

Genealogy Rocks!

Locating and Surveying Early Land Records, *Part One*

It is a remarkable feeling of connection when you can stand on the land your ancestors worked and lived upon. Many family researchers have been lucky enough to experience this sensation.



Ceil Damschroder

Finding the actual land of your ancestors can be difficult research, but very rewarding. If your ancestors lived in one of the eastern states, you will be dealing with the older survey method of metes and bounds (measurements and markers). The thirteen original colonies plus, Maine, Vermont, West Virginia, Tennessee and Kentucky were measured by metes and bounds, measuring from point to point, using natural markers: rivers, trees, piles of rocks, fences, neighbors lines. Land was surveyed by direction, north, east, southwest, etc., by compass degrees, and by distance with old terms such as chains, links and rods.

Before the thirteen colonies became states, each colony was surveyed according to the discretion of the proprietor, land owner and talents of the surveyor. There were inconsistencies and ensuing

boundary disputes. Our ancestors came to this country to better themselves and their situation through the acquisition of land. Some men were given land as bounty for service in the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, and the Mexican War. The chance that your ancestors were land owners during this time is great.

Most early land records can be found at the specific county court house and at the Family History Library in Salt Lake City or Family History Centers in Berthoud, Fort Collins and Loveland. The rectangular survey system (township, range, & section) for the western states will appear in a future column.

The next presentations are Digitizing Your Family History, March 13, Loveland Public Library, 9 am; Putting Your History in Your Family History, March 18 at the Harmony Library, Fort Collins, 6:30 pm; and Intro to Genealogy, March 27, Fort Collins Main Library, 10 am. Estes Park GS presents 'Where'd I Find That?' citing Genealogical Sources, Estes Park Library, March 11, 4 pm. Visit www.lcgsc.org for more information.

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