THE DENBOW DIASPORA

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Digital Preservation for Genealogists

By Dick Eastman

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Editor's Note: This article is very relevant to this issue of the *The Denbow Diaspora*, which has been delayed because of two successive crashes of my genealogical computer (also same machine as my ham shack computer) that required two clean installs of the OS (Win8-64). I had all my data in the documents folder backed up via CrashPlan online backup service and was able to restore it without too much hassle. I did forget that a few data files (e.g., a log made by a ham radio program for a mode called JT65-HF) were not backed up to the online service; therefore, I lost about two months worth of contact information for that digital mode and a few other items. Also, I've been placing a lot of my data on Dropbox over the last several months, though I haven't gone "whole hog" yet and used it to replace my entire documents folder, as has the author of this article. It was a real hassle to reinstall all of my programs, so in keeping with the LOCKSS principle, as described by Mr. Eastman, I'm now also regularly imaging my entire hard drive to an external drive via a program called Casper, which I had in the past used with great success at my office.

One of the more common arguments against saving things digitally is, "The required equipment to read it probably won't be available in 25 years." Perhaps the time is 50 years or 100 years, but I hear similar comments frequently. Indeed, there is some truth to that argument. Still, there is a simple solution.

Recent experience has proven that paper is not a good preservation mechanism, and microfilm isn't much better. The news reports frequently mention earthquakes, tsunamis, hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, building collapses, fires, and other disasters that have destroyed thousands of paper and microfilm documents within seconds. While not mentioned as often in the national news, burst water pipes will do the same.

For the past fifty years or so, microfilm was the storage mechanism of choice because it took up so little space, compared to paper. However, it is almost as fragile as paper. Microfilm is only slightly more impervious to earthquakes, tsunamis, hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, fires, and burst water pipes. To be sure, water-soaked microfilm probably can be washed and then dried for preservation purposes, but the other disasters will destroy microfilm as quickly as paper or anything else.

Digital archiving has its own set of problems and solutions. Disk drives crash, home computers occasionally erase data, huge data centers are occasionally destroyed in major disasters, and sometimes files simply grow obsolete by a change in technical standards. The biggest cause of computer data loss is the "oops factor:" the accidental loss of files. Any single copy of any digital file is almost guaranteed to be unavailable within a few years.

For confirmation of the problem with digital preservation, look at a report by Bill LeFurgy that was published in The Signal, a newsletter about digit preservation published by the Library of Congress at http://goo.gl/h2rcC. LeFurgy describes a survey of citizen reactions to the Kennedy assassination that was conducted from November 26 through December 3, 1963, by the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) at the University of Chicago. The survey results were recorded on paper punch cards, which were used to input data into the mainframe computer used to tabulate study data. Summary results were then published.

When another national catastrophe struck on September 11, 2001, NORC researchers wanted to replicate the 1963 study by asking the same kinds of questions to assess public reaction. The aim was to compare how the nation responded to two very different tragedies. There was but one problem: how to read the punched cards from the 1963 study? The 38-year-old stacks of 80-column punch cards were still available, but finding card readers to read that

information was a problem. Eventually, a vendor was found who could read them and convert them to more modern media. The vendor reported that they "had to refurb our punched card equipment; it had been sitting around so long it got a little rusty." In the end, all worked well and the data set was successfully migrated to a modern data format. The story has a happy ending.

If the need to read the 80-column punch cards had not occurred for another ten years or so, the ending might have been less happy.

This raises a question or two about your genealogy data. How are you saving it for future generations? Will today's storage media become as obsolete as punch cards? Should you save the information to a different form of media? If so, which kind of media?

Many people claim they will "save everything on paper to make sure it is still readable." Actually, that statement ignores several factors. Today's information published on paper will deteriorate rapidly due to several factors.

Most of the paper used today is acid-based and will deteriorate within a few years, unlike the paper of 75 or 100 years ago. Yes, you can buy acid-free paper; but have you ever purchased any? Not many people do.

Even worse is the ink and toner that is used to create most of today's documents. The output from your inkjet or laser printer may look great when first printed; but will it last for a few decades? Most of today's toner and inks will begin to fade within a few years. I have a filing cabinet full of photocopies made from genealogy books. Some of those copies are now 35 years old and have faded so much they are almost unreadable. (Most photocopiers use the same printing technology as laser printers: the "ink" is actually toner particles.)

Paper is also delicate. It must be kept under tight temperature and humidity controls if it is to last for a century or two. It can easily be destroyed by fire, flood, earthquakes, and burst water pipes. Paper is also susceptible to damage by moisture, rodents and insects. Just ask any archivist in a tropical country. Paper also consumes a lot of space. That's expensive space if it is temperature and humidity controlled.

Microfilm isn't much better. New microfilm cameras are now almost impossible to find, and the manufacturers of microfilm already have warned their customers that new, unexposed microfilm will probably become unavailable within the next few years. Once that happens, nobody will be making new microfilms or even copies of existing microfilms. Similarly, microfilm readers are sure to follow the same path to obsolescence.

Various digital media are available, each with its own strengths and shortcomings. Even the so-called DiamonDiscs or Stone Disks (see http://goo.gl/7vMBq) are DVD disks that should last one thousand years, but nobody is predicting that equipment to read them will be available even twenty or thirty years from now.

So, what is the answer? I think there is a simple, but effective answer. However, it does have one major drawback: it requires people.

For years, genealogists have always assumed that archival preservation meant to create information in some manner, then place the archival copy on a shelf and then rarely touch it again. This usually involves storage under rigidly-controlled temperature and humidity conditions. This "store it but rarely touch it" philosophy has worked moderately well for paper and for microfilms, but it is a poor method of storing digitized information.

In fact, the "store it but never touch it" process poorly protects against major disasters, regardless of storage media. Many government records offices, libraries, and other places where information has carefully been stored have lost records due to fire, flood, earthquake, hurricanes, and other disasters. Have you read about the loss of important military personnel records in the 1973 fire at the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis? If not, you can read the report written by the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, available at http://www.archives.gov/st-louis/military-personnel/fire-1973.html.

The records that were lost were not only an inconvenience for genealogists, but it was a major loss for many of the people whose records were destroyed. The records included critical information needed for pension applications, insurance documents, medical histories, and more. These records were lost in a single event because (1.) they existed only on paper and (2.) only one copy of each record existed.

In fact, having only a single copy of any record automatically puts that record at high risk. That's true for digital records as well as for paper records. The one difference is that digital records are easily duplicated and stored in multiple locations for safety, something that is difficult and expensive for paper records.

Digital data is easily stored. It requires very little physical space to store the equivalents of thousands of books. Temperature and humidity concerns are also reduced: if the room is comfortable for human habitation, it should also be good for computer equipment and storage media. In short, storing things digitally is much easier and cheaper than doing the same thing with paper or microfilm.

The primary problem is the choice of storage media. Professional archivists and data processing experts solved this problem years ago: they frequently copy archived data to new storage media as the technology changes. Unlike paper, you cannot leave digital archives on the shelf and forget about them. Digital archives require care and updating. New copies need to be made as new media appears. Luckily, this is easy to do if someone cares.

Let's take another example of 80-column punch cards. The difference is that this "problem" had an easier solution. Most U.S. genealogists are familiar with the Social Security Administrations Master Death File, often called the Social Security Death Index, or SSDI. This list of deceased Americans was begun in the early 1960s when all information was recorded on 80-column punch cards. Yes, the same storage media as that used by the National Opinion Research Center's survey mentioned earlier. However, genealogists, funeral directors, statisticians, and others still access the data today. How is that possible? Do all these people have card readers that will read those old-fashioned 80-column punched cards? Of course not.

Any person who works in a data center that preserves older information knows that all such information needs to be copied to newer media periodically. Indeed, the information professionals at the Social Security Administration have always done that. The 80-column punch cards of years ago were later copied to tape while both tape and card equipment were plentiful. Still later, the information was copied from tape to disk. Over and over, the information was periodically copied to newer and more modern disks and, in the future, will hopefully be copied to whatever storage media makes sense at that time. In theory, digital data can be preserved for centuries, far longer than anything stored on paper, punch cards, or even microfilm.

The weak spot is the word, "hopefully." All of this does not happen automatically; human beings have to occasionally make decisions and then create copies.

Of course, none of these information professionals/digital archivists put all of their eggs in one basket. They did not depend upon a single copy at any one time. After all, digital media is also susceptible to fire, floods, earthquakes, and similar disasters, the same as paper. Instead, the professionals made multiple copies of the information and stored those copies in different locations. That was difficult and expensive in the days of punch cards, a bit easier and a bit cheaper in the days of magnetic tapes, and still easier in the days of disk drives. With today's high-speed communications networks and low-cost disk storage, copying data and storing it elsewhere has become almost trivial.

Making lots of copies and storing them in multiple locations almost eliminates the possibility of any one disaster destroying all copies of any particular data.

THE DENBOW DIASPORA

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This newsletter is published quarterly, for the most part, by the co-editors, who are proud to claim that it is the only newsletter in the world "For Denbows by Denbows."

In recent years, dozens of articles have appeared in this newsletter and in all sorts of other genealogy publications claiming to tell how to preserve documents, family photographs, and other information. I don't think that any of the articles are "wrong," but it strikes me that very few of them have ever described the most effective storage method of all.

Many authors, myself included, have written tens of thousands of words about the advantages and disadvantages of storing on paper versus microfilm versus digital images. We have described the technical ins and outs of PDF files in comparison to DOC, TXT, JPG, GIF, PNG, TIFF, and the entire alphabet soup of file formats. We have described the advantages of acid-free paper in excruciating detail. We have talked about the chemical consistency of ink versus toner. Yet, most of us have overlooked the most obvious solution: L.O.C.K.S.S.

I'll even write it without all the periods: LOCKSS, an acronym for "Lots Of Copies Keep Stuff Safe." This has been a buzzword in the computer industry for quite some time now, but it's an expression that I don't hear much in the genealogy community. I'm hoping that will change.

The arguments about which is better—paper, or microfilm, or digital files—strike me as a waste of time. The obvious answer (to me) is, "all of the above."

Who cares if microfilm will last longer than digital files or vice versa? The wise genealogist/archivist saves documents on BOTH. In fact, he or she also preserves on paper and even on clay tablets, if appropriate. Okay, clay tablets may not be practical, but I am trying to make a point: let's not ignore any possibility. Let's look at all the

available solutions and then use all of them that make sense. Let's not settle on any single solution. Instead, we can use ALL of the solutions that make sense.

The solution is simple! I know of no requirement that says we must preserve information on only one medium. We, the genealogists, are free to store paper AND microfilm AND digital images AND any other method that may be invented in the future. In fact, I would suggest that storing a SINGLE copy of anything is a disservice to future genealogists and historians. We need to make multiple copies of every piece of paper, every microfilm, and every digital file and then store those copies in as many different locations as possible. Even better, the employees of any well-managed archive will periodically check the materials stored to see if each is still readable and if it should also be copied to some more modern technology that has appeared since the original was created.

If any single copy is unreadable or damaged or lost, it can be easily be replaced by making a copy of one of the versions stored elsewhere. In most cases, the new copy is made by transferring the data over a high-speed network connection. The time required? A few minutes. The cost? Much, much less than making paper copies.

Neither are we required to make only a single copy and then to put it on a shelf for long-term storage. Unless covered under copyright, we are free to make all sorts of copies, something that is easy and cheap today. Even better, we can store those copies in all sorts of locations: in the closet, in the basement, at a cousin's house, or in data centers in Rio de Janeiro, Capetown, and Mumbai. In fact, we can store any document in seven or more different data centers that are in seven or more different locations around the globe. What are the odds that ALL the copies will be destroyed? And the price for all this? Peanuts.

We are not limited to the storage of documents. While we perhaps cannot clone physical items, we can take pictures of those items and store those pictures in case of disaster. Perhaps you have a musket that great-great-grandpa carried in the war or maybe a wooden chest that great-great-grandma carried with her in the covered wagon across the plains. Antiques don't have to be all that old. There is reason to preserve pictures of the medals your father was awarded in the more recent war or even your children's report cards. You should save pictures of these valuable family mementos in multiple places. Again, I am talking about LOCKSS, the acronym for "Lots Of Copies Keep Stuff Safe."

By greatly increasing the number of copies available, we greatly increase the odds that at least one copy will survive. An earthquake in Japan? A Tsunami in Hawaii? A hurricane and flood in New Orleans? A building collapse in Cologne? A data center fire in Salt Lake City? Those are horrible human disasters, but all of these are trivial problems for stored records—if, and only if, multiple copies of everything of value have previously been created AND STORED IN DIFFERENT PLACES.

It is easy to think about such solutions when discussing major archives with millions of documents. However, the same process will work for you, the individual genealogist. Take a look at the family photographs and the documents in your possession. Make copies on paper, and give those copies to your nieces and nephews or to your cousins. You can even give copies to the relatives who are not interested in "all that old stuff." Some of them probably will throw them away, but others will place whatever you give them in a closet and keep the documents for future generations who may ask.

The same is true for digital copies. In fact, digital copies are easier to duplicate and store than are paper or microfilm copies. Scan the photos and the documents; then make backups to a local hard drive as well as to online cloud computing backup services. Save copies to CD or DVD disks or to flash drives. Store some at your office and give others to relatives. Not all those copies will survive, but some of them will, assuming you make enough copies. Of course, you need to re-copy those stored items to new media and new file formats every few years. Also, make sure your copies stored in "the cloud" are stored in a safe and secure manner that can only be accessed by you and by the people you designate, such as your heirs.

Ideally, you should make sure that someone knows how to retrieve your copies after you are gone. However, wouldn't it be easier to simply GIVE them copies while you are still alive? If your data vaporizes soon after your death, who cares? You have already taken steps to make sure the same information is already in the hands of multiple members of a younger generation.

Starting today, I plan to never write again in this newsletter about "Which storage medium is best?" My answer is, "Yes."

That is "yes," as in, "all of them." Don't store a single copy of anything and expect it to last. It makes no difference if that single copy is on paper or on microfilm or on a computer. A single copy of anything is at high risk, as has been proven by building collapses, fires, hurricanes, earthquakes, and the other calamities of recent years. Whether we are talking about a major archive of an entire nation or your family's photographs of Aunt Tilley as a child, we all need to realize there is but one form of insurance: have multiple copies on different kinds of media, all stored in multiple locations. In other words, LOCKSS. Lots Of Copies Keep Stuff Safe.

Note: I use LOCKSS as a generic term, meaning Lots of Copies Keep Stuff Safe. However, Stanford University Libraries also maintains a formal program with the same name and meaning. The Stanford LOCKSS program is an international community initiative that provides libraries with digital preservation tools and support so that they can easily and inexpensively collect and preserve their own copies of authorized e-content. You can read more about the Stanford LOCKSS program at http://www.lockss.org/.

Let's examine one more disaster. I have heard this story dozens of times, and I bet you have also. An unnamed genealogist spent thousands of hours researching a family tree and collected it, perhaps even published it. When the genealogist died, well-meaning but clueless relatives "cleaned out" his or her belongings and threw all the genealogy information and perhaps old family photographs into a nearby dumpster.

My suggestion: preserve information by doing all of the above. Make multiple copies, store them in multiple locations, and then find someone who is interested in preserving this information and give him or her a copy. Ideally, this "interested person" should be a family member who shares your interests. That isn't always possible, so you may have to look for a local genealogy society or a library or an interested friend. The main thing is to find SOMEONE who cares. If one copy of your data is stored online, make sure that an interested person will be able to access that data for some time after your demise and then be able to make copies for use by future family members. Even better, give copies of your information BEFORE you become deceased.

In short, preserving data for centuries is possible by using a combination of technologies and by some advance planning. Isn't that worthwhile to preserve the results of all the hours you spent gathering that information?

Your input is need to keep this newsletter-going strong . . . Do your part today!

Tell us what you know about your Denbow ancestors. This is your newsletter, and we need your input to place the whole family history in perspective. We are looking for lead articles for upcoming issues as well as queries and letters to the editor.

Please consider writing down your own family history so that it, too, can become part of the permanent record of our common Denbow heritage. Each issue of this newsletter goes to several genealogical repositories, so what you write here will be available for future generations. Also, issues are online for easy access at the newly redesigned, denbow.org.

Scouring English documents for hints about John Denboe, indentured servant, Maryland immigrant; progenitor of most North American Denbo(w)s

By Nathan Murphy

As you know, Denbow is strictly a Southwestern English surname. During the seventeenth century, it was most commonly found in Cornwall and Devon. I conducted a survey of sources that cover these areas, as well as adjacent counties Dorset and Somerset, during this time to pinpoint where Denbow families resided at the time your ancestor left for Maryland. Here are my findings.

Seventeenth-Century Census Substitutes In 1641/2 just prior to the outbreak of the English Civil War, King Charles I required all males age 18 and above to sign a "protestation oath" stating that they supported the King. Many Denbows signed in Cornwall and Devon. These men would have been the right age to have been the father to John Denbow of Maryland:

CORNWALL

While reading this article in might prove useful to consult the map on the last page, which shows a distribution of Denbows in the 1600s.

Hundred of Pyder Padstow Parish: Robeart Denbow sen (p. 84)
Hundred of Powder Fowey Parish: Joseph Denbow (p. 107)
Hundred of West Lanteglos by Fowey Parish: Henry Denbowe (p. 162)
Hundred of Lesnewth Altarnun Parish: Digory Denbold, George Denboll (p. 198)
Hundred of East Laneast Parish: Digory Denboll (erased) (p. 221) St Mellion Parish: John Denboo (p. 247)
Source: T.L. Stoate et al, The Cornwall Protestation Returns 1641 (Bristol: T.L. Stoate, 1974), 84, 107, 162, 198, 221, 247.

DEVON

Coleridge Hundred Dartmouth St Clement Parish: James Denboe (p. 175)
Hundred of Stanborough Churchstow Parish: Richard Denlow, Roger Denlow (p. 202) Hundred of Ermington Holbeton Town: John Denbow (p. 223)
Hundred of Plympton Plympton St Mary Parish: John Denbowe (p. 233) Plympton St Maurice Parish: John Dooble (p. 235)
Hundred of Haytor Brixham Parish: John Denboe (p. 273)
Source: T.L. Stoate, The Devon Protestation Returns 1641, 2 vols. (n.p.: A.J. Howard, 1973), 1:175, 202, 223, 233, 235, 273.

DORSET

The list has not been published or indexed. A microfilm copy of the original is available through the Family History Library (FHL British Film 919506). There was inadequate time to read through the entire county's list during this research session.

SOMERSET

There were no Denbows, but at Wells St Cuthbert Parish a William Denbie appears (p. 127).
Source: T.L. Stoate, The Somerset Protestation Returns and Lay Subsidy Rolls 1641/2 (Bristol: A.J. Howard and T.L. Stoate, 1975), 127.
In the 1660s and 1670s, the English government raised money through a graded tax based on the number of hearths at each person's residence. This source provides another census-like list of Denbows at about the time your ancestor left for Maryland, as well as an indication of the Denbows' social status (the more hearths, the wealthier the person):

CORNWALL

Hundred of East St Mellion Parish: John Denbow 3 hearths ex (p. 23) Tresmeer Parish: John Denbowe 1 (p. 209)
Hundred of Lesnewth Altarnun Parish: George Denbole 4 hearths ex (p. 136) Altarnun Parish Free and Voluntary Present 1661: George Denboll 2.6 (p. 257)
Hundred of Pydar Padstow Town and Parish: Alexander Denbowe 1 ex; Robert Denbow 1 ex (p. 149)
Hundred of Powder Fowey Town: Joseph Denboe 1 hearth (p. 233)
Source: T.L. Stoate, Cornwall Hearth and Poll Taxes, 1660-1664: Direct Taxation in Cornwall in the Reign of Charles II (Bristol: T.L. Stoate, 1981), 23, 136, 149, 209, 233, 257.

DEVON

Haytor Hundred Paupers of Brixham: Wd Denbas 1 hearth (p. 199)
Fremington Hundred Great Torrington Parish: Tho Dendle 2 hearths (p. 103) Paupers of Great Torrington: Jon Denbow 1 hearth (p. 104)
Stanborough Hundred Poore of Chestow Parish (Churchstow): Ann Denbow 1 hearth (p. 176)
Source: T.L. Stoate, Devon Hearth Tax Return: Lady Day, 1674 (Bristol: T.L. Stoate, 1982), 103, 104, 103, 176, 199.

DORSET

No Denbows were recorded in Dorset.
Source: C.A.F. Meekings, Dorset Hearth Tax Assessments, 1662-1664 (Rawlinson MSS B. 292-296 in the Bodleian Library): With Introduction and Appendices (Dorchester: Longmans, 1951).

SOMERSET

No Denbows were recorded in Somerset.
Source: Richard Holworthy, Hearth Tax for Somerset 1664-5 (1916; reprint, Weston-super-Mare: Harry Galloway, 1994).
These records pinpoint parishes where further research should be conducted. No Denbows appear in a census taken from 1619 to 1635 of Devon and Cornwall mariners. A census-like record was created of inhabitants of Bristol, England, in 1696, but there were no Denbows living at that port town at that time.

Oxford and Cambridge Students

One individual from the family attended Cambridge before 1700: William Denbaud. Admitted pensioner (age 15) at SIDNEY, July 6, 1698. Son of William, Rector of Oakford, Devon. Born there. School, Tiverton. Matriculated 1698. (p. 30)

Two individuals admitted at Oxford before 1700 carried the surname. One was the father of the Cambridge alumnus: William Denbaude, 'serviens,' Exeter College, matriculated 6 June 1660; B.A. 1663, rector of Oakford, Devon, 1689. *See Foster's Index Ecclesiasticus. (Vol. I:393)* William Denbould, of Devon, gentleman, Broadgates Hall, matriculated 14 June 1582, aged 32. *(Vol. I:393) Wills*

Next, I identified and abstracted Denbow wills from the period. Cornish wills survive, but as you are probably aware, Devon's wills were almost entirely destroyed during the Nazi bombing of Exeter in World War II. The same is true for Somerset. There are no Denbows in surviving Somerset wills. In Dorset, few survive from before the 1660s. Ancestry.com has digitized Dorset's wills, but no Denbow wills were recorded there. A valuable project at the website GENUKI is underway to reconstruct lists of Devon wills based on other sources. Here is the complete list through 1858 and abstracts of those I was able to find in our microfilm collections. Unfortunately, only one will survives for a Denbow in Devon in the 1600s and it doesn't mention a John. The other two seventeenth-century wills for Denbows in Cornwood, Devon, could have contained valuable clues, but they were destroyed.

Devon Wills and Administrations

1. 1614 Administration of Thomas Denbowe, Brixham [Brixham St Mary, Devon] ab Prerogative Court of Canterbury JHA PCC Admons. Vol. 5 p. 145. Devon Wills Project.
2. Administration of Thomas Denbowe late of Brixham, Devon, deceased was granted to Wm Denbowe his brother on 19 April 1614. Inventory. Total: £6, 0 shillings, 6 pence (Prerogative Court of Canterbury, Administration Act Book, Vol. 5:145 [FHL British Film 93248 Item 2]) [Document 11]
3. 1635 Will of John Denbawd, Cornwood [destroyed record]
4. 1636 Will of Alfred Denband, Asheton, Devon, 108 Pile, Prerogative Court of Canterbury (survives). Devon Wills Project.
5. Will of Alferide Denband of Asheton, Devon, yeoman Will dated 15 December 1634 Will proved last [30] November 1636 by Agnes Denband, relict Bequest of 40 shillings to the poor of Asheton Son: Alferide messuage and lands in Asheton Son: Leonard £100 Son: Richard 12 pence Daughter: Ann wife of Richard Furseland 40 shillings; their children: John Furseland, Samuell Furseland, Honor Furseland 10 shillings each Now wife: Agnes appointed executrix Overseers: George Cruse thelder, gentleman, Richard Furseland Son: Avery Denband land "Wyndford Park and Whitemead" in the Forest of Dartmore Witnesses: Geo. Cruss, William Cruss, Tho Cornish (Prerogative Court of Canterbury, 108 Pile [FHL British Film 92136]) [Document 12]
6. 1636 Probate of Alfred Denband, PROB 11/172, Prerogative Court of Canterbury (survives). Devon Wills Project. [This additional paperwork belongs to Alfred's will, and is available at The National Archives, Kew, U.K. I didn't order an agent to search it, as it is unlikely to tell more than the actual will.]
7. 1649 Will of Alice Denband, Cornwood [destroyed record]
8. 1703 Administration of James Denband, Combentinhead [destroyed record]
9. 1724 Administration of Margarett Denbow, Padstowe [destroyed record]

I did not attempt to search for these later records which follow, as they would be of little use to identifying your immigrant origin, but if you wish to read them, I would suggest visiting the Devon Wills Project Web site for further information on tracking them down, http://genuki.cs.ncl.ac.uk/DEV/DevonWillsProject/.

1. 1737 Will of Elizabeth Denbow, North Tawton, Devon, le Barn Beck T.N. Devon Wills Project.
2. 1797 Will of Catherine Denbow, Dock [Stoke Damerel, Devon], PWDRO-W 762 copy. Devon Wills Project.
3. 1823 Administration of Susannah Denbow, Loddiswell, Devon, ab TOT DDR2 IR 26/465 f.7. Granted to William Denbow, father. Devon Wills Project.
4. 1852 Administration of William Denbow, Blackawton, Devon, farmer, ab TOT DDR2 IR 26/523 f. 220. Granted to Jane Morgan Denbow of Woodford, Blackawton, relict. Devon Wills Project.
5. 1853 Will of Robert Denbow, Plymouth, Devon, IRW D 282. Devon Wills Project.
6. 1855 Will of Benjamin Denbow, Stoke Damerel, Devon, IRW D 281. Devon Wills Project.

Cornwall Wills and Administrations. Some Cornish wills were proved in local courts, others at Exeter, while others were proved at the Prerogative Court of Canterbury in London. The survival rate is much greater for this county than Devon or Somerset.

1. Will of James Denboe of Lant[eglos] by Fo[we]ye, Cornwall Will dated 12 March 1630[/31] Will proved 1 April 1631 Poore of Lanteglis 2 shillings Daughter: Margerett £8 at day of marriage Daughter: Agnis £8 at day of marriage Daughter: Pressellye £8 at day of marriage Son: James my dwelling house Wife: Grace dwelling house; appointed executrix Witnesses: Stephen Kinge, Vyncentt Peeke, William Perrymann Inventory dated 1 April 1631 Appraisers: Henrye Cossent, Vynsent Peeke, and Stephen Kinge Total value: £30.10.0 (Archdiaconal Court of Cornwall, D333/1, 2; FHL British Film 1565715) [Document 13]
2. Will of Robart Denbole of Lanneast, Cornewall Will dated 1635 Will proved 14 July 1635 Youngest daughter: Mary Denbole £40 (unmarried) Son: John Denbole 12 pence NRS: Phillip Simon one sheep Son: Degory Denbole one heifer Son: George Denbole personalty Daughter: Elizabeth Denbole 40 shillings Wife: Johan Denbole executrix Witnesses:

John Burgis, Richard Simon, Thomas Tucker, John Horken Robert signed his will Inventory dated 10 April 1635. To-value: £112.3.0 (Archdiaconal Court of Cornwall, D366/1, 2; FHL British Film 1565714) [Document 14]

3. Will of Mary Denboul of Lannest, Cornewall, Spinster Will dated 23 April 1643 Will proved 13 December 1643 Poore of Lannest 3 shillings Mother: Johan Denboul Brothers: George Denboul, Degory Denboul £5, John Denboul £5 Aunt: Elizabeth Bluet 20 shillings Cousins: Judith Bluet 3 shillings 4 pence and Mary Bluet 3 shillings 4 pence Sister: Elizabeth Denboul appointed executrix Witnesses: John Burges, Robert Burges Mary made a mark for her signature Inventory of Mary Denbole dated 8 December 1645 Appraisers: John Prudiaux and John Fillis Total value: £48.16.0 (Archdiaconal Court of Cornwall, D467/1, 2; FHL British Film 1565714) [Document 15]
4. Will of George Denbull of the Parish of Laneast, Cornwall Will dated 10 May 1676 Brother: John Denboull 1 shilling Sister: Elizabeth Joll appointed executrix Witnesses: Roger Northey, Phillip Northey Administration dated 2 January 1676[/77] Bond: John Denboll of St Cleather, worked in agriculture; Roger Edgcumbe of Lanest, Gentleman George's sister Elizabeth Joll died before fulfilling her role as executrix. George's brother John Denball was then appointed administrator Inventory dated 25 July 1676 Appraisers: Roger Edgcombe and Phillip Northey Total value: £8.4.2 (Archdiaconal Court of Cornwall, D729/1-3; FHL British Film 1565715) [Document 16]
5. Will of John Denbow Sr. of St. Mellion, Cornwall, Yeoman Will dated 21 March 1684[/85] Will proved 29 October 1689 Requests burial at St. Mellion Son: John Denbow 4 pence and 4 pence a peice to all of his children Daughter: Frances Stribley 4 pence and 4 pence a peice to all of her children Executrices: Daughter Elnor Kimpe and granddaughter Elizabeth Kimpe Witnesses: Joseph Webb, Joan Simons, Mary Edgcomb Inventory dated 28 October 1689 Appraiser: Mr John Cory and Wm George Total value: £0.14.4 (Archdiaconal Court of Cornwall, D890/1, 2; FHL British Film 1565715) [Document 17]
6. Will of Martha Denboll of Lanest, Cornwall, Widow Will dated 9 February 1686[/87] Will proved 25 February 1690 [/91] Brother: Leonard T/Combe Sister: Amie Coustide Daughter: Lois Foper Many other bequests to persons with the surnames Courtier, Hawking, Scagel Executor: John Courtier, Alice Courtier Witnesses: Richard Kinsman, Alice Kinsman, and Richard Scagell Inventory dated 17 January 1690[/91] Appraisers: John Preate, Richard Kinsman Total value: £36.01.00 (Archdiaconal Court of Cornwall, D904/1, 2; FHL British Film 1565715) [Document 18]
7. Administration of James Denbow late of Fowey, Cornwall Dated 26 September 1727 Bond: Joan Denbow of Fowey, Widow; Mary Denbow of Fowey, Widow; Katherine Stephens of Fowey, Spinster (all three signed) (Archdiaconal Court of Cornwall, FHL British Film 189668) [Document 19]
8. Will of James Denbow of Liskeard, Cornwall, Gentleman Will dated 30 May 1734 The following persons received bequests of 27 shillings each to buy mourning rings: Highly Esteemed Friend: Mr Gregory Stribly, Aunt Mrs Dorothy Stephens, Kinsman [Kinsmen] Mr Abraham Stephens and Mr Arthur Stephens, Late Master Mr Edward Puckey, Rev. Mr. Blatchford, Mr Hugh Young Friend: Thomas Perryman 2 guineas Matthemattical books left to Hugh Young and Thomas Perryman Aunt: Mrs Katherine Stephens tenement in Parish of Tywardreth, Cornwall; appointed executrix; to pay rent to the Mayor of the Borough of Fowey Witnesses: Jos. Flemining, Thomas Rogers, Mary Pearn (Archdiaconal Court of Cornwall, FHL British Film 90190) [Document 20]
9. Administration of Joan Denbow late of Borough of Fowey, Cornwall, Widow Dated 11 November 1746 Abraham Stephens and Arthur Stephens, Gentlemen, the Nephews and next of kin renounced administration, which was granted to Amy Roberts, of the Borough of Fowey, widow, principal creditor (Archdiaconal Court of Cornwall, FHL British Film 189668) [Document 21]

LOOKING FOR DENBOW POEMS? SO ARE WE!

I recently asked on the denbow-l listserv for poems by our ancestors. So far, Joe Denbow, of Ashland, Ohio, and Garren Snyder, of Zanesville, have submitted poems. Garren also sent a brief piece of macabre prose — People "I have saw killed" during my lifetime. Garren's submissions were all by Harold Sinclair Denbow, grandson of Levi Denbow, of the Civil War generation. Joe's submission was from Elmer Forest Denbow, aka "Uncle Bob" by all who knew him. In the next issue, due in De-

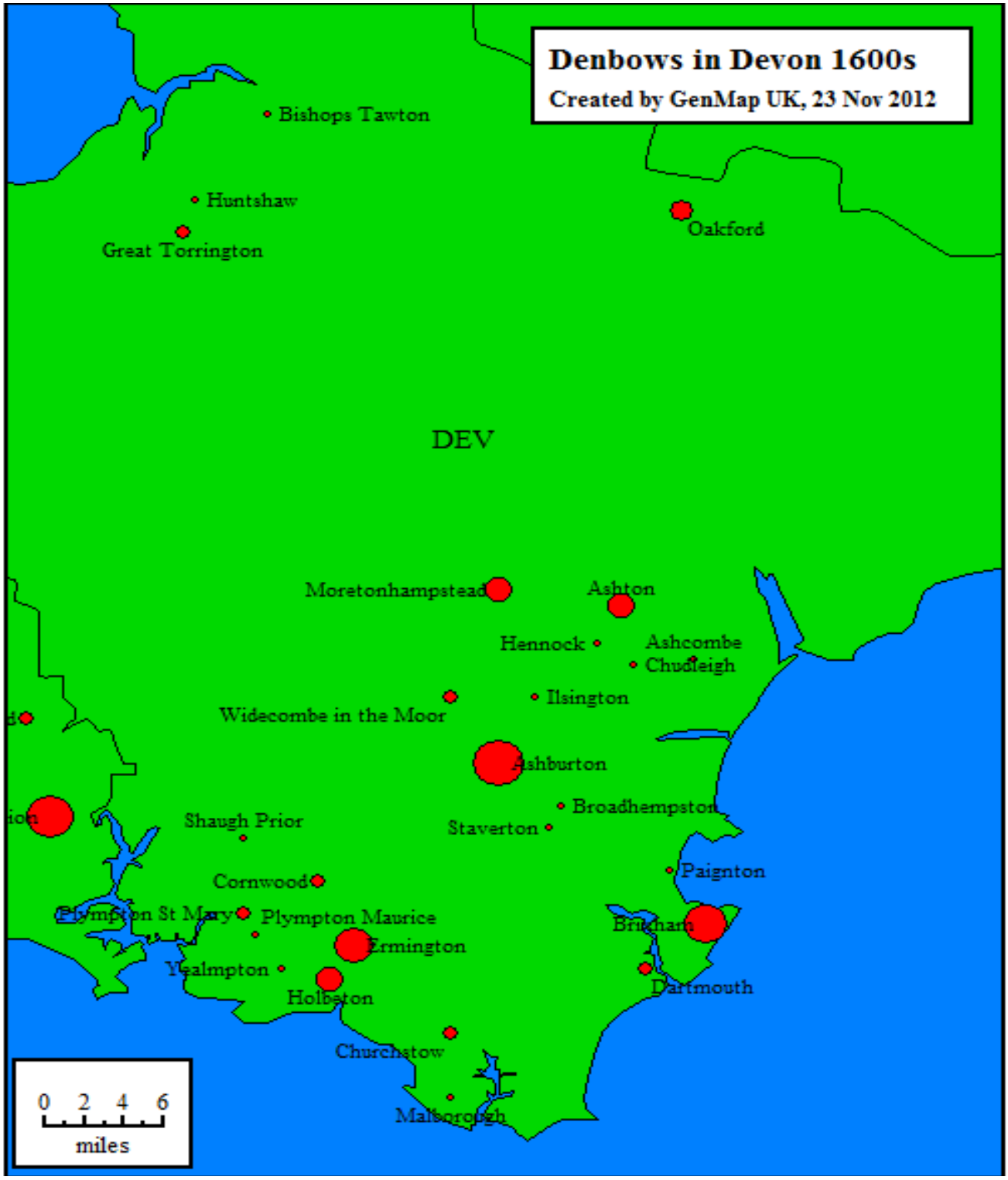

Figure 3. Labeled map of Devon parishes where Denbows resided in the 1600s. The center of Devon, where very few entries appear, is Dartmoor. A sparsely inhabited wasteland memorialized in the Sherlock Holmes novel *Hound of the Baskervilles*, it is no wonder people did not want to make it their abode. Moretonhampstead and Widecombe in the Moor border Dartmoor. The region to the south of Dartmoor, where most Denbows lived, was much more fertile. It is known as the South Hams region of the county. The international port of Plymouth, though not identified on this map, is located next to Plympton. Dartmouth, where one or two Denbows were spotted, was also a minor international port that traded with America at this time.