



Visualizing Brick Walls

13 November 2016

Agenda

- A “brick wall” is any avenue of enquiry where the genealogy searcher has reached the end of possible conclusions. A new approach might break through the wall, allowing further progress.
- Sometimes, a visual approach (as opposed to lists of data or entries in a genealogy program) yields new avenues for enquiry.
- In this presentation, we describe visualization software, provide some examples and links to some “How-To” guides.

Visualization Software

- **General graphing software:** ability to make general drawings using tools, file insertion.
 - Flow charts, hand-made family trees, presentations, audio-video embedding.
- **Timeline software:** create family-specific and historical timelines to highlight inconsistent events and absence of information.
 - For example, you might see an inconsistent order of birth, death, marriage.
- **Mind Map software:** show the relationship between people and events. Organize information for easier assessment.
- **Specialty:**
 - Proof (or not) of genealogical assertions.
 - Maps to see boundaries, movements of people, clusters of people.
 - Discrepancy charts to analyze and assess both information and the surety of sources.



General Graphing Software

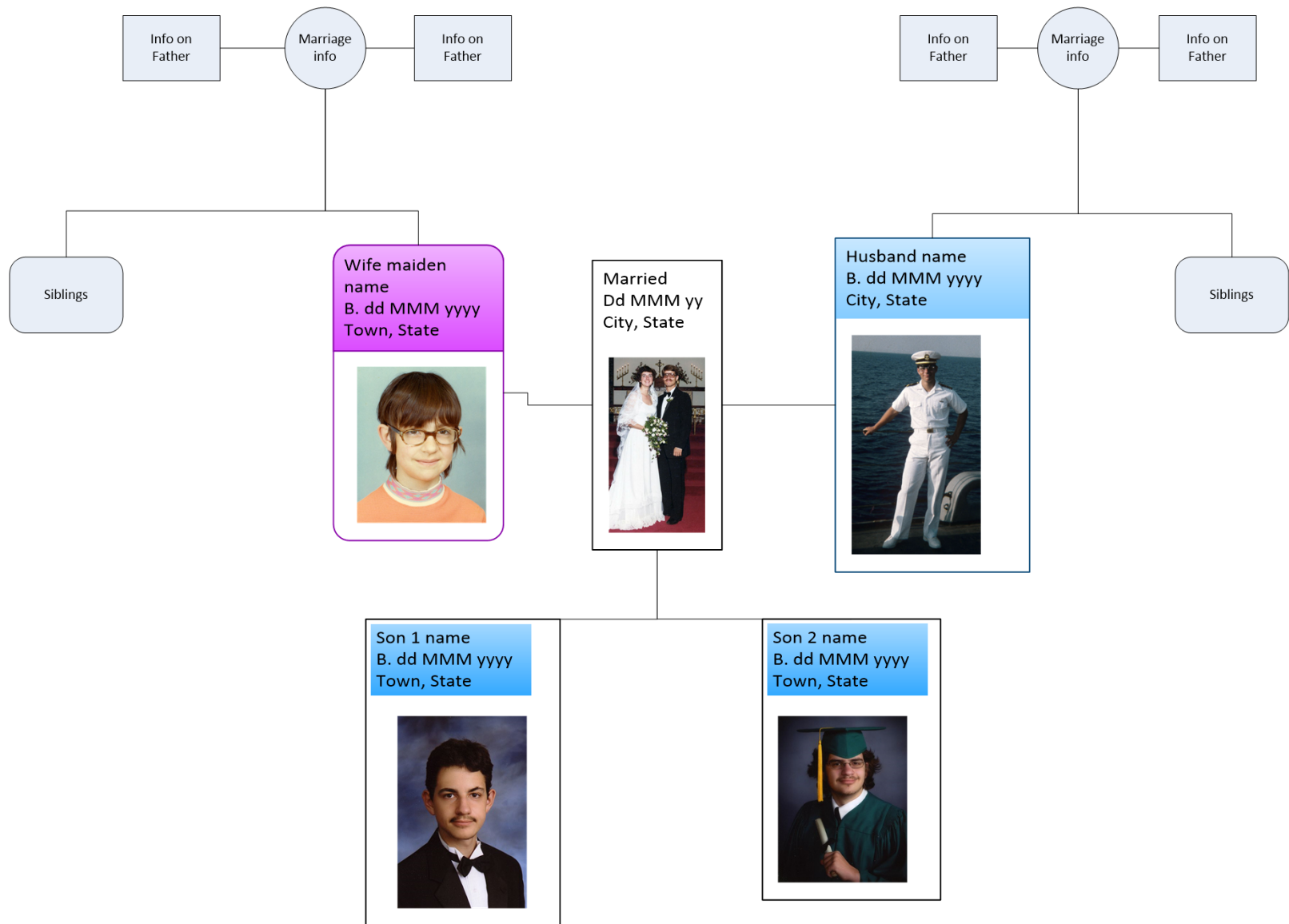
- **Visio**
 - <https://products.office.com/en-us/visio/flowchart-software>
 - PC
 - About \$300
- **Smart Draw**
 - <https://www.smartdraw.com/>
 - PC
 - About \$129
- **PowerPoint**
 - <https://products.office.com/en-us/powerpoint>
 - PC/MAC
 - About \$ 79 to \$149



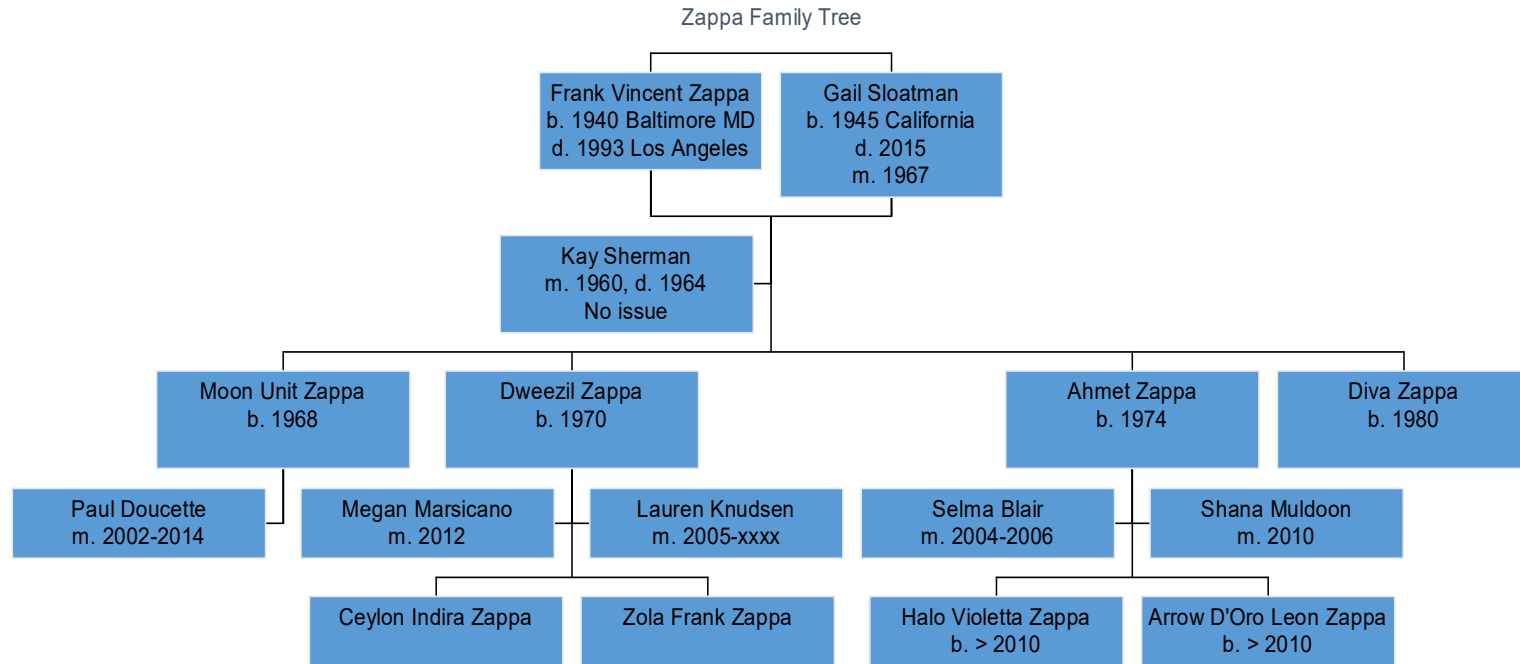
General Graphing Software

Software	Pros	Cons
MS Visio	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Has a wide variety of diagramming shapes.• Microsoft multi file and product.• Alignment tools, embedded hyperlinks.• Easy to use.• Plain and simple, it rocks!	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cost is high, but if its capabilities are needed, then you have value for money.
Smart Draw	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Has a wide variety of diagramming shapes.• Well organized and very easy to move data to other Microsoft Office applications.• Built-in Family Tree templates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cost is relatively high.• Not easy to use.
MS PowerPoint	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Easy hand-outs.• Supports audio, video, graphics and more.• Presents the material in a legible, neat fashion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cost, but frequently available on PC's.• Learning curve is moderate.• PowerPoint can't do it all.
MS Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No known uses for genealogy visualization, but useful to organize a research project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Date limited: MS Project cannot use dates before 1984.
MS Excel	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can handle statistical analysis of genealogical data.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• MS Excel cannot use dates before 1900.• Limited extra coding can help MS Excel work with earlier dates.

Visio: a hand-made family tree.



PowerPoint family tree using the Org Chart module.



Pro's

- Easy to put together a simple chart and collect info.
- Good to highlight a certain section of the family tree.

Con's

- Hard to show multiple marriages
- Limited fields to display information
- Can't easily show ancestors of prime persons.




Timeline Software

- **Genelines Universal Edition**
 - <https://progenygenealogy.com/products/timeline-charts.aspx>
 - PC
 - \$29.95

- **Timeline Maker Pro**
 - <https://www.timelinemaker.com/>
 - Free 14 day trial, then \$149.00

Timeline Software

Software	Pros	Cons
<p>Genelines Universal Edition</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses timeline charts to perfect your genealogy research. • Print charts of any size, including wall charts. • Publish to PDF and share timeline charts. • Comes with a library of timeline files. • Create customized historical events and timelines. • "Text View" report lists, in chronological order, all the events, dates, notes, etc. for the people in a chart. • Estimates and visually highlights unknown dates where more research is needed. • Supports the display of multiple family lines on one chart for easy correction of duplicate names from cousin marriages. • Genelines Universal supports GEDCOM, and so can create timeline charts for any genealogy database. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Family Tree Maker™ versions 2007 and earlier (2008 and later use GEDCOM). ○ Personal Ancestral File™. ○ Legacy Family Tree. ○ Ancestral Quest™. ○ Ancestry Family Tree®. ○ Others ... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Editing Historical Events is difficult. • Cannot select date range for reports. • Cannot manually enter events and dates.



Timeline Software

Software	Pros	Cons
Timeline Maker	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Raw entry of data, and being able to handle years without entering day and month. This is particularly good for genealogy, where many dates are unknown, but need to be estimated.• Being able to move events up and down on the bar chart, so as to group genealogy events like parents and children.• On the bar chart, absolute lock of bar start/ end to the dates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Items on the Event List cannot be rearranged by drag-and-drop.• Some column comments can be shown on the bar chart.• Lacking a lot of features.

Draw a timeline

- Show EVERY documented event. Add in family events, such as marriages/ births/ deaths.
- Include historical events that might provide clues.
- Flesh out the timeline with source information, such as what was recorded on the census (including family details).
- Timelines can be drawn on paper, lifted from many genealogy programs, created in dedicated software, and fashioned from unexpected software like MS Project and Excel.

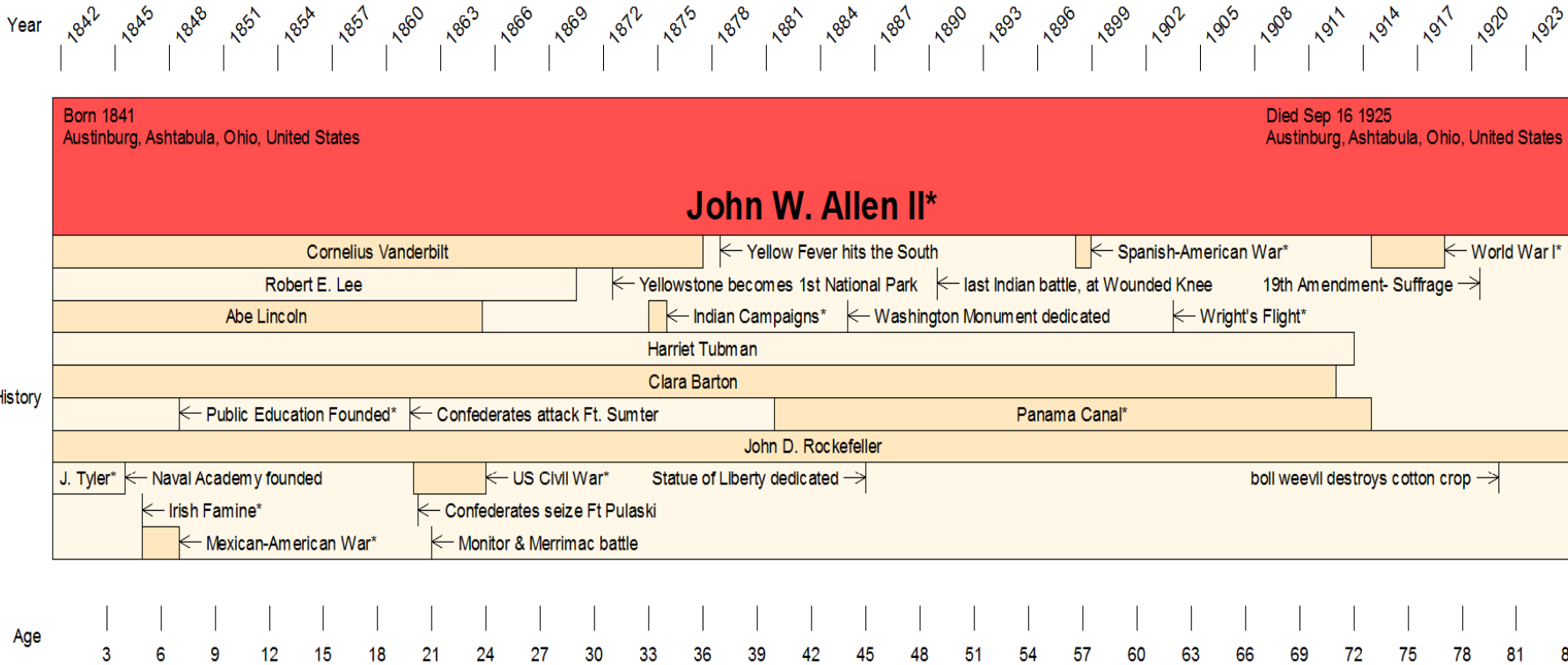


Use the timeline ... it helps in these ways

- Lets you see what you've already done, and what still needs to be done.
- Keeps you organized when working on multiple lines or generations.
- Might highlight connections, e.g., a boarder in one census that is a sister-in-law in the next.
- Distinguishes between people with same name, age or birthplace.
- Lets you see trends and inconsistencies across census records.



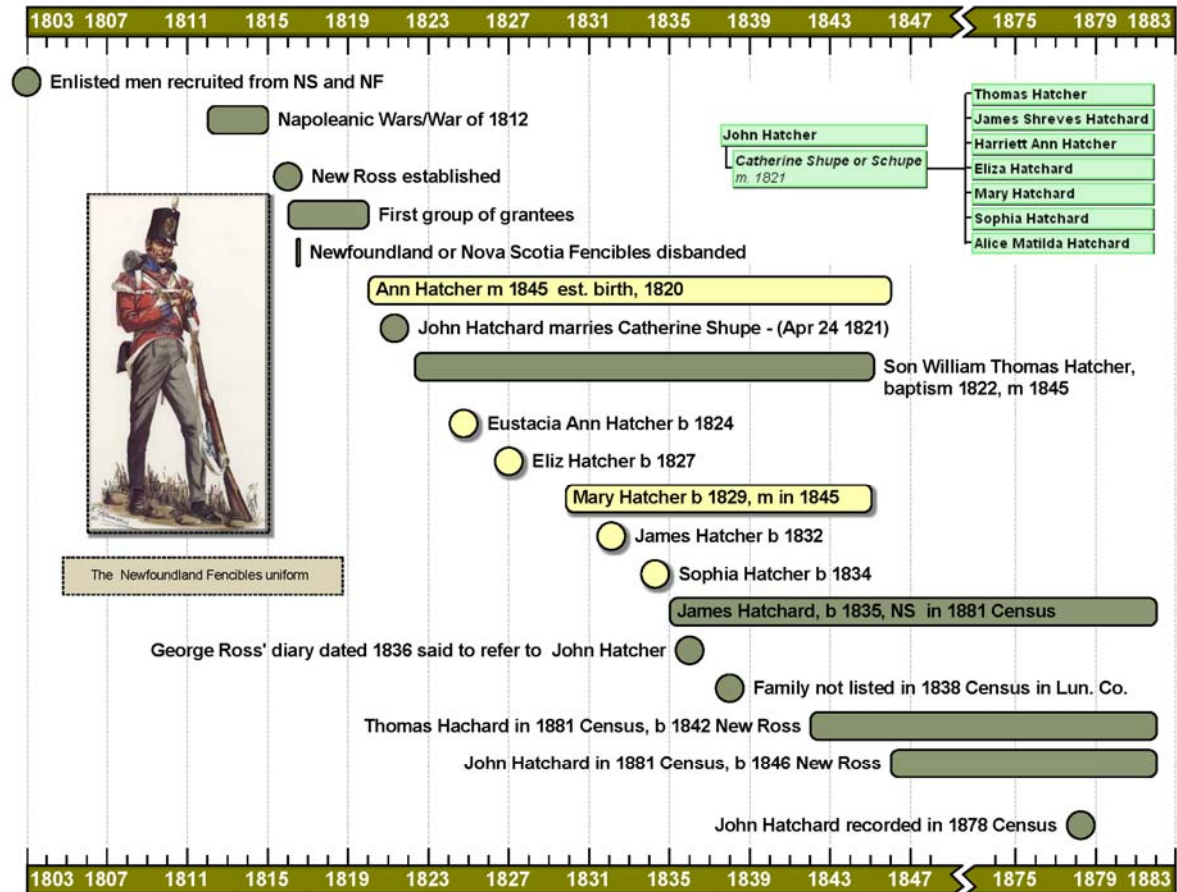
Genelines Universal Edition



Biographical Chart for John W. Allen II (1841-1925)
Created with Genelines™ on Nov 17 2016

John Hatcher - Where did he come from?

Example using Timeline Maker Pro



The Newfoundland Fencibles uniform

Because Hatcher was part of the first group of grantees, he is most likely a soldier from the Newfoundland or Nova Scotia Fencibles, disbanded in Halifax in June and July 1816.

Aug 2005: C. Elliott reports: He received lot K-40 in the Forties. I understand that the fortieth lots are now the actual village of the Forties. The recorded of him receiving 13000 acres was a red herring - all grantees were recorded that way. His lot was 100 acres. The entire grant, given out by Captain Ross was 13000 acres total. This grant was the first of two grants awarded to disbanded soldiers and a few others after the Napoleonic Wars/War of 1812 (-1814).

Raymond Saunders reports the 1878 Cenus finding.


Unassigned Child of John and Catherine

Mind Map Software

- **Mind Manager**
 - <https://www.mindjet.com/home/>
 - PC/MAC
 - \$349
- **Mind Mup**
 - <https://www.mindmup.com/>
 - Online
 - Free
- **Freemind**
 - http://freemind.sourceforge.net/wiki/index.php/Main_Page
 - PC/MAC
 - Free
- **Bubble.us**
 - <https://bubbl.us/>
 - Online
 - Free



Mind Map Software

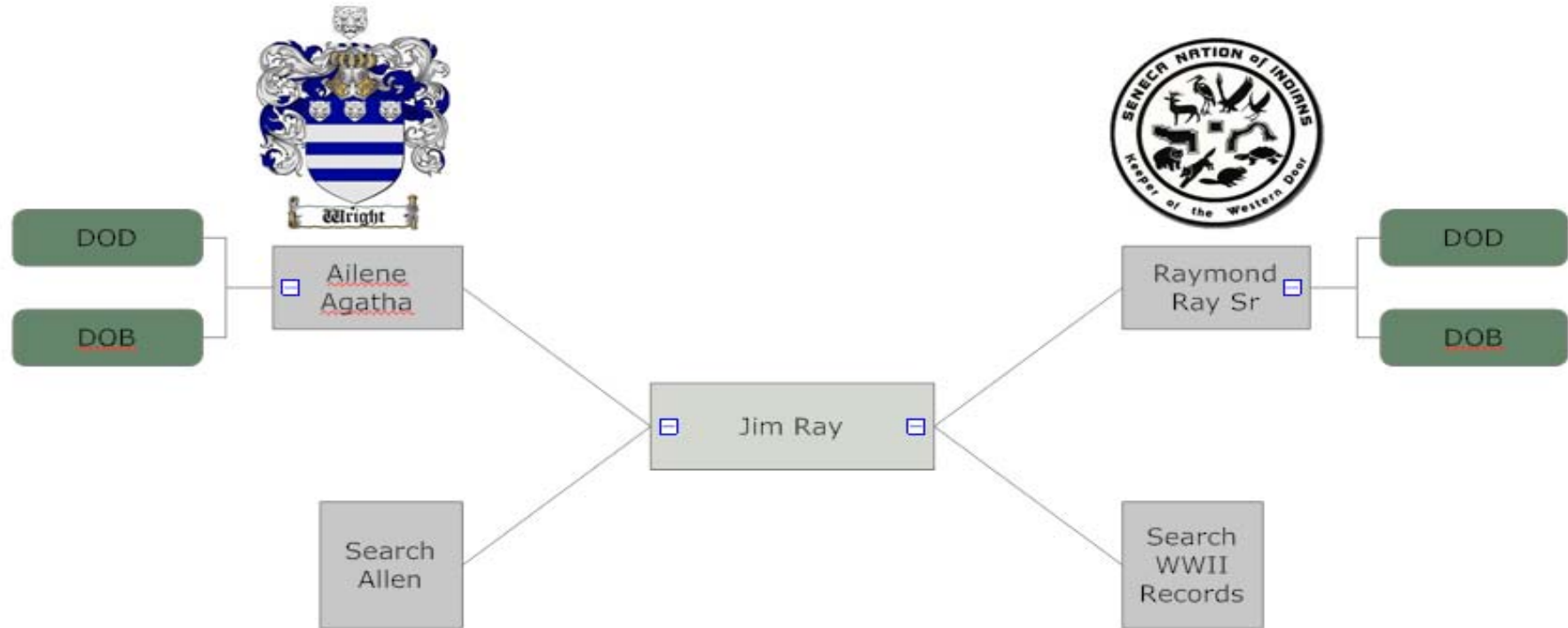
Software	Pros	Cons
Mind Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Everything you needed to produce quality mind charts.• Fantastic for brain storming.• Easy to use.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cost- \$349.00
Mind Mup 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Has a wide variety of diagramming shapes.• Share and publish.• Easy to use.• Tightly integrated with Google Apps.• Works online.• Stores maps for six months.• Supports Color and Graphic imports.• Exports to Computer, Google Drive, PDF and more.• Attach files.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Small learning curve.
FreeMind	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Exports to several different formats.• Needs Java Runtime Environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does not support graphic files.• It's clumsy to use.
Bubble.us	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Easy.• Web-based with nothing to download.• Save your mind map as an image.• Share and collaborate with others.• One click presentation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No graphics feature.



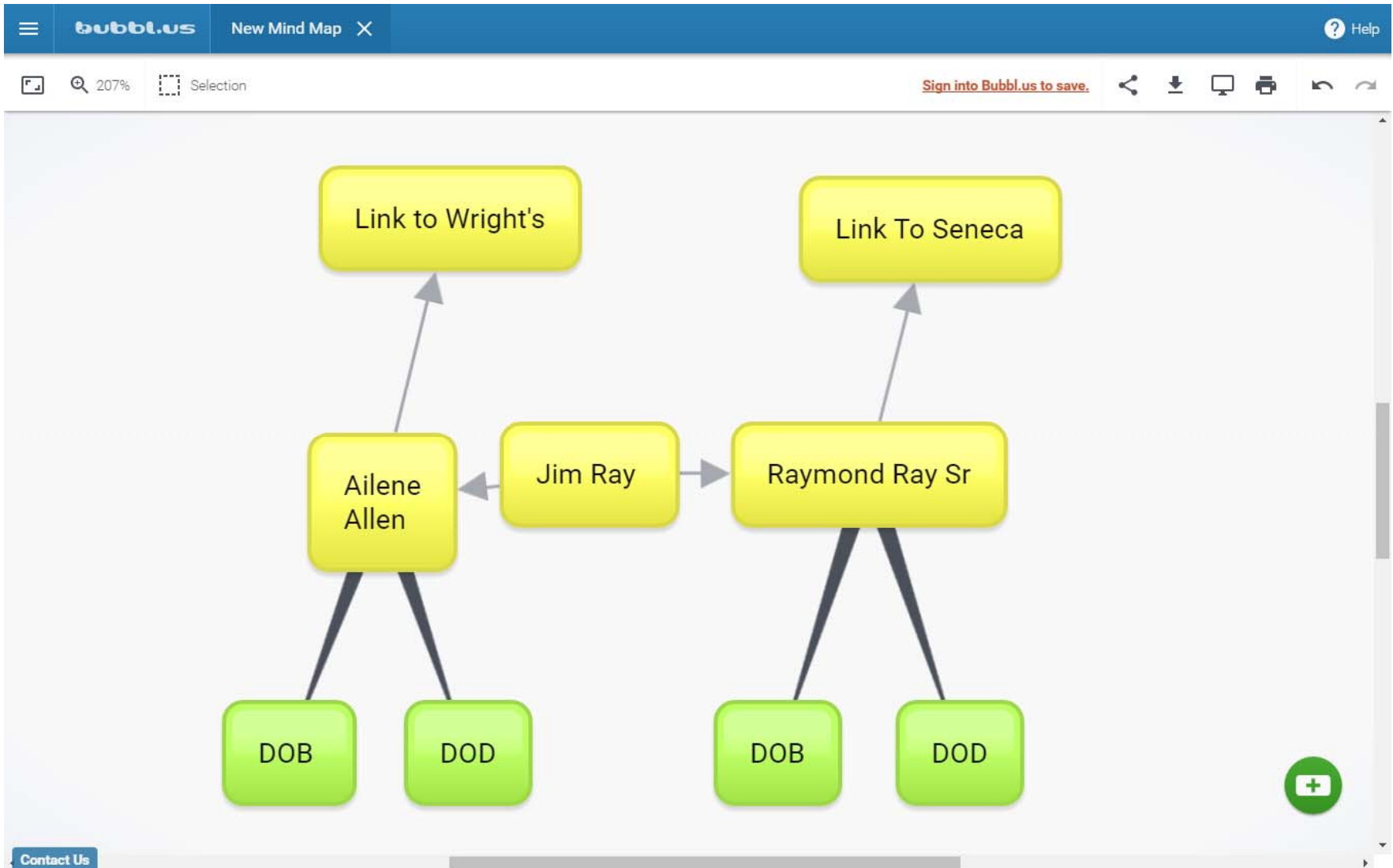
Use Mind Maps

- Use Mind Maps to visualize connections between family members.
- Organize information with comments and color choices.
- Embed pictures, links, screen captures, etc.

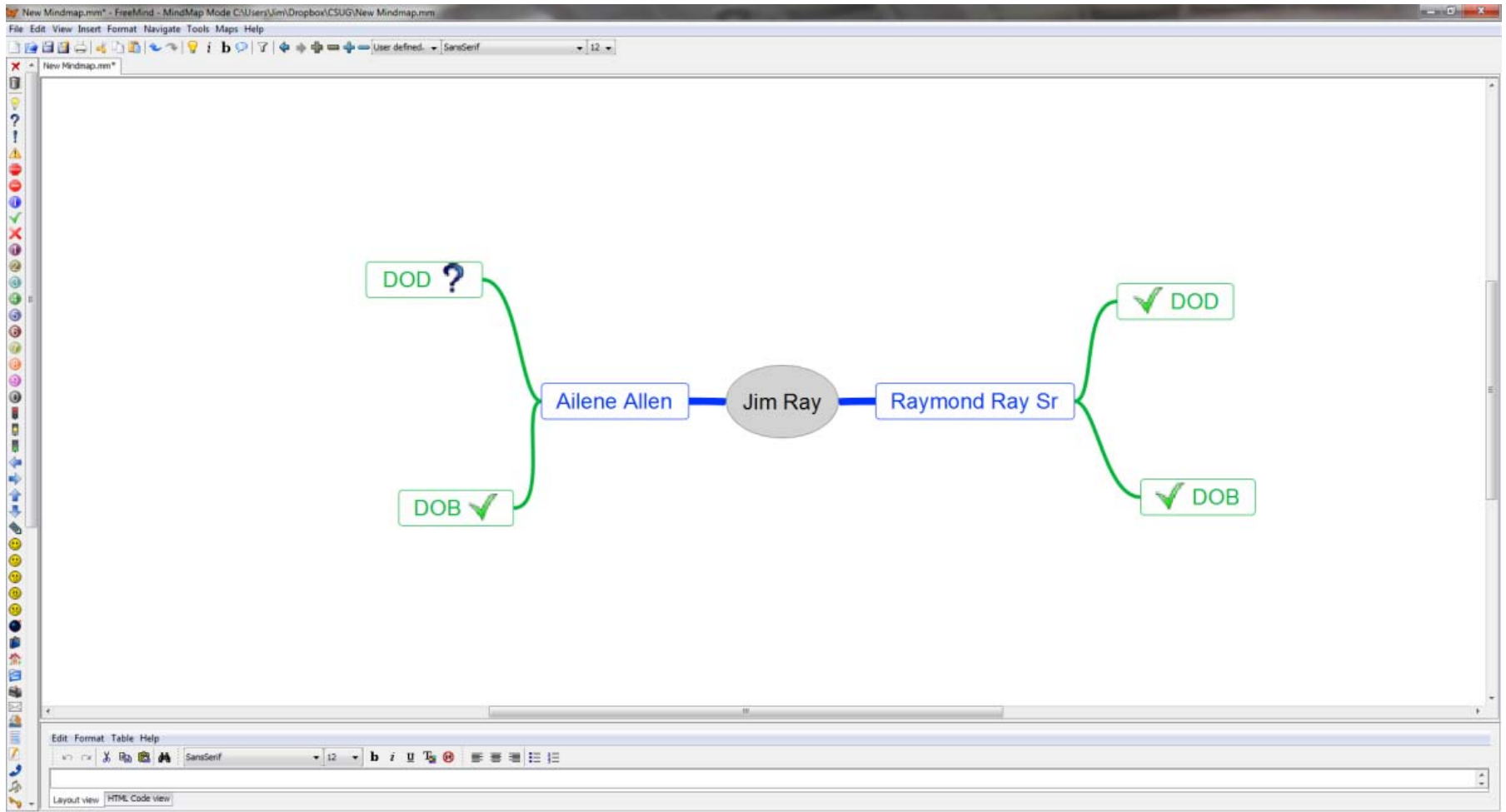
Smart Draw



Bubble.us



FreeMind



Mind Mup



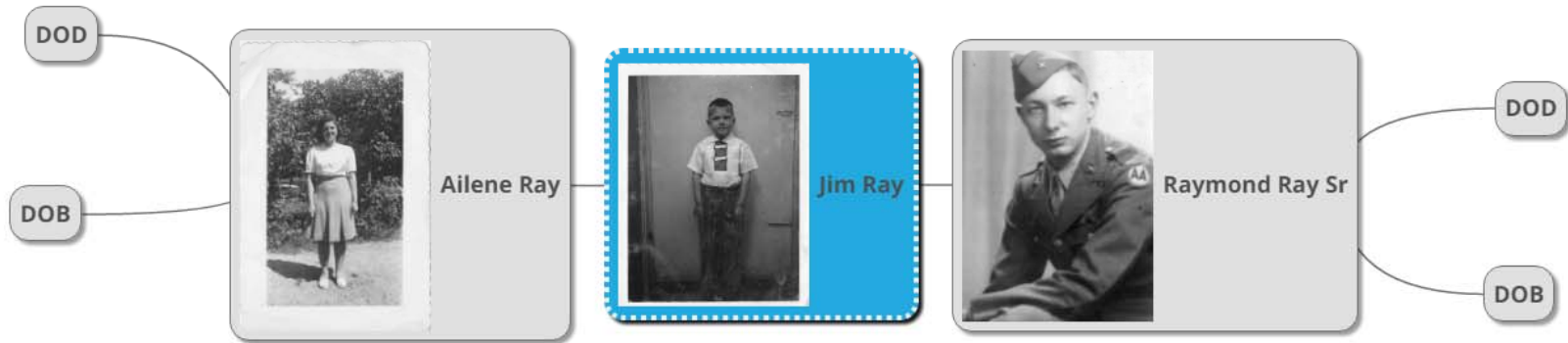
Jim Ray

File Insert Edit View Help All changes saved in Drive

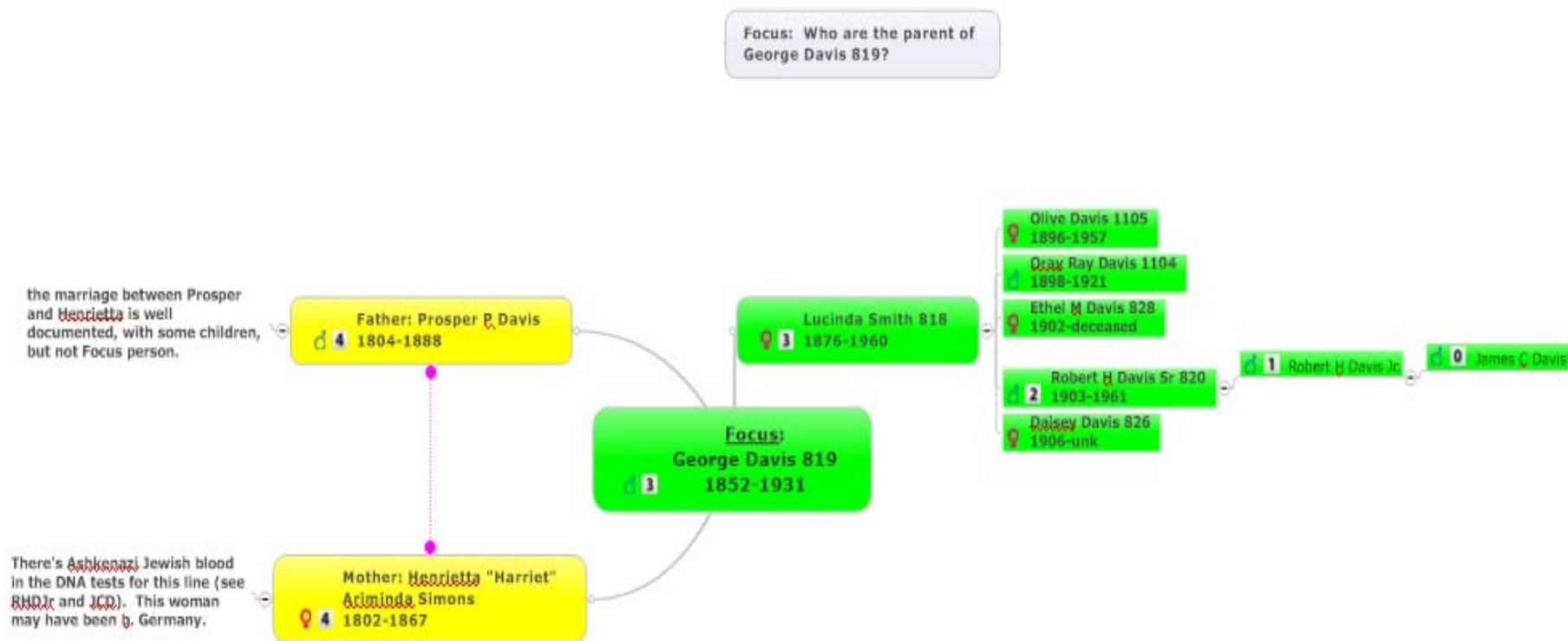
jray9242@gmail.com

PUBLISH

SHARE



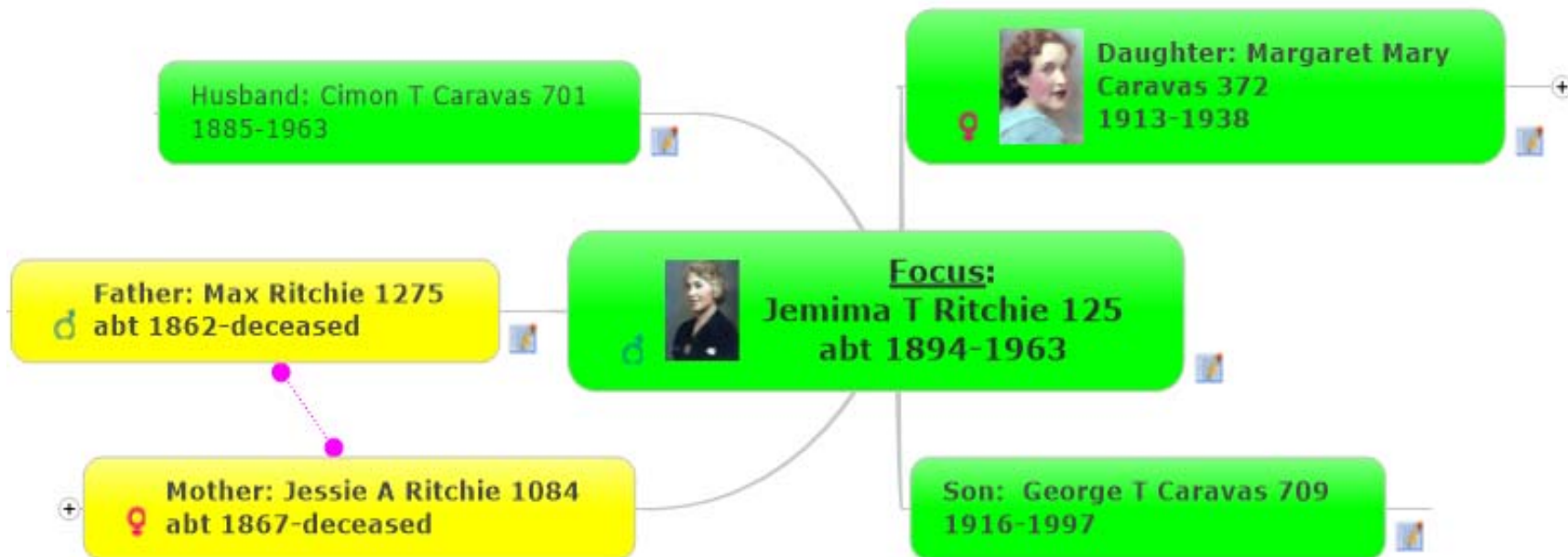
Examples of brick wall mind map: George Davis (Jim D's g-gpa)



Original mind map in file "Davis George 819.pdf"

Examples of brick wall mind map: Jemima Ritchie (Jim D's g-gma)

Focus: Who are the parent of Jemima T Ritchie 125?



A few more mind maps ...

- Brick wall suggestions in file “Brick Wall solutions.pdf.”
- Another great-grandmother, Lucinda Smith, solutions shown in file “Life details of Lucinda Smith 818.pdf.”




Specialty Software

Software	URL	Platform	Cost
Evidentia	http://evidentiasoftware.com	PC/MAC	14 day free trial, then \$29.99


Software	Pros	Cons
Evidentia	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attach each claim to as many people and events as needed• Classify your sources (original, derivative...) and information (primary, secondary...)• Easily extract multiple claims from one source.• Copy similar sources for fast entry.• Analyze evidence based on reliability in relation to other evidence.• Resolve conflicts and even reveal possible new directions for your research.• Easily generate coherent proof reports to show how you reached your conclusion.• Over 150 built-in citation templates based on Evidence Explained.• Create additional custom citation templates for quick entry.• Supports the Genealogical Proof Standard (GPS) by:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Requiring all claims to have a source.○ Fully analyze evidence before reaching a conclusion.○ Finally feel confident about your conclusions and know for sure when you've done a reasonably exhaustive search.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complexity.• Insistence on entering a lot of information and its rigor.• You have to buy into the model to use it well.

Evidentia 2.4.3 - evidentia



Give a Voice to Your Sources

- Document a Source
- Catalogue Claims
- Analyze Evidence
- Digital File Manager



- List Manager
- Reports
- Template Creator
- Age Calculator
- Help
- Options
- About Evidentia

Source List Filter

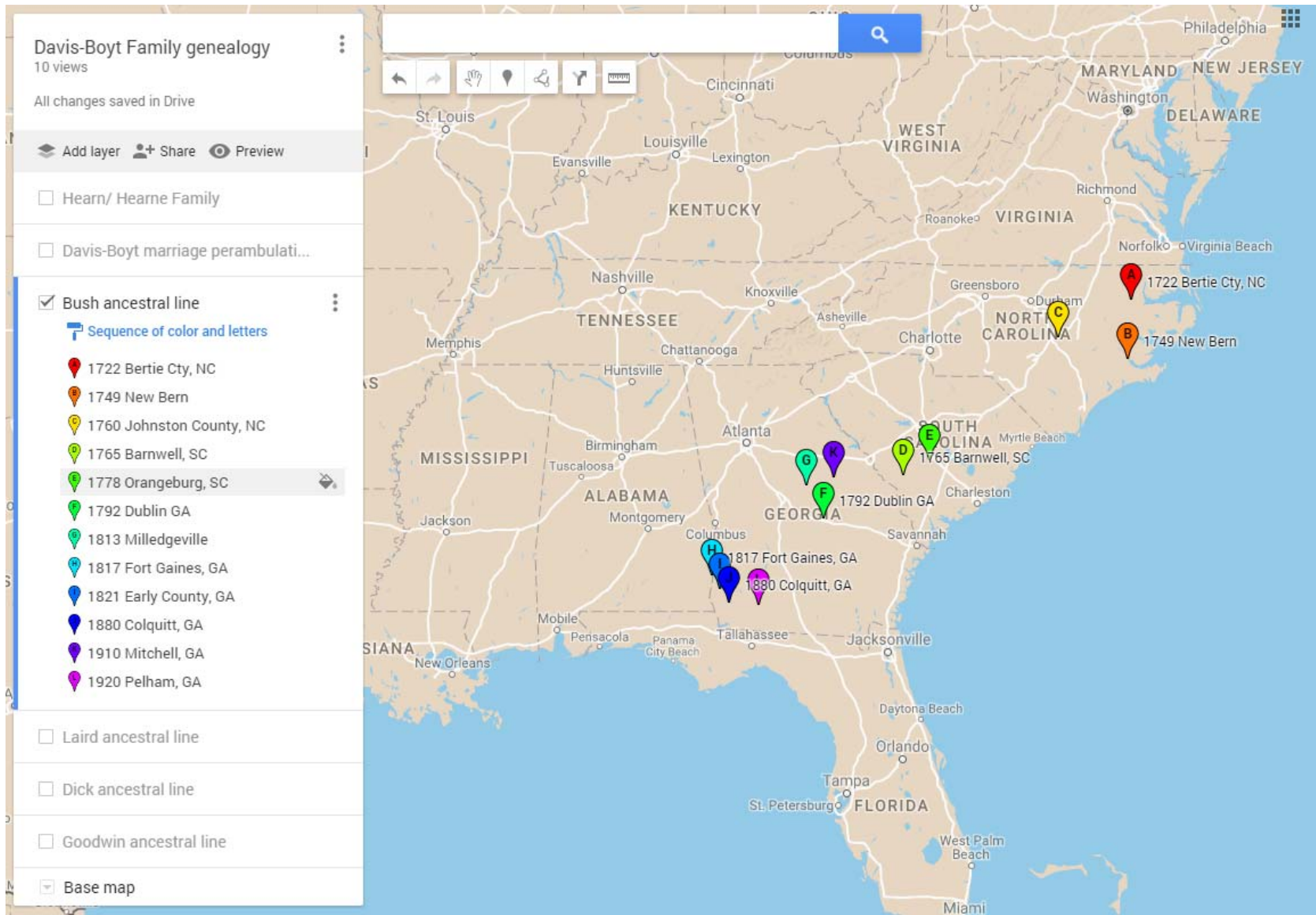
Birth Certificate - Ohio

Citation List Filter



Other ways to visualize information

Create a custom Google Map



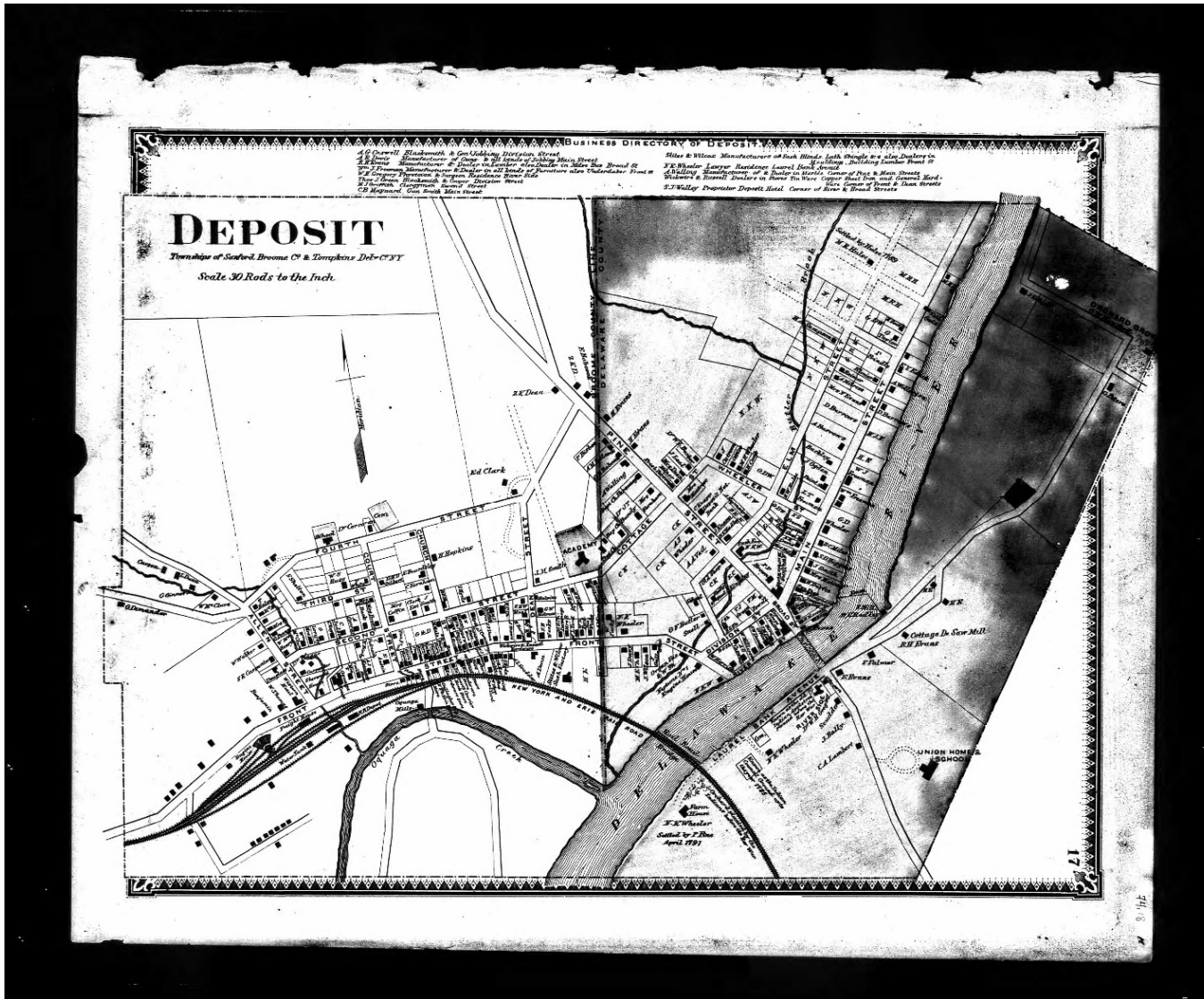
See How-To at <https://support.google.com/mymaps/answer/3024454?hl=en>.

Uses for custom Google Maps

- Show migration patterns or places an ancestor lived.
- List all the places you traveled on a particular family vacation.
- Show all the countries you've visited in the world.
- Zoom in on a small area and pinpoint all the addresses of family, friends and neighbors for the brick wall ancestor as a part of cluster research.
- Use layers to understand relationships. Satellite, terrain, political, etc.
- Focus on the blank spots.

Use old maps to locate important places

[Image file](#)



- Old maps help you visualize your family history, showing the places your ancestors lived and worked.
- They can be valuable for pinpointing your ancestral village, discovering county boundary changes or documenting country border shifts.
- They can show clusters of family and neighbors.

Organize the inconclusive with Discrepancy Charts

- List evidence in a table and use columns to comment on the evidence.
- Discrepancy charts help summarize the conflicts between different record sources and indicate the source for each conflicting piece of data. Using discrepancy charts will more easily allow you to weigh the evidence.
- Columns might include: Record, Item of interest (like birth date, place, age), Informant, Source quality (primary/ secondary), assessment.



Example Discrepancy Chart: birth date

Record	Birth Date	Birthplace	Age	Informant	Source Type
John TRAUTVETTER death certificate, 1937	Not given	Alexandria, Missouri	Not given		Secondary
Ida MILLER death certificate, 1939.	1 April 1874	Adams County, Illinois	65 years, 2 months, and 22 days	Hospital Records	Secondary
Ida's Obituary, 1939	1 April 1874	Warsaw, Hancock, Illinois	65 years		Secondary
Marriage to George TRAUTVETTER, 1898, Hancock County, Illinois	Ca. 1874/1875 (estimated from age)	Iowa	23 years	Probably Ida	Secondary
Marriage to William MILLER, 1936, Hancock County, Illinois	Ca. 1873/1874	Lima, Adams, Illinois	63 years	Probably Ida	Secondary
1880 Census, Hancock County, Illinois	Ca. 1873/1874 (estimated)	Iowa	6 years		Secondary
1900 Census, Hancock County, Illinois	April 1874	America	26 years		Secondary

Source: http://www.genealogy.com/articles/research/37_neill.html

Personal use of discrepancy chart, Jim D's Scots great-grandmother in file "Various persons named Jemima Ritchie.pdf."

Old photo albums may contain important information

- Great-grandmother left an old photo album annotated with nicknames, places, original photos of well-known homes, etc.
- Every bit helps round out the picture. In this case, the nickname “Molly” led to identification of other relatives in the album through elimination and association.



Annotations: Auntie is the key to Grandma



"Your aunt, me and
your mother in your
great Aunt's café in
Panama." MMC027



"Mamie is your
Grandma's sister"
MMC018

- The aunt owned a bar in Panama.
- Grandpa was a radioman in the Canal Zone.
- Grandma and Grandpa met and married in the CZ.
- Marriage license was signed by a friend of Grandpa , found later to be second husband of auntie.
- Second husband marriage license named the auntie, providing link to mystery great-Grandma.



Questions and Answers

Contact Information

Jim Ray – jray9242@gmail.com

Jim Davis - genealogy@creeksidefarm.org

DCH-GSUG - Durham Chapel Hill Genealogy Software Users Group
<https://gsug.creeksidefarm.org/>