

Mehitable Higginbotham - Doin' Liberry Searchin'

I know everybody out there is dyin' to know all about researchin' in a liberry – a genealogy liberry, that is. So pay attention.

Every time you set foot in that there genealogy room at Montgomery County Liberry, they stick that dumb register book under you nose, saying that proof of use of the Genealogy Room gets 'em more books. So, jest smile and sign in all them spaces.

For goodness sakes – take a ton of pencils – 'cause one time somebody done underlined their ancestors names in ink and done ruint a whole book. Take cheer – they got a 'lectric pencil sharpner.

Now , they have a “Head Honcho” who knows jest ever thang – but do you think you can waltz in there and tell her to get the book down and show you your ancestors? WRONG! Or to work up your family tree? WRONG! Like as not she'll begin to explain all 'bout the genealogy room and where you can commerce to put your ancestor tree together yourself.

Invariably, she'll ask “Who of your ancestors was alive in 1880? Something 'bout 'til now that the latest census records available. Lordee, if'n I knowed that I wouldn't be at the liberry to find out! I think it's a game they play to jest get you to come in ever day and sign your name in that dumb register.

Now that you come to the understandin' that you do the job YOURSELF, you commence to find out about microfilms and “readers.” That “reader” is YOU – that is, if'n you got four pairs eyes, a lot of imagination and the patience of JOB. 'Cause them census-takers didn't know boo about spellin'. It seems the feller who could rite got the census-takers job – didn't make no never mind if'n he knowed how to spel.

And then, there's all them forms. A nickel notebook you carry 'round in your purse to jot down your grocer list won't cut the mustard. They got forms for everthang. Claims it makes “proving out” easier. Whatever that is. But they don't offer a course in Form-fillin'-Out.

Now the last thang you need to work at the Montgomery County Libeery on your family tree is nerves – nerves of steel – cause you jest never know when somebody is gonna find their relates and the “yells” that rent the air is plumb starling! I ain't never found no body yet, but I been practicing a home so If I ever do, I can yell real good.

T'other day when I took my youngun into the that there Children's Dept. of the Liberry, they done tole me that they ain't gonna do no more babysittin' whilst I do my researchin', so don't none of you way yore little kids down there thinkin' you done got a built-in babysitter, ' cause you ain't.s