



Past and Present

Newsletter of The Southern Genealogist's Exchange Society
May 2019

www.sgesjax.org

Quote of the month

"Research is not a matter of looking up the answer, but tracking down the answer.-Sarah Larsen

Genealogy detectives at the SGEN Library

"Abstract of North Carolina Wills" NC104 & 104.1

These books' abstracts include name of testator, place of residence, names of wife, children, legatees, witnesses, probate officer, etc. Also mentioned are names of plantations and remarkable items and noteworthy passages in wills.

"Historical Sketches of North Carolina From 1584-1951" NC105

This book is written in two parts. Part one consists of the history of the state while part two concentrates on the counties compiled from original records, official documents and traditional statements.

Announcements

The SGEN Annual Fundraiser continues through May 31st. See the last page of this newsletter to learn how your donation will *double* in value.

Josh Goodman, Archives Historian at the State Archives of Florida, will be guest speaker at the May 19th meeting of The Huxford Genealogical Society, 20 S College St, Homerville, GA. His presentation, titled "Drawing the Line: The History of the Florida-Georgia boundary Dispute", will begin at 2:00 pm. The library will open at 9:00 am for researchers.

Want more genealogy research advice? Go to <https://blog.eogn.com> Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter site. Dick Eastman, a genealogist for more than 35 years, combines his research expertise with computer skills to regularly publish this newsletter. A free Standard Edition is offered as well as the Plus Edition (\$5.95 for 3 months or \$19.85 for 12 months).

Story of the month

The Search for Julia E. Landon
By Dorothy K. Fletcher

This story begins in 1976 or so, when I became aware of a little cemetery on my way to work. Day after day as I drove past, I could see a handful of worn headstones—some leaning and some toppled in rough grass and fallen tree trunks. It turned out that this was Philips-Craig Swamp Cemetery, a property deeded in 1971 to the Southern Genealogists' Exchange Society. Of course, when I first saw it, there was no marker at the entrance and no fence as there is today, so I didn't know this information yet. (Editor's note: this cemetery is now owned by VFW Post 1689.)

I need to mention that there is a discrepancy in the spelling of the name of the cemetery. "Philips," as it is on the historic marker, is probably the correct spelling, since the property had once been owned by Captain Albert Galatin Philips, owner of the Red Banks Plantation. Still, "Phillips," as the name is on the gate, would seem to be acceptable since that spelling appears in several places, not the least of which is Phillips Highway street signs. Actually, the name of the road should be Philips Highway since it was named for Judge Henry Bethune Philips.

Anyway, I decided to investigate the cemetery, however it was spelled, during my summer vacation. I wanted to see who the movers and shakers of the Southside were in a time long before I was born. I found graves of soldiers who had served on both sides of the War Between the States. There were founders of churches and owners of hardware stores, and there were many children's graves which indicated that life was very hard in times long past.

I wrote down the death dates of those headstones I could make out and I went to the library to find the obituaries in the microfilms of the *Florida Times-Union*. Then, I spent quite a while "fleshing out" these people who were pioneers of this area so that I could write an article for the 1978 March/April issue of *Jacksonville Magazine*. At that time, I used the incorrect spelling of the cemetery's name, "Phillips." All I can say is that since it was so long ago, I was not privy to the same information as I am today. Perhaps I just wasn't careful. In any case, my notes are long gone, so we will never know.

One of my most interesting finds was the grave of a John M. Landon who was born in 1817 and who died in 1892. He had served in the Union Army and relocated his family to this area in 1867. I immediately wondered if he were in some way related to Julia Landon for whom the San Marco junior high had been named. Maybe. Since I had not located her grave in the cemetery, I let it go. I wrote my story for the magazine, misspelling and all, and then went on about my life.

Just over 40 years later, I was still wondering about Julia Landon. As I often do, I started "digging," thinking it would be great fun to find out about Miss Landon. Why was it that of all the high schools named for male generals, explorers and captains of industry—Lee, Jackson, Ribault, White, DuPont—this woman gets such an honor here in Jacksonville? She really must have been something!

What my research has shown me is that her father was indeed the John M. Landon I had found in the little cemetery. In an article announcing Julia's death (*Florida Times-Union*, August 6, 1939), the article said that in 1867, John, his wife Mary, and three year old Julia "at once established their home..., on a fertile tract, now bisected by Landon Avenue and other thickly populated thoroughfares, which was improved with an orange grove, truck and flower gardens."

In an article written by Bill Foley for the *Times-Union*, August 6, 1992, He said that Julia had been born in Piqua, Ohio, on October 16, 1864. She and her sister, Minerva, eventually attended a small, public school in the St. Nicolas area. When Julia was 16, she "served a term" as a teacher. Soon after this experience, she attended "Maryville, Tenn., College"[sic] to become a fulltime teacher. She returned to Jacksonville and taught at various schools throughout the county for many years.

Foley's article went on to say that in 1924, School Superintendent Fons Hathaway asked the School Board to buy 22 lots in the Shady Side subdivision. It was unclear when the Landons sold this property to developers, but the area between Myrtle (today's Thacker Avenue) and Minerva Streets, which was to be used for a school, was where the Landons had lived. Julia lived and eventually died at 1837 Arcadia Lane which is next to the school property. The house is no longer there.

About 150 junior high school students who lived in Southside had to cross the river every day to attend school in Riverside at John Gorrie Junior High, named for a male physician. By 1927, a school was needed on the south side of the St. Johns River so the Board of Public Instruction recognized Miss Landon's contribution to education by naming this new school for her. It was to be a junior/senior high school and the first class to graduate was the Class of 1928-1929. It is interesting that in the article announcing her death in 1939, there was more verbiage about her 50 years of service at the Elizabeth Swaim Memorial Church than about her teaching

career. Julia was a charter member of the church, and she served for 30 years as financial secretary of the church. She also was a member of the first building committee, the Ladies Aid Society and she was the communion steward until the last few months of her life.

Julia Ellen Landon died on August 3, 1939, not long before her 75th birthday. She lay in state at the altar of her beloved church, and she was buried in Oaklawn Cemetery, a few miles from Philips Craig Swamp Cemetery. Next to her marker is another marker, a cenotaph, bearing the names of John M. Landon, Mary Landon and Julia L. Bennett, John's sister.

After all is said and done, it is important to mention two very touching and telling anecdotes about Julia Landon. One was revealed in Bill Foley's article saying that her last public outing before she died, attending the Landon Christmas pageant. She apparently often visited her namesake school and seemed very proud of it.

The other story was mentioned in the article written in the *Times-Union* the day after she died. The article said, "Sorrowing friends yesterday recalled her faithfulness, over a period of 30 years, in instituting and directing semi-annual beautification programs at the Philips Cemetery, the resting place of her father and mother, John M. and Mary Landon. To keep faith with the dead Miss Landon, a few months ago summoned volunteer workers to her sick bed to allot clean-up tasks."



Photograph courtesy of Noni Mayer, Media Specialist at Julia Landon College Preparatory and Leadership Development School.

As I read all that I could find about Julia E. Landon, I began to see a most intelligent, devoted, diligent, and hard working woman who deserved to be included with generals, explorers and captains of industry. She was faithful and caring until the very end. She can be most proud that the school which bears her name—Julia Landon College Preparatory and Leadership Development School—is still as viable and lively as it was on the day it opened.

Website

Noted Genealogist researcher/author Thomas MacEntee has made available to the public, free access to his "Genealogy Do-Over" program. This is a project-based initiative to improve genealogy research skills while having fun too. Although started in 2018, it is still applicable in 2019.

Here we are in Month 5 of The Genealogy Do-Over and this month's focus is all about tools: finding and curating online tools to assist with your genealogy research AND understanding the basis of citing sources as a tool to document your research.

Topics: Citing Sources and Building a Research Toolbox

1) Building a Research Toolbox

For several years I've been advocating the following concept: every genealogist should create a consolidated research toolbox filled with various tools such as historical value of money calculators, links to historical newspaper sites, etc.

The reason? Efficiency and increased productivity. Think of how much time you spend looking for a link to a site you saved a week or a month ago? Wouldn't you rather spend that time looking for ancestors? On the other hand, when you need to calculate something – like how much \$1 in 1910 would be worth in today's money, you spend time out on the Web searching for a site to do the calculation. Don't forget that each time you wander out to the Internet, you are at risk of being attracted by those BSOs ("bright and shiny objects") and time is wasted!

2) Citing Sources

True confession: Like many beginning genealogists, I did not always cite my sources during research. I was a name collector. I've evolved as my research skills improved and as I took advantage of educational resources. For me, citing sources is not about impressing other researchers or meeting any standards established by others. I cite sources so I can go back and find the original information. Plain and simple. Source citations are the equivalent of a trail of breadcrumbs along my genealogy journey.

For more information <https://abundantgenealogy.com/genealogy-do-over-month-5-may-2018/>

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In Memoriam

Two longtime SGES members have recently passed away.

David Bahn passed away April 19, 2019. He not only served as a member of SGES but also donated his time as Treasurer. A memorial service will be held on Saturday, May 11, at 2:00 p.m. at Lakewood Presbyterian Church, 2001 University Boulevard West, Jacksonville, FL 32217. In lieu of flowers, David's family has requested donations to either Lakewood Presbyterian Church or Northeast Florida Community Hospice.

Bob Hendry passed away on April 29, 2019 following a long illness. A longtime active member of SGES, he was very personable and always encouraged others in their genealogy research. A future graveside memorial will be held in Blackshear, Georgia. In lieu of flowers, monetary donations and expressions of sympathy may be made to SGES, P.O. Box 7728, Jacksonville, FL 32238.