congressional seats, electoral votes and funding for government programs. Census information is also used by businesses, community organizations, historians—and genealogists.

From the very first census, incorrect census information has been a concern. Thomas Jefferson and George Washington both speculated that the population of the country was higher than the 3.9 million counted in the 1790 census. Although early censuses recorded comparatively few names and gave a basic population count, more recent census records have much more information about individuals and households. As you search U.S. census records, understanding census errors can help you with your family history.

## Why Are There Mistakes in Censuses?

Most census mistakes are simply human error. Census takers risk severe penalties if they disregard confidentiality or deliberately misrepresent data. In fact, Census Bureau employees have always been required to take a nondisclosure oath and are sworn to protect the confidentiality of census data for life.

Nonetheless, inaccuracies do occur. Some of the most frequent reasons for incorrect census information include the following:

- **A focus on counting.** Counting the population has always been the main focus of the United States census, not keeping perfect historical records. In fact, census questions from past censuses may have been answered by any member of a household, a boarder, or even a neighbor who agreed to be truthful.
- **Spelling errors.** Looking for ancestors, genealogists may be stumped by name spellings that vary from census to census. Some of this variation comes because many U.S. schools taught spelling by phonics (by sound) in the 1800s. Also, in 1790 only about 65 percent of the U.S. population could read at all, so spelling a name was up to the census taker, according to Bill Dollarhide, author and census genealogy expert. Thinking of different ways to spell or misspell a name can help you identify your ancestors despite spelling variations in the census data.
- **Copying errors.** Each set of census records has a different history of copies. Sometimes the copying process resulted in the county, state and federal governments holding separate copies, all of which may have slight variations. Genealogists usually view the copy from the National Archives and Records Administration and may not realize they can also check state and county records to see if the forms contain copy errors.

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## INCORRECT U.S. CENSUS INFORMATION—WHEN THE CENSUS TAKER GETS IT WRONG

(CONTINUED)

- **Missing or false information.** Citizens are sometimes wary that the U.S. census is for tax collection or may dislike answering census questions. Misunderstanding can also arise from language barriers between a census taker and the person being interviewed. Especially in older censuses, people responding may also not have had precise answers for some questions. For example, Dollarhide notes that birthdays weren't widely celebrated in the U.S. until the 1880s, and even parents may not have remembered exact ages for each family member.

Today, the U.S. census is conducted initially with mailed questionnaires, which prevents many recording errors. Census records have also been partially or fully processed by machine since as early as 1872. The Census Bureau is always working on improving the enumeration and processing of future U.S. censuses.

### Can Incorrect Census Information Be Changed?

According to the United States Census Bureau, it isn't possible to correct an error in a census record. The census records are historical documents, and historical documents are not perfect. The Census Bureau recommends the following, "Our advice to genealogists who find inaccuracies is to make a note in their family history that the census record may contain errors."

The Census Bureau also points out that some of these errors can actually teach us about our family members. Families sometimes provided alternate or "Americanized" names, left illegitimate children out of their household count, or misidentified their racial heritage when answering census questions. These intentional differences teach us about the culture surrounding our ancestors and may help us identify missing or interesting stories in our family history.

### The Value of Census Records

While U.S. Census Records are not the only resource for tracing ancestors, they are freely accessible at FamilySearch.org and also available on other genealogy sites.

Finding an ancestor in a census record can be a great start to building or extending a family tree. Although census data may not have the same level of accuracy as other genealogical records, censuses can help you discover family stories. They also contain vital clues for locating other records. With the information from one or more census records, you may be able to locate a birth, marriage, or death record for your ancestor. You also might be able to track down naturalization papers or learn where ancestors lived and traveled within the United States.

Read more about United States census records and how to use census records on the FamilySearch blog.

End Notes:

"Heads of Families at the First Census," United States Census Bureau, accessed September 27, 2018, <https://www2.census.gov/prod2/decennial/documents/1790j-02.pdf>

"1790 Overview," United States Census Bureau, accessed September 27, 2018, [https://www.census.gov/history/www/through\\_the\\_decades/overview/1790.html](https://www.census.gov/history/www/through_the_decades/overview/1790.html)

Bill Dollarhide, "Census Mistakes," Genealogy Blog, last modified April 13, 2012, <https://www.genealogyblog.com/?p=18199>

*This article was posted at [FamilySearch Blog](#) on October 9, 2018.*



## INSTRUCTIONS FOR FEDERAL CENSUS TAKERS

Between 1790 to 1870, the duty of collecting census data fell upon the U.S. Marshals. A March 3, 1879 act replaced the U.S. Marshals with specially hired and trained census takers to conduct the 1880 and subsequent censuses. Instructions for door-to-door census takers guided the collection and recording of census information.

It is important that census researchers be familiar with the census taker instructions associated with the records they are viewing. The information included in the instructions could help to eliminate confusion and incorrect assumptions about the data provided in a census record.

Listed below are examples from instructions for the 1870 Federal Census that are pertinent to genealogical research. (View the entire document at <https://www.census.gov/history/pdf/1870instructions-2.pdf>.)

- **SCHEDULE No. 1 – Inhabitants, Column 3 – Names of Individuals.** “[enter] the Name of every person in each family, of whatever age, including the Names of such as were temporarily absent on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of June, 1870. The name of any member of the family who may have died between the 1<sup>st</sup> day of June, 1870 and the day of the Assistant Marshal’s visit is to be entered, and the person fully described, as if living; but the name of any person born during that period is to be omitted...”
- **SCHEDULE No. 3 – Mortality.** ...“Care should be taken to have it understood [by every family] that the period covered by the inquiry is from the 1<sup>st</sup> of June, 1869, to the 31<sup>st</sup> of May, 1870, inclusive; otherwise many will understand by the phrase, ‘within the year,’ since January 1, 1870; or by the phrase, ‘last year,’ the year ending December 31, 1869... Column 2 – Names. ...[enter] the name of every person whose death occurred during the year ending June 1, 1870...”

It goes without saying that the availability of instructions did not necessarily mean a census taker followed them. This possibility combined with the potential for inaccurate information provided by the family are at least two good reasons for caution using the records. In spite of these concerns, census records are a valuable source for genealogists and historians, and the value could be enhanced through a better understanding of the data contained.

Visit these websites for more information about the census and instructions for census takers:

- Publications related to the census data collected from 1790 to 2010 are available at <https://www.census.gov/prod/www/decennial.html>.
- Census instructions: [https://www.census.gov/history/www/through\\_the\\_decades/census\\_instructions/](https://www.census.gov/history/www/through_the_decades/census_instructions/).

*The majority of the Information for this article came from the [U. S. Census Bureau](#).*



### NEW OFFICER APPOINTMENTS - BELL COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Recent officer appointments at the commission for the term 2018-2020 include several members of BCGS. Namely, Nancy Kelsey, chairman; Judy Tyler, vice-chairman; Jalenn Ellis, corresponding secretary; and Kathy Taylor, treasurer. Congratulations to all!



# HISTORIC CAUSES OF DEATH AND MODERN EQUIVALENTS

by Travor Hammond

Finding the historic obituary for your ancestor on Newspapers.com is like hitting the jackpot in genealogical research. Sometimes the cause of death is something we have never heard of. Here is a list of historic causes of death and their modern equivalents:

- Ague: Malarial Fever
- Apoplexy: Unconsciousness resulting from a cerebral hemorrhage or stroke
- Brain Fever: Meningitis
- Bright's Disease: Kidney failure
- Childbed: Fever due to an infection after childbirth
- Consumption: Tuberculosis
- Chin Cough: Whooping cough
- Diphtheria: Contagious disease of the throat
- Dyspepsia: Indigestion and heartburn
- Dropsy: Edema caused by kidney or heart disease
- Falling Sickness: Epilepsy
- Inanition: Starvation
- Lockjaw: Tetanus disease that affects muscles in the neck and jaw
- Milk Leg: Painful swelling after giving birth caused by thrombophlebitis in the femoral vein
- Mania: Dementia
- Mania-a-potu: A mental disorder caused by alcoholism
- Quinsy: Tonsillitis
- Ship Fever: Typhus
- Spotted Fever: Meningitis or Typhus

*This article was posted at Fishwrap – The official blog of [Newspapers.com](http://Newspapers.com) – on August 10, 2018.*



## BCGS POLO SHIRTS

Shirts are 50/50 cotton/polyester and available in a variety of colors and sizes with the BCGS logo embroidered just below the collar on the front. To order, email Kathy Taylor at [diamondt.kathy@yahoo.com](mailto:diamondt.kathy@yahoo.com) and put "BCGS Polo Shirt" in the subject.

**Colors:** The official color of the society's polo shirts is hunter green with the logo in white. However, shirts are available in other colors. Email Kathy for availability.

**Sizes and pricing:** Men/unisex SM-XL \$17; Women SM-XL \$18\*; Men 2XL & 3XL \$19; Women 2XL & 3XL \$20\*. Please email Kathy for availability and prices of larger sizes.



*\*Shirts for women run small, and Kathy suggests you order at least one size larger than you normally wear. Shirts for women are more fitted than the men/unisex sizes. If you like a roomier fit, Kathy suggests you order the unisex size.*

## UPCOMING MEETING PROGRAMS

### **January 15 – Beyond Family Tree Maker: How to Take Control of Preserving Your Family Tree Information by Lisa Louise Cooke**

Are you taking care of your family tree, and all that research and the legacy it represents, in the best possible way? Here is a solid game plan for taking care of your family history research. Lisa Louise Cooke shares her personal experience and approach. Then, she will encourage you to do your own homework, ask the same questions, and most importantly put a reliable plan in place for protecting your family history.

### **February 19 – Institutional Records by Lisa Louise Cooke**

From schools and orphanages to prisons, hospitals, asylums, workhouses, and more, there is a good chance one or more of your ancestors might be found on record in one of the many types of institutions. In this video, we will cover some of the methods for finding institutional records that may contain information on your ancestors.

### **March 19 – Five Ways to Enhance Your Genealogy Research with Old Maps by Lisa Louise Cooke**

In this video, you will learn:

- Which historical maps that every genealogist should use, including Sanborn maps, census enumeration district maps, plat maps and more
- Some of the best online resources for finding old maps
- How to locate offline historical maps
- How to create and save your own historical map collection
- Techniques for using old maps in your research

*Suggestions for future programs are welcomed  
and should be sent by email to [bcgsprograms@gmail.com](mailto:bcgsprograms@gmail.com).*



### **LINKS TO MORE ARTICLES**

Follow the links below to information that might be useful to you in your genealogical research:

- [How to Preserve and Test Old Letters for Grandma's DNA](#) by Denise May Levenick, dated April 19, 2018. DNA testing of old postage stamps, envelope flaps, and other personal artifacts will soon become readily available to the average consumer. Levenick advises that now is the time to locate potential specimens, preserve items in archival storage, and plan a testing strategy.
- [Why DNA tourism may be the big travel trend of 2019](#) by Dana McMahan, dated December 9, 2018. With the advent of DNA testing, more people are discovering their roots. While many intrepid travelers will forge ahead on their own, an industry is springing up around tailoring guided DNA trips. The author tells about the availability of DNA tours that include DNA testing and an on-board genealogist.
- [Ordering the SS-5: 2018 style](#) by Judy G. Russell, The Legal Genealogist, dated December 14, 2018. Russell responds to a question concerning how to obtain a copy of the SS-5, the form used to get a Social Security Number. She describes the form and provides helpful hints for ordering.

## SURNAME RESEARCH

Georgia Downey ([gjd12000@yahoo.com](mailto:gjd12000@yahoo.com)) - Riley, Beene, Moore, Hill, Vannoy, Spencer, Breedlove, Graves, McEwen, Davison, Kuykendall, Embree, and Adair.

Lonnie Moore ([lonnie@lonniemoore.com](mailto:lonnie@lonniemoore.com)) - Moore, Horton, Knight, and Lancaster.

James E. (Jim) Bridges ([bridgework@aol.com](mailto:bridgework@aol.com)) – Wright and Kelsy/Kelsey/Kelcy. My great grandfather E. A. or A. E. Wright was adopted by his stepfather Kelsey after the death of his own father and the remarriage of his mother. I am seeking info on that relationship and the burial place of Alexander Edwin Wright.

Kathleen Trautman ([kathleenst@mac.com](mailto:kathleenst@mac.com)) - Smith, Robey, Mead, Price, Carothers, Watson, Henderson, Gillespie, Calloway, Webb, Cowan, and Blewett.

Brenda McGuire ([bm McGuire7679@gmail.com](mailto:bm McGuire7679@gmail.com)) - Goates, Bingham, Logsdon, and Pilcher.

Marilyn Fleisher ([news@saladovillagevoice.com](mailto:news@saladovillagevoice.com)) - Fritsch, Richards, and Beadle.

Rich Trautman ([trautmanrich@gmail.com](mailto:trautmanrich@gmail.com)) - Trautman, Stone, and Lovelady.

Ronald Neubert ([singtoswing@gmail.com](mailto:singtoswing@gmail.com)) - Neubert and Zoellner (both of German extraction).

Nancy Kelsey ([mnkelsey@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mnkelsey@sbcglobal.net)) - Allen, Barnes, Chaszczewski/Kaczewski/Kaszewski/Kaschewsky/Kashefsky, Combs, Dietrich, Duff, Fackler, Foster, Goodman, Graff/Graeff/Gref, Graham, Harper, Jung, Miller, Paul, Reed, Rice, Roney, Ruppenthal, Russell, Shyrock/Shryock, Tatum, and Tharp/Tharpe.

Ginny Parsons ([ginnyguinn@yahoo.com](mailto:ginnyguinn@yahoo.com)) - Barnes, Brown, Davis, Dearman, Dobson, Durden, Fry, Galyon, Guinn, Killian, O'Connor/O'Conner, O'Neal/O'Neil/O'Neill, Otis, Parks, Rhode, Ryan, Simpson, Tuberty/Tubridy/Tubirdy, Vick, and Ward.

Jennifer Schwenker ([junder4@aol.com](mailto:junder4@aol.com)) - Teaff, Shipp, Jones, and Bawcom.

*Submit your list of surnames and contact email address to  
[info@txbcqs.org](mailto:info@txbcqs.org) for inclusion in future newsletters.*



### DID YOU KNOW

[FamilySearch](#) expanded its free online archives in September 2018 with almost 13 million new indexed family history records and over 500,000 digital images from around the world. New historical records were added from Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Colombia, England, France, Italy, Lesotho, Liberia, Mexico, Netherlands, Peru, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Wales, and the United States, which includes Arkansas, California, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, New Hampshire, New Mexico, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Virginia. New digital images were added from BillionGraves and Georgia. Find your ancestors using [free archives online](#), including birth, marriage, death, and church records. Millions of new genealogy records are added each month to make your search easier. Visit [FamilySearch](#) to view the latest additions.



## PHOTOS



Billy Wiseman, author of *Descendants of Thomas Wiseman; 1750-9 Oct. 1825 Edgefield County, South Carolina*, generously donated a copy of the unbound manuscript to Temple Public Library, and Bell County Genealogical Society sponsored binding the document in to a two-volume set of books. At the regular meeting of the society on October 16, Nancy Kelsey presented the newly bound books to library representatives Paula Roberts and Liz Smith. Pictured (from left) are Roberts, Kelsey, and Smith.



On October 19, 2018, BCGS members (from left) Nancy Kelsey, Kathy Taylor, Judy Tyler, Paula Roberts, and Jalenn Ellis attended the 18th Annual Genealogy Lock-in held at West Waco Library and Genealogy Center in Waco.



Members Ginny Parsons (left) and Nancy Kelsey with Bill Buckner at the Texas State Genealogical Society book awards ceremony in San Antonio on November 3, 2018. The society awarded Kelsey and Parsons the grand prize for their book "Empresario's Son: E. S. C. Robertson of Salado." Buckner chairs the awards committee.



(From left) Ginny Parsons, Nancy Kelsey, and Kathy Taylor at the Texas State Genealogical Society's 2018 conference in San Antonio.



**PHOTOS**  
(CONTINUED)



Texas State Cemetery, December 15, 2018. Member Nancy Kelsey traveled to Austin with the ladies of Betty Martin Chapter NSDAR and participated in the annual National Wreaths Across America Day at the cemetery.



Richard Trautman conducted the drawing and presented prizes during our 2018 Christmas party. Donnie Yeilding received the grand prize - free BCGS membership for one year.



Members and guests enjoyed fun and good food at our 2018 Christmas party.

**BELL COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY**  
**MEMBERSHIP FORM**

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME(S): \_\_\_\_\_

MAILING ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

AMOUNT ENCLOSED (PLEASE DO NOT SEND CASH): \$ \_\_\_\_\_

FAMILY SURNAMES AND LOCALITIES OF INTEREST TO YOU (NEED NOT LIMIT TO BELL COUNTY OR TEXAS):

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(CONTINUE ON REVERSE IF MORE SPACE IS NEEDED)

**MEMBERSHIP:** Membership is open to all persons who have attained their twelfth birthday, are willing to abide by the by-laws, and are willing to support the society by service on committees. Members are encouraged to submit the surnames and localities they are researching.

**ANNUAL DUES:** \$12.00 per individual; \$15.00 per family. Dues cover the period 1 January through 31 December and are payable January 1 of each year.

**TO JOIN:** Please complete and mail this Membership Form with your check or money order payable to Bell County Genealogical Society, P.O. Box 1493, Temple, TX 76503-1493. Alternatively, consider bringing your form with you to one of our meetings.

**NOTE:** Current members may use this Membership Form to update their personal information. Please note that it is important that the society has current contact information, particularly in the event a meeting is canceled.

## **BCGS OFFICERS & COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

An elected Executive Board is the governing body of BCGS, and standing and special committees are appointed by the society's president.

### **OFFICERS**

President – David Yeilding

First Vice-President (Programs) – Nancy Kelsey and Kathy Taylor

Second Vice-President (Reporter) – Linda Judd

Secretary – Becky McEntire

Treasurer – Terry Tyler

Historian – Juanita Jones

### **COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

Door Prizes – Richard Trautman

Facebook – James Bozeman

Refreshments – Jalenn Ellis

Research – Mary Duke

Website & Newsletter – Ginny Parsons



Visit us at our website [www.txbcgs.org](http://www.txbcgs.org)  
and on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/groups/120501541316366/) (https://www.facebook.com/groups/120501541316366/)



### **NEWSLETTER PUBLICATION**

The BCGS newsletter is published quarterly by editor Ginny Parsons. Send comments, questions, and suggestions for content to [info@txbcgs.org](mailto:info@txbcgs.org).

**NOTE:** Bell County Genealogical Society is not responsible for the content of any external websites to which we provide links. Be sure to read the privacy policy for the website before disclosing any personal information. These websites or services have separate data and privacy practices independent of us, and therefore we hold no responsibility or liability for their policies or actions.

***LOOK FOR OUR SPRING 2019 NEWSLETTER IN APRIL!***

