

Welcome to this issue, from **RootsBasic™** www.rootsbasic.com



If you have a specific question about how and where to find sources for your family tree, or wonder about genealogy classes online (run by certified genealogists), drop me an email and I'll include my answers in the next issue of TreeTips. - Celia

Note: All web links in the newsletter go to primarily free sites

TreeTip #1: LOOKING FOR MARRIAGE INFORMATION?

This is a very common problem, and the information can be crucial to determining if a particular individual is part of your family tree. Marriage registration records can be wonderfully informative with names of both individuals, birth information, residence, parents (or just fathers') names, parish, place of marriage, person performing the marriage, witnesses' names. Or, sometimes, only the couple's names and marriage date is recorded.

➤ **CANADA:**

www.genealogysearch.org/canada

Check out all the helpful information on this site: click on the province or territory your ancestors lived in, and start searching. The Ontario Marriage Registrations cover 1800-1924, with about 75,000 online records.

www.archives.gov.on.ca/english/archival-records/interloan/vsfaq.aspx This is the Archives of Ontario site, which shows you how to search for registrations, plus the information which should be recorded on the document. Although not online, you can find information through free interlibrary loan, or through one of the Family History Centres of the Church of Latter Day Saints (Mormon Church), in your area, also a free resource.

www.ancestry.ca (\$\$) Although this is a fee-based site, you can do a 14-day free search, and if you are organized with names, dates, possible counties etc., you may well be able to find the documents you are looking for, and download a copy to your computer. Or, purchase a one-month membership to look up births, marriages, and deaths in Canada.

<http://archives.gnb.ca/APPS/NewspaperVitalStats/Default.aspx?culture=en-CA>

This is a phenomenal treasure trove for those with ancestors in New Brunswick. Daniel F. Johnson gathered Vital Statistics from all English-language New Brunswick newspapers from 1784 onwards into an amazing database,. You can search online by surname, then filter by date, place, newspaper title, or county. An invaluable resource.

More on FINDING MARRIAGE INFORMATION

- Each province/territory has a Vital Statistics Department or Agency, which has information on how to access genealogical information. For example, to search in B.C., where I live, <http://www.vs.gov.bc.ca/genealogy/index.html> has detailed information on how to search online, and how to order a "Genealogy Certified Registration Copy".
- Remember that there are more details about marriages on death registrations, on burial certificates/headstones, in newspapers, and on pension forms.
- Finally, your public LIBRARY has much detailed information you can mine for documented details of your ancestors.

TreeTip #3: Do you have a SURNAME MASTER LIST?

This is a very important list of the specific surnames that you are searching. According to my Family Tree Maker 2005 software, I have 1638 different surnames in my database, with total number of individuals of 7597. This is not particularly helpful information however, as all these are not my direct ancestor surnames, and include names of ancestors' siblings' marriage partners also. To focus your research more effectively, try the following:

- **5-generation form** Using this handy form, with yourself as #1 will help you limit your searches to your direct ancestors, in this case, 16 different surnames (at right edge). If you do not have a 5-Gen Form, email me and I will send you one free. Print out several copies of this form – you may use it for many groups of ancestors, not just for your own first 5 generations.
- **Repeat for another 5-generations for one other ancestor on your First Form** Use **the** individual # from the First Form (perhaps your grandfather, for example), and fill in that person's ancestors as you find them. Repeat for other ancestors on your First Form. In this way you will begin to develop a group of about 40 -80 surnames to research. This is very do-able. Much easier than my total of 1638 surnames, isn't it!
- **Write down all those surnames from the above steps, with dates/places** This is your SURNAME MASTER LIST, an incredibly useful tool as you search information particularly when you re away from your computer in a library, newspaper archive, courthouse, city archive, government vital statistics department, etc.
Keep a binder or file folder for this list. You may want to write notes or search information for specific surnames, so think of a way you could do this and not have a mixed up higgledy-piggledy mess of papers. Remember to have surnames in INK, and your notes in PENCIL so that you can erase and rewrite notes to remember.

TreeTip #4: SPELLING, MisSPELLING, & OTHER VARIANTS

It cannot be said often enough: Names on forms and records of all sorts were spelled in many weird and wonderful and confusing ways. This was particularly notable **pre-1850** in Europe and North America. Not all persons were able to read and write, and spelling was not considered important. Also, people did NOT write their own names down on forms very often during their lifetimes: clerks did, ministers did, census-takers did, and so on. So, spelling could easily be mangled by the writer.

- **Always search for variant spellings** For example, "Ormsby" is a surname of one greatgreatgrandmother. How else could it spelled? Ormsbee, for instance, or Ormsbey, Ormsbay, or even Hornsby... Etc. First names may be mangled badly, so search for additional individuals in the family to see how one person's first name is spelled on different documents/records.
- **Be creative in your searches** Assume that your ancestor will be listed under a variety of misspelled names. If on a census of a small town, search every page to be CERTAIN of whether or not the individual is listed. Every page! Every spelling!

Happy searching!

- Celia

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