

Roots & Branches
The Morning Group, Tuscaloosa Genealogical Society



Roots & Branches

Tuscaloosa Genealogical Society
The Morning Group
NEWSLETTER

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Message from:

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Morning Genealogy Group
P.O. Box 20565
Tuscaloosa, AL 35402

I hope you are all having a great summer. If you are in town, please come to our meetings on the first Thursday of each month.

Our emphasis will be on "technology and our genealogy" in the coming months.

The July meeting will include a tour of the genealogy section of our library and an explanation of how to find what we need and where to look for it.

Ray Hamer

Notes from the Editor:

This edition contains a warranty deed from my Great Grandfather, Joel C. Weems and has the names of my Grandfather (Elby Sewell) and Grandmother (Eliza Dale Weems). It also contains the names of relatives who were living at the time. Several of these were otherwise unknown to me.

There is also information on the kind of files and other information that can be found in your local court house.

I also need your input on the next newsletters. Please let me know what you like, what you need and your areas of interest.

Do not let these summer family events get by with out increasing your knowledge, if not your database, of family members and events. The events in your ancestors' lives make them real to those who will read your research. The places they lived, what they did for a living, the churches they attended, what they did for fun, their trials and successes, these are the stories that are cherished.

Good luck hunting ancestors

Charles E. Sewell

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What You Can Learn from Deed Books

The Deed Index

Usually, anything listed in a deed book is indexed when it entails the sale of property. Other items may also be indexed, either in the grantor/grantee index or in a separate index of miscellaneous documents that are different from property transactions. The seller is referred to as the "grantor", and the purchaser is referred to as the "grantee". There may be several deed indexes in a courthouse and these are to be found with the recorder of deeds or similar official. One index is created alphabetically by grantor and the grantee and a reference to the piece of property is listed, along with the volume and page of the deed book in which the transcript of the deed or other transaction is recorded. Another index may exist that is organized alphabetically by grantor, and then by grantee, and will include a reference to a specific piece of property. In many places there also are indexes of the property description itself and the name(s) of the owner(s). Plat maps are good examples of physical images of townships that depict a piece of property and the name(s) of the current owners, and many courthouses retain these records for many years.

Contents of a Deed Book

Don't make the assumption that a deed book contains only deeds. There may be other documents included there too. However, recognize that not all of the materials you find in a deed book are primary sources, (the original documents created at or near the time of the event). The contents of the deed books are, in fact, transcriptions of the original documents and therefore qualify as secondary sources. Transcription errors by the recording clerk may exist. The original documents were signed by and given to the grantor and grantee.

A deed book may contain, among other things, the following types of records.

Indentures

These are documents that state the terms under which a security (or bond) is issued or secured. Consider the fact that an indenture may relate to land, as in a mortgage, to a term of servitude, to the purchase of slaves, to the purchase of livestock, or to some other commodity or produce. The property is described, priced, and the term of the arrangement is stated. Think of an indenture much the same as an "agreement of sale" that is used in the state of real estate or other property today.

Deeds

A deed is a signed and usually sealed instrument containing some legal transfer, bargain, or contract. If the grantee pays cash for property, the grantee releases the property via the property on credit or some other type of bond, an indenture may be created, signed, and filed with the recorder of deeds (or other land official) until such time as the debt is paid. At that time, a deed is issued and usually recorded at the courthouse.

You should note that, in earlier times, it may not have been convenient to travel to a courthouse to record a transaction. Some property transfers occurred privately between individuals and were not recorded. Others were recorded at a later date when it was convenient to travel to the nearest courthouse. Taxes were still due on the property but the tax bill may have simply been passed along.

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Deeds may be excellent indicators of the death date of the owner, as well as the name(s) of children and daughter's married names. I have seen cases in which a parcel of property was passed through several generations without new ownerships having been recorded. When the property was to be sold or otherwise recorded, a deed had to be created that showed the proper chain of inheritance down through the county. A friend in Alachua County, Florida, noted that one will he has indexed actually showed five generations of owners listed. What a bonanza!

Births

In some places, the birth of a child was entered in the deed book by the recorder of deeds. This could be a slave or a white child. Therefore, be sure to look at deed books for all possible names in the family.

Slave Sales or Trades

The sale or trade of slaves, as abhorrent a practice as it was, may also be recorded in deed books. These records are among the more important clues for African American researchers to locate family members and groups.

Cemetery Lot Sales

The purchase of a cemetery lot (or plot) from a municipal government or from an individual may also be recorded in a deed book. However, many private cemeteries, cemetery associations, religious groups, corporations, morticians, and others purchased a larger lot and then sold the lots or plots themselves. Crematory firms may have purchased a lot, built a columbarium (a structure of vaults lined with recesses for cinerary urns), and sold perpetual storage niches.

This list cannot possibly cover all the types of records found in deed books but it will give you an idea of what types of records – and alternate record types – may be found in these volumes.

I hope you will start using the deed books in the counties in which your ancestors lived. They certainly can tell you about your ancestors' movements and about their financial status. The physical deed copies they provide may give you clues that you otherwise might miss.

Happy Hunting!
George

George G. Morgan is president and a proud member of the International Society of Family History Writers and Editors and is available for speaking engagements.

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New books in the Local History section.

- 1840 Alabama Census, microfilm, M704.
"The Alabama Ironman, the Authorized Biography of Johnny Montgomery"; by Jerry W. Henry. LH B Montgomery
"Bleeding Blue and Gray: Civil War Surgery and the Evolution of American Medicine"; by Ira M. Rutkow. LH 973.775 Rut
"Booth Family History". LH 929.2 Boo
"Camden District, South Carolina, Wills and Administrations, 1781 – 1787 (1770 – 1796)"; abstracted by Brent H. Holcomb and Elmer O. Parker. LH 929.37 5761 Hol
"Chester County, South Carolina, Deed Abstracts"; by Brent H. Holcomb. LH 929.37 5747 Hol
"Early History & Research Digest of Bedford County, Tennessee"; by Timothy R. & Helen C. Marsh. LH 929.37 68583 Mar
"Flight Path, a Biography of Frank Barker Jr."; by Janie Buck and Mary Lou Davis. LH B Barker
"Gibson Hill Cemetery and Church: a Rich Heritage"; LH 929.5 Gib
"Griffin Cousins". LH 929.2 Gri
"Heart of the Blue Ridge, Highlands, North Carolina"; by Randolph P. Shaffner
LH 929.37 56982 Sha
"A History of Alabama Elks and Their Lodges"; by James Record
LH 366.5 Jam
"A Medley of History: Alabama Federation of Music Clubs"; compiled by Margaret Burdick Smith. LH 780.973 Smi
""Notes" of Tuscaloosa Music Club"; compiled by Margaret Burdick Smith. LH 780.973 Smi
"Slave Country: American Expansion and the Origins of the Deep South"; by Adam Rothman LH 306.362 Rot
"The Underground Rail Road: a Record of Facts, Authentic Narratives, Letters, &c., Narrating the Hardships, Hair-breadth Escapes, and Death Struggles of the Slaves in Their Efforts for Freedom as Related by Themselves and Others, or Witnessed by the Author, Together with Sketches of Some of the Largest Stockholders, and Most Liberal Aiders and Advisors, of the Road"; by William Still LH 973.7115 Sti
"York County, South Carolina Will Abstracts: 1787-1862 (1770-1862)"; by Brent H. Holcomb. LH 929.37 5743 Hol

Ahnentafel Charts

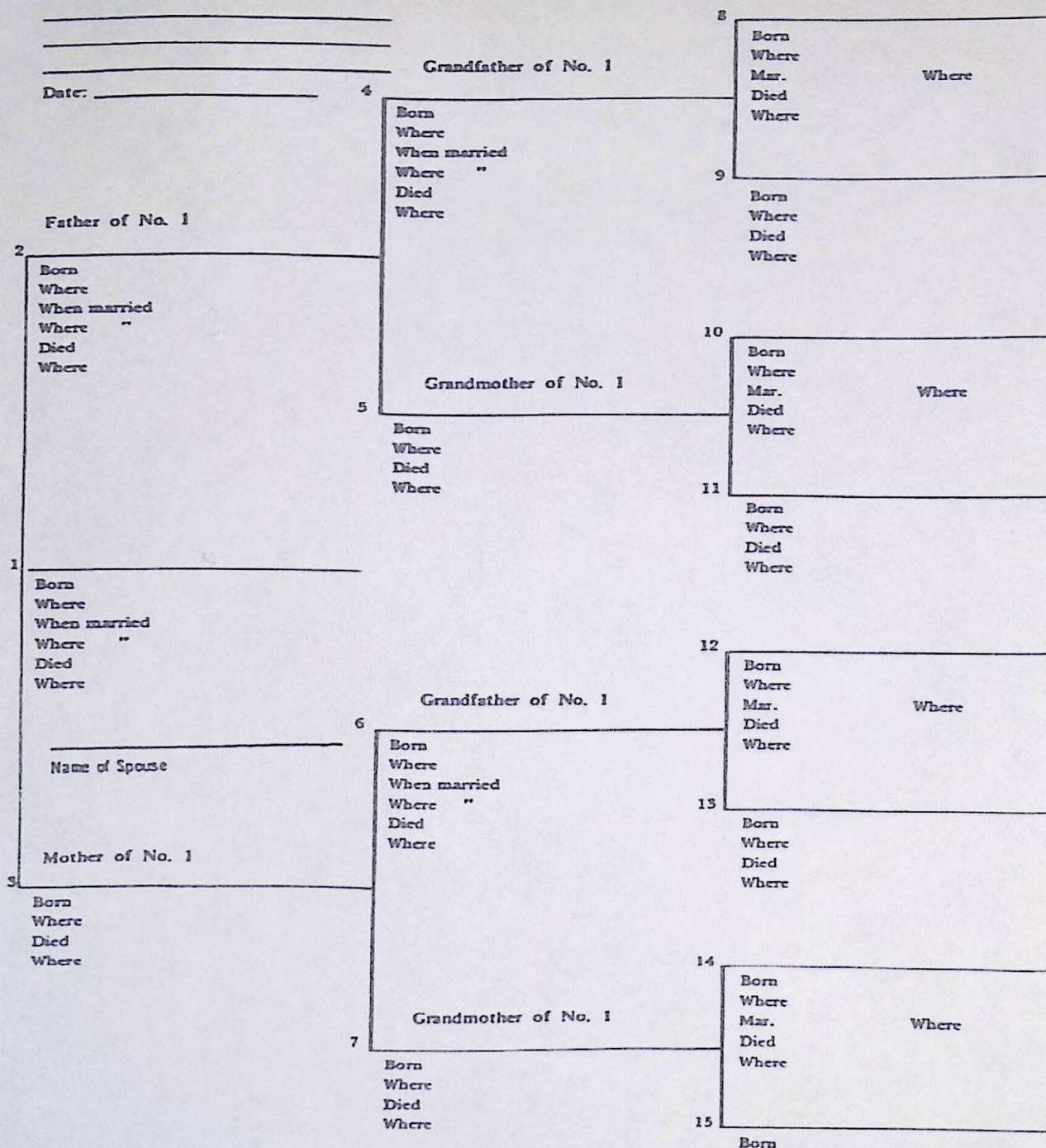
Ahnentafel is German for ancestor table. Each new generation has double the number of ancestors of the previous generation. Each ancestor added gets a number. The husband gets an even number and his wife gets an odd number which is the same as the husband's plus one. The husband's father is given a number that is twice the husband's. The wife's father is given a number that is twice the wife's. Family lines can be traced by number or name. Most computer genealogy software can give Ahnentafel reports.

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LINEAGE CHART

COMPILED BY: (name and address)

Date: _____



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Genealogy can be defined as tracing yourself back to better people. But, remember that every family tree has some sap in it and when shaken, nuts can fall out of it.

Web Sites for Genealogy Research

Alabama

- | | |
|---|---|
| Alabama Birth Certificates | http://birth-certificates.net/alabama.htm |
| This website was created to provide genealogists with access to Alabama birth certificates. | |
| Alabama Census Online | census-online.com/links/AL |
| Census records 1820 - 1930 | |
| Alabama Civil War Roots Homepage | rootsweb.com/~alcwroot |
| research the Civil War record of an ancestor | |
| Alabama Department of Archives and History | archives.state.al.us |
| resources available from the state archives | |
| Alabama GenWeb Project | rootsweb.com/~algenweb |
| Alabama Historical Commission | www.preserveala.org |
| Cemeteries of Alabama | interment.net/us/al |
| Online burial records and tombstone inscriptions from Alabama cemeteries | |
| Historic Alabama Maps | alabamamaps.ua.edu/alabama/historical |
| Evolution of county lines and other general information | |

Armed Services

- | | |
|---|---|
| Civil War Rosters | www.geocities.com/Area51/Lair/3680/cw/cw.html |
| Arranged by state, not all rosters available. | |
| Military Records | http://rwguide.rootsweb.com/military/militarylinks.html |
| | http://www.cyndislist.com/military.htm |
| U. S. Army Center of Military History | www.army.mil/cmh-pg |
| U. S. Navy, Military History | www.history.navy.mil/ |
| | www.navyhistory.org |
| U. S. Marine Corps. | www.usmc.mil/ |
| World War I Draft Registration | user.rootsweb.com/ww1/draft |
| not all states available at this time | |

Black History and Genealogy

- | | |
|---|--|
| African American Genealogy | www.afrigeneas.com/ |
| | www.cyndislist.com/african.htm |
| | www.genealinks.com/africanamerican.htm |
| African American Genealogy Group | www.aagg.org |
| African American Genealogy Ring | afamgenealogy.ourfamily.com/ |
| Freedom Trail | www.thefreedomtrail.com |
| Promotional site for counties in New York state with a focus on the Underground Railroad. | |

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Immigration

American Family Immigration History Center www.ellisland.org
Records of immigrants who entered the country through Ellis Island and
photographs of ships that carried some of them.
Immigrant Ships Transcribers Guild istg.rootsweb.com
Mayflower Passengers MAYFLOWER-L-request@rootsweb.com

Ireland

Commercial site of Trinity College www.eneclann.ie
Maps, history, cd sales, and other services
Irish Abroad www.irishabroad.com
Irish Genealogy www.goireland.com/genealogy
Irish Heritage Trail www.irishheritagetrail.com
Calendar of events related to Irish heritage in Boston and other Boston
information.

Lineage Societies

Daughters of the American Revolution dar.library.net
Links www.cyndislist.com/soc-lineage.htm
<http://genealogy2.com/lineagegroups/lineagegroups.html>
United Daughters of the Confederacy <http://www.hqudc.org/>
Sons of Confederate Veterans <http://www.scv.org/>
Sons of the American Revolution www.sar.org
National Society Magna Charta Dames and Barons
<http://www.magnacharta.org/membership.htm>

This organization puts out a monthly newsletter and has several meetings
and dinners during the year. They also plan tours to England and other places
associated with the Magna Charta.

Maryland

Maryland Archives <http://www.mdarchives.state.md.us/>
Information and resources on Maryland government
Maryland Genealogical Resources mdgenealogy.com
resources.rootsweb.com/USA/MD
Maryland Genealogical Society rootsweb.com/~mdsgs

Native American

Access Genealogy <http://www.accessgenealogy.com/native/>
DNA www.genetree.com
Genealogical Resources <http://www.hanksville.org/NAresources/indices/NAgenealogy.html>
Links www.cindislist.com/native.htm
<http://www.indiancircle.com/>
<http://www.umsystem.edu/shs/nativeam.html>

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Religion

Catholic

home.att.net/~Local_Catholic

Scotland

National Archives of Scotland
Electric Scotland

www.nas.gov.uk
www.electricscotland.com

Search Engine - Genealogy

Dogpile
Ancestor Hunt
I Found It!

<http://www.dogpile.com>
www.ancestorhunt.com/
<http://www.gensource.com/ifoundit/>

U. S. Presidents

Genealogy of the Presidents

users.legacyfamilytree.com/USPresidents
www3.dcs.hull.ac.uk/public/genealogy/presidents
www.geocities.com/Heartland/Ridge/4602/prez.html

This website gives the Mayflower ancestors of American Presidents
Presidents having Royal Ancestors <http://members.aol.com/rfield/chap15.html>
If you can connect to a President with Royal Ancestors you can add
generations of proven ancestors to your line. Most of these Presidents
are descendants of William the Conqueror, who in turn was a descendant
of Charlemagne.

<http://www.asis.com/~stag/uspres.html>

This site is a little off the wall but has some interesting information. I
would get any information from this site confirmed from other sources.
These and other sites are available online and all sites were good as of July 6,
2005.

Court House Records

Court Records are open to the public unless the judge seals the documents, as
in juvenile cases. In some cases you can look at them yourself and in others the
clerk may have to look them up for you. In most cases, looking is free; but, they
are allowed to charge a fee for copying. This can vary from ten cents to dollars
for each page.

Types of records available: adoptions, apprenticeships and indentures, having
fathered a child out of wedlock, business and professional licenses, coroner's
files and inquests, court proceedings, guardianship papers, homestead files,
insanity and commitment hearings, jury and grand jury lists, justice of the peace
records, land deeds, livestock brands, mortgages and leases, name changes,
naturalizations, orphans records, poorhouse/county farm records, prenuptial
agreements, property foreclosures, tax rolls, vital records, voter registrations,
wills and probates, bounties on predatory animals (wolf or coyote, etc.)

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2005 Roots & Branches Membership/Renewal Application

\$8.00 Single Membership: ()

New Member: ()

\$14.00 Two Member Household: ()

Renewal: ()

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: () _____ - _____ Email: _____

Surnames you are researching (up to eight): _____

Make checks payable to: **"Morning Group, T.G.S."** and mail to P.O. Box 20565,
Tuscaloosa, AL 35402

Please invite friends and family. Growth is essential.

THE MORNING GROUP
TUSCALOOSA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

Mr. Ray Hamer – President
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