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## Duplin County, North Carolina, Research

by Terry Moore, CG

Thinking of Duplin County brings to mind Dallas Herring of Rose Hill. When I first met him, he was about ninety years old. Dr. Herring transformed his home into a genealogy and history library with a large collection of everything North Carolina. In his bow tie and smoking jacket, he was a gracious and entertaining host to those who researched in his home. I called him one evening to make an appointment to visit his library and we agreed on Monday, next. “But call the night before to make sure I’m still alive,” he said.

Duplin County was created from New Hanover in 1750 and, although it is not a burned county, it is missing many court records. At first glance, it might also appear to be missing its earliest deeds, but when Sampson County was created from Duplin in 1784 it retained the Duplin County deed books. Copies of the original deed books have been made and are now available at the Duplin County Register of Deeds and on their website (<http://www.duplincountync.com/governmentOffices/registerOfDeeds.html>).

### Vital records

Images of Duplin County death certificates and birth indexes are available on Ancestry.com from 1909 to 1976 and death certificates are on FamilySearch.org from 1906 to 1930. Birth and death records were recorded beginning October 1913 and a copy of a vital record can be requested from the register of deeds. The request form can be printed from the Duplin County Register of Deeds website. Non-certified copies are \$1.00 each. Images of Duplin County’s marriage records 1762-1979 are also available on FamilySearch.org.

### Deeds

Images of the Duplin County deeds as far back as 1749, as well as searchable grantor and grantee indexes, can be viewed on the Duplin County Register of Deeds website. The images are in an image or PDF format. The PDF format was easier to read.

Search the Land Grant Index on the North Carolina State Archives website (<http://www.archives.ncdcr.gov>) to find your ancestor’s land grants in Duplin County.

### Probate

Images of the Duplin County will indexes, wills, other probate books, and loose estate records are available online at FamilySearch.org under the “Record” search. To locate these records, follow these instructions.

1. Go to <http://www.familysearch.org>.
2. Register and sign in.
3. Across the top of the page you will see **Family Tree, Memories, Search, and Indexing**. Click on **Search, then** click on **Records**.
4. On the right hand side of the page is a map. Click on the area of the map you want to search.
5. Click on the state you want to search.
6. Click again on **Start Searching in (state name)**.
7. A list of records will come up.
8. Click on **Show all (number) collections**.
9. Click on the record you are interested in. For example, click on the probate records. For North Carolina, probate records are listed at the bottom under **Show top five collections**. Click on this link.
10. On the next page, click on **browse images**.
11. A list of counties will come up. Click on the county of interest.
12. Choose a record to search and the images will come up.
13. Many of the records will have an index in the beginning of the record book, or there may be a separate index volume (an example would be for wills).

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14. When searching the loose estates records, a global search is available. You may also choose to **browse images** and a list of counties will come up. Click on the county and then click on the letter of the surname you are looking for and a list will appear. If you don't know which county, do the global search.
15. A more efficient way to locate a will in North Carolina is to consult Thornton Mitchell's will index for the book and page number, then go directly to the correct will book in the county probate records. Mitchell's will index is only available in print. (Thornton W. Mitchell, *North Carolina Wills: A Testator Index, 1665-1900*. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1992).

### **NCGS Journal Articles on Duplin County**

Douglas Ransom, "Highway Men, Robbers, & Murderers-Duplin and Wayne Cos., N.C., 1781-1784," *NCGS Journal* (November 1979, Volume V, no. 4), p. 246.

Tom Byrd, "Navigation on Goshen Swamp, Duplin County, NC 1785," *NCGS Journal* (February 1982, Volume VIII, no. 1), p. 2. (The names of 231 settlers who lived along Goshen, some of whom are not found on the 1783 tax list, the 1786 state census, or the 1790 US census are included in the following article.)

William L. Murphy, Jr., "The Fifty-two Heirs of Rachel Davis of Duplin, 1849," *NCGS Journal* (February 1989, Volume XV, no. 1), p. 14.

Jeffrey L. Haines, CG, "Petition from the Adjoining Inhabitants of the Counties of New Hanover, Duplin, and Bladen, 23 October 1779," *NCGS Journal* (August 2007, Volume 33, no. 3), p. 244.

Jeffrey L. Haines, CG, "Duplin County 1786 Tax Lists," *NCGS Journal* (November 2008, Volume 34, no.4), p. 331.

Jeffrey L. Haines, CG, "St. Gabriel's Parish, Duplin County, Wardens' Records, 1799-1817," *NCGS Journal* (May 2009, Volume 35, no. 2), p. 140.

Jeffrey L. Haines, CG, "1818 Duplin County Tax List," *NCGS Journal* (August 2011, Volume 37, no. 3) p. 220.

### **Miscellaneous**

Be sure to search the Private Collections index on the North Carolina State Archives website as well as the Duplin County, North Carolina, USGenWeb web page at <http://www.usgenweb.com> for abstracts of some Duplin County records.

Dr. Herring died in 2007 at the age of ninety and the Herring Collection, although not in his beloved Duplin County, is now at the Pender County Historical Archives located at 108 S. Cowan Street in Burgaw, Pender County, North Carolina.