

GENEALOGY TERMS

Abbreviations - commonly used in genealogy or in documents.

b - born

B - black; Negro

c, ca - about, approximately; from Latin *circa*

co - county, or company

col - "colored"; black; Negro

CSA - Confederate States of America, the association of Southern state which seceded from the U.S. in 1860-1861.

d - died

dau - daughter

dea - deacon

decd - deceased

et al - Latin *et alii*, meaning "and others"

etc - Latin *et cetera*, meaning "and other things"

F - female

fmc - free man of color

fwc - free woman of color

govt - government

ibid - Latin *ibidem*, meaning "in the same place"

JP - Justice of the Peace

LDS - The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, i.e. the Mormons

LE - Local Elder

LS - Latin *locus sigilli*, on documents, the place where man's seal is placed

m - married

M - male

m1 - married first

m2 - married second

MG - Minister of the Gospel

Mu - Mulatto, person with one Caucasian parent and one Negro parent

nd - no date given

n m - never married

np - no page or publisher given

NS - New Style, referring to the Gregorian calendar

OM - Ordained Minister.

OS - Old Style, referring to the Julian calendar

pp - pages

unm - unmarried

W - white; Caucasian

(w) or wit - witness

GENEALOGY TERMS

Glossary - Definitions of terms commonly used in genealogy or documents

Abstract - summary of important points of a given text, especially deeds and wills.

Administrator - (of an estate) - person appointed to manage or divide the estate of a deceased person.

Administratrix - a female administrator.

Alien - foreigner

American Revolution - U.S. war for independence from Great Britain, 1775-1783.

Ancestor - a person from whom you are descended; a forefather.

Ante - a Latin prefix meaning *before*.

Archives - records of a government, organization, or institution; the place where such records are stored.

Attest - to bear witness to; to certify by an oath or signature; to testify to.

Banns - public announcement of an intended marriage.

Bequeath - to give property to a person in a will.

Bond - written, signed, witnessed agreement requiring payment of a specified amount of money on or before a given date.

Bounty Land Warrant - a right to obtain land, specific number of acres of unallocated public land, granted for military service.

Census - official enumeration, listing, or counting of citizens.

Civil War - War between the States; war between the North & the South, 1861- 1865.

Codicil - addition to a will.

Common ancestor - one shared by two people.

Confederate - pertaining to the Southern state which seceded from the U.S. in 1860 - 1861, their government and their citizens.

Consort - usually, a wife whose husband is living.

Cousin - relative descended from a common ancestor, but not a brother or sister.

Daughter-in-law - wife of one's son.

Deceased - dead.

Declaration of Intention - first paper, sworn to and filed in court, by an alien stating that he wants to become a citizen.

Deed - transfer of ownership of property.

Devisee - one to whom property is given in a will.

Devisor - one who gives property in a will.

Dissenter - one who did not belong to the established church, especially the Church of England in the American colonies.

Dower - legal right or share which a wife acquired by marriage in the real estate of her husband, allotted to her after his death for lifetime.

Emigrant - one leaving a country and moving to another.

Enumeration - listing or counting, such as a census.

Estate - all property and debts belonging to a person.

Executor - one appointed in a will to carry out its provisions.

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- Father-in-law** - father of one's spouse.
- Fraternity** - group of men (or women) sharing a common purpose or interest.
- Friend** - member of the Religious Society of Friends; a Quaker.
- Genealogy** - study of family history and descent.
- Given name** - name given to a person at birth or baptism, one's first and middle names.
- Grantee** - one who buys property or receives a grant.
- Grantor** - one who sells property or makes a grant.
- Great-aunt** - sister of one's grandparent.
- Great-uncle** - brother of one's grandparent.
- Guardian** - person appointed to care for and manage property of a minor orphan or an adult incompetent of managing his own affairs.
- Half-brother / half-sister** - child by another marriage of one's mother or father; the relationship of two people who have only one parent in common.
- Heirs** - those entitled by law or by the terms of a will to inherit property from another.
- Homestead Act** - law passed by Congress in 1862 allowing a head of family to obtain title to 160 acres of public land after clearing and improving it and living on it for 5 years.
- Illegitimate** - born to a mother who was not married to the child's father.
- Immigrant** - one moving into a country from another.
- Indentured servant** - one who bound himself into service of another person for a specified number of years, often in return for transportation to this country.
- Instant** - (calendar) of the current month; of this month.
- Intestate** - one who dies without a will. Used as an adjective - *dying without a will*.
- Issue** - offspring; children.
- Late** - recently deceased; now deceased.
- Legacy** - property or money left to someone in a will.
- Legislature** - lawmaking branch of state or national government; elected group of lawmakers.
- Lineage** - ancestry; direct descent from a specific ancestor.
- Lodge** - chapter or meeting hall of a fraternal organization.
- Loyalist** - Tory, an American colonist who supported the British side during the American Revolution.
- Maiden name** - a girl's last name, or surname, before she marries.
- Maternal** - related through one's mother. Maternal grandmother is the mother's mother.
- Microfilm** - reproduction of documents on film at reduced size.
- Microfiche** - sheet of microfilm with greatly reduced images of pages of documents.
- Migrant** - person who moves from place to place, usually in search of work.
- Migrate** - to move from one country or state or region to another.
- Militia** - citizens of a state who are not part of the national military forces but who can be called into military service in an emergency; a citizen army, apart from the regular military forces.
- Minor** - one who is under legal age; not yet a legal adult.
- Mortality** - death; death rate.

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- Mortality schedules** - enumeration of person who died during the year prior to June 1 of 1850, 1860, 1870, and 1880 in each state of the United States, conducted by the Bureau of the Census (e.g., deaths occurring between June 1, 1849, and June 1, 1850, were reported on the 1850 Mortality Schedules.)
- Mother-in-law** - mother of one's spouse.
- Namesake** - person named after another person.
- Necrology** - listing or record of persons who have died recently.
- Nee** - used to identify a women's maiden name: *Mrs. Louise Betty Heiser nee Bickel*.
- Nephew** - son of one's brother or sister.
- Niece** - daughter of one's brother or sister.
- Orphan** - child whose parents are dead; sometimes, a child who has lost one parent by death.
- Patent** - grant of land from a government to an individual.
- Paternal** - related through one's father. Paternal grandmother is the father's mother.
- Patriot** - one who loves his country and supports its interests.
- Pedigree** - family tree; ancestry.
- Pension** - money paid regularly to an individual, especially by a government as reward for military service during wartime or upon retirement from government service.
- Pensioner** - one who receives a pension.
- Poll** - list or record of person, especially for taxing or voting.
- Post** - Latin prefix meaning *after*, as in post-war economy.
- Posterity** - descendants; those who come after.
- Pre** - Latin prefix meaning *before*, as in pre-war military build-up.
- Probate** - having to do with wills and administration of estates.
- Progenitor** - a direct ancestor.
- Proximo** - in the following month, in the month after the present one.
- Public Domain** - land owned by the government.
- Quaker** - member of the Religious Society of Friends.
- Relict** - widow.
- Republic** - government in which supreme authority lies with the people or their elected representatives.
- Revolutionary War** - U.S. war for independence from Great Britain. 1775-1783
- Shaker** - member of a religious group formed in 1747 which practiced communal living and celibacy.
- Sibling** - person having one or both parents in common with another; a brother or sister.
- Sic** - Latin meaning *thus*; copied exactly as the original reads. Often suggests a mistake or surprise in the original.
- Son-in-law** - husband of one's daughter.
- Spouse** - husband or wife.
- Statute** - law.
- Step-brother** - (step-sister) - child of one's step-father or step-mother.
- Step-child** - child of one's husband or wife from a previous marriage.

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Step-father - husband of one's mother by a later marriage.

Step-mother - wife of one's father by a later marriage.

Surname - family name or last name.

Territory - area of land owned by the United States, not a state, but having its own legislature and governor.

Testator - person who makes a valid will before his death.

Tithable - taxable.

Tithe - formerly, money due as a tax for support of the clergy or church.

Tory - Loyalist; one who supported the British side in the American Revolution.

Township - division of U.S. public land that contained 36 sections, or 36 square miles. also a subdivision of the county in many Northeastern and Midwestern states of the U.S.

Ultimo - in the month before this one.

Union - the United States; also the "North" during the Civil War, the states which did not secede.

Vital records - records of birth, death, marriage, and divorce.

Vital statistics - data dealing with birth, death, marriage, and divorce.

War Between the States - U.S. Civil War, 1861-1865.

Will - document declaring how a person wants his property divided after his death.

Witness - one who is present at a transaction, such as a sale of land or signing of a will, who can testify or affirm that it actually took place.