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# Past and Present

Newsletter of The Southern Genealogist’s Exchange Society

January 2019

## **Quote of the month**

“It is not deeds or acts that last: it is the written record of those deeds and acts.” Elbert Hubbard

“A people without the knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots”. Marcus Garvey

**Genealogy detectives at the SGES Library**

**By Alana Masters**

Location: FL-442

Title: Non-Federal Census of Florida, 1784-1945: A Guide to Sources by Karen Packard

Rhodes

This is a great book if you have family that lived in Florida. It has information on multiple books, periodical articles, manuscripts, original documents, microfilmed and digitized works and where to find them.

**Story of the month**

By Darrell Dean Kathman

#### Origin of Surnames

Throughout history humans have been known by more than one name to distinguish them from other people with the same name. As societies became more complex or were colonized by more complex societies these distinguishing names became fixed and were passed on to the next generation. The nature of the surnames depends on what was important to the society at the time surnames were adopted. Thus hunter-gatherer societies often distinguished individuals by an event, a characteristic or a religious connotation. More technically advanced cultures with a settled society typically derived surnames from occupations, social status or place of residence. Surnames derived from a father's name are common, particularly in societies that were less developed when they adopted surnames.

Surname - Etymology

# surname (n.)

1. 1300, "name, title, or epithet added to a person's name," from sur "above" (from Latin super-; see [sur-](https://www.etymonline.com/word/sur-?ref=etymonline_crossreference#etymonline_v_22401) (1)) + [name](https://www.etymonline.com/word/name?ref=etymonline_crossreference#etymonline_v_2264) (n.); modeled on Anglo-French surnoun "surname" (early 14c.), variant of Old French sornom, from sur "over" + nom "name." As "family name" from late 14c.   
     
   An Old English word for this was freonama, literally "free name." Meaning "family name" is first found late 14c. Hereditary surnames existed among Norman nobility in England in early 12c., among the common people they began to be used 13c., increasingly frequent until near universal by end of 14c. The process was later in the north of England than the south. The verb is attested from 1510s. Related: Surnamed.

Do you have an Indian last name? Maybe a Jewish last name? Find out the meaning and history behind your last name. We have thousands of names from cultures around the world. You're bound to find the origin of your last name here!

**German**

It wasn't until 1871 that Germany became a unified country. Until then, it was made up of smaller nation-states whose borders frequently changed. Even after 1871, Germany's land area and political influence shifted several times. Because of this, German last names can be found throughout bordering countries, including Poland, Austria, France and Spain.

Another tricky thing about German last names: A last name could be what you would call a [farm name](https://www.thoughtco.com/german-surnames-meanings-and-origins-1420789). If a German moved onto someone else's farm, it was not uncommon to change his last name to that of the farm. If his wife inherited a farm, he might change his name to her maiden name.

My Ancestor came from the Oldenburg region of Germany, the surnames were given to families in the 14th century so that the ruler could insure that all taxes levied by him were collected and a list of who had paid could by kept.

My ancestor fits the last sentence above, in that the daughter inherited the farm.

When all the sons in the family had married and had their own land, my ancestor had only his daughter to pass his farm to, Johann Aschern married (in 1716) this daughter, Natalia, and from then on in Church and tax records he was known a Johann Kathmann Geb (born as) Aschern. The farm is still in the hands of a Kathman Family and has been for over 500 years.

**Spain / Spanish**

Like many cultures, [last names of Spanish origin](https://blogs.ancestry.com/cm/4-types-of-spanish-surnames-which-one-is-yours/) are derived from family names, place names, descriptive names or names of occupations. Spanish names, however, don't always follow a linear path. A person, for example may have two last names, one from their mother and one from their father. Their children may take two last names from their father and one from their mother. A woman may take only her mother's surname.

This appears to be more dependent on the person’s social class. The higher in social status a person is, the more likely that they are known by a given name with a title preceding it. Don Juan Carlos, Juan Carlos Alfonso Víctor María de Borbón y Borbón, King of Spain. They may also be known with four or more surname attached to the given name. While the lower classes are normally shown with two surnames, one from the father and one from the mother, IE... Manuel Perez y Nino and Francesca Roman y Nina their children would be (Given Name) Perez y Roman, the Nino and Nina would only be used for genealogical reasons to show relationship.

**Norway / Norwegian**

If you have a Norwegian last name, you find it a little difficult to trace your family history back further than a few generations. That's because [before 1923](https://blogs.ancestry.com/cm/what-your-scandinavian-name-ending-in-son-or-sen-means/), the most common last names in Norway ended in *-son*, *-sen*, *-dotter*, or *-datter*, which mean "son of" or "daughter of," and changed with each generation. So Carl Johanssen is Carl, son or Johan. But Carl's daughter Anna might be Anna Carlsdotter.

In 1923, the Norwegian government mandated all Norwegian families to choose a last name they could pass down from generation to generation. Families either stuck with their current patronymic last name, but some chose the farm or other place they lived.

The website at www. Familyeducation.com has a list of 40 countries with this information.

See also <https://forebears.io/surnamess> and <https://www.familyeducation.com/baby-names/browse-origin/surname>

**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. Each month we’ll give you an overview of that month’s topics. For those that want to know more, we will include link. Hope it helps you.

**January: Setting Previous Research Aside and Preparing to Research**

## Old habits are hard to break. Thomas says:

It may sound odd for many of us to do “prep work” before researching. However, I found that if I took time to prepare my workspace and my mind for research, I had much better results.

For me, this means I will no longer research at 2:00 am if I am tired or half-asleep. It also means that I will no longer say to myself, “Oh I have 15 minutes before the roast in the oven is done, I’ll look for Grandpa some more.” One of my biggest problems in the past was **not starting or finishing the research process properly**. Moreover, the finish turned out to be just as important for me: with a good ending to a research session, I would know exactly where to pick up the next time I started.

So over the next month, **think about how you have researched in the past in terms of time, location, tools used, etc**. Consider making some changes. Write down some research “warm up” exercises and try them once we get to the research phase. Make a list of items that you must have available when you are researching. See <https://abundantgenealogy.com/genealogy-month-1-january-2018/>

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**New additions to the SGES Library**

The Genealogical Record Vol XXXVI, # 1 March 1994; #2 June 1994; #3 Sept 1994

(Published quarterly by The Houston Genealogist Forum)

Southern Genealogical Index 1991 Vol 8

A Guide to Printed Sources for Genealogical and Historical Research in the Louisiana Parishes

1991 Supplement by Yvette Guillot Boling

Generations…Past to Present Vol 1 complied by Phoebe Chauvin Morrison Nov 1983

Acadian Descendants Vol III by Janet Jehn, The Genealogy of Antoine A’ Daniel LeBlanc

and Marie Bourgeois

Acadian Genealogy Exchange Vol XXIII #2 Apr 1994

Acadian Genealogy Exchange Vol XXI #1 Jan 1992

Acadian Descendants Vol II The Genealogies of Jean Gaudet, Daniel LeBlanc &Etienne Herbert

Acadian Exiles in the Colonies 1977 by Janet Jehn

Acadian Descendants Vol I by Janet Jehn

Terrebonne Life Lines covering old Interior LaFourche Parrish: Assumption, LaFourche &

Terrebonne: Volume 4, #1, 2, 3, 4 1985; Volume 10, #1, 2, 4 1991;

Volume 11, #2, 3, 4 1992; Volume 12, #1, 3, 4 1993