

# BOUSE GENIES



## SOURCES, EVIDENCE & ANALYSIS

by Barbara A. H. Nuehring  
and Carolyn H. Brown

Years ago genealogists spoke of primary and secondary sources. Today that concept has been expanded to identify the data within those sources and determine its relevance to the problem we are working on. We now know we should also think deeper about the source documents we discover.

Is the data in a document evidence that will solve our problem? Is it an additional fact to help us in our research? Or, is it an interesting anecdote that will put meat on the bones of our ancestors? Let's discuss the differences in the types of sources, evidence and how to analyze the data to form a conclusion.

### Primary & Secondary Sources

Sources can be civil, ecclesiastical or legal documents, photographs and portraits, manuscripts, books, microfilm, microfiche, journals or magazines, CDs, databases, web sites or people. They can be artifacts of any type like wall hangings (on which a female forebear embroidered her name and dates) and tombstones. For years we have heard that sources are either:

Primary Sources—unbiased records created very close to the time of the actual event by someone who was a participant or observer and had first-hand knowledge of the event.

Secondary Sources—documents produced sometime after the event occurred by a person quoting assumptions obtained from other records, tradition or hearsay.

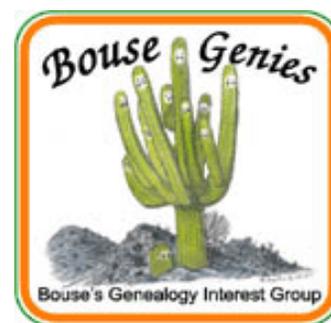
A document such as a death certificate can be both a primary source (with respect to the date, place and cause of death) and secondary source (in regard to the date and place of birth and the parents of the deceased).

**Tip:** Never discount the value of secondary sources—they provide leads for locating more data and perhaps a supporting primary source document. And there have been occasions when a primary source was wrong and the secondary source was right! Case in point: The listing in the Courthouse Register written in the hand of the minister gave the wrong surname of the bride; whereas the announcement in the local newspaper and later the individual's obituary had the correct surname.

### Original & Derivative Sources

In today's world, it is no longer enough that we identify our sources as primary or secondary. We need to also consider what type of evidence the source provides. Is it an original or a derivative source? Generally, original sources are more reliable than derivatives—although all rules have exceptions.

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### Bouse Genies Electronic Newsletter

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Please send all general correspondence to:

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or email

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The Bouse Genies meet every other Friday from October thru April at one of the members homes. You may email Carol at [sidcarol@escapees.com](mailto:sidcarol@escapees.com) for the time, place and schedule.

The Bouse Genies Website is <http://bousegenies.weebly.com>

(Continued from page 1)

An [original source](#) is one that contributes written, oral, or visual data not derived from a prior written record or oral communication. Official copies (i.e., verbatim transcriptions entered into church or governmental registers by persons charged by law with recording facts and statistics accurately) may be treated as an original if the actual "loose sheet" original is no longer available. Microfilmed images and digitized images may be treated as an original when produced by an official or otherwise reputable agency. A marriage license would be considered an original source.

A [derivative source](#) is one that provides data that has been hand-copied, transcribed, abstracted, summarized, or repeated from a previously existing source. Photocopies and digital images made and distributed by individuals do not carry the same weight as originals because of the possibility of tampering. Certificates (birth, marriage, death, etc.) issued by church and governmental agencies are not considered originals because copying errors are more frequent and data may be intentionally omitted to fit the form of the certificate.

## Evidence

Not all source documents we find may be relevant to our problem, even if it deals with our individual.

If our problem is the identification of William's wife's maiden name, then sources stating that William paid taxes 1876 would not likely be evidence for the problem we have defined. A marriage record, on the other hand, typically would be evidence.

Once we decide that a piece of data is evidence for a particular problem, then we measure that evidence by asking: Is this direct evidence or indirect evidence?

[Direct Evidence](#) is a document that explicitly states the relationship or uniquely describes the person of interest.

[Indirect Evidence](#) also called "circumstantial evidence," is a collection of documents, none of which directly addresses the matter at issue, but that can be used to infer a relationship (a genetic or legal connection between two people) or identity (a conclusion that descriptions of individuals in various records all pertain to the same person).

**Tip:** Never stop at one piece of evidence. Find collaborating data. Collect as much evidence as you can. Evaluate each piece of evidence for reliability and credibility.

## Analysis

Analysis is the process of compiling, examining and weighing all of the data you have gathered in order to prove or disprove a point. It may be a time consuming process, but worth your time and energy.

**Tip:** Many times it is as important to prove who someone wasn't as it is to prove who they were. Case in point: You have two or more individuals in the same geographic area at the same time with the same name. By eliminating one or more individuals as your ancestor, you will be closer to proving which individual with that particular name is your person of interest.

**Tip:** Your initial analysis may require gathering additional data from varied sources. Case in point: The paternity of the children of Sally Hemmings. Research into this problem went so far as knowing the layout of Monticello, researching all of Thomas Jefferson's papers to prove if he was with Sally when her children were conceived and who was not there during that time frame. DNA also assisted in the process.

## Conclusion

Unfortunately, our problem may be hard to solve since most of our ancestors did not leave a large quantity of records for us to find. Therefore, we must gather all of the known source documents available, evaluate the strength of the evidence we have uncovered, and analyze the evidentiary data before we can make beyond-a-reasonable-doubt conclusions about our ancestors' lives and relationships.

## GENEALOGISTS BIGGEST USERS OF PUBLIC RECORDS

by Maryalice Gordon



"Family history is probably the biggest area of public records research in Oregon." This is part of a quote from an Associated Press article in *The Columbian*, my local newspaper for Vancouver, Washington. As genealogists we locate and closely examine birth and death certificates, marriage licenses, property assessment rolls, probate settlements and other public records such as deeds and surveyor maps. Often we can track down family members using these public records. According to the article, family researchers are probably the biggest consumers of public records nationwide followed by students and people interested in environmental issues.

## They Say.....

by Barbara A. H. Nuehring

How many times have you heard *They say....* in your life? Children are notorious for using that phrase when stating a "fact" they want to share. News media have another take on the phrase—a *reliable source has told us....* Friends say *well, I read it on the Internet*. Who else do you know that uses a variation of *They say....*?



Some genealogists do! Have you found an ancestor on another's database with no explanation as to where they got the data? Have you found transcriptions of obituaries with no notation as to the newspaper or date? Or worse yet, did you discover some evidence and documented it on your database and later don't know where you got it?

It is important to write down where we obtained the evidence that proves/disproves a name, relationship, event, date or location—for our further research and for those that will follow us. In other words, we should always cite our sources. The basic information we should record is:

- Author/creator/compiler/interviewer;
- Complete title of the record/document;
- Where it was published/created;
- Who and when was it published/created;
- Where the record/document is located (i.e., FHL or NARA film number, the URL, the name of the repository, or name and contact information of the person holding the original).

There are excellent guides for sale and on library shelves that will help you:

### *Quicksheet Citing Online Historical Resources*

by Elizabeth Shown Mills (Author)  
Pamphlet: 4 pages  
Publisher: Genealogical Publishing Company; 1 Revised edition (January 1, 2007)  
ISBN-10: 0806317760  
ISBN-13: 978-0806317762

### *Evidence! Citation & Analysis for the Family Historian*

by Elizabeth Shown Mills (Author)  
Hardcover: 124 pages  
Publisher: Genealogical Publishing Company (January 1, 1997)  
ISBN-10: 0806315431  
ISBN-13: 978-0806315430

### *Evidence Explained: Citing History Sources from Artifacts*

### *to Cyberspace*

by Elizabeth Shown Mills (Author)  
Hardcover: 885 pages  
Publisher: Genealogical Publishing Company (June 30, 2007)  
ISBN-10: 0806317817  
ISBN-13: 978-0806317816

### *Professional Genealogy: A Manual for Researchers, Writers, Editors, Lecturers, and Librarians*

by Elizabeth Shown Mills (Editor)  
Hardcover: 654 pages  
Publisher: Genealogical Publishing Company (May 1, 2001)  
ISBN-10: 0806316489  
ISBN-13: 978-0806316482

### *Cite Your Sources: A Manual for Documenting Family Histories and Genealogical Records*

by Richard S. Lackey (Author)  
Paperback: 94 pages  
Publisher: University Press of Mississippi (February 1986)  
ISBN-10: 0878052860  
ISBN-13: 978-0878052868

### *Genealogical Proof Standard: Building a Solid Case*

by Christine Rose (Author)  
Paperback: 58 pages  
Publisher: CR Publications; 2 Rev Enl edition (March 2005)  
ISBN-10: 092962615X  
ISBN-13: 978-0929626154

### *Genealogical Evidence: A Guide to the Standard of Proof Relating to Pedigrees, Ancestry, Heirship and Family History*

by Noel C. Stevenson (Author)  
Paperback: 233 pages  
Publisher: Aegean Park Press; Revised edition (June 1989)  
ISBN-10: 0894121596  
ISBN-13: 978-0894121593

### *Family History Documentation Guidelines*

by Silicon Valley PAF Users Group  
Spiral-bound: 104 pages  
Publisher: Silicon Valley PAF Users Group (July 8, 2000)  
ISBN-10: 0970415605  
ISBN-13: 978-0970415608

Don't be the "They" in someone's *They say....* Cite your sources!



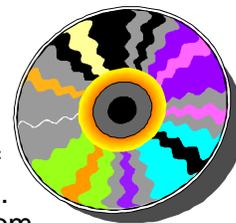
Each king in a deck of playing cards represents a great king from history:

- Spades - King David
- Hearts - Charlemagne
- Clubs - Alexander, the Great
- Diamonds - Julius Caesar

## FROM THE COMPUTER DESK

### CITING SOURCES IN YOUR GENEALOGY PROGRAM

By Carolyn H. Brown



Genealogy programs available today have many great features that make our job of entering large amounts of data, photos, and sources so easy compared to their cousins in the past. The question is, have you learned to use these features in your genealogy program to their fullest? Many of us purchase a program, learn the basics and fail to really study the features available to us.

For years I personally have used Legacy Family Tree as my program of choice, having gotten totally disgusted with PAF and Family Tree Maker. Entering my sources was so easy with Legacy, even in the early releases, that I continued doing it the same way all this time.

Recently a member of our local genealogy group brought a Legacy training CD to show at one of our meetings with instructions on using Legacy's sources feature. The show took about 45 minutes and I found

that I had been missing one feature that made the process of entering sources a total breeze. When entering a lot of data from one source, Legacy allows the source to be placed on the "source clipboard". As data is being entered for individuals click the single bar button on the left side of the individual screen to enter the clipboard source for that single event, or if all of the data being entered for the individual is from the same source, click the multiple event source bar button to enter the same source for all events just entered.

This is only one of the many neat features available for Legacy's source citations. No matter which genealogy program you are using, take time to learn the time saving features available in that software. You will be glad you did!

### Internet Sites about Documentation and Citations



*Web sites come, move, and go on a regular basis. These URLs were current at the time of publication and are subject to unannounced changes.*

How to Cite Sources article by John Wylie

[www.genealogy.com/19\\_wylie\\_print.html](http://www.genealogy.com/19_wylie_print.html)

Citing Records in the National Archives

[www.archives.gov/publications/general-info-leaflets/17.html](http://www.archives.gov/publications/general-info-leaflets/17.html)

Library of Congress: How to Cite Sources

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/ndlpedu/start/cite/index.html>

Citations for Internet and Electronic Sources

[www.library.ualberta.ca/guides/citation/index.cfm](http://www.library.ualberta.ca/guides/citation/index.cfm)

Chicago Manual of Style: Citation Quick Guide

[www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools\\_citationguide.html](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html)

Citation Machine

<http://citationmachine.net>

*Interactive formatting of citations in accordance with MLA, APA, Turabian and Chicago Manual of Style*



### BOUSE GENIES

#### 2008 MEETING SCHEDULE

Meetings are held every other Friday from October thru May at 10:00 a.m. in the Bouse Community Building next to the library.

May 9 & 23, 2008

The meetings in the fall will begin again on October 3, 2008

### NEW GENEALOGY MAGAZINE

Family Chronicles Magazine has started publishing a new genealogy magazine for those just beginning their family search entitled *Discovering Family History*. You can download a free preview issue at: [www.DiscoverFamilyHistory.com](http://www.DiscoverFamilyHistory.com).

A free copy of *Internet Genealogy Magazine* can be downloaded from [www.internet-genealogy.com](http://www.internet-genealogy.com).

# ABCs

## THE A-B-Cs OF GENEALOGY

### E - F - G - H

by Maryalice Gordon

[from the SKP Genies Newsletter Mar/Apr 2006]

**E** is for **EMIGRANT**, a person who exits one country to establish permanent residence in another. Many Germany emigrants left Europe before and during World War I and II to immigrate (or come into) the United States. Having trouble remembering if you are looking for an emigrant or an immigrant? Remember that **E** = emigrant or Exiting a country, and **I** = immigrant or Into a county.

**F** is for **FRAUD**. Fraudulent companies sell “genealogies” that are at best a compiled narrative of your common last name and at worst, a national “phone book” of people sharing a common name. Coats of Arms are NOT inherited, they are bestowed. Buying a plaque or certificate for your family name may be fun, but it is not family research.

**G** is for **Gather**, transcribe, copy, and preserve whatever records you can. You will find some records are very fragile as you venture into courthouses and archives. They may not be there for your grandchildren or great-grandchildren. Treat them with care and copy them correctly.

**H** is for **HEREDITY** which is the transmission of characteristics from people to offspring by means of genes in the chromosomes or the tendency of offspring to resemble parents or ancestors. My granddaughter has red hair and her parents do not, but her great-great-grandmother did. Everyone believes in heredity until their children act like fools!

#### YOU KNOW YOU ARE A GENEALOGIST WHEN—

You are the only person to show up at the cemetery research party with a shovel.

To put the “final touches” on your genealogical research, you’ve asked all of your closest relatives to provide DNA samples.

## CITE YOUR SOURCES FOR YOURSELF

by Carolyn H. Brown

Often we shrug off citing the sources for our genealogy data because we are in a hurry to record all we can or think we really don’t need them. This is a huge mistake.



The sources you cite will help you find the specific document you need to verify conflicting information when this occurs in your research. If you don’t know where you got the data, how can you tell which version is to be believed or if neither should be? This occurs quite often when you have gathered data from family members. One person will tell you one date and another will tell you another for the same event. You need to know who told you what so you can verify the information. You should try to back up all data with a second source.

When you have conflicting information make sure you explain the differences, your analysis of the data and where you obtained the data in the notes area of your genealogy program for the individual(s) in question.

I had a situation where I copied some pages from a book that I was sure applied to my family. I am so glad I had copied the frontispiece of the book (usually the first page which shows title, author and publication information), and had annotated the name of the holding library. Since I knew exactly where I had found it and I could access the book again. In-fact I did access it two more times, only to find later in my research that the data in the book did not apply to my ancestors. If I had not known the source of the data I was using, I never would have been able to find the book again or to disprove the connection.



## BEGINNERS PIT FALLS

**MY ANCESTOR’S FATHER DIDN’T  
MENTION HIM IN HIS WILL,  
SO HE MUST HAVE DIED EARLIER**

This is an assumption many of us make which is often wrong. A good many wills do not mention all living children of the testator. It was quite common for the parent to give the older children their legacies before the will was made. This was especially true if the child was married. Therefore they didn’t need to be mentioned.



## FILING YOUR SOURCE DOCUMENTS

by Carolyn H. Brown

Over the course of our family research we gather large amounts of source documents. One of our biggest problems is how to file them so we can readily access them when needed.

**Paper Documents** - A copy of your paper documents can be filed with each individual listed in the document, which requires the most copies. Or, in a separate filing system where the documents are filed according to document type and then numbered within each type. The code with the item number is then recorded with each applicable event for the individuals involved.

Example of Codes

B - Birth	Ba - Baptism	Bo - Book
Ce - Census	Ch - Church	Co - Court Record
D - Death	De - Deed	Di - Directory
M - Marriage	Mil - Military	New - Newspaper
OR - Other Researcher	W - Will	Web - Website

Each document is numbered with the appropriate code followed by the document number within that code to create a Source ID; i.e. "M - 1" would be marriage document number 1.

Create your own list of source types to meet your needs.

Some genealogy programs, like Legacy, provide a field on the source document screen to input the source document ID you have created so you can easily access the source document when needed.

**Digital Documents** - Many of the documents you will gather might come from the Internet in digital format or you can scan the paper documents you have gathered to be stored on your computer. You will want to create a system of folders to help you locate each document easily. There are two methods that can be used to accomplish this.

1 - Create a folder for each surname group and use sub-folders to store the documents according to the same source types and numbering system you have created for your paper files.

2 - Create a folder for each document type you have created for your paper files, and then sub-folders for each surname group using the same coding system.

If your paper filing system and your digital filing system are similar it will be a lot easier to keep track of those source documents.

Make sure you create a system you can live with!

## Bouse Genies News

Thanks to Gloria Freemon for taking over the job of Secretary since Betty Gilbert left for the season..

The Library Committee has been very busy logging in all of our books, both in the library and in the storage room. Thanks so much ladies for all of your hard work.

There is an outstanding issue with the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Library and the County, however, the board of the Friends of the Bouse Public Library met with District Supervisor Cliff Eddy and Parker Library Manager Jana Ponce and a MOU will be prepared as soon as they know if changing the current MOU will effect the huge grant the library received last year. If there is a problem, then the MOU with the Friends will have to wait. However, a lot of problems the Friends and the Library Management were having have been cleared up and our books will stay in the library. Since there is no more space available at this time, no additional books can be shelved until the new construction has been completed on the library.

We are still looking into a locker for us to place in the storage room. However, the price for one to match the existing one in the storage room would be over \$400.00. We can't afford it at this time.

The Legacy Training CD's have arrived and will be available at the May meeting. The invoice for Ancestry.com has been paid. The amount for 2008 was \$1065.

Four Bouse Genies members, Carol Brown, Dennis Chapman, Gloria Freemon, and Eileen Lundsford, went on the field trip to the Lake Havasu Genealogical Society Library on April 23<sup>rd</sup>. It is really good genealogy library and we will be planning another field trip for next season.

This is the last newsletter before we stop meeting for the summer. We will continue with the newsletter and any information that needs to be shared will be sent to the Yahoo Groups. If you have not signed up for the Bouse Genies Yahoo Group please do so by sending an email to Dennis Chapman at: [dennischap@ureach.com](mailto:dennischap@ureach.com). Let him know you are ready to join and he will send you an invitation.

We voted at the April 11<sup>th</sup> meeting to start up again in the Fall on October 3<sup>rd</sup>. Please mark your calendar.