**Genealogy Bonanzas**

Introduction

Sometimes we work hard on our research and find only a few new people for our database; it is satisfying when we run into certain situations where we are able to add 100 or more new names in a single effort. We can sometimes do this with the use of surname books and trees, and with more effective use of Family Search and Ancestry, along with special uses of Ancestry DNA results.

Bonanza #1: the Baker Family Tree: Numerous 1st and 2nd Cousins

My own family tree was developed by a number of Baker cousins. It consisted of about 1,000 descendants of Nicholas Baker (1818-1896), the immigrant ancestor of those people. A good family tree with both length and breadth is helpful in further genealogy research. For example, knowing the names in the Baker tree has been immensely helpful in identifying Baker relatives who take DNA tests.

Note: you might get similar help from fellow reunion people or other cousins.

Bonanza #2: Extended In-Depth Tree for Koehler Family Going Back to the 1600s

This data was provided by a 3rd cousin, Ray Keen, whose ancestry intersected with my own ancestry. As a faithful genealogist, Keen had traced by GGM’s Koehler family back into its German town origins, had added in the inter-marrying families, and traced the several ancestral family origins back into the 1600s. Keen had researched German town records and had learned to read the original German script.

Bonanza #3: Detailed Family Tree Data for 3 Early German Families

This data was provided by a nice email correspondent from Missouri. She had seen my postings of the data that I had on the Koehler family 9courtesy of Ray Keen, Bonanza #2) and had a lot of related data. She had worked with a local German professional genealogist, and they had compiled data for three different German ancestral families in the area of Gimmeldingen, Germany. The professional genealogist had used parish records, and had also used even earlier tax and property records.

Note: posting data is important. If I had not posted my data, the nice woman would not have found me.

Bonanza #4: a German Family Book for the Town of Bromskirchen

I had traced some of my German ancestors back to Bromskirchen and was looking through the available records for the town (on Family Search) when I noticed that someone had developed a “Family Book” for Bromskirchen that dated back to the 1500s. A German Pfarrer (priest) had apparently developed this handwritten book. It was formatted by nuclear family alphabetically and chronologically so it was organized in the most user-friendly manner possible and contained numerous family names.

Bonanza #5: German Sippenbuchs for Goddelsheim, Ober-Ense, and Gimmeldingen

Similar to the old handwritten Family Books, this modern day version of a Family Book expands the scope of the old Family Book. This book was both online and in hard copy. It covered each Goddelsheim family from 1646 to 1975 with a complete, well-organized listing of births, marriages, and deaths. Also, there was related data for mayors, teachers, and ministers for the town.

Note: we could probably dig out the same data as is contained in the Sippenbuch, but it would easily require many, many more hours. The German script is difficult to decipher, and the process of finding each correct parent along with marriage and death data is formidable.

Note: to find a town Sippenbuch, try the Family Search catalog and also look on worldcat.org with its Advanced Search capability.

Summary of Bonanzas 1-6

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| Number | Title/Category | Names for  My Database | Comments |
| 1 | Baker Family Tree/Surname Tree | 1,000 | Created 1980, by Baker cousins |
| 2 | Early Koehler Tree/Surname Tree | 1,000 | Created 1995, by 3rd cousin |
| 3 | Early Gimmeldingen Family Tree | 1,000 | 2005, German genealogist |
| 4 | Bromskirchen Book/Family Book | 5,000 | Early German Pfarrer created this |
| 5 | Siippenbuchs | 25,000 | Everyone in town is listed |
| ALL |  | 33,000 |  |

Bonanza #6: Scriba Family Surname Records, Dating Back to 1505

These family records were created by a family society that has been in existence for over 200 years. Their records are for all the descendants of Konrad Scriba, b. 1505. These well researched records are available on CD and are maintained by a family society. I found out about this society and its research by looking for data on Google.

Note: we may not all be lucky enough to have bonanzas just fall into our lap. But, we can increase our likelihood of bonanzas by doing all the right things: posting our data, looking for possible surname books or lists, looking for family books by using worldcat.org, and by doing our regular research. Further, there are some areas that may be open to all of us to have bonanzas, such as making effective use of Family Search and Ancestry, and using DNA results.

Bonanza #7: Using DNA Results to Add More People to the Family Tree, also Using Family Search and Ancestry to Methodically Go Through Their Data on Distant Cousins

We sometimes do very well to find people going “up the tree”, but neglect to identify the many relatives we have coming “down the tree.” I had noted that recently I was able to identify a number of “new” ancestors in the 4th GGF and 5th GGF categories but had limited data on the descendants of those ancestors. Both Family Search and Ancestry are very good about having multitudes of data for such ancestors. We discussed strategies to use Family Search and Ancestry to add many people to our database by focusing on the descendants of those early ancestors.

When we post a tree on Ancestry DNA, Ancestry can then do its magic to identify a large number of matches who also descend from the same common ancestor. In this manner, with its Thru Lines concept, Ancestry will find many connections for us. In my case, Ancestry identified over 800 matches who share a specific common ancestor with me. Then, using its large database, Ancestry offers data to show exactly how each person is related to us by showing that person’s family tree. We can plug the data from those trees into our own database. Equally valuable, many of your solid matches post their own trees which can be added to yours.

Note: These are important opportunities because you are starting from a solid basis, that is, you know the other person is a solid relatives, so you can go from there. You might focus on a specific family branch or location. You can supplement your matching person’s tree with related data such as data for marriages or deaths in that location for that family, or you can check census data, Family Search, or Ancestry data.

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Bonanza #8: Early American Records.

A number of early American research efforts have resulted in ready-made bonanzas for those of us who have ancestors in that time and location. The Mayflower people have been researched heavily as well as others who came to Massachusetts in the early 1600s. Similarly, the Jamestown settlers and early Virginia people have been heavily research. For both MA and VA there are great numbers of records online and elsewhere. There are also a great number of online and other records for our Revolutionary War patriots, so all of those early Americans represent bonanza opportunities.

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| Number | Title/Category | Names for  My Database | Comments |
| 6 | Scriba Family Tree/Surname Tree | 13,000 | Descendants of Konrad Scriba, b. 1504 |
| 7 | DNA Results on Thru Lines/Family Tree Data | 10,000 | To be developed using Ancestry DNA family tree postings |
| 8 | Early American Data/Family Tree Data | 10,000 | Plus this data in based on research already done |
| ALL |  | 33,000 |  |

Conclusions

We have shown that you may find genealogy bonanzas in several different ways. Maybe some of them will come as a result of “good luck” but others may come from making a concerted effort in certain areas.

* Family tree data is important; it may come from other family members, or from books or online records
* It is useful to be on the lookout for existing research that has surname results that are presented in a user-friendly way
* It is likely that we can all add greatly to our total family tree by focusing more on the “downward branches”; we can do this by making more effective use of Family Search and Ancestry.
* We can greatly add to our family tree by plugging in data from our DNA results, most notably by using the Thru Lines results and the posted trees.