



Genealogy
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Round About and Overlooked Sources?

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An often-overlooked area of genealogy is searching for data through round about means.

An excellent example is either www.ancestry.com or www.hertiagequest.com.

These two sites have the entire U.S. Federal Census from 1790-1930 on line. Yet these two excellent sites are private and one needs to subscribe to use their services, and this can run into hundreds of dollars a year. However, some local libraries subscribe to this internet service and one can access it through the local library's website.

When searching the census, one often encounters the problem of trying to locate an individual by using their name and may not be able find it. Try to locate the individual by using his wife's name, or a child's name. This is really useful if a person has an unusual name.

Remember that the census index has recorded the name of the person just as it is written in the record. So, look for variations

in spelling and don't be afraid to use the soundex.

The soundex gives a broader coverage of names with different spellings. One may be looking for "John Smith," but it could be listed as "Jon Smith," "J. Smith," "Jonathan Smith," "Jonny Smith," "Johnny Smith," "Jno. Smith," or "Jack Smith."

I mention spelling for it was not important until the turn of the twentieth century. My own Straughan (Straughan is a spelling variation of Strachan) line is spelled three different ways in three Federal censuses.

In 1810 Federal Kentucky Census the name is spelled "Straughan," in 1820 it is phonetically spelled "Strawn," and in 1830 as "Strong." A search of the county showed that no other family by these same names existed there at the same time, so Straughan, Strawn, and Strong were all the same.

Another round about search for information can often be in side relative's history. Perhaps data can be found through a son-in-law's history, or a cousin's history in a county history biography section.

Recently I looked at a book on the Cash family to see if it had any information on my Straughan family. I didn't expect to find a thing. To my surprise there was a three-paragraph account on the history of the maternal ancestry of Lewis L. Cash.

Lewis was the grandson of John Straughan of Orange County, Virginia, who happens to be my 5th great-grandfather. In his statement he tells that John Straughan was born about 1760 in North Carolina, and his parents were from Scotland. That John's mother married a second time, and John had a half-brother by the name of Bennett Bangus.

To help lend credit to this story is the fact that John named one of his son's Bennett, and John's daughter, Elizabeth, who married Claibourne Cash, named one of her son's Bennett too; hum, interesting.