Clayton Library Center for Genealogical Research
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Telling Stories About the Names on Your Pedigree Chart
by Susan Kaufman
As one looks for information about names on their pedigree chart, it is important to recognize that the pursuit is steeped in places and dates. These places and dates are part of the larger society that goes through events. These events are part of your life and your ancestor’s story. The story of the particular “time period” is what makes a genealogy a family history.

**Step One:**
To understand the importance of the family story, visit the [Family Search blog](#) and search “family stories.” Articles from this blog include *Building a Legacy through Family Stories, Strategies to Inspire Relatives to Share Family Stories, Four (4) Family Stories you Must Save for your Children,* and more. Sharing stories of your life or your ancestors’ lives will keep the family alive.

Rather than the traditional genealogical records we search for, try using information that is part of a society. For example, placing you or your family in the context of what was going on at the time of an event, finding “supplemental” information to the stories that are told, and using the lifetime of a family member to create a story.

Our quest is to identify and place a name in a location, during a specific time period through a specific record, and what historical event were taking place during the time you are researching? You could look at what kind of foods were available to your ancestors? Did you know SPAM went public in 1937 after Jay Hormel released a full canned ham in 1927? Events and history impact us every day. [Find out more about food history](#)!

**Step Two:**
We all know that “we wish we had asked” feeling and preserving the stories can stop some of that cycle. Writing, recording, and preserving the stories so they are available to our future ancestors. Not every story can be saved, but many can by recording online family meetings. Pick a topic like the winters on the Great Plains, then [read about the Great Plains in Wikipedia](#). Visit the state archives website of each Great Plains State for history or digital images to help write the story.

Another cool source is the [Internet Archive](#). This website gathers all types of historical information including, books, videos, music, photos, and much more that can help with writing the story or even spark memories to help start stories.

As an example, I grew up in Chicago, IL, and during the 60’s and 70’s there was a commercial for Empire Carpet. To this day I remember the phone number, 588-2300, and the jingle that went with it. When I moved to Houston, I found the same commercial, slightly modernized, yet the same jingle and the same phone number, but now with a toll-free area code attached. I found the original commercial on the Internet Archive, and then started to talk to my sister about Empire Carpet. That conversation led us to search for more things on the Internet Archive, which lead to a video of immigrants arriving at Ellis Island in the early 1900’s, which was the time period my paternal great grandmother and her sons, including my grandfather came to New York City.

There are several books at the Houston Public Library, or your local library that can help you write your family history. Here is where you can start your search in the library.
1. Go the adult non-fiction section of the library and search for cookbooks, travel books, history books, art books, and for different types of materials that will give you information about your ethnic background, the time period, or specific interest such as military ships, uniforms, etc.

2. Next, go to the children’s section to find the same type of materials for a quick lesson on a subject.

3. Find newspapers online and read them for the time period. You might not find a newspaper for your local area already digitized, but you can use larger city newspapers to get a broad sense of history during that time.

4. Check local historical societies and local history collections for more information about the area you are researching.

Clayton Library is filled with the books and resources pertaining to the names, dates and place sources. Additionally, you will find county, ethnic, local, and social histories, along with other sources that will help you put your ancestor in context, helping you to create a family history from a genealogy.

Here is a title search from the Houston Public Library catalog giving results for “social history” limiting the search to books at Clayton Library.

A few resources that can help in writing social history are:

*Premium: How to Use Social History in Genealogy* by Lisa Lisson

Sturdevant, Katherine Scott. *Bringing Your Family History to Life through Social History*
Clayton call number 929.1072073 S935 USA.

Telling the stories about the names on your pedigree chart will engage family members and might even give you more clues about events, names and places that will help you in your research. Save those stories so families stay alive!

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**Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston Digital Collection**
by Rodney Sam

The Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston was created as the Diocese of Galveston on May 4, 1847 in Galveston, Texas by Pope Pius IX to serve the state’s Catholic population. Today, the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston covers 8,880 square miles in the Texas counties of Galveston, Harris, Austin, Brazoria, Fort Bend, Grimes, Montgomery, San Jacinto, Walker, and Waller. The diocese’s chancery, the administrative offices of a Catholic diocese, is in downtown Houston at 1700 San Jacinto Street and serves the 146 parishes of the diocese. As an Archdiocese, Galveston-Houston also oversees the dioceses of Austin, Beaumont, Brownsville, Corpus Christi, Tyler, and Victoria.
Sacramental registers of marriages, baptisms, confirmations, and burials from at least 113 churches within the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston have been digitized by Family Search and are available for researchers to view within LDS Family History Centers and affiliate libraries like the Clayton Library Center for Genealogical Research. The viewable sacramental records begin about 1840 and end in 1957. The records usually begin when the individual Catholic parish and church was built or formed, but fires, floods, etc. could have destroyed some of the records for specific churches. The records that existed in 1957 were microfilmed by the Diocese of Galveston in 1957. These microfilms are what make up the majority of the sacramental records that have been digitized by Family Search.

Catholic sacramental registers are valuable for genealogists looking to learn more about their family history. So, if you had Roman Catholic ancestors that lived in the Gulf Coast region of Texas from the Republic of Texas days to the middle of the 20th century, these digitized records probably contain information about them. Catholic baptismal records provide the name of the baptized, the date of baptism, the names of parents and usually the date and place of birth. Marriage records give the names of the bride and groom, the date of marriage, the year and place of their birth, or at least their age, and usually the names of each of their parents if known. Marriage records can also refer you back to the date and place of a Catholic’s baptismal record. Burials give the name of the deceased, where they are buried, and even the cause of death in some cases.

To access the digitized records of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston online, you will need to have a free account at FamilySearch. Visit [FamilySearch.org](http://FamilySearch.org) and click on “Create Account” to set up your free account. Once it is created and you login, click “Search”, then “Catalog” and do a Place Search for the city or town the Catholic Church you are looking for is in.

**For example,** if you were interested in viewing the sacramental registers of Catholic Churches in the City of Houston; you will first type Houston, then look in the list of places for “United States, Texas, Harris, Houston.” Once you do that, a list of record categories or subject headings will appear. Click on the subject heading “Church Records” and read through the list of entries, looking for the Catholic church you are interested in as an author. Most of the entries’ titles are “Parish registers, [years].” Click on the title and look at the microfilm reel information. There will be a camera icon to the far right for each reel of microfilm that has been digitized. You can click on that camera icon to open the digitized images. You will need to look at that images as if you were looking at a reel of microfilm. For the most part each register is organized by type of sacrament, and then by the years they cover. Many of the registers have an alphabetical index of the records at the at the beginning of each register. Since these registers cover from 1840-1957, not all of them are arranged this way, so you may have to do some digging within the records for your specific church.

If you are not sure of the names of the Catholic church(es) in the town you are researching in the Galveston-Houston Archdiocese, Clayton Library has a book titled *The Official Catholic Directory* (Clayton call number 282 O32 USA 2016) as part of the permanent collection that gives a breakdown of every Catholic diocese in the United States and every Catholic church within each diocese. Clayton Library also has a rich book collection of Catholic sacramental abstracts for Texas and other states that can be used by genealogists who visit the library.
If you are looking for Catholic records from the Spanish and Mexican colonial period of Texas, FamilySearch has additional digital collections of parish registers, such as those for San Antonio that begin as early as 1703. These other Catholic records can also be accessed at LDS Family History Centers and affiliate libraries like Clayton Library. Here are some examples of the fascinating records you may find to help you tell the stories of your Texas Catholic ancestors. Happy Hunting!

(Picture 1 Above: Pg. 43 of Baptism register of St. Nicholas Catholic Church in Houston, Texas for 1918. St. Nicholas Church was established in 1887 and is the oldest Black Catholic Church in Houston. Entries are written in Latin.)

(Picture 2 Above: 1790 baptism of Maria Guadalupe, free mulatto, at the Alamo Mission in San Antonio.)
The Great Migrations
by Mitchell Clendening

There are at least two periods in the history of North America that are known as “The Great Migration.” Both events saw a shifting of populations that forever changed the lives and fortunes of those involved. Both migrations were an attempt to escape persecution; one sought to establish religious freedom, the other fleeing racial oppression and pursuing economic opportunity.

The First Great Migration
Marked from the landing of the English Puritans in North America in 1620. This Separatist religious sect had already spent a decade looking for a new home, free from what they considered religious persecution. With the arrival of the *Mayflower*, the English settlement of the continent had begun. Most Great English Migration immigrants left behind prosperous lives in England for the privations of colonial life in the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

They traveled as established family groups; they were literate, and often highly skilled artisans and craftspeople. Instead of seeking better economic opportunities for their families, these immigrants were seeking the chance to live the pious Puritan lifestyle denied them in England and Europe. Almost a decade after the establishment of the Plymouth Colony, King Charles I took the Puritan crisis from a simmer to a boil. By dissolving the English Parliament in 1629, the king cut off the Puritans' efforts to effect change from within. Without a representative body, persecution of the sect increased.

Over the next eleven years, The Massachusetts Bay Colony became a destination for more than twenty thousand permanent settlers. Puritan migration to New England dropped after Parliament was finally reconvened in 1640. A wealth of information regarding this wave of migration to New England can be found thanks to The Great Migration Study Project; begun in 1988 by Robert Charles Anderson and the New England Historic Genealogical Society. Multi-volume works *The Great Migration: Immigrants to New England, 1634-1635*, and *The Great Migration Directory: Immigrants to New England, 1620-1640* both resulted from this project.

The Great Northward Migration
Another Great Migration, sometimes known as the Great Northward Migration, began more than 250 years later, and continued into living memory. Following the end of the U.S. Civil War in 1865, Republicans sought to rebuild the defeated South.

The Reconstruction era saw the continued federal occupation of some southern states, as well as the requirement of new state constitutions guaranteeing the rights of freedmen. The Freedmen's Bureau was established to ensure free and fair labor practices for formerly enslaved workers. The Bureau served as a bank and lending institution for black citizens, funding businesses, schools, and churches. The return to political power of the Democrats following a major economic downturn in 1873 spelled the end of the Reconstruction era by 1877.

Without an intervening federal presence, the Southern states regressed to segregation through discriminatory Jim Crow laws. As recently as 1910, more than 90% of this
country's African American population lived in the Southern states. Faced with segregation, discrimination, injustice and poor economic prospects, southern Blacks turned their eyes northward. The agriculture-based economy of the South could not compete with the urban, industrial North. Several factors combined to turn a trickle of migrants into a torrent following the end of the first decade of the twentieth century.

World War I resulted in labor shortages in key northern industries such as automobile manufacturing and meat-packing plants. Wages in the North could be as much as double those in the South. These urban jobs were made more enticing by northern businesses that offered incentives for Black workers to relocate. Railroads and automobiles made the migration easier than it had ever been before. The northward migration accelerated in the thirty years after the end of the Great Depression. The defense buildup for World War II brought fresh labor to urban industries following the lull of the Depression.

From 1940-1970 more than 5 million people relocated from the South to the largest cities of the North and West. In the first phase of the migration, major cities of the North, namely New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, St. Louis, Denver, Detroit, Kansas City, Pittsburgh, and Indianapolis were destinations for southern African Americans looking to improve their lives. Later, in the second wave of migrations, Houston, Los Angeles, Portland, San Francisco, Phoenix, Seattle, and Oakland also saw their African American population swell. In less than 60 years, about six million African Americans had left the South, permanently changing the demographics of the entire United States.

Both “great migrations” had huge impacts on the history of the United States and our ancestors’ lives. Studying these migrations to see how they affected your ancestors can help you “tell stories about the names” as mentioned in Sue Kaufman’s article and can be accomplished by using materials available at Clayton Library. Please use this bibliography to help you get started researching your ancestors’ “great migrations.”

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