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.

**President’s Message**

Each of our meeting programs for the last two years has included an online presentation on a variety of genealogy-related topics by Lisa Louise Cooke. We hope everyone found the information useful to their research. In 2020, we will return to programs that include activities and guest speakers, and I encourage members to recommend topics/speakers/activities of interest at an upcoming meeting or by email to bgsprograms@gmail.com.

It is time to elect BCGS officers for the 2020-2021 term. In August, we appointed a Nominating Committee to identify potential candidates and present a slate at the October meeting. We will vote at our meeting in November and install new officers in December.

Please keep in mind that the society needs volunteers for several activities, and I ask you to consider supporting these efforts. Specifically, we need member involvement with 1) conducting a beginning genealogy seminar on November 2, 2019, at Temple Public Library; 2) organizing the contents of three vertical file cabinets in the Genealogy Room at Temple Public Library; and 3) reviewing our bylaws for potential update. Contact me for additional information or if you are available to help.

Our schedule for the remainder of this year includes regular meetings in October and November. In October, we will discuss increasing our annual dues. In lieu of a regular meeting in December, we will have our annual Christmas party and install new officers. Please join us!

_Judy Tyler_

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Order a BCGS polo shirt! See **page 6** for details.
**Standing in Judgment of Our Ancestors**

By Lisa Louise Cooke

Standing in judgment of our ancestors may be unavoidable. Genealogists dig up the good, the bad, and the ugly. We cannot pick and choose what we find, but we might be able to pick what and how we share it with others. Read on to hear one listener’s example and things to keep in mind when documenting and sharing unpleasant details.

Recently, I received a letter from a Genealogy Gems Podcast listener, which included a very delicate and sensitive matter. She writes:

*Hi Lisa! I love your blog and podcast. Thank you for all you do getting gems together for us! I have a question for you and would love to know your opinion (or the opinion of anyone else as well).*

*I was recently at a family wedding. I printed out all the family and ancestor’s paper trails and documents and was passing them around to my aunt, uncles, and cousins. My mom’s eldest brother brought up a memory he had of his grandfather, my great-grandfather, a German immigrant. My uncle whispered it to me because the saying my great-grandfather often said is very prejudice. I won’t tell you what the quote is but it’s prejudice against Jewish, Irish, and Dutch people.*

*Here’s my question: should I write down that my great-grandfather was prejudice against certain people to preserve this part of his character or should I let this information fade into history?*

*As genealogists we are always trying to get a full view of the person we are researching – past the census records, military service paperwork, and wills – and into the real person and personality. So, I now have a more broad view of my great-grandfather, but it’s negative. Should I preserve this character flaw in my ancestry notes?*

*I’m conflicted about what to do. Maybe if this was a further distanced relative I would have an easier time brushing aside this prejudice but I’m having a hard time with the “right thing to do.” Any advice would be wonderful! As a side note I will tell you that in the following generations this mans’ children and grandchildren have married Irish and Jewish spouses. Haha. I guess the “saying” was never echoed by his descendants! Thanks, Jennifer*

**Judgment of Our Ancestors**

This is a great question and I applaud you for thoughtfully taking a moment to really think it through and ask for advice before moving forward on recording what you were told.

You asked – *Should I write down that my great-grandfather was prejudice against certain people to preserve this part of his character or should I let this information fade into history?*

*My opinion is: no. *Mother Lisa* says this is gossip and you didn’t hear it straight from your great-grandfather. I certainly wouldn’t want anyone else attributing a negative comment to me without having the chance to review or rebuke it. It’s a slippery slope.*

You also asked – *Should I preserve this character flaw in my ancestry notes?*

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Standing in Judgment of Our Ancestors
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And there’s the slippery slope. I believe that we, in this modern era, should avoid sitting in judgment of ancestors who are not here to defend themselves. We don’t want to presume that we are in a position to decide how wrong “the crime” is. We certainly don’t want to be negatively prejudiced against others ourselves, but it is impossible to put oneself in another’s shoes in a differing time and circumstance.

We know nothing about what the person really said. Perhaps they were joking (even though in extremely bad taste!). Maybe the person who heard this, and passed it on, had an ax to grind and part (or none) of it is true. Or, maybe there was an experience that our ancestor suffered that could have given him a reason to gripe based on his personal experience. You just don’t know.

In my book, I would chalk this up to gossip and either prove it with substantiated evidence or move on. What goes around comes around so let’s hope it will prevent an occurrence of someone gossiping about you and your future descendant spreading it into the ages.

Deciding to Write the Whole Story

In cases where you have secured substantial evidence that a negative story is true, you still have a choice to make. When I come across particularly sensitive or negative information about an ancestor, and before I make it public, I ask myself, “who will this help and who will it hurt?” Does adding it to the family history enrich it? Is there anyone living today who might be hurt? If someone stands to be injured, but you’re set on capturing the story, I encourage you to do so privately for your own records and of course, cite all of your sources.

If you do decide to write and publish sensitive stories, I know that you will want to do so in as gentle and fair a way as possible. Here are some things to consider when writing about delicate stories of our ancestors:

- Be sure to cite your source – who told you the story and when. The reader can decide how much weight to give the information.

- Let your readers know your reason for sharing the story in the first place. Genealogy Gems blogger Amie Tennant recently read a family history that included a horrible childhood memory. The writer stated it was important to put the family dynamics in full view so that other stories would be seen in the “right light.”

- If naming everyone in the story will cause hurt or embarrassment, consider documenting the essence of the story without naming names.

Whatever you decide, writing a family history, though difficult at times, can be a rewarding experience! If you’re ready to write your story and the stories of your family, Sunny Morton has a fantastic fill-in-the-blank workbook that is the perfect tool for the job. No more intimidating blank pages or writer’s block. You will find the overwhelming task of starting your story as easy as pie!

This article was posted on April 29, 2019, at LisaLouiseCooke.com, the website of Lisa Louise Cooke, host of the Genealogy Gems Podcast.
BARKING UP THE WRONG TREE
Subtitle: Do as I say, not as I have done.

By Dick Eastman

I well remember the day that I lost about 100 ancestors. It could happen to you.

In my case, early in my genealogy endeavors, I was adding information about “new” ancestors in great haste. Well, they weren’t really new; they had always been my ancestors, but their names were new to me in those days. I’d find a new ancestor, record his or her information, then move on and find the parents. In the early days of my genealogy searches, it was easy to add new ancestors. After all, everyone has thousands of ancestors and, when you are new to the game, the records can be easy to find. This is especially true for French-Canadian genealogy as the Catholic Church did a great job of recording almost every christening and marriage and most funerals, usually including the name of the parents in each record. Those records are easy to find on microfilms and in printed books and, in recent years, in online databases.

As a genealogy newcomer, however, I didn’t know about the need for double and triple-checking for accuracy.

One day I found a record for one of my French-Canadian great-great-grandfathers. There was but one problem: I had already documented him (or someone else) but with different dates of birth, marriage, and death, and with a different wife. I had no choice but to go back and double-check the original records I had previously transcribed.

I’ll skip over the boring details and go directly to the bottom line: I had found and transcribed information about the wrong man! Who knew that two different men, living in the same small town in northern Maine at the same time, would have the same name? It turns out they were not even closely related. I later determined that they were very distant cousins although I doubt if the two men ever knew that. I had found a record stating that my great-grandfather was the son of Joseph Theriault and then, in my haste, I found a man named Joseph Theriault living in the same small town at that time. I ASSUMED that he was the father. Some months later, I found ANOTHER Joseph Theriault living in the same small town.

NOTE #1: The word ASSUMED should never be used in genealogy!

NOTE #2: Theriault is a very common Acadian surname. (The Acadians were the French people living in areas that are now Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island. Many of their descendants moved to northern Maine to escape the British Expulsion of 1755–1763.) Joseph is undoubtedly the most common first name of all French-Canadians. I don’t know how many babies have been christened with the name Joseph Theriault over the years, but there must have been hundreds. This is roughly the Acadian equivalent of looking for a man named John Smith in English-speaking countries.

Okay, finding that I had erred in my earlier genealogy efforts, I removed the “errant” Joseph Theriault from my database. The problem is that I had already traced the ancestry of the “wrong” Joseph Theriault back another 6 or 8 generations! By removing the erroneous entry, I also removed more than 100 other people from my (assumed) list of ancestors!

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BARKING UP THE WRONG TREE
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That was a very depressing evening as I realized I had spent many, many hours recording the ancestry of people who were not in my family tree. I had to start all over again with this branch of the family, proceeding with a bit more caution this time. I double- and triple-checked everything and am now confident that my new records have a higher degree of accuracy.

Now let me ask you a few questions:

Are you SURE that every record you have transcribed is 100% accurate? How about the information you obtained from an online database or from a distant relative? Are you SURE the other person’s work is 100% accurate?

Have you independently verified every “fact” you have discovered? By “independently,” I mean that you should always find a contemporary record that agrees with the first record you found. Even then, mistakes are easy to make. In my case, there were contemporary records available that were recorded by the priests at each marriage. The problem was that two different priests performed marriages of two different men of the same name in the same church, although on different dates. In this case, both of the original records were equally accurate but referred to different men. I only found the error by comparing their birth dates, their marriage dates, the names of the wives, and the first names of their children.

How many possibly inaccurate records do you have in your database right now?

FIRST MORAL TO THIS STORY: Use caution and common sense when transcribing records you find.

Here is my favorite line that I have read dozens of times in different messages, written by different people: “I went on the [insert name of an online database] web site and found 1,000 new ancestors!”

Really? How do you know they are yours? All of them?

FOOTNOTE: There is a silver lining in this story. After researching the ancestry of the “new” Joseph Theriault a few generations, I found that he was a distant cousin of the wrong man. They shared many ancestors, although obviously not all of them. I was able to “recycle” many of the original records I had previously researched. However, this time I did double-check each record to make sure I didn’t repeat my earlier error.

SECOND MORAL TO THIS STORY: Never throw away any records you have previously transcribed. You might find a new use for them some day!

This article appeared in Dick Eastman’s Online Genealogy Newsletter on May 8, 2014.
We have a new television show debuting on NBC!

If you love “Who Do You Think You Are?” but also want to see everyday people embark on journeys of personal discovery - watch “A New Leaf,” hosted by Daisy Fuentes.

Each week, “A New Leaf” will follow people on the cusp of key life inflection points, who using family history, genealogy, and sometimes AncestryDNA® analysis will go on a journey of self-discovery and learn from the past while looking to the future. In partnership with Ancestry, Fuentes will join families as they learn the importance of appreciating and understanding their family history and ancestors in order to make important life decisions.

“A New Leaf” will be included in the Saturday NBC morning programming block The More You Know beginning October 5, 2019. Check your local listings.

This information extracted from “A New Leaf, A new Television Series by Ancestry® to debut on NBC this Fall posted by Ancestry Team on September 24, 2019. Read the entire text at the link above.

**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 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**

**October 15 – The Big Picture in Little Details**

Often times the road to assembling the big picture in your genealogy is paved with lots of little details. In this video webinar class, we’ll explore examples of how to inspect the big picture genealogical problems we face, and identify the little clues that can use to move our research forward.

**November 19 – How to Find Essential Apps for Genealogists**

In this video, we cover 1) Identifying the task that you want to accomplish; 2) Three apps that every genealogist can enjoy right away; 3) Knowing where to look for apps for genealogy; and 4) Automating the process of finding apps.

**December 17 – Annual Christmas Party**

Please join us for fun and fellowship, 6:30-8:00 p.m., in the McLane Room at Temple Public Library. Bring a side dish, appetizer, or dessert to share (for 5-6 people). Coffee and iced tea provided. Anyone preferring another beverage should bring their non-alcoholic beverage of choice.

Suggestions for future programs are welcomed and should be sent by email to bcsprograms@gmail.com.
SURNAME RESEARCH

Georgia Downey (gid12000@yahoo.com) - Riley, Beene, Moore, Hill, Vannoy, Spencer, Breedlove, Graves, McEwen, Davison, Kuykendall, Embree, and Adair.

Lonnie Moore (lonnie@lonniemoore.com) - Moore, Horton, Knight, and Lancaster.

James E. (Jim) Bridges (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) - Smith, Robey, Mead, Price, Carothers, Watson, Henderson, Gillespie, Calloway, Webb, Cowan, and Blewett.

Brenda McGuire (bmguire7679@gmail.com) - Goates, Bingham, Logsdon, and Pilcher.

Marilyn Fleisher (news@saladovillagevoice.com) - Fritsch, Richards, and Beadle.

Rich Trautman (trautmanrich@gmail.com) - Trautman, Stone, and Lovelady.

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


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

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

Terry Tyler (ttyler@hot.rr.com) Blakely, Blickensderfer, Cardwell, Clearly, Cook, Cooksey, Crawford, Dillon, Franks, Frazer, Furr, Gamble, Johnson, Jones, O'Bryant, Oehler, Ricksecker, Rodgers, Russell, Smith, Tyler, Walderich, Winchester, Winds, and Wofford.

Judy Tyler (jksttyler@hot.rr.com) Arendale, Arnold, Bennett, Bishop, Boyd, Carrol, Clark, Cooper, Courington, Daniel, Dobson, Eddins, Elston, Foxcraft, Franklin, Gautier, Glass, Harder, Henderson, Howard, Lindsey, Long, Mackey, Marsh, McNutt, Neel, Pitts, Robbins, Sellers, Sevier, Stubblefield, Trimmier, and Wilson.

Kathy Taylor (kathy.taylor56@yahoo.com) Casheer, Davee, McDaniel, Moore, Owens, Polk, Underwood, and Vinson. Husband’s line: Barron, Finney, Scott, and Taylor.

Submit your list of surnames and contact email address to txbcgs@gmail.com for inclusion in future newsletters.
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):

________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________

(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.

AT OUR REGULAR MEETING IN OCTOBER 2019, WE WILL DISCUSS INCREASING OUR ANNUAL DUES. PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE OR SEND US AN EMAIL TO CONFIRM ANNUAL DUES AMOUNTS.
An elected Executive Board is the governing body of BCGS, and standing and special committees are appointed by the society's president.

**Officers**

President – Judy Tyler

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**

Membership – Judy Tyler

Door Prizes – Richard Trautman

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/)

**Newsletter Publication**

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

**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 Winter 2020 Newsletter in January!**