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Title

Harness the power of blogging for your research or your One Place Study: How social media helped reunite descendants of emigrants from Dorfprozelten and unravelled the Moloneys and the McNamaras from East Clare.

Summary

21st century family historians have a wonderful online opportunity with blogging. Many writers begin blogging as a form of online family history, or as cousin bait. This talk takes a different approach illustrating how it can also bring together generations of descendants from a particular group of emigrants. You can also use blogging for your One Place Study.

Abstract

So you think social media is a new-fangled 21st century innovation? Think again. Our ancestors used 19th century social media in making their emigration decisions: letters, word-of-mouth, and newspaper stories. They usually didn't leave their villages on their own, and only the most adventurous took that first step towards the far side of the world alone and uninformed. Most were heavily reliant on those who preceded them - the social media of their time. Many travelled in company with fellow villagers, family or friends, or in close sequence – chain migration.

So why would we ignore the opportunity to learn more about our ancestors' companions in their emigration adventure: those who left their home town with them, or met up with them in Australia? The broader understanding of our ancestor's home place and their fellow emigrants can potentially provide a richer texture to our own family's story. Blogging offers 21st century genealogists the opportunity to record discoveries about their ancestor's migration networks. This can be invaluable for those working on a One Place Study overseas.

My case studies will focus on two migration networks, one from Germany and the other from Ireland.

The first is the story of the serendipitous linkages which arose from a feature page on my family history blog. It will reveal how blogging has provided an amazing platform for reuniting the descendants of a small group of emigrants from the village of Dorfprozelten in Bavaria. It has reconnected family branches, unravelled research knots, and revealed their ancestors' human stories and colonial experiences.

The second case study will focus on how I've been working to unearth the migration network of Irish immigrants from East County Clare in Ireland. Blogging has provided me with a forum to disseminate what I've learned and hopefully act as descendant-bait as well.

While these two studies are focused on my own places of interest, this presentation will discuss how the power of blogging can assist with your broader family history research, and perhaps even a One Place Study.

Audience

Intermediate