



MTGS Messenger
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Jim Long, Editor



MTGS September 20 Virtual Meeting with Melissa Barker

For our September 20 regular meeting, which will be on Zoom only starting at 1:00pm Central Time, **Melissa Barker**, from the Houston County Archives & Museum in Erin, brings us a new program for 2025 on [how to find women 'hiding' among the records at an archives](#).

Local archives of all kinds have records for your female ancestors. Many times, these records are not digitized or available online. Learn from a seasoned archivist how to locate and research female records in local archives.

Melissa is a Certified Archives Manager and Public Historian currently working at the [Houston County, Tennessee Archives and Museum](#). She lectures, teaches and [writes about the genealogy research process](#), researching in archives and records preservation. She also conducts virtual webinar presentations across the United States for genealogical and historical societies.

Gracious thanks to Melissa for making this late change-of-speaker for the meeting!

* Please note that this is a Zoom-only meeting. We will not be in-person at TSLA this time.

[The Zoom link for this meeting is here.](#)



Registration now Open for the November Seminar with Julie Merrill, AG

Seminar season at MTGS is here! Registration is open for our **November 15 genealogical seminar** with national speaker [Julie Merrill, AG](#), from [Ancestry ProGenealogists](#), at the Tennessee State Library and Archives. Julie will be presenting these four great topics throughout the day:

- Research Strategies for the Colonial Southern United States
- Intermediate Research Skill Building

- How do I use DNA to Break Down Brick Walls in my Family Tree?
- Find all the Records! Alternative methods to documenting your family in a burned county

In-person and remote attendance options are available. In-person attendees also receive a choice of boxed lunch, and snacks. And don't forget the worry-free parking in the spacious TSLA garage!

The Seminar brochure is attached to this email, and is available on the MTGS website at <https://mtgs.org/seminar.html>. Registration can be done via PayPal or by mailed check.

We hope to see you on November 15 for our 37th Annual Genealogical Seminar.



Our friend Carolyn, who is a “walking encyclopedia of all things Bedford County,” asked us to let everyone know that she has 24 volumes (1975-1998) of the *North Carolina Genealogical Society* journal to give away. Anyone interested can make arrangements to pick them up in College Grove, TN, by contacting her [at her email address](#).

The Lovable - but Imperfect - FamilySearch Catalog

I've recently been on the hunt for the records of a specific church that some of my ancestors attended in the early 1800s – the **Dry Creek Baptist Church in Trigg County, Kentucky**. I knew that the church had started about 1805, as a “wing” of the Red River Church in western Robertson County, Tennessee. My first goal was to find the minutes of the Red River Church. Thankfully, the Red River minutes had been abstracted years ago, and [a copy was available](#) at the Tennessee State Library and Archives for me to read.

Back at home, I wondered if the *original* minutes were accessible on FamilySearch. A catalog search returned an entry for the *print* version I'd read at TSLA, but that's not viewable online. Three years ago, in the July 2022 issue, I reminded our readers to use the **Places Within** button in the FamilySearch Catalog. So I clicked into the catalog entry for Adams, in western Robertson County, and found the [original minutes of Red River Church, 1791-1826](#), which included the earliest minutes for the “wing” on Dry Creek that was my research target. But once Dry Creek was constituted as a separate church in 1805, its minutes were no longer in the Red River minute book.

A search in the FamilySearch catalog for a title of “Dry Creek” yielded no results for the church minutes of that Trigg County church. But I tried that **Places Within** button for Trigg County, and saw a category called “Dry Creek,” with a subcategory for one set of Church records. Yay, result!

I was disappointed, however, when the catalog entry indicated that the minutes were for the church I was targeting, but didn't begin until 1872 – long after the time period I needed:

[Church records, 1872-1956](#)

Author:
Predestinarian Baptist Church (Dry
Creek, Kentucky : Primitive Baptist)

But I clicked the link *anyway*, and was further disappointed by my most-dreaded icon on FamilySearch, the **You Can't See This From Home** icon:



Some microfilm reels can only be viewed while at a [FamilySearch Center](#), or at an [Affiliate Library](#). Lucky for me, there are two Affiliate libraries within a reasonable drive for me. One of course is TSLA, but the other one is even closer to me, the [Houston County Archives & Museum in Erin](#).

I visited the Houston County Archives & Museum, in the great hands of Melissa Barker, and used her public computer to access that limited-access reel of Dry Creek Church minutes.

What's *actually* on that reel of "Dry Creek Church minutes, 1872-1956" delighted me beyond imagination:

- Dry Creek Church minutes, 1805-1855
- Casey's Creek Church minutes, 1848-1905
- Muddy Fork Church minutes, 1855-1927

A 3-for-1 win! Not only had I found the early Dry Creek minutes I was seeking, but the *uncatalogued* records of two more churches in the same county, one of which recorded the death date of an ancestor who wasn't even on my mind.

If you think the record you're seeking isn't on FamilySearch, try a little persistence.
