## OF NOTE

### The History and Genealogy Department welcomes new staff member

Greg Hilton joined the History and Genealogy Department reference staff on Nov. 17. Greg has a B.A. in English Literature from St. Louis University and brings to the department extensive research experience and knowledge of genealogical source material.

### History and Genealogy Department at FGS

History and Genealogy Department manager Scott Holl and assistant manager Jacob Eubanks will be attending the Federation of Genealogical Societies / RootsTech Conference in Salt Lake City, Feb. 11–14, 2015. If you are going to the conference, please stop by booth 1207 in the exhibit hall and say hello.

### Planning underway for NGS Conference

The National Genealogical Society Conference will held at the St. Charles Convention Center, May 13–16, 2015 bringing as many as 2500 researchers to the area (see page 2). St. Louis County Library is expecting many of them to visit the History and Genealogy Department. Watch future issues of PastPorts and the library website for suggestions on how to make best use of the department and its resources during the conference.

## HOLIDAY CLOSING

### Monday, Jan. 19

The library will be closed in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.



| SOURCES | INFORMATION | EVIDENCE |
|---|---|---|
| Original or Derivative | Primary or Secondary | Direct or Indirect |
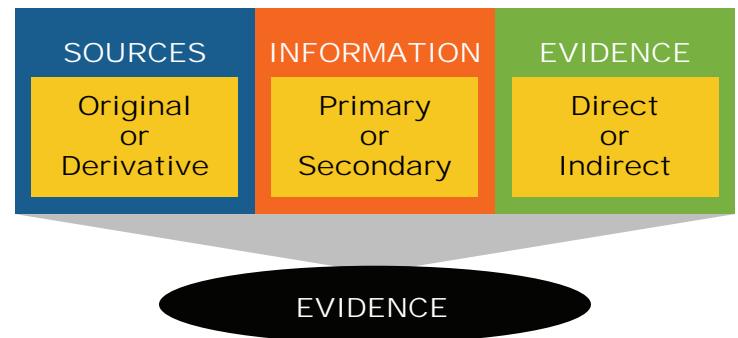
**EVIDENCE**

The Analysis Tree Model for evaluating genealogical evidence.

## FOR THE RECORDS

### An approach to evaluating family histories and family trees

Genealogy is the study of history in a microcosm – the tracing of lines of descent in the context of history. While historians typically focus on the bigger picture of events and society, genealogists focus on individual lives, looking for minute details in order to better understand themselves and their families in the context of history. While historians can make minor errors and not alter their big picture ideas, mistakes on the part of genealogists can have immense consequences on future research. Therefore, it is important for genealogists to be precise in evaluating the evidence they uncover.

Today there is a growing interest in sharing genealogical research. Ancestry, Family Search, web forums, and historical websites all provide ease of access to family trees created by both professional and amateur genealogists. There are thousands of published and unpublished family histories available today – more than 15,000 in the collections of the History and

# NATIONAL GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY 2015 FAMILY HISTORY CONFERENCE

## CROSSROADS OF AMERICA
### ST. CHARLES, MISSOURI
### 13–16 MAY 2015
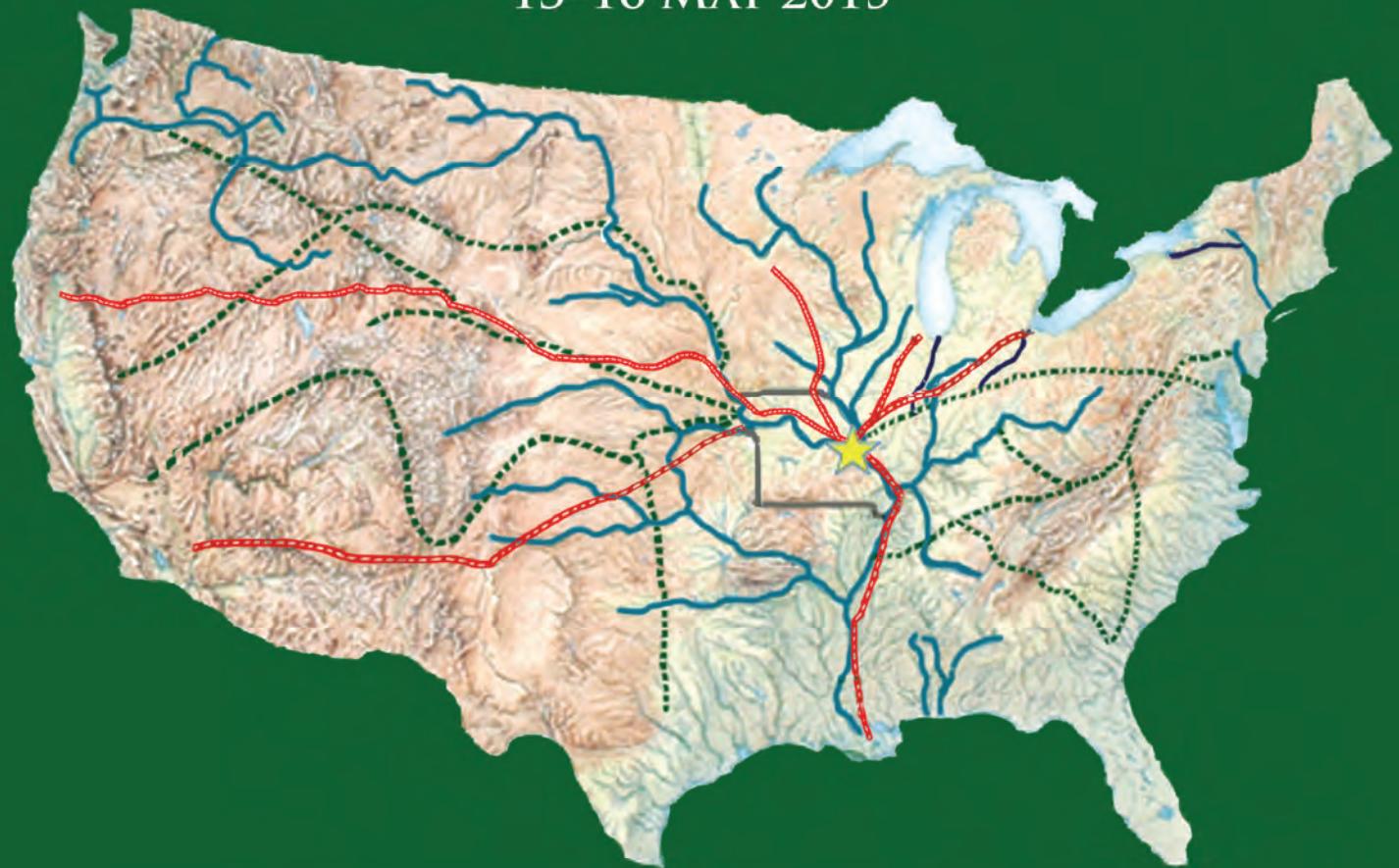
Visit www.ngsgenealogy.org for more information.

NATIONAL GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

FOUNDED 1903

Genealogy Department. This abundance of accessible pre-packaged family history material greatly benefits the genealogy community, but the greater availability of such data also creates greater risk of misinformation.

This article investigates two practices that should aide researchers in navigating the wealth of information available from family histories and trees. These practices deal with the evaluation of evidence and the evaluation of proof. Researchers can apply these practices to their research in order to determine the accuracy of family histories or trees.

## Evaluating evidence

Students are taught to evaluate information as coming from primary or secondary sources. According to its website, Princeton University <http://www.princeton.edu/~refdesk/primary2.html> defines a primary source as "a document or physical object which was written or created during the time under study. These sources were present during an experience or time period and offer an inside view of a

particular event." While this definition may be applicable to traditional historical research, it does not really serve the purposes of genealogical research. Genealogists require a tighter definition to limit mistakes and reduce bias.

For genealogists, a primary source is one in which all information presented by the source is accounted for at the time of creation. For instance, a death certificate often includes information regarding the parents' place of birth. For this to be considered a primary source, both parents would need to have been present to confirm this information. For obvious reasons, this is not common. For historical researchers this would not be an issue, but for genealogists, an error at this level can quickly derail research and lead one astray.

To successfully avoid misinformation that might lead them astray, genealogists must evaluate the evidence used by sources. Elizabeth Shown Mills has written extensively about genealogical evidence. The Analysis Tree model (see page 1) is the most common model Mills cites for evaluating evidence. The Analysis Tree breaks down evaluation into three variables: **Sources, Information, and Evidence.**

**The source** is the package or container for the information and can take various forms, such as people, books, artifacts, websites, etc. It could be grandma's quilt or a great-grandfather's tombstone. When looking at a source, it is important to determine if the data is original or derivative. Original sources as a rule are more reliable than derivatives. However, as with all rules, there can be exceptions—dates can be miss-recorded; names can be misspelled. REMEMBER: original documents may be "original," but they may also be incorrect.

**Information** consists of the data genealogists extract from a source. Data can be primary or secondary, and the creator of the data could have firsthand or secondhand knowledge. Oral histories, diaries, letters, and witnesses are examples of primary sources. Family histories, family trees, death and probate records are all examples of secondary sources. While a primary source is typically preferable to a secondary one, information can be and often is incorrect. Just because a person has firsthand knowledge does not mean the information communicated by that individual is

# CLASSES

Classes are free and open to the public. Registration is required. ☎ Call (314) 994-3300 to register. Space is limited.

☎ **Beginning a Genealogical Research Project**
Tuesday, Jan. 6 | 2 p.m.
Headquarters East Room
Larry Franke, instructor
Registration is now open.

☎ **Introduction to Ancestry Library Edition Database**
Thursday, Jan. 15 | 2 p.m.
Headquarters Computer Lab
Larry Franke, instructor
Registration is now open.

☎ **Introduction to Fold3 and HeritageQuest**
Wednesday, Jan. 21 | 2 p.m.
Headquarters Computer Lab
Larry Franke, instructor
Registration is now open.

☎ **History and Genealogy in Newspapers**
Thursday, Jan. 29 | 2 p.m.
Headquarters Computer Lab
Larry Franke, instructor
Registration opens Jan. 2..

☎ **Beginning a Genealogical Research Project**
Wednesday, Feb. 4 | 2 p.m.
Headquarters East Room
Larry Franke, instructor
Registration opens Jan. 7

☎ **Introduction to Ancestry Library Edition Database**
Tuesday, Feb.. 24 | 2 p.m.
Headquarters Computer Lab
Larry Franke, instructor
Registration opens  Jan. 27

firsthand. Bias and experience can alter the firsthand source's recollection. For example, a grandfather passes down the story of being adopted following the death of his mother. He relates that his mother died during the birth of her third son. The boys are all given up, and the grandfather is taken in by local law enforcement. When genealogical records are consulted, the evidence reveals that it was actually the father—not the mother—who died. Further evidence reveals that the mother gave up her children when she remarried. The grandfather was adopted by a lawyer in a neighboring town, and his younger brother was adopted by the county sheriff.

**Evidence** is information that can be applied to answer a specific question. Genealogists are faced with many questions. The task is to seek out evidence which answers those questions. There are two types of evidence: direct and indirect. Direct evidence answers a specific question while indirect evidence is useful but only provides clues. For example, when researching a female family member's line and attempting to determine her maiden name, a cemetery marker with her married name is an indirect source. The cemetery record in this example does not answer the question of "what is her maiden name" but it indirectly establishes who she was and where she lived. A direct source in this case might be a birth certificate, a marriage license, or a federal census record from before she was married.

In many cases, indirect evidence is necessary to locate direct evidence. Using the example above, the woman in question was buried with her husband; no maiden name was recorded. She appeared on the 1870 through 1910 federal censuses for Kansas and the 1875-1905 Kansas State censuses under her married name. Each census record indicated she was born in Indiana. No one with her name appeared on the 1860 federal census in Kansas and, due to the Kansas-Nebraska act, no Kansas settlers were documented prior to the 1850 census. To discover her maiden name, records for her locality from the 1860s were cross-checked with the 1850 and 1860 federal censuses, which identified her father. A cross-check of local election records for 1867 revealed a correlation to the 1850 federal census showing the father living with the daughter in Indiana, thus providing a direct record of her maiden name.

**For further information about evaluating genealogical evidence**

Merriman, Brenda Dougal. *Genealogical Standards of Evidence.* Toronto: Ontario Genealogical Society, 2012. 929.1 M571G

Mills, Elizabeth Shown. Evidence*! Citation & Analysis for the Family Historian.* Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1997. R 929.1 M657E and circulating copy

Mills, Elizabeth Shown. *Evidence Explained: Citing History Sources From Artifacts to Cyberspace.* Baltimore: Genealogical Publications, 2007. R 907.2 M657E and circulating copy

Morgan, George C. and Drew Smith. *Advanced Genealogy: Research Techniques.* New York: McGraw Hill, 2014. R 929.1 M848A and circulating copy

## Evaluating proof

Family histories and family trees are secondary sources that are subjective and dependent on performed research. Because no two researchers will look at the same record and arrive at the same conclusions, bias and experience always come into play in their analysis. While family histories are great starting points, researchers should take the time to evaluate these sources so they do not find themselves on the wrong path.

Recognizing that genealogical conclusions are so vulnerable to error, the Board of Certification of Genealogists has outlined a Genealogical Proof Standard <http://www.bcgcertification.org/resources/standard.html> in order to help compilers develop—and researchers identify—accurate information. The five components are:

1. Thorough ("reasonably exhaustive") searches in sources that might help answer a research question.
2. Informative ("complete, accurate") citations to the sources of every information item contributing to the research question's answer.
3. Analysis and comparison ("correlation") of the relevant sources to assess their usefulness as evidence to support the answer to the research question.

4. Resolution of any conflicts between evidence and the proposed answer to a research question.
5. A written statement, list, or narrative supporting the answer.

When examining family histories and trees, researchers should be cautious and question the level of proof that went into determining the conclusions proposed by the compiler. While each proof standard may not apply to every element within the family history or tree, the conclusions drawn from the evidence should hold up to a reasonable scrutiny.

In evaluating genealogical proof, researchers should:

- Examine the compiler's source citations to determine the extent of the compiler's research.
- Apply the Analysis Tree model to determine the accuracy of the sources.
- Use the Analysis Tree model to evaluate the compiler's conclusions and determine if the sources directly correlate with the questions posed.
- Look for any narrative explanations that support the evidence behind the compiler's conclusions.

**For further information about evaluating genealogical proof**

Board for Certification of Genealogists. *The BCG Genealogical Standards Manual.* Orem, Utah: Ancestry, 2000. 929.1 B364

Jones, Thomas W. *Mastering Genealogical Proof.* National Genealogical Society Special Publication #107. Arlington, VA: National Genealogical Society, 2013. R 929.1 J79M

If time is taken to apply the five components of Genealogical Proof Standard to family histories and family trees, and if the Analysis Tree model is implemented in evaluating the evidence compiled, then researchers will not only have more accurate evidence but also enjoy greater success navigating the growing wealth of genealogical information available from these resources.

# Genealogy
## PROGRAMS

## JAN 2015

### St. Louis Genealogical Society General Meeting
### Saturday, January 10, 10:00 a.m.
*Headquarters–Auditorium*

#### StLGS Website Improvements, Tips and Demonstration

*Speakers:* **Bob Goode and Carol Kohnen**

Learn the features of our newly refurbished website. See the easy-to-use, even more secure store and the lightning fast search engine that allows you to search within specific databases. Be among the first to know about all these exciting changes.

### St. Louis Genealogical Society German Special Interest Group
### Wednesday, January 14, 7:00 p.m.
*Headquarters–Auditorium*

#### What's New in the German Collection at St. Louis County Library?

Learn about the newest print and microfilm resources for German research in the History and Genealogy Department.

*Speaker:* **Scott Holl**

### St. Louis Genealogical Society Irish Special Interest Group
### Tuesday, January 27, 7:00 p.m.
*Headquarters–East Room*

#### Putting Meat on the Bones: Using Digitized Newspapers to Add Persona to Birth, Marriage and Death

An ancestor's life is more than just the dates of birth, marriage and death. Find out how to add more depth to a person's life story by using digitized newspapers.

*Speaker:* **Viki Fagyal**

**Programs are free and open to the public.**

**Registration is not required.**

**Call 314-994-3300 for more information.**

Programs take place at:
**St. Louis County Library Headquarters**
1640 S. Lindbergh Blvd.
St. Louis, MO 63131.

St. Louis County **Library**

**Program sites are accessible.** Upon two weeks' notice, accommodations will be made for persons with disabilities. Call 314-994-3300 or visit www.slcl.org

## NEW IN THE HISTORY AND GENEALOGY DEPARTMENT

### View the list of new books on the web

A list of new books received during the previous month now appears on the library's website. View the list by clicking on the graphic, left, or by typing the URL into your browser: <http://tinyurl.com/ktha6fr>.

### Looking for a specific state, or county ?

Books pertaining to specific states (and counties within states) begin with the same call number. A chart of Dewey Decimal numbers for states and counties is posted on the library website <http://tinyurl.com/oqy8xp8>. Other subjects are also grouped by call number. For example, family histories begin with 929.2. Materials for Scotland begin with 941 and those for Germany begin with 943.

To find new titles on the book list, note the Dewey Decimal Number for the state / county or subject you are interested in. Scroll through the book list until you find items beginning with that call number.

Books with call numbers **not beginning with "R"** are listed in Dewey Decimal order first, followed by those beginning with "R" (denoting "Reference" books that may be used only in the library). Book titles can be selected from the online list and emailed, printed, or saved to a file. An additional feature for library card holders is the ability to login to their library accounts and save titles to a customized list. You can also download the list as a PDF from the library's website <http://tinyurl.com/okz4vvs>.

For more information about viewing the new book list online, exporting records, and saving items to a customized list, call (314) 994-3300 or ask a librarian when visiting any St. Louis County Library branch.

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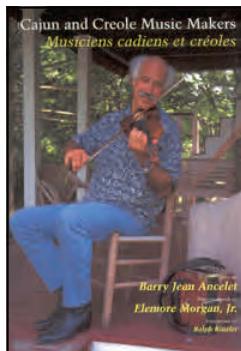
### Cajun and Creole music Makers / Musiciens cadiens et créoles

**By Barry Jean Ancelet**

**University of Mississippi, 1999**
**R 781.62 A538C**

This new edition of a book first published in 1984 celebrates the music makers in the generation most responsible for the survival of Cajun music and zydeco and showcases many of the young performers who have emerged since then to give the music new spark. More than 100 color photographs show them in their homes, on their front porches, and in their fields, as well as in performance at local clubs and dance halls and on festival stages. In interviews they speak directly about their lives, their music, and the vital tradition from which their rollicking music springs.—*Publisher*
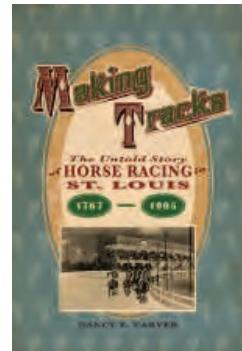
### Making Tracks: The Untold Story of Horse Racing in St. Louis, 1767–1905

**By Nancy Ellen Carver**

**Reedy Press, 2014**
**R 977.866 C331M and**
**circulating copy**

At one time, horse racing was a more popular sport than baseball. Nowhere was this reality more apparent than in St. Louis. From 1767 to 1905, throngs of excited St. Louisans rooted for their horses in almost twenty different racing venues around the area. Making Tracks takes readers on a tour of local tracks and racing history, where surprising facts emerge. St. Louis had the first night racing in the country; the St. Louis Browns, a professional baseball team, shared their baseball field with a race track; the St. Louis World's Fair Handicap in 1904 dazzled the racing world with a $50,000 purse; famous

people, including celebrated jockeys and horsemen, came to St. Louis to race; and the Delmar Loop track made history as the city's last track and the scene of a notorious raid orchestrated by the Missouri governor. The track histories capture the thrill of the sport and the flavor of the times, including the political, social, economic, and religious realities involved. Making Tracks is a must read for horse racing fans, local history buffs, and people who love a good story. Saddle up and take a ride on bygone tracks once filled with passionate and engaged fans.—*Publisher*
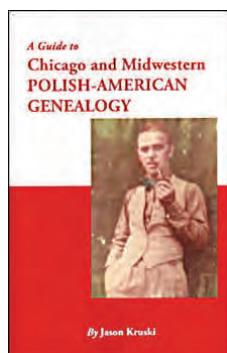
### A Guide to Chicago and Midwestern Polish-American Genealogy

**By Jason Kruski**

**Clearfield, 2012**
**R 977.311 K94G**

This new guidebook is the first comprehensive introduction to Polish genealogy in years. Since Polish-Americans (including the author) proliferate in Chicago and the U.S. Midwest, they are the focus; however, much of the advice set forth here will apply to the majority of U.S. residents of Polish Catholic origin, as well as to records in Poland themselves. (Persons of Polish Jewish/Lithuanian/Ruthenian ancestry are not covered in Mr. Kruski's book.) Since Polish immigration to the United States began in earnest following the American Civil War, and was heaviest during the last quarter of the nineteenth and first quarter of the twentieth century, this era is the chronological focal point of the work.—*Publisher*
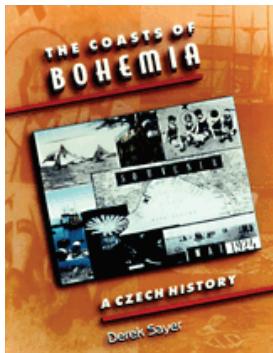
### The Coasts of Bohemia: A Czech History

**By Derek Sayer**

**Princeton University, 1998**
**R 943.71 S274C**

In The Winter's Tale, Shakespeare gave the landlocked country of Bohemia a coastline--a famous and, to Czechs, typical example of foreigners' ignorance of the Czech homeland. Although the lands that were once the Kingdom of Bohemia lie at the heart of Europe, Czechs are usually encountered only in the margins of other people's stories. In The Coasts of Bohemia, Derek Sayer reverses this perspective. He presents a comprehensive and long-needed history of the Czech people that is also a remarkably original history of modern Europe, told from its uneasy center.—*Publisher*

## New microfilm

**St. Louis newspapers**
Deutsche Tribeune | July 15, 1844–March 31, 1852 (German)
Deutsche Wochenschrift | June 26, 1969–May 21, 1982 (German)
Es Videke | Oct. 31, 1958–Aug. 9, 1969 (Hungarian)

# GENEALOGY AT CLIFF CAVE

The following events take place at the Cliff Cave Branch of St. Louis County Library, 5430 Telegraph Road. Events are free and open to the public.

### JANUARY / FEBRUARY

**Passenger Lists in America**
Monday, Jan. 12 | 6:30 p.m.

When did your ancestor arrive in the U.S.? At what port, and on what ship? Passenger lists can answer these questions and provide other details as well.

Ken Webb, speaker

**Top Genealogy Websites**
Monday, Feb. 9 | 6:30 p.m.

A review of the most popular pay and free websites for genealogical research.

Ken Webb, speaker

**NEWS AND TIPS** | ST. LOUIS COUNTY LIBRARY HISTORY AND GENEALOGY DEPARTMENT

Il Pensiero | April 5, 1969–Dec. 22, 2008
(Italian and English)

Przewodnik Polski | Jan. 8, 1903–July 7, 1910; Feb. 27,
1913–July 11, 1929; Feb. 2, 1845; Feb. 22, 1945
(Polish)

St. Louis Lutheran | June 26, 1948–Oct. 1, 1960

**City directories for Mississippi**

Greenville, 1936-1960 (with gaps)

Gulfport, 1936-1960 (with gaps)

Hattiesburg, 1937-1959 (with gaps)

Jackson, 1937-1960 (with gaps)

Laurel, 1938-1960 (with gaps)

Natchez, 1922-1960 (with gaps)

## New electronic databases

The following NewsBank databases provide full-text access to newspapers.

Access World News—includes many U.S. and
international newspapers.

St. Louis Post-Dispatch—total access from 1988 to present,
and partial access from 1981–1987.

North Side Journal—covers north St. Louis County

Independent News—Florissant Valley area, including
Black Jack, Florissant, Hazelwood, and Spanish Lake.,
Oct. 2006 to present.

South County Journal—2004 to present.

Southwest County Journal - covers south and west St.
Louis County. Includes access from Oct. 2004 to Jan.
2009.

Links to the databases <http://tinyurl.com/7qt8ja7> can be
accessed from the History and Genealogy page by clicking
on "Databases & Websites" link. St. Louis County Library
card holders living in the metropolitan area can access the
database at home.

## New at Ancestry Library Edition

Many new databases for England

Alabama, Voter Registration Records, 1867

Czech Republic, Church Books, 1552–1948

Czechoslovakia, Social Welfare and Repatriation Records
of Holocaust Survivors, 1939–1948

England & Wales, Criminal Lunacy Warrant and Entry
Books, 1882–1898

Iowa State Census, 1905

Jamaica, Civil Birth Registration, 1878–1930

Minnesota, Naturalization Card Index, 1930–1988

Nebraska, Homestead Records, 1861–1936

New York, Sing Sing Prison Admission Registers, 1865–
1939

New York, State Census, 1865

Nova Scotia, Canada, Land Petitions, 1765–1800

Oklahoma and Indian Territory, Dawes Census Cards for
Five Civilized Tribes, 1898–1914

Oklahoma and Indian Territory, Indian and Pioneer
Historical Collection, 1937

Oklahoma and Indian Territory, Indian Censuses and Rolls,
1851–1959

Oklahoma and Indian Territory, Indian Photos, 1850–1930

Oklahoma and Indian Territory, Land Allotment Jackets for
Five Civilized Tribes, 1884–1934

Oklahoma and Indian Territory, Marriage, Citizenship and
Census Records, 1841–1927

Oklahoma, Historical Indian Archives Index, 1856–1933

Oklahoma, Indian Land Allotment Sales, 1908–1927

Oklahoma, Land Run and other Land Records, 1889–1926

Tennessee, Passenger and Crew Manifests of Airplanes
Arriving at Memphis, 1958–1961

U.K., Lunacy Patients Admission Registers, 1846–1912

U.S., Ratified Indian Treaties and Chiefs, 1722–1869

U.S., Records Related to Enrollment of Eastern
Cherokee by Guion Miller, 1908–1910

Ancestry Library Edition can be used for free at any
St. Louis County Library location.

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**PastPorts publishing schedule for 2015**

Eleven issues of PastPorts will be published in 2015. A
special NGS issue in both print and PDF formats will be
ready by May as a May-June issue in. A combined issue
will be published for Dec. 2015–Jan. 2016 .

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**NEWS AND TIPS** | ST. LOUIS COUNTY LIBRARY HISTORY AND GENEALOGY DEPARTMENT