



ROOTDIGGER

2nd Quarter: April—June 2010

The Rootdigger is a publication of the Marion County Genealogical Society, a division of the non-profit Historic Marion County/ Ocala Preservation Society. Annual membership fee is \$15.00.

Chasing the Music Man

Written and researched by Colleen Callahan Wells

The Phantom Ancestor

Like many amateur genealogists you occasionally reach a point in your research where you can go no further with a particular person or subject. Your research literally comes to a standstill. All types of angles are explored, but your proverbial brick wall stands firmly in its place. In my case, Duncan Summers, my great, great grandfather was not only my brick wall, but also my family's.

Since the end of the 19th century, the knowledge of the whereabouts and life of my great, great grandfather Duncan Summers has been pursued by several individuals in my family. His son, Rufus Adolphus Joseph Somers (he changed the spelling of his name from Summers to Somers) once declared, "My father deserted me, my mother, and sister in 1886. I was only a year old at the time." My grandmother and aunt, both family historians, searched until their deaths for the elusive Duncan, without finding any success. Sometime after their deaths I was bitten by the genealogy "bug." Of course, like many people I caught this "bug" too late. Most of the older generation had passed on before I could ply them with family questions. I, unlike most, had a grandmother who loved to write notes and keep them for years in binders. These notes became invaluable to me as I began my research. In the case of Duncan Summers, my grandmother left only a few lines of what she had learned from her father, Rufus. According to family rumors, Duncan not only deserted his family, he may have become an actor, a circus performer, and/or musician. How any one knew of these things, since Duncan left his family and never returned, remains to be seen. With so little to go on, Duncan's story was virtually shelved until I decided to give my newly found genealogical skills a go at it.



Is this Duncan Summers aka "The Music Man" with his EEb Tuba????

2nd Quarter 2010

Inside this issue:

Origin and Meaning of Names (part 2) 4

Directory of Genealogy Libraries 8

Special points of interest:

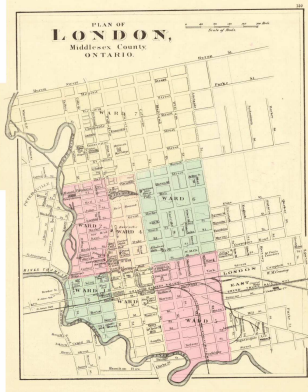
- Chasing the Music Man
- Spelling variations of family names
- Origins of surnames around the world

(Continued on page 2)



Chasing the Music Man

continued



London, Ontario 1875

*He said he recently inherited
an album of very old photos
from his Summers line*



*Hydro propelled vehicle in
London Ontario.*

(Continued from page 1)

Breaking New Ground

I began my research with the website Ancestry.com. I did know that Duncan's children, Rufus and Gertrude were born in London, Ontario. His wife, Nellie Myers was born in Chatham, Ontario. I did not know where Duncan had been born, but thought that Ontario would be a good starting point. I entered his name in the Ancestry.com search engine along with using different variants of the spelling. I had several good hits doing this; which included a marriage record and Canadian census records for 1861, 1871, and 1881. The marriage record did belong to him and my g.g grandmother, Nellie Myers; but unfortunately it listed only their names, where they currently lived, and the marriage date of 13 Apr 1882. No parents, ages, or place of birth listed. All the census records had the same information. The Duncan Summers listed was born in Quebec in 1857 then moved by the 1871 census to London, Ontario. In 1881, this Duncan is still living in London with his parents. I checked the Drouin Collection, again through Ancestry.com. This collection houses thousands of parish records for Montreal, Quebec between the years of 1621-1967. In this collection, I found the birth records for not only the Duncan in the census records, but his seven other brothers and sisters. I had a strong hunch that this was my Duncan Summers, but how could I prove it.

I next began searching message boards in hopes that there would be someone with information on this particular family. Luck was with me. I checked the Public Member Trees on Ancestry.com for Duncan and siblings. I had one match. It was for an Alice Eleanor Summers who was born in Quebec in 1864. This Alice is the youngest sister to the Duncan Summers in the census records. I quickly wrote the Tree's creator asking him about his family. He replied that he was very new to genealogy and only knew his great grandmother's name. He said he recently inherited an album of very old photos from his Summers line, but had no idea how to identify them. I told him that I was researching his Summers line with the anticipation that they may be my family, also. Now, at this point I was grasping for straws, but I asked him if any of his newly acquired photos had a man using props; such as a musical instrument, wearing an outrageous costume, or perhaps a circus photo. After checking, he emailed me saying that he had one photo of a man holding a baton, standing next to a very large musical horn. Could this be my Duncan? He scanned and sent the photo. The photo revealed a tall distinguished man with a top hat looking to be perhaps a conductor of a band. The photo was taken in Creston, Iowa at the J.E. Agnew studio. I was so excited with this picture. Did the man seemed to resemble Rufus Somers or was it just my imagination?

(Continued on page 3)

Chasing the Music Man

continued

(Continued from page 2)

What to do next? I decided to try Union County, Iowa's genealogical website for information on the city of Creston, Iowa in hopes they may have something. Nothing, there. I googled J.E. Agnew photography and found they were no longer in business. I tried every website that I could think of which might have applied. It then dawned on me that perhaps I could find something in a newspaper research website. I went to Newspaperarchives.com site and used their free index. I put in Duncan Summers, the dates from 1882-1920, and the state, Iowa. Bingo! Newspapers from seven different cities in Iowa popped up containing articles pertaining to Duncan Summers. I quickly subscribed to Newspaperarchives.com and began reading the stories from Iowa. What I found was totally incredible.

The Real Duncan Summers?

After I pulled up the features on Duncan Summers, I discovered that he was a fraud and scam artist. Duncan apparently was going by the name of Professor Harold Land. Harold Land was Creston's music professor who taught the city's juvenile and ladies' bands. He also was the director of the Union County band and gave open air concerts in the city weekly. According to a piece written on 24 May 1895, in the *Adams County Free Press*, Corning, Iowa it states, "Director Harold Land's band played to an audience of about five hundred last Tuesday."

In the 26 Dec 1895 article in the *Iowa State Register*, Des Moines, Iowa my ancestor Duncan Summers was arrested on a charge of lewdness, together with two young girls who were living with him posing as his sisters. Apparently, the girls' mother, a Mrs. Gilmore Smith wrote a letter to the mayor of Creston informing him that the man they have as director and leader of the ladies' military band is a fraud. Mrs. Smith goes on to say that, "Land's right name is Duncan Summers and that he deserted a wife and two children in Canada in 1886. She says that Land has ruined three of her daughters and he is a demon — 'a second Holmes.'" The story reveals that Harold Land, alias Duncan Summers, is a lothario who lives with two sisters in sin.

The story of Professor Harold Land, alias Duncan Summers, is followed and repeated in numerous leading newspapers throughout Iowa over the next six months. I also searched Newspaperarchives.com for the name Harold Land. This exploration provided me with articles showing a different side of my relative. Before the scandal he was reported as being a prominent man in the community, whom citizens looked up to with the highest esteem. Not only was he the leader of several bands, he also was the city's printer and telegraph editor.

(Continued on page 4)



Creston, Iowa High School

I put in Duncan Summers, the dates from 1882-1920, and the state, Iowa. Bingo!



Agnew's Creston Juvenile Band about 1910



Origins and Meaning of Names

By Mayrand Family Association

Permission to use Documents (such as white papers, press releases, and other publications) from this server ("Server") is granted by the Mayrand Family Association ("Mayrand"), provided that (1) the below copyright notice appears in all copies and that both the copyright notice and this permission notice appear, (2) use of such Documents from this Server is for informational and non-commercial or personal use only and will not be copied or posted on any network computer or broadcast in any media, and (3) no modifications of any Documents are made. Use for any unauthorized purpose is expressly prohibited by law, and may result in severe civil and criminal penalties. Violators will be prosecuted to the maximum extent possible.

© 1999 Mayrand Family Association Inc. All rights reserved.



Smolensk, 1912

Spelling Variations of the Family Names

When you begin to do more extensive research on your surname you may have difficulty finding it with the exact spelling which you use today. It, in fact, may very well have been spelled differently hundreds of years ago, or you may even know of someone in your family's past who actually changed his name. The more research you do, the more likely you'll find several different spellings. Language changes, carelessness and a high degree of illiteracy (sometimes the man himself did not know how to spell his own name) compounded the number of ways a name might be spelled. Often the town clerk spelled the name the way it sounded to him.

(Continued on page 5)

"That many of us believe that Dixie, Meredith's older sister, was responsible for the basic story of the Music Man."

Chasing the Music Man

continued

(Continued from page 3)

As I read and learned more about the make-believe life of Harold Land, I realized that his life seemed to parallel the main character, Harold Hill in Meredith Willson's musical, *The Music Man*. The names were very similar, both were musical imposters, and both lived in a small town in Iowa. With this in mind, I contacted the officials at Mason City, Iowa to see if they would know who Meredith Willson based his character, Harold Hill on. Mason City was the birthplace of Meredith Willson and it is where the "Music Man" museum is located. I was informed by the Historian Archivist at the city's library, "That many of us believe that Dixie, Meredith's older sister, was responsible for the basic story of the Music Man." Apparently, the story written was called, "The Silver Triangle" and unfortunately the one and only copy is gone. He concluded, "Unless someone produces the missing copy, we really can't say for sure much about the character's outlook." I truly feel that my Duncan could have been the inspiration behind the "Music Man" story, but even if he isn't, I couldn't have asked for a better tale. I continue to track my Duncan. Indubitably, he is on the run with a new name and new adventures. *Colleen Wells is an active genealogical researcher based in Ocala, FL. Her passion for genealogy stems from discovering the past lives of her ancestors, along with encouraging family members to join in on the adventures of solving old mysteries.*



Professor Harold Hill "The Music Man"

Origins and Meaning of Names

continued

(Continued from page 4)

When you begin your own intensive research in to your genealogy you will very likely need to consult many sources outside your immediate family. One type of source which you may find especially useful is fists of name - forms, their meaning and variant spellings. Such fists, along with more extensive onomastic dictionaries, now exist for many nationalities and name-groups. You will need to be alert to a wide range of spelling variations. Many names became altered in moving from one language to another. Thus, the German name Metzger (occupational in origin) became Butcher in English. Often, names were changed for political or social reasons, to blur or obscure ancestral associations which at a given time a family may have considered a liability. Some spellings may have been altered for the sake of simplification, thus losing their relational, occupational or locational prefixes and suffixes. For example, the surname "Rosenthal" - a valley where roses grow - may have been shortened to Rosen or Rose. With the exception of some place-names which still survive, most ancient Gaelic names in Ireland, Scotland, and Wales have largely disappeared under their Anglicized forms: "Mac an Bhreitheamhnaigh," meaning son of a judge, may have become Briany or Brien, or Abraham (pronounced eh' brum), or even judge by translation. The Gaelic "ua," meaning grandson of, changed first to O, then to O', and was finally even dropped by some families. Many of these dropped familial prefixes have since been restored, but is likely that some accidental changes have entered the transactions.

We have mentioned the most common sources from which surnames are derived. We must now examine some of the idiosyncracies for name giving for the country of origin. Different cultures had different ways of choosing names for their offspring. Below are various nationalities and ethnic groups and some of the ways in which their names are derived.

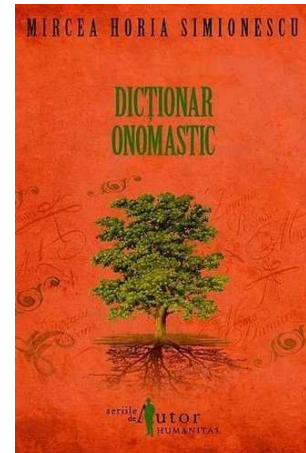
The Origins of Surnames Around the World

Although your last name offers you the most substantial clues to your family history, first and middle names can also be valuable in tracing your family tree. We generally think of names with three parts: first, middle and last. First names are called "given" or "Christian" names, because early Christians changed their pagan first names to Christian names at baptism.

Most first names used in the Western World today originate from five languages: Hebrew, Teutonic (which included Germanic), Greek, Latin and Celtic (which includes Irish, Welsh and Scottish).

It's fascinating to learn how easily first names fall into obvious categories. Hebrew contributed biblical names, and about one-half of the English-speaking population have first names from the New Testament such as Eliza-

(Continued on page 6)



Onomastic Dictionary, the origins and forms of proper names.

First names are called "given" or "Christian" names, because early Christians changed their pagan first names to Christian names at baptism.

1	John	Mary
2	William	Anna
3	James	Emma
4	Charles	Elizabeth
5	George	Minnie
6	Frank	Margaret
7	Joseph	Ida
8	Thomas	Alice
9	Henry	Bertha
10	Robert	Sarah

10 most popular baby names in the United States in the year 1880



Origins and Meaning of Names

continued

(Continued from page 5)

beth, Mary, John and Joseph. The Teutonic tongues gave us names linked with warlike characteristics, such as Charles (to become adult), or Ethel (noble). The Greek, Latin and Celtic languages also gave us names for personal characteristics and abstract qualities. For example, the Greek name Andrew means "manly," the Greek Dorothy is "gift of God," the Latin Victor means "victory in battle," and the Latin Laura translates to "the air." Names of Celtic origin are almost poetic, such as Kevin meaning "gentle and beloved" and Morgan meaning "sea dweller."

While there is a wealth of first names available, the actual selection process has been somewhat limited. It is necessary to remember that in 1545 the Catholic Church made the use of a saint's name mandatory for baptism, so for centuries first names have been confined to the John - and -Mary tradition. In fact, in all western countries during the Middle Ages, there were only about twenty common names for infant boys and girls. And John and Mary were most frequently used. In the 1600's the Protestants rejected anything associated with Catholicism, so in came names from the Old Testament, such as Elijah, Priscilla and Joshua.

Middle names weren't used until the 15th century when a second "first" name was used as a status symbol by German nobility. Many years passed before this practice became widespread, and in the United States, it did not become popular until after the Revolutionary War, when the fashion was to use the mother's maiden name.

Perhaps you have or will come across an ancestor's name with what appears to be a fide. For example, "Esquire" following a name meant someone much respected, one step away from a knight. "Gentleman" was one step down from an Esquire. The title "Goodman" (or a woman was called "Goody" or "Goodwife") meant the person was head of a household. Many other terms from our past have changed meaning. Esquire and Gentleman were expanded through the years to include persons with special social standing in the community - doctors, clergymen, lawyers. Also "Senior" and "Junior" placed immediately following a name did not necessarily imply a father - and - son relationship. They could have been an uncle and nephew who bore the same name and lived near each other. The term cousin was widely used to mean "an extended family," not legally just the child of an aunt or uncle.

Belgian

Belgian surnames are either of French or Dutch Origin. In the North, surnames tend to be of a Dutch origin and are similar in nature to those found in the Netherlands. The remainder of the country falls under French influence, particularly the Walloon dialect, and surnames from these areas resemble

(Continued on page 7)



Middle age castle

Greek name Andrew means "manly," the Greek Dorothy is "gift of God,"



The Boulevard in Brussels, Belgian.

Origins and Meaning of Names

continued

(Continued from page 6)

those of the French.

Chinese

Although China has over one billion people, there are approximately 1000 surnames, and only 60 of these are common. Most Chinese surnames are only one syllable and are characteristic of descriptive in origin. The most common Chinese names are Wang (yellow, Wong (field or wide water), Chan (old) and Chew (mountain). Since almost all Chinese names are one syllable and easy to pronounce, and because of strong Chinese family and ancestral ties, few names have been changed. The Chinese still place their surnames first, although this practice is no longer followed by the Chinese people living in Western countries.

Czech

Czech surnames are related to Polish surnames, but they tend to be shorter and easier to pronounce, since they contain fewer consonants. It is common to find a Czech surname derived from a nickname and diminutive forms are also widespread. Many Czechs have German or "Germanicized" names. Some interesting Czech surnames include the following: Hovorka (one who was overly talkative), Kostal (a dweller in a field where cabbages have been cut) and Metnick (one who ground grain, a miller).

Danish

The vast majority of Danish names are patronymic in origin and end in -sen. Prior to the late 1860's, these surnames were not hereditary, but changed with each generation. The son of Jorgen Petersen would be known by the surname Jorgensen. In 1904 the Danish Government began to encourage the use of surnames other than the traditional -sen names, and many people then added a place or occupational name to their -sen name by hyphenating the two. Other Danish surnames include: Henricksen (the son of Henry; home rule), Krogh (a worker in an inn, or dweller in a corner), Pedersen (the son of Peter; a rock) and Jorgenson (the son of George; farin er).

Dutch

The use of hereditary family surnames began in the 13th and 14th centuries but did not spread to the Low Countries until the middle of the 17th century. Many Dutch names are recognized by the prefixes van, van der, van den, and ver which mean "from" or "from the." The Dutch van is not like the German von which designates nobility. Characteristic nicknames were also used as surnames by the Dutch, and, like many other cultures, patronymics which changed with each generation were long a fixture in the Dutch name system. The following surnames are of Dutch origin: Drukker (one who prints or works as a pressman), Zylstra (a dweller near a lock, or drainage sluice), Groen (the young, inexperienced, vigorous person) and Hartig (a strong, robust man).

(Ed note: Future issues of the Rootdigger will continue with the Origins of Surnames from around the World.)



Old Town, Prague

Wang (yellow, Wong (field or wide water), Chan (old) and Chew (mountain)



Dutch windmills from across the lake.



**Marion County
Genealogical Society**

Mission Statement

The Marion County Genealogical Society is dedicated to creating and promoting an interest in genealogy, focusing on research in Marion County, Florida and in supporting members in their research.

2nd Quarter: April—
June 2010

**The Rootdigger
MCGS
P. O. Box 1206
Ocala, FL 34478-1206**

President: Patti Hunt
Vice President: Phyllis Sennewald
Secretary: Barbara Jones
Treasurer: Richard Heckman
Past President: Bettie DeBary
Rootdigger Editor: Joel Swanson
Field Trips: Jim Neate
Database: Peggy Jones
Research: Marcia Winne
Webmaster: Judy Wright
Cemetery Project: Arnold Davis
Obituary Daily Times: Marcia Winne
Phone: 352-207-0082
Email: mariongenealogy@gmail.com

Place mailing address label here

**We're on the web:
Mariongenealogy.tripod.com**



Genealogy & Local History department of the Chattahoochee Valley Libraries

Directory of Genealogy Libraries in the US

As anyone who has ever looked for genealogy records knows, the vast majority of genealogy records are still in paper or microfiche form sitting on some dusty shelf of a local library. Knowing which local libraries have genealogy records is often half the battle. This is where the excellent website Directory of Genealogy Libraries in the US comes in handy. It lists all the US public libraries that contain genealogy information. The list is alphabetical by state. The name of the library, its address and (where available) its website and email address is also listed. This is a very useful website for tracking down local genealogy records. Access is free. Use the link below.

http://www.gwest.org/gen_libs.htm