

The Samuel Cook Dimick family moved from Lyme, Grafton County, New Hampshire to Wood County, Ohio in the 1870s, where several generations of Dimicks resided and their descendants still do today. Seeking to find why the family moved began a research journey that spanned several years, countless miles and many documents. This case study demonstrates aspects of the Genealogical Proof Standard and how having a focused research question is beneficial to your search.

The research process can be fluid and meandering taking the researcher through many different record sets, repositories and documents. This list shares many of the record types used to solve the question of why the Dimick family moved from New Hampshire to Ohio, and to create a detailed biography of Samuel Cook Dimick and his family.



Marshall Dimick Family photograph, ca. 1918; image copy held by author, original in private collection of Margaret (Dimick) Miller, [ADDRESS FOR PRIVATE USE,] Perrysburg, Ohio, 2010. From left: Marshall, Martha Mildred, Mary, Leland, Mae (in front of Leland), Ruth, Gerald and Martha. Used with permission.

Common Causes of Migration:

“Push/Pull,” when discussing migration refers to something in the homeland that “pushed” them out or something in the new land that “pulled” them in such as:

- Religious, race, or other persecution
- Religious freedom
- Famine, disease
- Plentiful food, wildlife, farming
- Political reasons
- Democracy, political freedom
- War, violence
- Promise of peace, safety
- Crowding, not enough land
- Abundant supply of land
- High costs of living; poverty
- Ability to sustain a living
- Constantly feeling “penned in” or downtrodden
- Adventurousome personality-type seeking new ventures and freedom

Five elements of the Genealogical Proof Standard (GPS)

1. Reasonably Exhaustive Search
 2. Source Citations
 3. Analysis and Correlation
 4. Resolution of Conflicts
 5. Written Conclusion
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The Research Question

Every effective research project begins with a focused research question. You can't find an answer if you don't know what the question is! Genealogical proof cannot be determined if there is not a well-defined research question. Questions must address a clearly identified individual (Samuel Cook Dimick, born in Lyme, New Hampshire in 1835) and ask a question about a relationship, identity or activity (why did he move to Wood County, Ohio). The full research question for this case study was:

Why did Samuel Cook Dimick, born in Lyme, Grafton County, New Hampshire in 1835, move to Wood County, Ohio?

A sample of records, websites and repositories used in this case study:

County Histories & Historical Books

Google Books - books.google.com

"Samuel C. Dimick" in *Commemorative, Historical and Biographical Record of Wood County, Ohio* (Chicago: J. H. Beers & Co, 1887), 1356.

Internet Archive - www.archive.org

FamilySearch Books - books.familysearch.org

Hathi Trust - www.hathitrust.org

Geography & Migration

David Rumsey Map Collection - www.davidrumsey.com

Map Guide to American Migration Routes, 1735-1815 by William Dollarhide

City Directories

Wood County District Public Library, Bowling Green, Ohio

Fold3 - www.fold3.com

Ancestry.com - www.ancestry.com

Land Records

Ohio County Courthouses - www.ohiocourtlinks.org

Family History Library - in person or by ordering films - www.familysearch.org

County Landowner Maps - Library of Congress - www.loc.gov/index.html

Census Records

Federal and special censuses (e.g. agricultural census) - Ancestry.com

Vital Records

Death Indexes - www.deathindexes.com
Wood County Courthouse - Probate Records - www.probate-court.co.wood.oh.us
Family History Library, catalog and online records - www.familysearch.org
Ohio Vital Records - www.odh.ohio.gov/vs
Ohio History Connection - ohiohistory.org
Newspapers & Obituaries
Chronicling America - chroniclingamerica.loc.gov
Ohio Memory - ohiomemory.org
Local Library Obituary Collections -
 Wood County District Public Library (Bowling Green, Ohio)
 Way Public Library (Perrysburg, Ohio)
Rutherford B. Hayes Presidential Center - www.rbhayes.org/hayes/
Cemetery & Tombstones
Find-A-Grave - www.findagrave.com
Local society indexing projects and publications -
 Wood County Chapter of the Ohio Genealogical Society
Other Favorite Repositories and Websites:
Google - www.google.com
Ohio GenWeb - www.ohgenweb.org
Ohio Genealogical Society - www.ogs.org
Center for Archival Collections - www.bgsu.edu/colleges/library/cac/
Ebay - www.ebay.com

Compilation and Writing

This case study utilized the 5 elements of the GPS to answer the research question:

- Thorough research - I examined every record I could think of that might answer the research question, whether it was online, in a repository or on a microfilm and any records those lead you to.
- Source citations - Use research logs and/or a system of note-taking that works for you.
- Analysis and correlation - Organize the information in a variety of ways so that you can analyze and correlate the data, such as timelines, tables, maps, charts, etc.
- Resolve conflicts - There were no real conflicts that needed to be resolved for this case.
- Written conclusion - Writing up the results not only brings all of the work together in a cohesive piece, but it can be shared with others either through publication or with family members.

Tips for compiling an effective and interesting biographical sketch for your ancestor:

1. Move from the known to the unknown, often this means working from present day and moving back in time. However, this can mean moving from a known place to an unknown place.
2. Plan the scope of the sketch and answer some basic questions about audience and structure. Will this be for publication in a journal? a book? shared only with family members? Will you use a numbering system in your sketch?
3. Determine if there are any themes that stand out in your ancestor's life that you could focus the sketch on. Perhaps the family migrated many times looking for a better life, or they were constantly struck by tragedies yet still managed to survive and thrive. Theme possibilities are endless.
4. Put your ancestor in historical and social context. We aren't just researching names and dates on paper. These were people, dealing with external issues such as politics, weather, confrontations, wars, economic issues, cultural and societal pressures, and more. Read books and articles pertaining to the appropriate time and place. Use this information to make your ancestors' stories come to life.
5. Create an outline that follows the story in a logical manner. This doesn't always follow chronological order. Sometimes this can be where creativity can happen.
6. ALWAYS CITE YOUR SOURCES! It doesn't matter if you are sharing this work for publications, on your blog, only with family members or just yourself. Always cite your sources.

Bibliography

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