



Getting Started

Genealogy Journeys
Paula Lowther McGrew
August 2016

Introducing Myself

Oldest of 3 girls

Daughter of Dewayne and Ginnie Lowther

Wife of Gary McGrew

Mother of Stephen and Amy

Associate Professor of Library Science @ West Virginia Wesleyan

Director of Library Services @ West Virginia Wesleyan

Genealogist/Family Historian



Genealogy – Questions for Starting the Journey

Why do we do it?

To learn about our ancestors

To learn about ourselves

Because we are curious!



How do we do it?

Read

Research

Reach Out and Connect

Explore

Document and Organize

Repeat



Over the Rainbow - Down the Rabbit Hole

Dorothy knew where she wanted to go. First to Oz. Then to Kansas. She had friends to help her get there.

Alice went down the Rabbit Hole, finding herself in very unusual places. No real plans for her. She just followed each lead as it came.

I am finding that I am approaching Genealogy more as Alice -- until I go down a Rabbit Hole that I want to pursue directly for awhile. I need more of a plan.



Genealogy

Discovering your ancestors

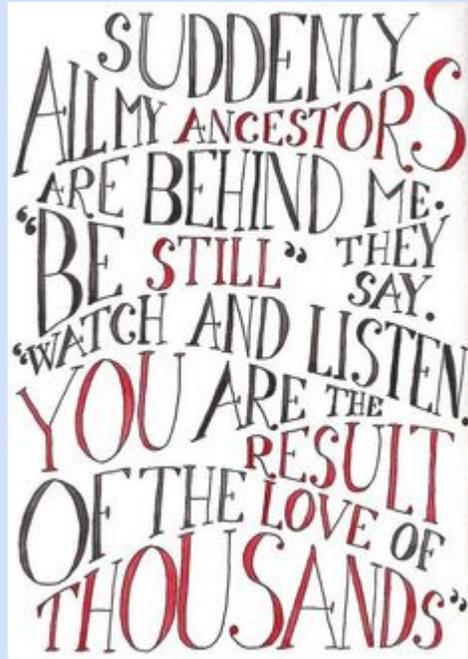
Gathering Information:

Names

Dates

Places

Many Other Types of Information



Family History

Telling the stories of your ancestors

Putting the Pieces Together to Discover:

What were their experiences?

What were their beliefs?

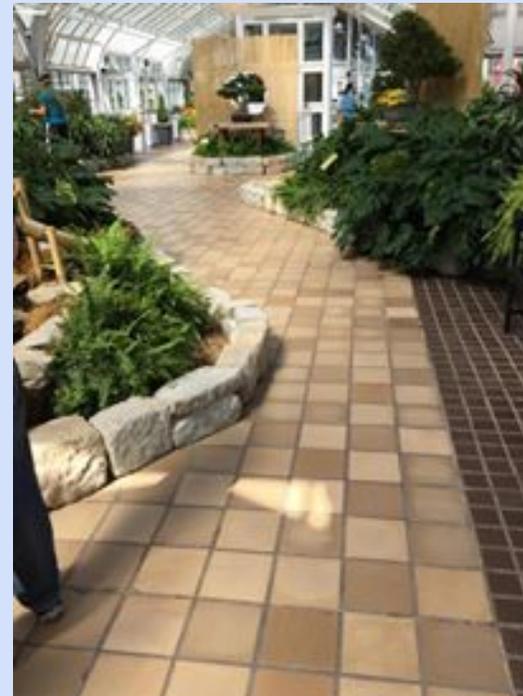
What did they do for a living?

What were things they were interested in or passionate about?

What kind of people WERE they?

My Genealogy Path.....roughly

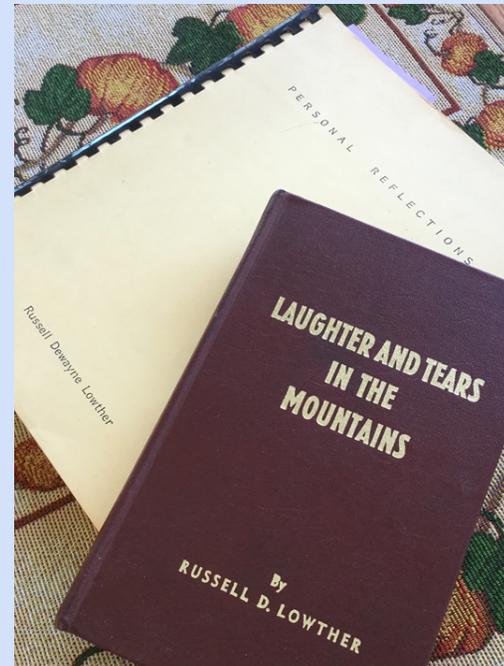
1. Reading Grandpa's Book and Reflections
2. Christmas Break with Ancestor.com.....which all disappeared by the time I had the chance to look at it again in the spring.
3. A couple of years later...Signed Up with MyHeritage.com
4. Clicked and clicked
5. Now double-checking all of those things
6. Subscribed to Family Tree Magazine
7. Ahnentafel
8. Roots Magic
9. Family Atlas



Laughter and Tears in the Mountains



- 1933-1937
- 21 years old
- Earl Charge – 9 churches
- 76 miles around the charge from parsonage to all 9 churches and back again





Our stories are
about who we
have been

About who we are

About who we are
becoming

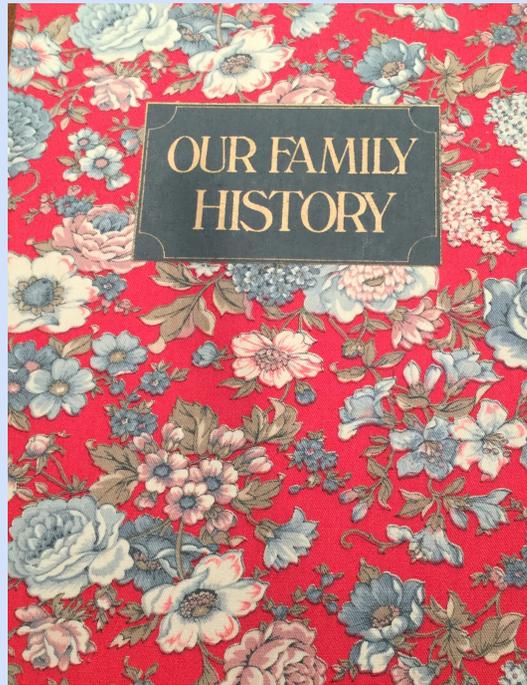
Where Are You From?

My traditional answer is...West Virginia. Pretty much the whole state. By the time I graduated from college, I had lived in 9 places in the state (and 2 in Illinois).

Places in WV that I hadn't lived, my grandparents and other extended family had lived. So, it was just easier to claim the whole state.



Early Attempt



Only went back 6 generations

Didn't have room to add details

Couldn't search it

Couldn't share it

Technology improved

As technology got better, researching became more possible

Now I could do a good bit of research from home – or from the library where I work

The children grew up and required less of my time

My husband retired

30/30/30 life plan – yes, I am right on schedule



An invitation

West Virginia History Class

Represent the family of Colonel William Lowther

During first part of class, I was amazed to hear the professor talking about other pioneer leaders with names that were familiar to me – including the Jacksons.



This was getting serious! And interesting!

Free trial of Ancestry.com



Decided to do a little digging around on Ancestry.com

Thanksgiving Break seemed a great time

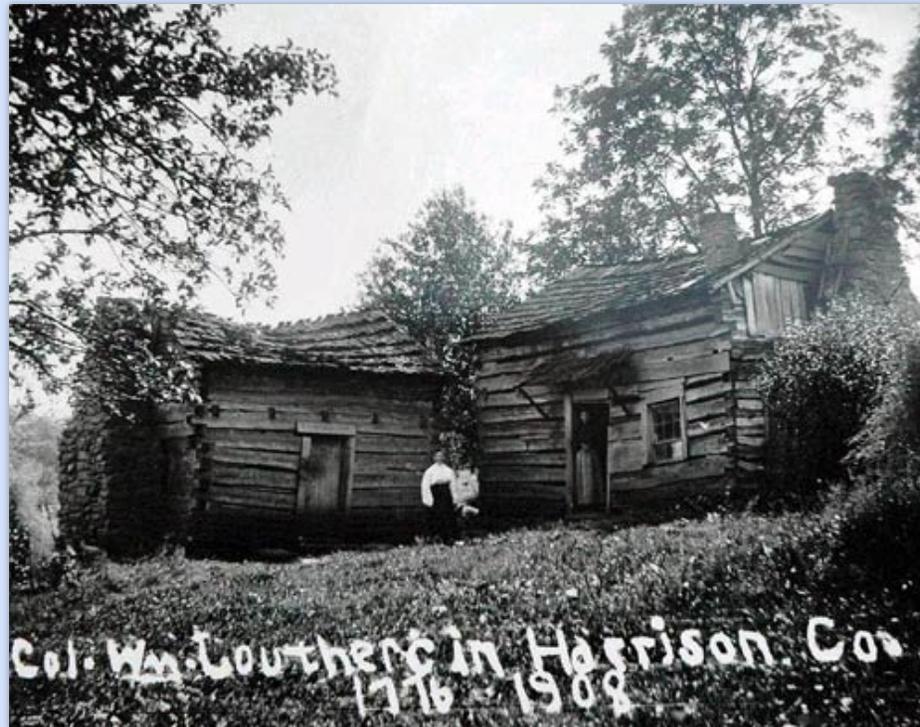
Got busy again right after break, and by the time I got back to it again, everything had disappeared.....

Lessons Learned!

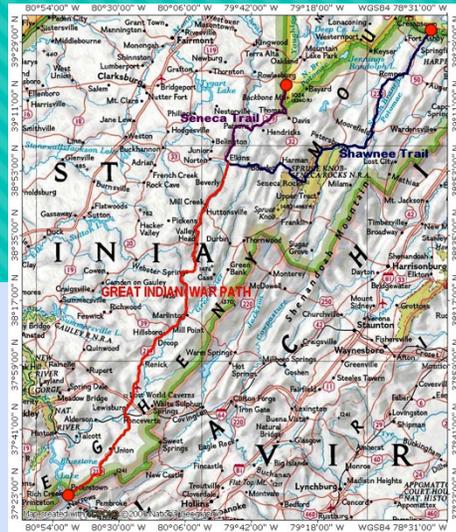
- Sign up for real if you want it to be there
- Back up – to your computer, an external hard drive, etc.

Colonel William Lowther

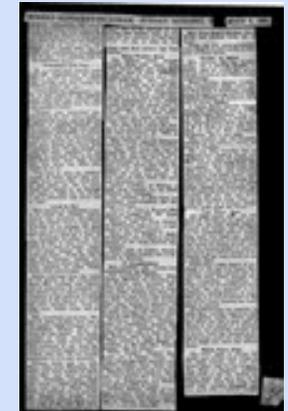
- 1743-1814
- Married Sudna Hughes
- Sherriff
- Hunting saved the settlers during the “Starving Year” 1773
- Indian Fighter
- Served in Army



Sarah Estelene Flesher Lowther



- Born October 4, 1853
- 5 years old: Crippled by Infantile Paralysis
- 7 years old, Covered Wagon Trip Over Mountain
- Married Sylvester Hugh Lowther
- 6 children
- 3 page feature story in Clarksburg paper on December 6, 1931



Cecelia Beverly (Jackson) Bush Bonnett



- 1854-1942
- Married Jacob Bush in 1870. They had 11 children. He died 23 years later.
- Married Henry Bonnett in 1902. He had 9 children.
- “This remarkable woman is rarely ever ill. She never had a headache but once and then when she had typhoid fever. Aunt Celia never had time for these aches, pains, and sicknesses that come to so many.”

Aura Melissa Bonnett and Roal P. Bush



GRASS RUN SCHOOL NEAR STONE COAL CHURCH - WESTON, WEST VIRGINIA - circa 1903
PAULA LOWTHER MCGREW'S GREAT GRANDMOTHER AURA MELISSA BONNETT - BACK ROW - WHITE SHAWL AND **HOLDING BOOK**

Aura 1889-1929



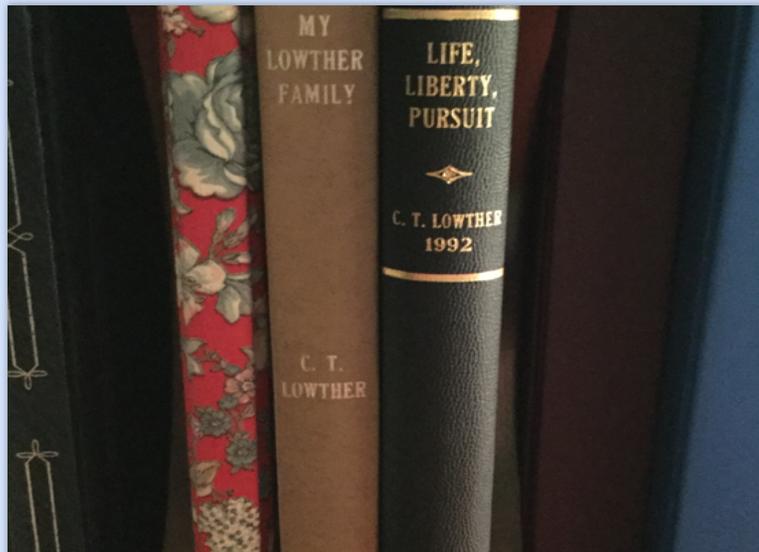
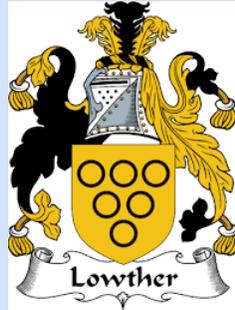
Roal P. Bush, 1883-1937
(son of Cecelia Beverly Jackson Bush)

Time Passed

- As I helped others search, I would occasionally run across pieces of my own family history
- At the library – I am always at work, and never seem to find time for my own research
- We started watching Finding Your Roots on PBS



Books!



My Lowther Family.....about the family that had been in Northwestern England.....complete with Lowther Castle. Cool!

(Waaaaaaayyyy back)

Life, Liberty, Pursuit....a historical novel based on Colonel William Lowther!

(1742-1814)

MyHeritage.com



- Signed up with MyHeritage.com, and soon expanded to an advanced version to get access to some of the tools and apps
- Found people!
- Lots and lots of people!

Need to Organize!!!!!!!

Photos and papers and stories.....oh my



Ahnentafel

1. Discovered Ahnentafel -- math that actually makes sense. A cataloging system for the ancestors. Perfect!

2. Created Ahnentafel Spreadsheet

(First Generation)

1 (Me)

(Second Generation)

2 Father

3 Mother

(Third Generation)

4 Father's father

5 Father's mother

6 Mother's father

7 Mother's mother

(Fourth Generation)

8 Father's father's father

9 Father's father's mother

10 Father's mother's father

11 Father's mother's mother

12 Mother's father's father

13 Mother's father's mother

14 Mother's mother's father

15 Mother's mother's mother

My Ahnentafel for the first four generations

(First Generation)

1 Paula Vantia Lowther McGrew

(Second Generation)

2 Dewayne Rymer Lowther

3 Mary Virginia Settle Lowther

(Third Generation)

4 Russell Dewayne Lowther

5 Catherine Cecelia Bush Lowther

6 Samuel Brittan Settle

7 LaVantia Pearl Elliott Settle

(Fourth Generation)

8 Ira Haymond Lowther

9 Alma Eltha Rymer Lowther

10 Roal Petty "Pug" Bush

11 Aura Malissa Bonnett Bush

12 George Washington Settle

13 Mary Minor "Minnie" Beckham Settle

14 Andrew Jackson Elliott

15 Della Irene Woods Elliott

Uses for Ahnentafel

Created a Spreadsheet – to track who was still missing

Created a Filing System for Photographs and Documents (Electronic)

Created the same Filing System for Physical Items

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	Ahnentafel	Name (8)	Maiden Name	Years	Relationship to Paula (1)	Father/Mother of
2	8	Lowther, Ira Haymond		September 5 1881 - September 2 1973	Paternal GGF	Russell Dewayne Lowther (4)
3	9	Lowther, Alma Eltha	Rymer	October 11 1889 - January 14, 1956	Paternal GGM	Russell Dewayne Lowther (4)
4	10	Bush, Roal Petty "Pug"		October 16 1883 - April 20 1937	Paternal GGF	Catherine Celelia (Bush) Lowther (5)
5	11	Bush, Aura Malissa	Bonnett	October 13 1889 - July 16 1929	Paternal GGM	Catherine Celelia (Bush) Lowther (5)
6	12	Settle, George Washington		December 26 1860 - March 26 1944	Maternal GGF	Samuel Brittan Settle (6)
7	13	Settle, Mary Minor "Minnie"	Beckham	September 21 1866 - March 1 1955	Maternal GGM	Samuel Brittan Settle (6)
8	14	Elliott, Andrew Jackson		May 22 1886 - March 18 1955	Maternal GGF	LaVantia Pearl (Elliott) Settle (7)
9	15	Elliott, Della Irene	Woods	September 17 1871 - March 3 1938	Maternal GGM	LaVantia Pearl (Elliott) Settle (7)

So Many People!

1 - 1 (Me)

2 - 2

3 - 4

4 - 8

5 - 16

6 - 32

7 - 64

8 - 128

9 - 256

10 - 512

I am complete through the 5th generation before there are people I still need to find.



By the 21st, it is 1,048,576!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! And, these are just the DIRECT lines!

More Questions!

Where did they live?

What did they do for a living?

Were they in military service (Revolutionary soldiers, Civil War soldiers -- on both sides, militia)

What did people say about them? (One was considered to be a snake charmer -- not sure that guy belongs in MY tree!)

What did they say to others -- journals, letters, mentioned in books



Reading....reading...reading

History is much more interesting than I had thought.

Libraries are even more awesome than I knew

Online resources are getting better and better.

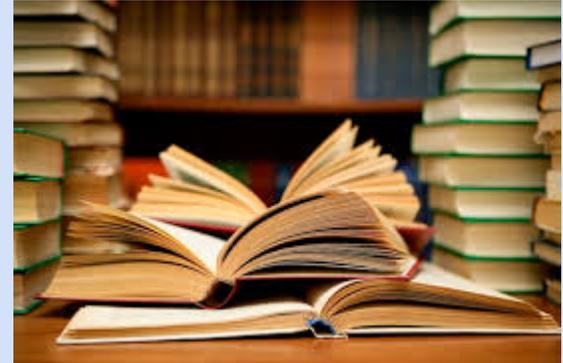
Internet Archive

Library of Congress

Newspaper and Obituary Resources

Court records, state archives, national arc1

Archives, many going digital



Religious Traditions

I am finding quite a variety - and often they were leaders (preachers, missionaries, church founders, one missed being elected Methodist Bishop by one vote!)

What did their religion have to do with where they lived? How they acted? What they thought? How they interacted with their communities?

Quakers - Church of England - Protestants - Lutherans - Presbyterians - Methodists

The more you know....the more things you need to find out.

I need a plan.....

Choose Goals and Create Projects

Break Projects Down into Sub-Projects and Tasks

Project 1:

Follow Jackson Line
as Far as Possible

- Check Brigade website!
- MyHeritage.com
- Other online resources

Project 2:

Create a Timeline of World
Events and match it with
ancestors

- Word Document (or GoogleDoc)
organized by year
- State, Local, National Leaders
- Wikipedia can help
- When were states/
counties/etc.
founded?

Project 3:

What were the
religious views of
ancestors?

- Extract this
from people
you find online
- Family bibles
and journals
- Baptism or
Christening
records

Project 4:

Collect stories about
the ancestors

- Word Document
(or GoogleDoc)
Organized
alphabetically.
- When you come
across an
especially
interesting story,
include it!

Connect with People

The Jackson Brigade

Hacker's Creek Pioneer Descendents

Local History Societies

DAR and other groups

Even the folks who come by the library!

These organizations often have publications or websites!

When you find things, you can submit your work to these publications as well.



Visiting Places

Cemeteries



Libraries



Driving through the areas where the ancestors lived

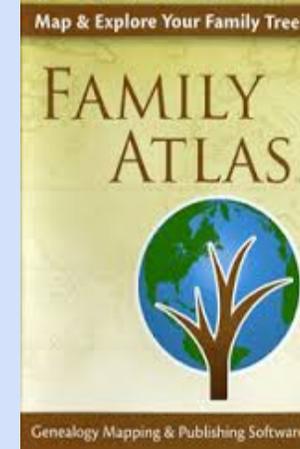
Making plans for trips to Virginia, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey (that one was a surprise!)

Making plans for a big trip to England and Ireland....maybe a return to Germany and Scotland.



Most Recently

1. Bought RootsMagic -- it actually runs a report with the Ahnentafel! And lives on my computer so that I can keep it and back it up.
2. Bought Family Atlas.....haven't really had time to do much with this yet



Family Tree Magazine

- This magazine is published 7 times per year
- Articles are readable, and full of great information. They cover a wide range of topics and interests. And, they give tips on how to make the most of your Ancestry.com, MyHeritage.com, etc. subscriptions if you have them.
- Lists are amazingly helpful: Websites, apps, and more
- Tips and tutorials
- Free newsletter (familytreemagazone.com/enews)
- Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/familytreemagazine/>),
- Twitter (<https://twitter.com/FamilyTreeMag>)

Lots of Free Things as Well as Subscription Based



[Family Tree Magazine](#) [@FamilyTreeMag](#) 4h **4 hours ago**
[#ICYMI](#): We've released our list of 101 Favorite Genealogy websites for 2016. Read all about them here: <http://ow.ly/6CMz302VL8E>

If the Journey is the Destination..... then You are Already There



It will require:

Brains
Heart
Courage

Friends are helpful

Meandering is fun, but
having a plan makes it more
focused