

JULY 2007 NEWSLETTER - NORTH AMERICAN EDITION

LostCousins members have 60,327,945 relatives in their family trees according to our latest estimate!

What might stop us from finding your 'lost cousins'? That's an easy one to answer: for us to identify two members who are cousins, BOTH members need to have entered the same relative on their My Ancestors page.

Therefore the more relatives you're able to enter from the US 1880 or Canada 1881 Census, the more likely it is that some of them have also been entered by your cousins. If so, there will be an IMMEDIATE MATCH when you click the Search button!

We're very proud that LostCousins is one of the first British genealogy websites to expand into North America - it generally works the other way round. But we don't want to bore you with information that isn't relevant to your research.

Starting with this issue we're going to be sending different versions of our newsletter to members, depending on where you live.

The newsletter you're reading now is primarily for members whose relatives were living in North America in the late 19th century. For the British edition see:

http://www.LostCousins.com/pages/members/0707_1.pdf

We'll be introducing other international versions as our coverage expands.

HOW TO LOG-IN

To log-in at <http://www.LostCousins.com> you'll need your email address and password. If you can't remember your password, click the link below to get an instant email reminder:

<http://www.lostcousins.com/pages/login/forgotten.mhtml>

IN YOUR JULY NEWSLETTER

* Leading article: 10 Tips and Tricks

- * Events: FGS Conference in Fort Wayne
- * Resources: NEHGS adds 500,000+ new names
- * Exclusive offer: 25% discount at Origins
- * Latest research: Twins have fewer children
- * Feature: The International Genealogical Index (IGI)

10 TIPS AND TRICKS

Over the past 3 years we've added numerous features to the LostCousins website, almost all of them in response to suggestions from our members. Here's a reminder of some of the clever things you can do - thanks to those great suggestions!

#1: WOULDN'T IT BE GOOD if you could see at a glance which of your ancestors had maiden names or baptism dates recorded? Well you can - click 'More detail' near the top of your My Ancestors page, and a new window will open with more detailed information.

#2: HAVE YOU EVER WANTED TO transfer the information to Excel? You can do that too - using the same display copy the information to the clipboard, then paste it into a blank worksheet.

#3: IS THERE A TICK against one of the relatives on your My Ancestors page? Did you know that when you click the tick you'll see a list of the cousins who have entered that relative?

#4: DID YOU KNOW that clicking the + symbol alongside a relative on your My Ancestors page allows you to add someone from the same household in a fraction of the time? Usually you only need to enter their first name and age - which takes about 10 seconds.

#5: WOULD YOU LIKE TO know which relatives you share with a cousin - or with a new contact? Just go to your My Cousins page and click on the entry in the 'Common relatives' column - we'll even tell you how the other person is related to each!

#6: ARE YOU UNSURE who is regarded as a Direct Ancestor? Just print out the blank Ancestor Chart we provide and fill it in - everyone on that chart is a direct ancestor of yours.

#7: ANCESTOR NUMBERS are very useful because they indicate where each direct ancestor fits on your tree - read them off the Ancestor Chart and enter in the box provided on the 'Add an Ancestor' (or 'Edit Ancestor') form. (Note: the posh name is Ahnentafel)

#8: FEMALE RELATIVES who may have married before the 1881 Census are hard to find, so try looking for them in the Index of Maiden Names - thanks to LostCousins members there are more than 100,000 entries!

#9: MAIDEN NAMES that you enter are added to the Index of Maiden Names immediately, making it easier for your cousins to find the relatives that you and they share. But please don't enter a maiden name for a spinster - that will just confuse people.

#10: CORRECTED SURNAMES are added to our Index of Incorrect Surnames at the end of the month - they also make it easier for your cousins to find you.

EVENTS: FGS CONFERENCE IN FORT WAYNE

The 2007 annual conference of the Federation of Genealogical Societies takes place in Fort Wayne, Indiana from August 15 thru 18.

The Allen County Public Library has one of the largest genealogy collections in the world - and it's only a few minutes from the conference venue.

For full details of the event visit:

<http://www.fgsconference.org>

RESOURCES: NEHGS ADDS 500,000+ NEW NAMES

The New England Historic Genealogical Society has added over 500,000 new names to its databases, which are available to members at:

<http://www.NewEnglandAncestors.org>

EXCLUSIVE OFFER: 25% DISCOUNT AT ORIGINS

The Origins Network is the best online destination for those with Irish ancestry. We've arranged discount offers at Origins before, but for the very first time we're able to offer a 25% discount on all of their subscriptions!

This offer is ONLY for readers of the LostCousins newsletter, and you must enter the special code below. The offer starts immediately, and will last until midnight (London time) on Friday 20 July.

Many of the online databases are EXCLUSIVE to the Origins Network. The collections include:

- Griffith's Valuation (Irish census substitute)
- Irish census fragments
- Passenger lists
- British & Irish Galleries
- The largest online index of pre-1837 English marriages
- Boyd's London Inhabitants
- Wills
- Apprentice records
- Court records
- Property records

To take advantage of this offer, simply enter the code: LCJULY in the promotional code box on the sign-up page, or in the shopping cart before you check out!

For full details of how to sign up, and to learn more about what is available we suggest you visit:

<http://www.originsnetwork.com>

LATEST RESEARCH: TWINS HAVE FEWER CHILDREN

Research carried out at the University of Sheffield, England using data from old Finnish parish records suggests that a woman who has a twin brother is less likely to marry, and less likely to bear children.

Mothers in the study who produced twins of the opposite gender had on average 19% fewer grandchildren than mothers whose twins were both boys, or both girls.

Are there any twins in your family tree? It would be interesting to know whether the data that LostCousins members have collected supports the published research.

FEATURE: THE INTERNATIONAL GENEALOGICAL INDEX

One of the most valuable resources for family historians is the International Genealogical Index (usually referred to as the IGI).

Compiled by members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS), it is online at the free FamilySearch site.

<http://www.familysearch.org>

There are two types of entry, and it's important to distinguish between them. Many were transcribed from baptism and marriage registers by volunteers as part of a systematic project. These entries were carefully checked and are almost always accurate.

Other entries have been submitted later by individual members of the Church, and usually appear with the note "Record submitted.... by a member of the LDS Church".

Such entries are sometimes no more than speculative guesses, and this is most obvious when no precise date and location are given, or a place name appears instead of a church name. In these circumstances it is best to completely disregard the entry.

It is very important to note that the IGI is a partial index - some towns or parishes are not covered at all, and other only for certain periods.

The easiest way to find out whether the place you're interested in is included for the relevant period is to visit Hugh Wallis's site (see your My Links page). However, even if it is included the entry you're looking for may have been omitted.

Occasionally over half of the entries for a year are missing, so the fact that you can't find your ancestor in the index doesn't necessarily mean that the record isn't in the register (though it is usually a strong indication).

Once you have found an entry in the IGI it's always a good idea to get a copy of the source record if you can - which may mean a trip to the records office or archives holding the relevant register.

But there are also hundreds of LDS Family History Centres around the world which can usually obtain microfilm copies of registers on your behalf at a very low cost.

http://www.familysearch.org/eng/Library/FHC/frameset_fhc.asp

These centres are open to all researchers, not just members of the church and wherever you are in the world there's a good chance you'll find one near you!

One reason for checking the source is that the IGI doesn't usually give the entire register entry. For example, after 1813 baptism registers for England & Wales show the father's address and occupation - but you won't see this information in the IGI.

Similarly, from 1753 onwards marriage registers in England & Wales show the signatures of all the participants, including the witnesses. Knowing if someone could sign their own name can be a valuable clue, especially when the surname is a common one.

The IGI is an incredibly valuable resource, one that it's well worth getting to know. (We'd recommend reading the help information - click "Tips on How to Search the International Genealogical Index" on the IGI Search page.)

For example, when you've found the baptism of one of your ancestors, it is very easy to search for other children of the same parents. Do bear in mind, though, that the mother's maiden name is only shown in a minority of entries.

Last, but not least - when you're using FamilySearch always search the resources individually. Though tempting, the "All Resources" Search never delivers the best results.

AND FINALLY....

We mentioned at the beginning that your chances of finding 'lost cousins' are directly related to the number of relatives that you enter on the My Ancestors page. Twice as many relatives means, on average, twice as many cousins.

What we didn't say is the relatives most likely to lead to 'lost cousins' are the ones just off your direct line - typically your great-great aunts and uncles, and great-great-great aunts and uncles. Let us know if you need help finding them!

The LostCousins Team
<http://www.LostCousins.com>