



*Coastal Georgia*

*Genealogical Society*

*News & Reviews*

1058 Whisper Ridge Loop, Waynesville, GA 31566 cggnews@hotmail.com

**SEPTEMBER 21<sup>ST</sup> MEETING** will be held at the College Place United Methodist Church on Altama Ave. in Brunswick at 2 p.m. This will be an open program, so bring your brick walls, genealogy tips, family stories, or anything you would like to share with the group. We will touch on the genealogy software topic and discuss what you are using, or what you would like to try out. Your editor will be bringing some treats, so bring your appetites!

**JUNE 22<sup>ND</sup> 2003 MEETING** was headed by **Dr. Caroline Haley**, one of our members. The title of discussion: "Genealogy 101". She reminded us of things that we usually take for granted after years of research. One being a research log. Record where you went, what you looked for, and if you found anything. I know I have gone over some things twice when I could have been looking for something else. Another pointer is to not use initials. Find out what they stand for if you can, and always include maiden names. Also, there are more records than just birth, marriage, and death. Awards, citations, heirlooms, are just a few of the obscure records that people overlook. They may be very telling if you look a little closer.

**Further Note:** Dr. Caroline Haley will be leaving us to move to Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Be sure to get in your goodbyes, and possibly some research requests to send with her! Just kidding! Chapel Hill University has a vast repository of record holdings, Ms. Haley should never want for something to do in Chapel Hill.

### **Overseers of the Poor**

– Sherry Irvine, CGRS, FSA (Scot)

The dissolution of the monasteries in the reign of Henry VIII left England with an acute problem: how to deal paupers and vagrants. A series of acts of Parliament, particularly under Elizabeth I, 1558-1603, created the system of poor relief that remained in effect for nearly three hundred years. One of these acts, in 1572, required each parish to appoint an Alms Collector, and a Supervisor of Rogues and Vagabonds; these two offices were later combined into that of Overseer of the Poor.

The Overseer was chosen at a meeting of the parish vestry

([www.ancestry.com/rd/prodredir.asp?sourceid=831&key=A634501](http://www.ancestry.com/rd/prodredir.asp?sourceid=831&key=A634501)) to administer the Poor Law for the coming year. There could be more than one in a parish, depending upon its population and/or size. The appointment was submitted to the Justices of the Peace for approval; refusal to accept the position could result in a fine. There was no pay, only reimbursement of reasonable expenses as approved by the parish vestry. The position often involved a heavy load of responsibility as well as constant dilemmas generated by the necessity of balancing cost with compassion. The duties included:

- Collecting rates to cover the costs of relief
- Doling out relief to those of the parish who were entitled to receive it
- Finding care for illegitimate children and finding the father, so the child was not chargeable to the parish
- Appearing from time to time at Quarter Sessions in connection with vagrancy and bastardy cases
- Licensing poor people to beg for alms
- Moving along rogues and vagabonds to be sure they did not become chargeable to the parish
- Setting to work all those unable to pay for their own necessities, either as parish apprentices to farms or businesses in the parish, or by assignment to the house of correction
- Handing in their accounts once each year for evaluation.

Many cases were complex and difficult to resolve. The parish of Upminster in Essex had persistent problems with John Crowest in the later 1700s. He lived in Upminster with the mother of his children but he was from Leeds in Kent. Upminster decided to send him home because he was chargeable on the parish, but Crowest heard of this and ran away. It took the overseer four days of travel to track down the man and get him to Leeds. Not long after, the Leeds vestry decided that Crowest was now settled in Upminster and sent the man back. At this point he married the mother of his children. (Presumably he was ordered to do so by the parish because the charge is noted in the accounts.) Shortly thereafter Crowest, alone, left Upminster for good. (Essex Record Office, D/P 117 and recounted in *Upminster and Cranham*, by J. Drury, 1986).

Situations like this were happening all the time; some parishes resorted to resolving their differences in

court. The records of the overseer of the poor are part of the contents of the parish chest. They are potentially a wonderful source of information about the parish and many of its residents. Overseers were meticulous about noting receipts and disbursements. These included regular payments to elderly widows, items of clothing, fuel, flour, doctor's fees, burial charges, etc. Other papers give details of parish apprenticeships, settlement certificates and examinations, and the collection of rates. The case of John Crowest points out that there are sometimes records in two places, the parish of legal settlement and parish seeking to move the pauper out.

Generally all these documents are in the record office of the county. Some, though not a lot, have been filmed and included in the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, some transcribed, and some used in the preparation of parish histories. As a result there are several ways to look for the records of the overseers of the poor.

Consult the Family History Library Catalog (FHLC) on CD-ROM or at [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org).

Examine the website of the county record office; one route of access is through Genuki ([www.genuki.org.uk](http://www.genuki.org.uk)).

Search the "Access to Archives" database at the National Archives website ([www.nationalarchives.gov.uk](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk)). It includes some records of the poor among the listings of resources at over 400 repositories.

Check the publications of family and local history societies in the area; e.g., the Wiltshire Family History Society, through the efforts of volunteers, has transcribed and published many volumes of transcriptions.

Look for parish histories and check to see whether the area is part of a volume in the Victoria County History series ([www.EnglandPast.net/](http://www.EnglandPast.net/)).

One of the Gibson Guides published by the Federation of Family History Societies ([www.ffhs.co.uk](http://www.ffhs.co.uk)), includes references to local indexes of records of poor relief, usually the names appearing in settlement examinations—*Specialist Indexes for Family Historians* (J.S.W. Gibson and Elizabeth Hampson, 1998).

For additional background information, two excellent books are *An Introduction to Poor Law Documents before 1834* (Anne Cole, FFHS, 2000) and *The Parish Chest* (W.E. Tate, Phillimore, 1998).

### **Interpreting Dates**

We've all seen it: 9/10/10. What is it? September 10, 1910? October 9, 1910? We may never know what was intended by someone else. However, you can prevent this in your own research by sticking to a format for writing down a date.

Most people write out the month, then the day, then the year. Which is good in most cases, but what if you forget the comma, or a number, then you don't know what part was the day, and what part was the year.

For myself, I use the European method of writing the day first, then the month, then the year, to separate the numbers.

When you find conflicting information, for instance you don't know for sure what the author intended when they wrote our previous example, but due to your research you know it is one of the combinations, you should place your observations in [square brackets], not (parentheses), since they have other meanings, like denoting maiden names.

Then we have entries such as 10<sup>th</sup> last, 12<sup>th</sup> inst. For the newbies to genealogy, "last" and "instant" are quite boggling to the mind. Last means "previous" as in last Thursday. So in our example of 10<sup>th</sup> last, means the 10<sup>th</sup> of last month. Instant means "this", so 12<sup>th</sup> inst. means the 12<sup>th</sup> of this month.

Regnal Years, for example, "In the 5th year of George II; in the 14th year of our Independence", involves a little math and history knowledge. If the actual year isn't given elsewhere in the document, a table in the back of *Black's Law Dictionary* (usually within your local library) can help.

Many of the dates in which we are most interested—the dates of baptisms, marriages, and burials—were recorded in churches. Thus, it isn't surprising that dates are stated in relationship to days or seasons in the church calendar. While we may think of, say, Easter as a single day, it is a season in many Christian church calendars; hence, the "second Wednesday of Easter."

Church books usually state dates such as "Easter Monday" or "Michaelmas." These records are usually the ones we are searching for when death and birth records aren't available. Churches have baptisms, which usually include birth dates and parents' names, deaths, which sometimes includes causes and place of burial, and marriages, with dates, parents, and sometimes residence. Part of the Christian calendar is based on the secular calendar, and part is derived from the lunar calendar. Thus, Michaelmas (the traditional day for paying rents in Virginia) is always September 29, but Ash Wednesday moves around.

The most annoying date, so far in my research, is Quaker dating. Quakers, along with other record keepers, used numbers to denote the month when writing out the date, 10-12-1742. You would think that is October 12, 1742, but you would be wrong. Actually it is December 12, 1742. Before 1751 the traditional European and Colonial American calendar started the year with 25 March and ended at 24 March. This is when the Quaker method of

dating events becomes frustrating.

After 1752 the year started with 1 January and ended with 31 December. Thus you may find a date with OS (old style/ Julian) or NS (new style/Gregorian) printed after the date. That is because of the calendar change, and due to this calendar change, days were lost! The year 1751 was the shortest year in modern history as it started at 25 March and ended at 31 December.

The calendar traditionally followed the rotation of the earth around the sun, and by 1752, the Julian calendar (old style) was out of sync by 11 days. What to do? Well, let's just wait until a slow time in the year, when there were no festivals and the English Court of Law was not in session. September was the chosen month, Wednesday 2 September 1752 was followed by Thursday 14 September 1752, that year, September only had 19 days.

So someone who considered themselves 50 years and one day old on 2 September 1752, (i.e. born on 1 September 1702), would be 50 years and 2 days old on 14 September 1752, thus they may have changed their birthdates to 12 September 1702 to reflect the calendar change. So in reality it is perfectly correct for an ancestor to have two birthdates and both of them be correct, depended on whether you are looking at OS or NS.

Double dating occurs here, such as the date 1698/9, which is perfectly okay and should be recorded as such. But if the day and month fell between 1 January and 24 March and the year isn't slashed, a closer look at the document is needed. You must look at the recording sequence and provide a [/number] after the appropriate date. For example: 25 December 1712, 27 February 1712, 13 April 1713, you can confidently record 27 February 1712 [/3]. If you just record the year 1712, you take it out of context, because we are in the NS, that February was technically in the year 1713, since in the OS the new year began in March it was 1712 to the people living then. If you had the dates 27 March 1732, 15 August 1732, 19 October 1732, you would not need a slash, because in the NS and the OS they fell within that year.

This final example is a doozy. What does this mean: 9ber 9<sup>th</sup> day? How many of you know the answer?

## **THE BRICK WALL**

### **Rebecca Sanders, Cherokee Maiden?**

Another one of your editor's brick walls involves a young lady named Rebecca (Sanders) Rich. She was my fourth great grandmother born 27 November 1812 in North Carolina and died before 1850 in Indiana.

I have no proof that she was Cherokee, or any Native nationality. Only the say so of a very talented family researcher (searching this line a little), and my

uncle.

My uncle said that his grandmother was offered lands in North Carolina due to her being 1/8 Cherokee. My family researcher, named Tar, looked up a little of her history and found the birth date given above and said that she was Cherokee and that he had looked at some of the census records for Indians in that area, but did not have time to sort out the hundreds of Rebecca Sanders listed therein at that time.

Moses Rich, a Quaker, was presumably the husband to Rebecca. I haven't a marriage date, or any dates of his birth or death. According to Quaker records in North Carolina, on 8 September 1831, Moses Rich, Jr. got White Lick MM in Indiana. Meaning he was going to transfer from North Carolina to Indiana. Three years later on 3 May 1834, in North Carolina, a Moses Rich is disowned from the church for marrying out of unity. Could this be the marriage to Cherokee Rebecca Sanders? Or was Rebecca a white woman who wasn't of the Quaker faith? There is a marriage bond for a Moses Rich and a Nancy Dougan on 25 March 1834 in Randolph County, North Carolina, the county where this disowning occurred.

In Indiana, a Moses Rich shows up as a son of John and Miriam Rich. This Moses being born 9 May 1811. The birth date fits close to my Moses, but was he born in Indiana and went to North Carolina for his bride or did his bride come to Indiana before they met? Or was this Moses born in North Carolina, then transferred to Indiana with his family?

In 1831 a Moses Rich and brothers John and Nathan were accepted into the New Garden, Indiana MM. I know from reading the records that this is the same Moses born to John and Miriam, but is he my Moses or is the North Carolina gentleman my Moses?

In the 1850 Hamilton Co., Indiana census is a Moses Rich, with children, one being my third great grand aunt who was born around 1837 in Indiana according to this census. Which lead me to believe that this Moses was the disowned Quaker from North Carolina. But no wife is listed, what happened to Rebecca and who is she?

Amy Hedrick [amylyn@btconline.net](mailto:amylyn@btconline.net)

## **INTERNET**

[www.oldbaileyonline.org](http://www.oldbaileyonline.org) A fully searchable online edition of the largest body of texts detailing the lives of non-elite people ever published, containing accounts of over 100,000 criminal trials held at London's central

criminal court.

Remit payment to our treasurer:

<http://blacksheep.rootsweb.com> The International Black Sheep Society of Genealogists [IBSSG] is an association of genealogists who have found black sheep ancestors in their direct family lines or under the one degree rule of the society.

Barbara Baethke  
119 Bayberry Circle  
St. Simons Is. , GA 31522

### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

**1 November 2003, Saturday** The Southern Genealogist's Exchange Society will hold a GENEALOGY WORKSHOP in Jacksonville, Florida. There will be two speakers, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Linda Ellwood will lead a workshop on researching in Florida 1763 - 1821, with emphases on East Florida Papers, Florida Archives, Florida Land Office. Linda Rosenblatt will conduct a workshop on military research on the southeast coast, and will include a Civil War portrayal of the widow Ann Dugger. Call or write the SGES library office for details of location of the workshop, schedule, cost and registration - [sgesjax@juno.com](mailto:sgesjax@juno.com); 904-778-1000.

**16 November 2003**--Library Visit. Our group will be touring the new library facilities here in Brunswick. This is a great chance to re-familiarize ourselves with their holdings, and learn how to use the new digital microfilm machine. I have already test drove it, and it is wonderful! Mark this on your calendars!

### **PUBLICATIONS**

“Vanishing Georgia” by the University of Georgia Press. A pictorial compilation of photographs from the Vanishing Georgia project which collected photos and histories from around Georgia. The book is marked off into chapters of subject matter, like “The Land” “How We Looked”. Nothing is sacred, everyday life is pictured from ladies’ aide society gatherings to lynchings. There are even some Glynn County photos, that I haven’t seen. The book is available in our local book store for about \$25.

### **MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION**

Annual membership to the CGGS is only **\$15** for one person or **\$18** for a family. Membership extends from 1 January 2003 to 31 December 2003.