

My name is Judy Russell. I'm a genealogist with a law degree, and my purpose here at *The Legal Genealogist* is, in part, to help folks understand the often arcane and even impenetrable legal concepts and terminology that are so very important to those of us studying family history. Without understanding the context in which events took place and records were created, we miss so much of both the significance and the flavor of what happened.

I hope you'll find your questions answered here, and invite you to send along any question you have that you'd like answered. There's a link at the top of every page ("Ask TLG").

My personal background is, well, eclectic. I have a bachelor's degree in journalism with a political science minor from George Washington University in Washington, D.C. and a law degree from Rutgers School of Law-Newark.

I've worked as a newspaper reporter, trade association writer, legal investigator, defense attorney, federal prosecutor, law editor and, for more than 20 years before my retirement in 2014, I was an adjunct member of the faculty at Rutgers Law School.

I'm a Colorado native with roots deep in the American south on my mother's side (from Virginia to Texas and just about everywhere in between!) and entirely in Germany on my father's side. It's an odd mix, finding records of my ancestors from 1680 Virginia on one side to being a first-generation American on the other.

I've spent the last decade learning my trade as a genealogist, and hold credentials as a Certified Genealogist® and Certified Genealogical LecturerSM from the Board for Certification of Genealogists® where I currently serve as a member of the Board of Trustees. I'm a member of the National Genealogical Society, the Association of Professional Genealogists, and, among others, the state genealogical societies of New Jersey, North Carolina, Virginia, Texas and Illinois.

I've attended the National Institute on Genealogical Research (predecessor to today's Genealogical Institute on Federal Records) at the National Archives in Washington, D.C., and completed Elizabeth Shown Mills' course in Advanced Methodology and Evidence Analysis and Thomas W. Jones' course in Writing and Publishing for Genealogists at the Institute of Genealogy & Historical Research (IGHR). I'm privileged now to serve on the faculty at IGHR, the Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy (SLIG), the Genealogical Research Institute of Pittsburgh (GRIP), the Midwest African American Genealogy Institute (MAAGI), and the Genealogical Institute on Federal Records (Gen-Fed).

I've written for publications including the *National Genealogical Society Quarterly* (see Judy G. Russell, "Don't Stop There!' Connecting Josias Baker to His Burke County, North Carolina, Parents," *National*

Genealogical Society Quarterly, March 2011, 25-41), the *National Genealogical Society Magazine* (see Judy G. Russell, "Autosomal DNA testing," *National Genealogical Society Magazine*, October-December 2011, 38-43, "Fifty years of credentialing," *National Genealogical Society Magazine*, January-March 2014, 15-19, and "Shootout at the Rhododendron Lodge: Reconstructing Life-Changing Events," *National Genealogical Society Magazine*, January-March 2015, 28-35), and BCG's *OnBoard* newsletter, among others.

I lecture on a wide variety of genealogical topics, ranging from using court records in our family history to understanding DNA testing. My current lecture list is in the Lecture link above, and I'd be happy to discuss new topics with any group interested in having me speak. Feel free to contact me about your particular needs.