

# Researching Kentucky Ancestors

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Genealogy research is a process as well as a result. Don't short circuit the process just to get a quick result. The Basic Sources supply the genealogy information to build an accurate family tree:

**Marriage and Divorce Records.** Did you know that there are at least **16** original marriage records and more than **250** sources with marriage evidence? Marriage is the beginning of the family unit; the marriage record provides the given name and surname of the mother of the family—sometimes her nickname. Marriage records supply the father's legal surname. Don't give up too soon in your search for these essential facts.

**Census Records, Inhabitant Lists, and Census Substitutes, like Tax Lists.** More than **30** different kinds of census enumerations were recorded throughout Colonial America before 1800. These early records are essential for Kentucky research and can be matched with other sources to identify members of the household. No other source category is better indexed or has such uniform and consistent data fields. And the census records are more easily searched than any other American record. Special search strategies reveal "hidden" evidence often overlooked in your rush to gather ancestors quickly.

**Probate and other Court Records.** Over **95%** of all American adults have appeared in at least one court during their lifetimes. These records are essential to your genealogy and ignoring or by-passing their data usually leads to an incorrect lineage or a connection to the wrong place of origin. So plunge in and gather the evidence for your ancestors and their relatives—currently known or not. Begin with printed transcripts or abstracts—they often index everyone named. Then search the originals—just be sure you search the originals!

**Land and Tax Records.** Tax records list most adult males who live in a given area—they were recorded annually. Some localities record their population every 6 months! At what age can persons own land? Buy and sell land? Gift land to others? Does land come from the husband's family or from the wife's relatives? How do

you read a deed? Are witnesses related to the people named in the documents? Which Jacob is mine? Search the tax lists first, the patents and grants next, the deeds last.

**Births and Deaths.** You have no idea what source will yield birth dates and places of death before official vital records are recorded. Transfers of property title that list proof of death for the owner. Tax rolls where the clerk recorded year of birth to differentiate between men of the same name and locality. Until you search the records, these early sources of birth and death will remain “hidden.” Search them later rather than first so you know the names of relatives and neighbors to help you distinguish between your ancestor and others of the same name.

**Cemetery and Burial Records.** Tombstones—in the cemetery and outside it—can be found online or in digital databases in local libraries and archives. The correct spelling of ethnic and foreign names as well as exact origins can be found recorded in these records. Somehow it didn’t seem right to bury grandpa under an assumed or falsified name. Always search these records before you search the passenger lists—you need correct information to match passenger lists.

**Genealogies, Family Histories, and Pedigree Charts.** Your genealogy may already be compiled. In 2000, the millennial year, I did an informal survey of surnames I was researching for clients. Do you know that **80%** of those names had one or more family histories already on file or in print. Break your losing streak! Search these sources. You can get up to 300 years of family information in just one good history or genealogy. When documented with copies of original records, you can save much time and effort.

**Other Sources.** Military records, church sources, newspapers and obituaries, historical websites, and periodicals provide best results when you know something about your family members. Use these sources to fill in gaps in dates, places, and relationships.

State of Tennessee  
Knox County

Know all men by these presents that we Jordan Hanes, Robert Conn & Willie King all of the County of Knox and State of Tennessee, are held and firmly bound to William Carroll Esquire Governor of the State of Tennessee, and his Successors in Office in the sum of twelve hundred and fifty Dollars for the payment whereof we bind ourselves our heirs Executors &c. To be void on condition there be no lawful objection why Jordan & Hanes and Letty Conn of the County of Knox, and State aforesaid may not be joined together as husband and wife, in the holy estate of Matrimony.

Witness our hands and seals this 5<sup>th</sup> day of March 1823

Jordan & Hanes  
Robert Conn  
W. King

*[Seal]*

*[Seal]*

*[Seal]*

Knox County, Tennessee Marriage Record for Jordan Hanes and Letty Conn

Marriages for the United States in one alphabet with accompanying images where available. Early images include signatures on bonds, licenses, applications, and other records. Don't overlook the interrelationship between Kentucky and surrounding states!

<http://findmypast.com>. Fee site. They launched a new U.S. Marriages Database at Roots Tech 2016. Some 33 billion American marriages!

## **Where are the Marriage Records for Kentucky?**

**Where are the marriage records for Kentucky? Is there more than one category you can expect to discover at the county level? The Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives issued a short description of the records, based upon the laws passed by the state legislature:**

1. The bond. A performance bond was filed by the groom and a kinsman or guardian of the bride. This bond assured the court that there was no lawful impediment to the marriage.
2. If either bride or groom were under age, a consent was required by the court from a parent or guardian. The bond, consent, and license became loose papers filed by the clerk in the early years. Later these documents were copied into a Marriage Record Book. The consent usually included relationship of the signer to the bride or groom.
3. The license was taken to the minister or justice who was to perform the marriage, as a permit that the couple paid their fees and had permission to marry.
4. A marriage certificate was filled out by the officiator and given to the bride.
5. Once the marriage was performed, the officiator was required by law to register the marriage or file a return of the event to the county where the marriage occurred. In rural communities, the clergyman or justice was permitted to send in his returns once or twice a year. If he moved or died, the marriage may never be returned to the county.
6. 1852-1861, marriages were recorded by the County Assessor and sent to the State Auditor's Office. In 1862, the law was repealed because it put too much work on the Assessor's Office.
7. 1874-1878, marriages again recorded by the Assessor. Repealed in 1878, marriages were recorded in a haphazard way until about 1910.
8. Since 1958, marriages are recorded by the state Vital Statistics Office consistently.

No wonder it is so difficult to build a family tree in Kentucky! Your family tree begins with the marriage of your ancestor (most of our ancestors were married). The marriage identifies the maiden surname of the bride—sometimes her nickname and the legal name of the groom.

## Kentucky Gretna Greens—Where you can look for Ancestral Marriages

### Checklist of Specific Kentucky Gretna Greens:

- \_\_\_ Crown Point IN, for couples from Kentucky, Illinois, Ohio
- \_\_\_ Cincinnati OH, some licenses were issued, no returns were submitted to the place of residence. Many persons stopped in Cincinnati to work before moving on to a different place.
- \_\_\_ Maysville KY, a river town on the Ohio River
- \_\_\_ Aberdeen OH, across the river from Maysville KY
- \_\_\_ Pikeville, Pike County KY
- \_\_\_ Evansville IN

In 2001, I received a letter from the son of Charles H. Browning of Evansville, Indiana. He described his father's *Obituary Notice Index* of more than 200,000 cards taken from the *Evansville Press* and *Evansville Courier and Press*, 1906-1990. These cards were scanned into a computer database. Then the obit notices from 1991-2000 were added by entering them directly into the *Browning Genealogy Database*. Next, the database was loaded onto the Evansville Vanderburgh Public Library website <http://browning.evpl.org>.

Charles H. Browning (d. 2007) spent more than 50 years also indexing important entries from these newspapers and adding details from other sources (I suspect including mortuary details from the Browning Funeral Home). He did 40,000 cards on World War II veterans and his **People of Evansville** study yielded 537,000 cards. These two databases are part of the Vanderburgh Public Library, *Local History Database*.

**All of these cards are available to you online!** You can choose standard search, advanced search, or keyword search on the search menu. And an individual print screen appears. No library code or access card is needed.

The *Local History Database* also includes scanned images from the newsclippings files which the library maintained for many years—still an on-going project. The Browning Family members and the staff of the Browning Funeral Home keep these Charles H. Browning projects current.

Searching this file for marriages could open your Kentucky pedigree—Evansville is a River town where people from surrounding counties in Indiana **and across the river in Kentucky** ran away to be married. What a find—a long, lost, *gretna green* wedding! Gretna Green was the name of places where a couple could be married, no questions asked—named for the “runaway” place in Scotland.



If you make a find in the card files described here, the Library staff can supply a copy of the newspaper entry for you.

### **Why does a couple choose a Gretna Green for their marriage?**

1. Cheaper, and sometimes no fee at all is charged as long as the couple stayed the night at a local hotel.
2. No paperwork. The officiator charged a nominal fee, and did not report the marriage. The only records are often account books where the cost of the wedding was posted. Or a diary entry made by the bride, groom, or officiator.
3. No bond was required to cover reasons the marriage should not be performed.
4. No waiting period between the time of issuing a license and the performance of the marriage. Spur of the moment decisions could be made.
5. The excitement of having the marriage completely under the control of the couple, without interference from family, friends, church, or government.

### **Kentucky Census Records**

To a genealogist, nothing is more important than records. Records which give you a glimpse into the past. Records which name the ancestors you are seeking. Records which provide direct statements of relationship for those same ancestors. Records which leave no doubt in your mind and mine, that the names on your pedigree charts are correct.

The census records we depend on change. Have you noticed? The census began naming heads of households only with all others in the household tabulated as numbers or slashes by column, in categories set by legislative act. Then, every person in the household was named with ages and places of residence. Particular categories requested by insurance companies and other special interest lobby groups were added, like “married within the year” or “died within the previous 12 months.”

Interesting census questions answered include: Do you have indoor plumbing? Do you own a radio? What language do you speak? How many children were born to this mother?

Finally, the last few enumerations, some families drew a long form questionnaire. Most got the short form—because the data supplied would provide statistics only—and the population count was the most important element because the count

was required by the United States Constitution. The address bar was pre-coded to accept certain kinds of addresses only.

My local address, with East-West coordinates, did not fit the computer field space allotted. And when it came to rural locations without street numbers and often without street names—what a mess! Imagine the enumerator delivering the census form to the “first white barn on the left side of the gravel road just over the canal.” Sounds like the directions on my son’s newspaper route.

Kentucky Local Enumerations. States were given permission and even encouraged to take their own census enumerations during the interim years between federal censuses. **Kentucky** was one of the states that took local censuses using the tax assessor and local deputies or militia captains to gather the data. To save money, Kentucky took their census along with the federal enumeration—**1830, 1840, 1850, 1860, 1870.**

These incredible enumerations are found **among the tax rolls** in the county courthouse. They enumerate, by name, heads of household only. They identify households where sons or daughters were married within the year. They list the agricultural produce and the livestock on each farm. They identify mercantile and manufacturing households. By 1860, the schedule is three pages across. These wondrous records are **Kentucky’s gift to your genealogy.**

*Jayette Co. Ky.*  
 1830 Tax list  
 F007960  
 D. L.

Persons	Land	County	Water	Name	Age	City	Block	Total
Chargalls								
Smiths								
Edwards Joshua	"	"	"	"	"	"	1	"
Edwards Tho.	"	"	"	"	"	"	1	"
Edwards William	"	"	"	"	"	"	1	"
Edwards Henry	"	"	"	"	"	"	1	"
Edwards Benjamin	" 78	"	Jayette	L. Elkhorn	Boachy	"	2	2
Edwards Martha	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	1
Edwards Tho.	"	"	"	"	"	"	1	"
Edwards James	"	"	"	"	"	"	1	"
Ellis John	"	"	"	"	"	"	1	2
Ellis John	75	"	Jayette	C. Run	McConnell	"	1	1
Ewing Saml.	"	"	"	"	"	"	1	1
Ewing John	26	"	do	L. Elkhorn	Vaughan	"	1	1
Is of McDeville District St. to the 1000								
Trig John	60	"	Jayette	J. Fork	McConnell	"	1	1
Trig John	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"

Fayette Co. 1830

Owner	Name	Survey	Patents	Acres	Black	White	Other	Value	Value of	Total Value
"	"	"	"	1	"	"	2	"	"	40
"	"	"	"	1	"	"	1	"	"	10
"	"	"	"	1	"	"	2	"	"	60
"	"	"	"	1	"	"	1	"	"	20
I E. H. Peachy	"	"	"	2	2	7	7	"	"	15
"	"	"	"	"	1	4	4	"	"	"
"	"	"	"	1	"	"	"	"	"	"
"	"	"	"	1	"	"	1	"	"	"
"	"	"	"	1	2	6	4	"	"	1510
C. Reed McConnell	"	"	"	1	1	2	4	"	"	20
"	"	"	"	1	1	2	2	"	"	480
I E. H. Vaughan	"	"	"	1	1	1	2	"	"	25
I. E. H. 1840	I. E. H. 1840	Regiment of Kentucky Militia	"	1	"	1	"	"	"	30
I. E. H. 1840	I. E. H. 1840	I. E. H. 1840	"	1	"	1	"	"	"	1970

## Kentucky's gift to your genealogy: Special Census Enumerations

I have collected references to numerous other special censuses for different places and dates. Remember that I do genealogy research every day—on a long list of surnames and in many different places. I am always looking for lists of residents and when those lists include statements of gender, age, occupation, possessions, place of origin, other family members, I say, “Yes!” I grab the data for my research projects and then look for others I can share the record with. Just like many genealogists do.

## Research Strategy for Kentucky Genealogy Before 1900—Works Every Time

Extract onto family group worksheets, everyone with your surname of interest. Get them all out of the records at the **county** level, where they can be compared for fit and match. You can do this manually on paper charts or digitally on charts included in your genealogy software. **Major rule: ONE—one family per chart, one source per chart.**



1. Search the marriages **first**. Watch for names of men who marry the daughters. Start tentative family units, by extracting each marriage on a family group worksheet—each marriage on its own family unit. Sort by census year so each married couple can be located in the next census after the marriage and followed each census year.
2. Search census records and census substitutes **next**. Extract all the entries for your family surname from the census records—census decade by census decade. Extract all the men who marry the daughters—so you **add to** and **build** the family units as you go.
3. **Interim Analysis**—identify the re-marriages, especially for the women. Which families appear to move away? Which ones stay in that locality? Look for “Gretna Green” marriages—where the couple runs away to be married or chooses a different place for their marriage. Spot middle names which are surnames. Identify unusual given names—Permelia, America, Europa, Cinnamon, Trauma, and so on. Watch for given names that are repeated in each family unit or each generation. Identify other families who marry into your family units.
4. **Arrange** your family units chronologically by date to begin with.
5. **Set aside** family units which clearly don’t fit for later consideration.
6. **Plan follow-up searches**—in the marriage records for those re-marriages you spot. If the household shows a young unmarried male of another surname, re-search the marriages. In the probate records—if the head of house is elderly, look for a will, inventory, or estate settlement. If the head of house is a farmer, look at the deeds—what lands did he own or farm? Where are the lands located? How did he acquire his lands? If there are young males in the household, search the tax rolls. If there are males age 16-18 years old in 1820—check the militia lists.

**This strategy works every time.** It will separate out for you more than one family or person by exactly the same name. Multiple people combined into the same person or family is the *most common problem* in genealogy—in the past and today. Usually, genealogists do not search deeply enough in marriages and census records at the beginning of each research project. You prepare for success in these two sources.

## Kentucky Land Office Databases—and their Indexes

A few weeks ago, I consulted the early Kentucky land patents databases online. And ran head-on into some of the most difficult problems of indexing records for digital recall.

1. Multiple spellings of surnames. You know the importance of watching for other spellings of your surname of interest. Anticipating those spellings enables you to search databases more completely. And while some online programing, like Ancestry’s online census access, includes a variety of surname alternates, some do not.
2. Indexing the principal parties in a document vs every-name indexes. If one record series has an every-name index, do all the record series include every

name? When these indexes are merged into a single index, the gap may not be obvious. It takes use to spot the problem.

3. Are multiple entries for the same name on the same page all individually indexed? The typist may conclude that seeing the multiple names as they appear on the page is enough. The index does not have to be expanded to a separate entry for each instance of the same name.

What the Kentucky government has done is extraordinary. Twelve (12) different record categories are now indexed online:

\_\_ Kentucky Cities

\_\_ Virginia and Old Kentucky Patent Series (called Virginia Surveys and Grants)

\_\_ Revolutionary War Warrants

\_\_ West of Tennessee River (Jackson Purchase) Military Patents

\_\_ Certificates of Settlement and Preemption Warrants

\_\_ Virginia Treasury Warrants Database

\_\_ Lincoln Entries (Lincoln County)

\_\_ County Court Order Patents

\_\_ Jackson Purchase Database

\_\_ West of Tennessee Non-Military Patents

\_\_ Wills included with Land Patent Files

\_\_ County Formations and Boundary Changes Database

And when you request a name in the search screen, the pages where that name appears are links. When you click the links, the name you requested appears on the page highlighted in yellow for easy spotting. Just be very careful that you request, **separately**, all the different spellings for your surname of interest.

For example: I requested **Isaac Ruddell** in the search screen. Yellow highlights appeared on two pages—as **Isaac** Ross and as **Isaac Ruddell**.

Then I requested **Isaac Ruddle**. Yellow highlight appeared on one entry for **Isaac Ruddle**. Immediately above the Isaac Ruddle entry, was an entry for **Isaac Ruddell**, not highlighted. Nor was it found in the **Ruddell** search.

Since the entries are alphabetical by surname, I then checked under the alpha spelling of Ruddle–Bingo! Two more Isaac Ruddle entries that did not appear in the index search. AND: two entries for **George Ruddle**, one entry for **James Ruddle**, four entries for **John Ruddle**, “Heirs of” and listing James Ruddle & “Heirs” as the **grantee** for each of those four entries. Also discovered were two entries for **Cornelius** Ruddell, in the alpha list for that spelling.

The four grantee entries for James Ruddle were lost—since they were not in the alpha section, where they could be easily retrieved. And no entries appeared for Stephen Ruddle/Ruddell, although he was a resident of Woodford County KY where he died about 1800.

My recommendations:

1. Check under each and every spelling of your surname of interest.
2. Search the alpha arrangement to spot additional entries not yet found.
3. Note other persons named in the entries with your surnames. And check each of their entries by index and by alpha arrangement. Often, men had partners as they applied for land.

This way you have a greater chance of finding all the entries. And when you are trying to fit everyone into family units eventually, you need everyone identified in the record series.

This is not a commentary meant to question the integrity of the indexes. It is a commentary to ensure that you find all the entries that concern your ancestry. Online indexing is an art, not a science. So is research. And you and I both need to invest extra time when we use digital indexes. Too many genealogy/family conclusions are based on shallow use of indexes; those conclusions are too often faulty. Break your losing streak! Invest the time to find the entries.

### **Correct Names of Blacks and Whites are Necessary to Track Ancestry Back Through Slavery--Let me tell you about a book I discovered during my travels—one that you all will benefit from:**

Conner, Glen. *‘Til Freedom Come: Slaves in Allen County Kentucky, 1815-1865*. Morley MO: Acclaim Press, 2010. <http://www.acclaimpress.com>

Conner’s book provides detailed charts on the slave population in Allen County KY, with identities of slaves from **Barren, Monroe, and Warren** counties as well. States of birth include Tennessee, Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia, and

Maryland. Slaves are listed by year with births and deaths. Every name is indexed and all names appear in alphabetical sequence in the charts for easy checking.

His book is a model—whatever county your ancestors lived in—look for the records described and indexed here.

**Checklist of Sources used:**

☐ deeds

☐ wills

☐ inventories

☐ inheritance records

☐ insurance records

☐ indentured servants lists

☐ church rolls

☐ militia records

☐ Civil War lists

☐ African-American Civil War Memorial, Washington DC. (Over 185,000 African Americans who fought in the Civil War are listed, including 17 Medal of Honor winners)

The author points out that names of black slaves and names of white slave owners are both needed to trace ancestry back through slavery. Even then, it is a difficult task requiring diligent and thorough research. Slave names are often omitted from county and local histories. And slave and black veterans of the Civil War are omitted from many reunion photos and veterans lists published in the local newspapers. Research must include unindexed court and legal records at all levels. The checklist of sources used in this volume is only a beginning.

I have written elsewhere about black neighborhoods omitted from atlases and streets where blacks reside omitted from local maps. Hang in there, if these records affect your genealogy, until the current genealogical community can correct these oversights. By indexing specific populations in local, state, and national legal records, the job of finding specific families today will become easier.



And please do not be offended by the profiling of blacks and ethnic peoples you encounter in the historical records. These statements will clearly separate blacks and whites who share the same names so you can identify these persons of interest. Watch for these important statements.

A LIST OF DELINQUENTS RETURNED BY THE SHERIFF OF CAMPBELL COUNTY, KENTUCKY, AS INSOLVENTS AND REMOVED OUT OF THE COUNTY FOR 1807 (General Claims Drawer - 1795-1839 - Alexandria, Campbell County, Ky.)

Copied by Margaret S. Hartman, 134 Backus Drive, Alexandria, Ky. 41001.

Benjamin Allen	- 2 levies	- insolvent
John Bartle		- insolvent
Joseph Black		- insolvent
Aaron Cherry		- gon over the Ohigho
Edward Clement		- not found
Robert Chambers		- insolvent
Joseph Cracraft		- gon to Mason County
James Duncan	- 2 levies	- gon to burbyn (sic)
John Ginner		- not found (crossed out)
William Havens		- gon over the Ohigho
Merideath Helms		- gon to Mason County
William Isral		- Bourbon (?)
John Lyans		- gon to green river
John McDanniel		- gon over the Ohigho
Daniel Mcgloughlin		- gon over the Ohigho
William Montgomery		- gon over the Ohigho
Joshua Mayall		- insolvent
Peter Overly		- insolvent
George Orr	- 2 levies	- gon over the Ohigho
Barrol (Barrot?) Parrish		- insolvent

## Headrights and Bounty Lands in Kentucky

On a used book table I picked up a reprint of *A Century of Wayne County Kentucky, 1800-1900* by Augusta Phillips Johnson. It was originally published in Louisville KY, 1939 and reprinted by Whipporwill Publications (Unigraphic, Inc.) of Evansville IN, 1988.

And I read it, cover to cover. Wayne was carved from Lincoln County, then Green County (located South of the Green River), then Cumberland County, and finally created in 1800 from Cumberland and Pulaski. Parts of Wayne were adjusted when Adair County added some territory, Wayne and Pulaski exchanged lands, Clinton and McCreary counties were created.

None of these facts—which many genealogists stop with—describe why Wayne County is significant. And this neat little “**unhistory**,” with its carefully selected accounts, provides a glimpse of that significance.

The author began to write a family history of her Phillips kin and switched to a county history because so many of the families were interrelated. The first important consideration in studying a rural county in Kentucky: Are the families who settled there related? Does the history demonstrate those relationships?

Second, identifying the origins of the settlers, including who traveled with whom and how were they connected?

Third where did the land titles come from? How did the settlers apply? What records were generated? All grants to the year 1797, in this area of Kentucky were military awards. The surveyors had varying skills and the surveys often overlapped—this led to numerous lawsuits later on as the veterans and their families tried to clear property titles. These circumstances helped to document and preserve the information for genealogical study—

\_\_ warrants

\_\_ surveys and resurveys

\_\_ land grants

\_\_ court minutes

\_\_ reports of commissioners appointed to view the property lines

\_\_ testimony of the chain carriers

\_\_ newspaper accounts

\_\_ ads placed in papers by local attorneys

\_\_ ads announcing sales of bounty warrants

These are just a few of the records you can expect to find to detail the experiences of your ancestors who settled in Wayne County territory before the county was formed. And the parent counties, today, are many miles away from this area—you might not consider searching Lincoln County for your ancestors who were physically located in present-day Wayne.

Actually you can anticipate the records to look for, when you give some attention to the reasons your ancestors were out there to begin with.

Bounty land records identify:

1. earliest **date of residence/arrival** and frequently supply other places of residence.
2. names of **sponsoring groups** or individuals—kinship networks for new immigrants and a variety of clues to places of origin.
3. **boundaries** of military reserves were set by law. Virginia awarded bounty lands for French and Indian War service which crossed major rivers and mountain ranges.
4. if heirs claim the lands, they had to submit **proof of service** as well as document their **exact relationship** to the veteran.
5. **proof of military service** includes names of officers, with dates and ranks. This proof can be used to qualify for lineage society membership. Caution: once military warrants could be assigned to others, and used as currency for purchase and exchange—**military service may not be proven**.
6. **experienced fighters** were needed to hold the frontier against the Indians. Remember that foreign governments—France, Spain, Netherlands, and even England—enforced their territorial claims with Indian warriors.
7. these records are the original recordings for land holdings. *ORIGINALS!*

After 1797, lands left over or escheated lands not claimed were opened to settlement by headright. There is some evidence that before Wayne County was formed, Virginia awarded bounty lands for settlement with lists of imports filed in local county courts and submitted as proof for land claims. Watch for these.

Because of record loss when a courthouse burned, bounty records are especially important—claims, supporting documents, testimony taken in special land courts, surveys and resurveys were filed with the state and will be found among the records in the State Land Office—now preserved at the Kentucky State Archives in Frankfort.

### Early Settlers in Kentucky—Where to Look

As I was studying Harriette Simpson Arnow's book, *Seedtime on the Cumberland*, published some time ago by Macmillan Company of New York, I came across these paragraphs:

Many families in this general region (Upper Cumberland Valley), particularly up on the Big South Fork, have *hand-me-down stories* of Baptist ancestors who instead of stopping in East Tennessee or going down to Natchez, *slipped into this part of Kentucky*. Still others tell of *Tories*, unable to escape to Canada, *settled in some out of the way valley* on a branch of the Cumberland. There are, too, stories of *forted farms* and *fightes with Indians*, but save for the depositions, given twenty-five to thirty years later, usually in connection with a *lawsuit over*

*land*, little is known of the early history of the southeastern part of Kentucky drained by the Cumberland.

Lists of early land grants in Kentucky help not at all. First, *few Kentuckians had any knowledge* whatever of the southern part of the state, and secondly, land grants were almost always *located by water courses*, but seldom did the surveyor and almost never did those who listed his work take the trouble to name the *larger body of water* into which the creek or branch flowed. There was for example, a Stinking Creek of Cumberland and a Stinking Creek of Rockcastle...

The *name of the grantee* is not always of much help. It was a small world with most of the early settlers on the Cumberland coming from a relatively small part of this world—southwestern Virginia and North Carolina. Thus, many bore *the same name*. Daniel Smith was, for example, a leading citizen of Middle Tennessee. Contemporaneous with him over in East Tennessee was another Daniel Smith who made John Redd a pair of leather breeches. John Buchanan was a first settler on the Cumberland, and his son John built a fort, while still another John Buchanan was killed in the Revolution.

I have taken the liberty of italicizing specific problems with Kentucky research. And early Kentucky research is a challenge—no question. We do, however, live in the 21st century with tools and indexes and abstracts and knowledge of where the original records can be found which Ms Arnow did not have access to—although her research for this book is exceptional and her maps are extraordinary.

1. **Hand-me-down stories.** Check out the **DAR** collection (on microfilm through your nearest Family History Center, call numbers available at **FamilySearch.org**). Then write the local public library genealogy collections in the areas where your ancestors reside for a check of their family files. The correspondence in these files often recounts the stories. Finally, check the Kentucky Historical Society with the same request. The secret of the Family Files is that few repositories sort their files—you will get **all** the Daniel Smiths and John Buchanans filed together. You will be the one to sort them out—ensuring that you don't miss out on the one that belongs to you.
2. **Slipped into this part of Kentucky—Cumberland Valley.** The entre to the Cumberland Valley for most early ancestors was through eastern Tennessee and southwestern Virginia. Still is. Check out a current road map. The flow of the mountains and the directions of the water courses and valleys is shown on most current road maps. Compare with a topographical map from your nearest federal Map Store—or order the right section online. A careful map study **before** you actually research is always a good idea—and a time-saver.
3. **Tories who settled in out of the way valleys.** If your ancestor appears to have parachuted into a Kentucky County—with little track of their origins—search the Tory lists from the American Revolution for North Carolina, **first**. Don't spin your wheels aimlessly checking local sources. They hid their origins—it was illegal and treason to be a Tory!
4. **Forted farms.** Virginia, the original jurisdiction for southeastern Kentucky, awarded 600 acres of land to any settler willing to build a fort or stockade for protection from the Indians and allowing neighbors to use this same safety station. See Arlene H. Eakle and Linda E. Brinkerhoff, **Kentucky, Volume I** (Family History World, PO Box 129,



Tremonton UT 84337 or online on my Home Page Catalog link) for a working list of early Kentucky stations with lists of their settlers. This is a list in progress with regular updates. Lots of new information appears as I continue to research fortified farms and stations.

5. **Fights with Indians.** Military service in Kentucky was your ancestor's day job! He served at the fort or on muster or in the field for his shift. Then went home to his family and farm when he was not on duty. I am working on a list of early militias and soldiers who served at forts—official posts as well as stations. I'll keep you posted as I get the names together.
6. **Lawsuits over land.** Kentucky created a big mess in land titles—your ancestor was most likely to be involved in one or more of these before he gave up and left the state for a better life in Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, or Missouri. And finally Kansas. Overlapping land titles, unrecorded claims, land rights barred from descent to heirs—all these and more. Stay tuned for where to look and how to use this evidence to your advantage.

## Early Settlers in Kentucky, Part II

Sources to document early Kentucky are rather extensive—most are available on microfilm which you can borrow from the Family History Library or from the archives and libraries in Kentucky or from the Mid-Continent Public Library Genealogy Section, Independence MO. Let me describe two large collections:

1. **The Draper Papers.** Dr. Lyman Draper was the Director of the Wisconsin Historical Society. He was determined to document the early settlement of what was called the Trans-Mississippi West—including Kentucky. Draper was at work when the Revolutionary War soldiers were still alive. And when early settlers, although they were now elderly, could still be interviewed and questioned about where they came from, when they migrated into Kentucky, who came with them, where they settled, and what their lives were like. These interviews and their accompanying questionnaires are invaluable for linking your ancestors to their kinship networks and places of origin.
2. **Shane Collections.** The Rev. John D. Shane was a Presbyterian minister and he saw his life's work as compiling a complete history of the Presbyterian Church in Kentucky—including family histories of those families within the faith who settled early Kentucky. Shane recorded the military engagements of the Scots-Irish Presbyterians, the local events they participated in, who they were related to, what contribution they made to the Presbyterian movement in America. When Rev. Shane died, his collection survived in three separate and distinct sections: 1) The Presbyterian Historical Collection, Kentucky Historical Society, Frankfort KY. 2) Shane Manuscript Collection, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia PA. 3) Shane Collection for Kentucky and Ohio, acquired by Dr. Lyman C. Draper and integrated into his work.

These men were contemporaries and knew each other fairly well. They corresponded back and forth on mutual, historical and genealogical interests. All the above collections, except the Presbyterian Historical Collection at the Kentucky Historical Society, can be borrowed on film to read wherever it is convenient for you.

See Arlene H. Eakle and Linda E. Brinkerhoff, *Tennessee and Kentucky: Twin Gateways to the South*. 2007. (Genealogical Institute, PO Box 129, Tremonton UT 84337-0129). Descriptions, microfilm reel numbers and contents, lists of family and congregation histories included in both men's works are included.

In my opinion, the materials Draper and Shane collected are essential to identify Kentucky ancestors and trace them to their origins—in Virginia, in Maryland, in North Carolina, in South Carolina, and in Pennsylvania and points east.

### **Early Settlers Part III**

#### **The Cumberland Settlements—Integrating Kentucky and Tennessee Resources for Tracing Early Settlers into this Important American Frontier**

A new, thorough resource is the seven-volume work on the Cumberland Settlements published by Warioto Press, Gallatin, Tennessee. Supplement volumes are accompanied by CD-ROM with 7.5 minute topographic maps in digital format. Alphabetical name lists and indexes are available online. <http://www.cumberlandpioneers.com>.



**This color map shows the integrated relationships of Kentucky, Tennessee, and the Deep South states of Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia through the valleys of the great Cumberland River.**

**Using the original land surveys amplified by state and local sources, the Warioto Press volumes enable us, for the first time to identify and track your ancestors who settled and either tamed the frontier or moved on to easier pickings.**

**Warioto Press Publications for Middle Tennessee and its borders:**

***The First Southwest: The Third Atlas, the Cumberland and Duck River Settlements: Tennesseans Expand Our Nation South and West.*** Jack Masters & Bill Puryear. Book with Digital Images on CD. Gallatin, TN: Warioto Press, 2012. 302 pp.

***Founding of the Cumberland Settlements: The First Atlas 1779-1804—showing who came, how they came, and where they put down roots.*** Doug Drake, Jack Masters, and Bill Puryear. Book with CD. Gallatin, TN: Warioto Press, 2009. 236 pp.

***Founding of the Cumberland Settlements: The First Atlas, 1779-1804. Data Supplement 1 and 2: North Carolina Warrants, Surveys, and Surveyor Plats.*** Doug Drake, Jack Masters, Bill Puryear. Gallatin, TN: Warioto Press, 2009. Includes maps of Cumberland-Duck River areas.

All or portions of Cheatham, Davidson, Jackson, Macon, Montgomery, Robertson, Smith, Sumner, Trousdale, Williamson, and Wilson Counties in Middle Tennessee.

***Land Grant Genealogy: North Carolina Warrants, Surveys, and Surveyor Plats 1779-1804. Data Supplement 3. (To Accompany Volume II Thoroughfare of Freedom.)*** Jack Masters and Bill Puryear. Book with CD digital images. Gallatin, TN: Warioto Press, 2011. 604 pp. All of Rutherford, Williamson, and Wilson Counties; remainder of Davidson and Smith Counties; part of Cannon, Cheatham, DeKalb, Jackson, Putnam, Sumner, and Trousdale Counties.

***Land Grant Genealogy: North Carolina Warrants, Surveys, and Surveyor Plats. Data Supplement 4, to Accompany Volume III, The First Southwest.*** Jack Masters and Bill Puryear. Gallatin TN: Warioto Press, 2012. 562 pp. All of Bedford, Dickson, Marshall, and Maury Counties; remainder of Cheatham and Montgomery Counties; most of Hickman, Houston, and Stewart Counties; portions of Coffee, Giles, Humphreys, and Lincoln Counties.

***Land Grants on Elk River in Tennessee: North Carolina and Tennessee Land Grants, 1783-1831, Land Grant Genealogy 5.*** Jack Masters. Gallatin, TN: Warioto Press, 2014. 658 pp. Bedford, Coffee, Franklin, Giles, Grundy, Lincoln, Marshall, and Moore Counties in Southern Middle Tennessee.

***Thoroughfare for Freedom: The Second Atlas of the Cumberland Settlements, 1779-1804, showing who came, how they came, and where they put down roots.*** Jack Masters and Bill Puryear. Gallatin, TN: Warioto Press, 2011. 255 pp.

These volumes are based on original land warrants, survey records, and surveyor's plats for Middle Tennessee, with the full story added from a wide variety of sources for the surrounding areas. Topographical maps allow the reader to identify just where the lands are located on the ground. Appendixes include name lists from petitions, enabling documents, and a wide variety of personal records like diaries, correspondence, and military records.

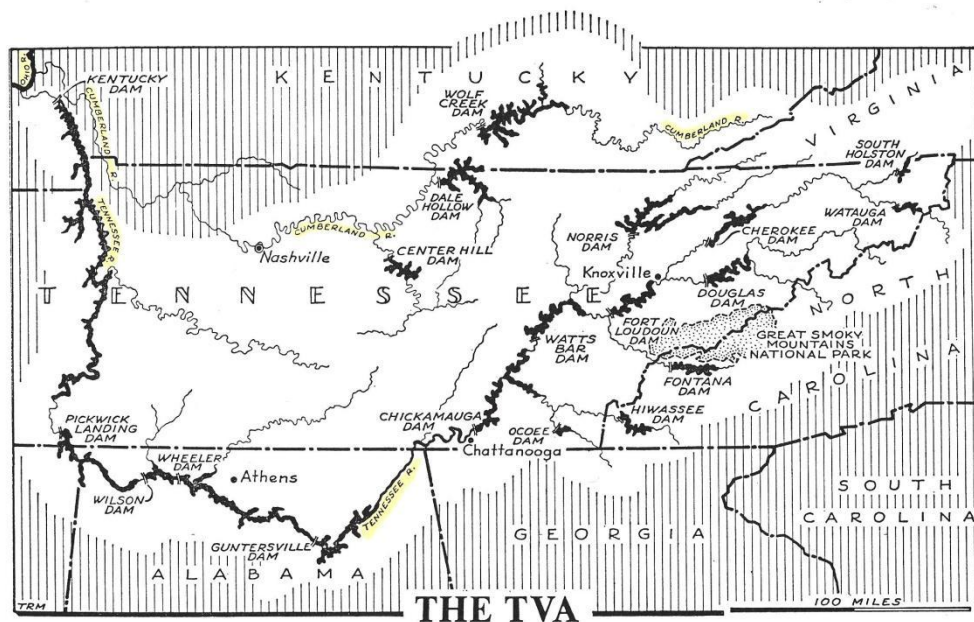
Special features include the following: timelines for the Chickamauga War, 1777-1795; 435 pioneer casualties, 1780-1795, supplying year killed, name, where killed, source and map references, and whether the person was a signer of the Cumberland Compact; locations of stations, forts, traces, 1788; North Carolina land grants in Tennessee; disposition of the signers of the Cumberland Compact, 244 total men with citations of deeds, location of settlements, location of lands; early Black history—all this and more crammed in these well-designed and researched volumes.

An important question answered; **Can a minor own land?**  
From the *Cumberland Compact*:

“all young men over the age of 16 years and able to perform militia duty shall be considered as having a full right to enter for and obtain in their own name as if they were of full age, and in that case not be reckoned in the family of his father, mother, or master...” Volume 1, p. 20.

One migration surprise among many: the exact routes of migration are traced for each of the major groups coming into middle Tennessee. For example, Isaac Lindsay, who brought four men and himself in 1767, left Knox County, Kentucky, followed the Cumberland River west through Kentucky and into Tennessee as it dipped down to French Lick (Nashville) through Stone’s settlement. Using the above map you can follow the exact route taken by this Lindsay group.

*Sumner County Tennessee Project.* Unpublished manuscript by Jack Masters, A four-year research project combining North Carolina Surveys, Tennessee Land Grants, Kentucky Land Grants, and Sumner County Deed transcriptions into an integrated, mapped, and updated land history of Sumner County. Copies of this project are available at the Tennessee State Library and Archives in Nashville, Sumner County Tennessee Archives, in Gallatin, and the Genealogy Library Center, Tremonton Utah through special arrangement with Jack Masters. Jack Masters can be reached directly: [jmas09@comcast.net](mailto:jmas09@comcast.net) or 1049Robertson Road, Gallatin TN 37066.



Richard N. Current, et al., *American History: A Survey*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1959.



## Works of George and Juanita Fox for East Tennessee: Tennessee Entry-Taker's Records

Ronald Bremer emphasized the importance of the Tennessee entry-taker every time I heard him speak and in various notes to me over the years. This local government official recorded some of the very earliest mentions of your ancestor and his intentions to settle in Tennessee. And, interestingly enough, these records have often survived courthouse fires which have plagued Kentucky-Tennessee genealogy research.

George and Juanita Fox have now supplied us with a ton of early entries:

1. *Surveyor Entry Book: District South of the French Broad and Holston, State of Tennessee, 1807 – Blount, Cocke, Jefferson, Knox, Sevier Counties*. 2004. Over 2,300 people with surveys between 1806 and 1812.
2. *Lists of Lands, District of French Broad and Holston, State of Tennessee, 1806-1812: Blount, Cocke, Jefferson, Knox, Sevier Counties*. 2002. Provides four early lists, including a Treasurer's list of installment payments!
3. [\*Installments Due for Land District South of French Broad and Holston, State of Tennessee 1831: Blount, Cocke, Jefferson, Knox, Sevier Counties\*](#).
4. *Cocke County, Tennessee Early Lists: 1839 Tax List, 1830-1840 Federal Census*.
5. *Sevier County, Tennessee Pre-1856 Courthouse Fire Records*.

These are five of the six books compiled between 2002 and 2005 by George and Juanita Fox on Sevier County and the District South of French Broad and Holston—**District** records that many genealogists neither know about nor how to find!

Each volume includes a newly drawn map of eastern Tennessee waterways in 1807, with a list of those watercourses that have changed names. With these two pages in hand, you can match the actual locations where your ancestors located in a modern-day atlas. District boundaries are described, so you know which parts of counties are included within the jurisdiction. And a brief history of the whole area is especially useful because it is tied to the records themselves.

## Kentucky is a Major Genealogical Research Challenge!

1. **Vital records** you usually search first to complete a family sheet are not kept consistently—birth records begin in the 1840's with big gaps in coverage. Marriage records have been lost in the many courthouse fires. The **wills** that do survive are scattered—with some original wills filed at the State Archives in alphabetical “family files” instead of in the courthouse where

you might expect to find them. Wills transferring real estate to churches were often given to the church and ended up wherever the church records were deposited. And cemetery graveyards mark burials with field stones that carry no inscription.

2. **Migration patterns** may run north and south instead of east to west to follow rivers, relationships of people, and boundaries of militia and church districts. During the Indian wars and the Civil War (referred to on the ground as the War Between the States), the settlers moved out of harm's way depending upon where the fighting occurred. Settlers were recalled during the Revolutionary War into Southside Virginia (Bedford County) or north-east of the Great Valley of Virginia (Shenandoah County). So, identifying counties of residence during these turbulent times takes special indexes and careful study of maps for each specific time period.
3. **Settlers came from New York and New England states** as well as the South. Surnames are not helpful in locating origins since they could come from anywhere. This requires more research in local sources and family and local histories to ensure you follow the right kinship networks and lineages.
4. **Field research** in Kentucky is recommended for tough research problems—so you can study the lay of the land and the local resources in libraries and archives. These research challenges cannot be resolved from printed books that have been reprinted on internet sites alone.
5. **Special collections** along migration paths and **interviews** with living descendants still living on the family land are quite helpful—Kentucky is still primarily rural and modern development has not eradicated evidence you need. Budget cuts have shortened public hours in research facilities—so careful planning, in advance, is also necessary.
6. Local used bookstores often have **original records**—diaries, court minute books, family Bibles as well as books and maps printed long ago.
7. **Local genealogy societies** have published surviving county records for many years—shelves and shelves of them. Some are little-known and often unsearched by today's genealogists who seek quick answers from the internet.