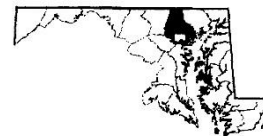


The Baltimore County Genealogical Society



THE NOTEBOOK



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September 1, 2025

Research Tips of the Quarter

Probate Records

by Ken Zimmerman



Here is a tip for trying to find where a relative lived. Look at a relative's Probate Record. The Probate record Last Will and Testament for Katherine Fredericka Noack as fifth item: I give and bequeath all my silver and flatware and gold watch and chain to my step-daughter Elizabeth Nickel wife of Henry Nickel now residing in Butte City in the State of Montana. Source: Baltimore City Maryland BK 71 Folio 177 1893. Then was able to find where Elizabeth Nickel brother John Noack died in Montana in 1900.

Research a Church record such as Baptism. The Baptism may have relatives for where another relative is a parent of a child and the Sponsor/ Witness may be another relative. Several Baptism records could lead you to connecting the relationship to relatives. Example: George Zimmerman and his wife Catharine Anna were witness to a child whose parents were George Zimmerman's sister (Catherine Dornbach) that was not known. You may need to find additional research to prove the hypothesis or preponderance of evidence. If one relative is in a church record then it is possible a connecting relative could be in the same church record for Baptism, marriage, membership, or burial.

York County, Pennsylvania Church records of the 18th Century Vol. 3 compiled by Marlene S Bates and F Edward Wright. Family Line Publications, 1991

Jacob Lischy, V.D. M private pastoral records transcribed by Henry James Young A.B. in 1934. There are some unexplained variations in spellings and dates. 1743-1769

Page 244: Susanna of Christoff Dornbach and Anna Catharina, baptized March 12, 1758. Sponsors: Gorg Zimmerman and Catherina Sencklin.

Page 247: Elisabeth of Gorg Zimmerman and Anna Catharina, baptized March 4, 1759. Sponsors: Chirstoff Dornbach and Anna Catharina.

Book Review

"Trace Your GERMAN Roots Online- A Complete Guide to German Genealogy Websites" James M Beidler, Masthof Press, 2025. Softcover, 156 pages \$24.00 [James M. Beidler, Author | Genealogy Research | Freelance Lecturer](#) jamesmbeidler.com

The book is great to help take your German genealogy research to the next level. This comprehensive book will assist you in finding your German ancestor on the internet. There are 18 Chapters in the publication to include Part One: German Genealogy Methodologies; Part Two: Top German Genealogy Sites and Part Three: Other Resources. It is James Beidler Second Edition Revised and Updated.

Note—Member research contributions to the *Notebook* are always welcome!

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Using AI for Genealogy Research—Part 3

By Dave Powell

This is the third in a series of articles about the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in during your genealogical research. Each article will address one web site or one aspect of using AI. In the first article we discussed FamilySearch.org's labs capability to read and search handwritten documents. In the second article we discussed using prompts with AI to help us plan or discover resources to do research. Using AI for analyzing or summarizing documents is another way that these tools can assist us.



One recent example that I used for my own personal research was a fairly complex will for my great, great grandmother. The will was over 40 pages in length and had numerous codicils. She had three sons, two of whom died fairly young leaving families. Because of this she had specified in her will many contingencies depending on when the under aged children became of age relative to her death date.

I submitted the will to ChatGPT and asked via a prompt for the AI to read the will and summarize the contents in a table showing all the contingences. In a manner of seconds it had produced about a half page summary that greatly enhanced my ability in understanding the will.

In a like manner, any of the AI tools can “read” a document and summarize it. It works really well on obituaries in figuring out surviving family and their relationships. Most AI tools can read PDF files, Microsoft Word, newspaper articles, and even spreadsheets. Give it a try with any of these AI assistants:

ChatGPT – openai.com

Claude – claude.ai

Perplexity – perplexity.ai

Gemini – gemini.google.com

Copilot – copilot.microsoft.com

Speaker?

*One of the highlights of our meetings is exposure to new information and techniques that broaden our genealogy research skills and knowledge. Toward that end, we are always looking for speakers for our meetings to help with that. If you have an expertise to share, or know of someone who might be interested in speaking to our group for an hour, please contact Vice President **Jim Cross**.*

AI Case Study Number 2

By Greg Burton

In the Google search I entered: *death notice or obituary in Maryland newspapers or funeral homes for the name Enlow, or Enloe, or Inlow, or Inloes*

Google returned this AI Overview:

Recent obituaries found in Maryland for the surname Enlow (and variants) include:

- **Mary Louise Enlow (Ward)** passed away on November 11, 2019, in Baltimore, MD at the age of 100. An obituary is available through Lassahn Funeral Home, Inc., and Legacy.com.
- **Bonnie Enlow Murphy**, born in Accident, Maryland, passed away on November 6, 2014, in Florida. An obituary is available through Stephenson-Nelson Funeral Home.
- While not a Maryland resident at the time of death, **Enlow "Eddie" Minick**, who was born in Frostburg, MD, passed away on March 9, 2017, in Maine.

Please Note: This information is based on available online search results and may not be exhaustive. For the most complete and up-to-date information, consider checking with local Maryland newspapers and funeral homes directly. Many funeral homes have online obituaries and death notices readily available.

I was able to find some obituaries that were for family providing new information for my family tree.

Using Needlework Samplers for Genealogy

Family Record Sampler—Number 1



Family Record Sampler

Elizabeth Potter, New London, Connecticut, 1835
Silk Embroidery on a linen ground, Museum Purchase, 1958.605.1

Family record or register samplers feature birth, marriage, and death dates of the needleworker's parents and siblings, and occasionally other family members or friends. By the early 19th century, such records were often, incorporated into memorials for deceased family members or commemoratives of other life passages. These samplers reflect the increasing importance and acceptance of a more openly affectionate family in the 18th century.

Elizabeth Potter's sampler records the history of her family from the marriage of her parents to arrival of seven children in quick succession, followed by equally rapid and untimely demise of several of her siblings. Elizabeth used traditional symbolic motifs. The heart between her parents' names indicates love and on the lower right a weeping willow tree is associated with burial sites.

Elizabeth did not plan on so many siblings when she originally laid out the design for her embroidery. The later addition of Alexander Merrell's inscriptions runs through the treetops and is broken by the balustrade on the top of the house.

"FAMILY RECORD: William Holt Clark was/born September 6 1795/Susan Potter was born/January 1 1798/ Was married February 3 1822/Mary Stockman was born November 20 1822 died Sep 3 1823/ Elizabeth Potter was born February 17 1824/ William Stockman was born August 15 1825 died Novr 8 1826/ Ann Holt was born September 1 1827/Susan was born July 14 1832/Ellenor Holmes was born June 3 1834 died March 2 , 1839/Alexander Merrell was born Oct 28 1836." Across the bottom of the sampler is cross-stitched: "Elizabeth Potter Clark her record Made in the 12 Year of her age New London 1835." (This was part of the sampler.)

Needlework Samplers (Continued from p. 3)

Family Record Sampler— Number 2

Eliabeth Sarah Gunter

Accomack County, Virginia, 1845

Silk and wool embroidery on cotton ground
Museum Purchase, Partial funding the Jean-
nine's Sampler Seminar 1997.

Deborah A. Novak, Devorah Bishop, and Dawn
Bradford, 1997-71

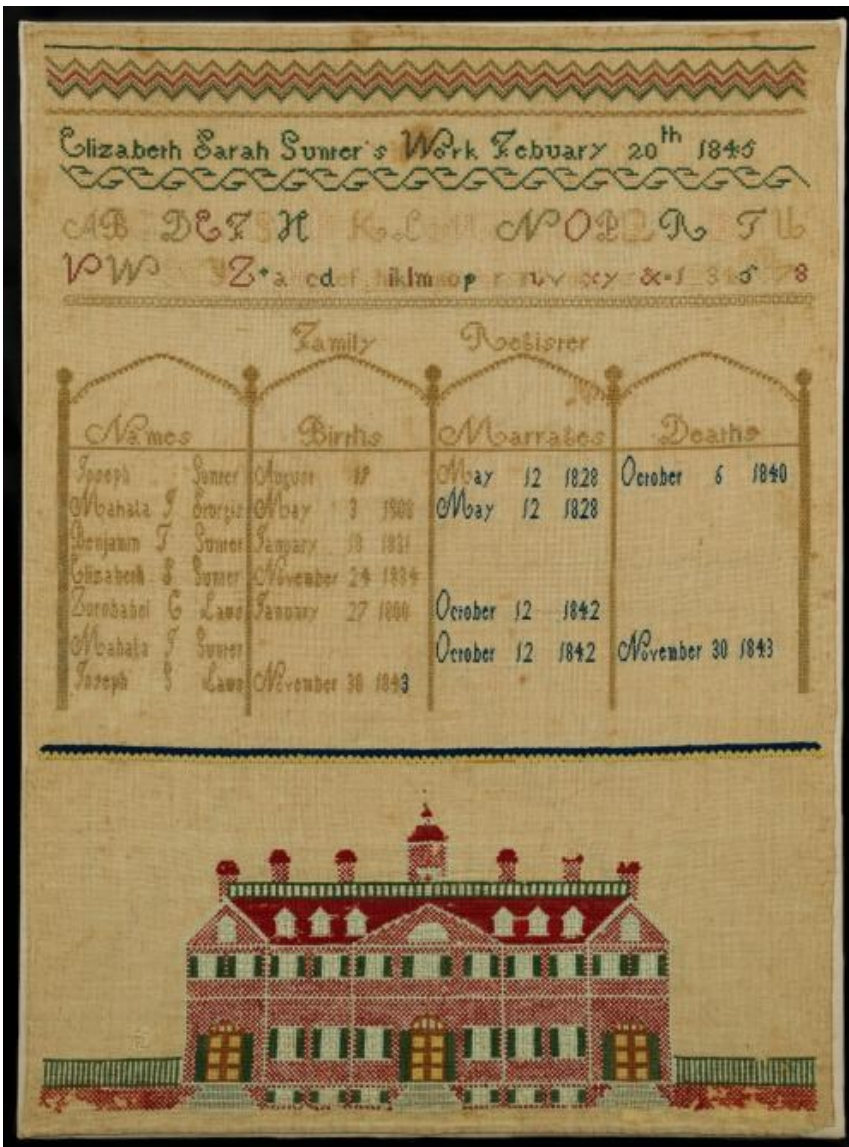
Elizabeth Gunter included her parents' birth and marriage dates, her brother's birth date, her own on November 24, 1834, and her father's death in 1840 on her unfinished register. She also reported the second marriage of her mother, Mahala J. Gunter, to Zorobabel Laws, The family recorded chronicles the birth of Elizabeth's half-brother, Joseph Laws, and the mother's death, both on November 20, 1843.

Elizabeth's work is one of four known similarly-formatted samplers created by schoolgirls in Accomack County on the Eastern Shore of Virginia. The needlework may have been done at the Margaret Academy, which opened in 1807 in Accomack.

The large imposing buildings on the sampler may be a grander rendition of Margaret Academy, which was four stories high with dormer windows, two chimneys, and front and side entrances.

Names Births Marriages[sic] Deaths

Joseph Gunter August 19 May 12 1828 October 6 1840; **Mahala J Sturgis** May 3 1808 May 12 1828 **Benjamin T Gunter** January 18 1831; **Elizabeth S Gunter** November 24 1834; **Zorobabel C Laws** January 27 1800 October 12 1842; **Mahala J Gunter** October 12 1842 November 30 1843; **Joseph G Laws** November 30 1843



Family Record Sampler

Elizabeth Sarah Gunter, Accomack County, Virginia, 1845

Silk and wool embroidery on cotton ground

Museum Purchase,

Partial funding the Jeannine's Sampler Seminar 1997.

Deborah A. Novak, Devorah Bishop, and Dawn Bradford, object number
1997-71

The above article was transcribed from the Sampler exhibit at the Wallace Dewitt Gallery in Colonial Williamsburg Foundation at Williamsburg, Virginia in 2024. The photos were provided by Colonial Williamsburg Foundation (CWF) from www.emuseum.history.org CWF has granted permission to reprint this exhibit description and photos to print in BCGS Notebook.

Needlework Samplers *(Continued from p. 4)*

Family Samplers: An Unusual Resource—and One You Can Still Make

When we talk about supporting documentation, we generally think about documents - things on paper. But "documentation" can include fabric too! Family samplers, a form of needlepoint with information on the family structure and vital records events, can also provide evidence of birth, death, marriage and relationships.

According to the Smithsonian, the first known example of a sampler is dated to 1645. By the 1700s, they were used as a display of a woman's level of education. The more complex the sampler, the stronger her needlework skills. Many were simply decorative, but others contained important genealogical details. The family record style of sampler, which recorded the births of the children of a single family, became popular around the turn of the 19th century.

Like family Bibles, these samplers - if they survive - provide valuable information. They were even included in pension files to support dates of birth and marriage. As genealogists, we still need to weigh the value of the source. Do we know the artist? How likely were they to accurately report the information they provided? In some cases, these young women were present at the events they recorded; in other cases, they relied on written family records to provide the information. Images of samplers, under the right circumstances, can be used as supporting documentation in a lineage society application.

And if you're looking for a craft project to keep you occupied as we head into the cooler winter months, the sampler is a great option. Many needlepoint companies make a modern version as a kit. You can fill in your own tree to create a family record for future generations."

Bryna O' Sullivan, Proprietor with Chart Oak Genealogy, CharterOakGenealogy.com on May 16, 2025 granted permission to reprint her article in the Notebook Baltimore County Genealogy Society.

Update on the Maryland State Archives

Mdlandrec.net

In our June newsletter, we published an article stating that the Maryland State Archives was implementing a new fee structure for accessing land records online—an asset that had been free for many years. After continued uproar from many different directions, the Archives has retracted that plan.

The text below comes from the Maryland State Archives web page found at: msa.maryland.gov/msa/main/html/feesched.html:

"The Maryland State Archives is suspending the implementation of the new version of the Maryland Land Records website that incorporates fees. The Archives looks forward to working with the General Assembly, the Judiciary, and the Executive Department on a sustainable funding plan that supports the electronic platform which provides access to Maryland's land records, as well as all of our archival collections. We appreciate the feedback we've received from stakeholders and welcome continued suggestions to msa.helpdesk@maryland.gov,"

Baltimore County Genealogical Society

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Baltimore County Genealogy Society

Located in the Parkville Senior Center

8601 Harford Rd, Parkville MD 21234

3rd Floor, Room 308 (Elevator Available)

Monthly Meetings:

4th Sunday of the month. January & June are research days 12-4 p.m.

- Eastern European Group—11:45 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- General Meeting—2 p.m. to 3 p.m.
- Speaker—3 p.m. to 4 p.m.
- Library open 12 noon to 2 p.m. for research before meeting
- No monthly meetings in July, August, and December.

Our Research Days are:

2nd Thursday of the Month—10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

2nd Saturday of the Month—10 a.m. 2 p.m.