

Since the phrase “The Southern States” can mean different things to different researchers, we need a working definition of which states are southern. The Southern States include the **eleven states** that seceded from the Union during the War between the States: Virginia, North and South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas, Tennessee and Texas.

The **border slave states** that did not break away had (and some areas still have) southern sympathies and connections: Maryland, West Virginia, Kentucky, Missouri, Oklahoma.

Although not directly a part of the South as defined here, the feeder and outlet states to the South are important to consider as well: **Feeder states**-- Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and New York; **Outlet states** Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Iowa.

What is a Southern Pedigree?

A Southern Pedigree is a group of families that originate within these states. Their descendants end up in the border slave states and later, the outlet states. Speech patterns and physical appearance have little to do with it.

Why is the South different?

1. The economy is a “**plantation**” economy. Crops are marketed raw-- sent somewhere else to be processed and refined--tobacco, rice, Indigo, sugar, pine-tar, molasses, wheat, and cattle. Ships operated in the North and old Northwest were often built in the south with slave and indentured labor. Patriarchal families resided on large estates based on the labor of indentured servants and Indian or African slaves.

2. Kinship networks cross county and even state lines. Originally, landholdings were acquired and distributed across county lines. Both sons and daughters inherited these landholdings in different parts of the state. So genealogies and local histories are especially important to identify scattered family members –

- 1) Compiled at different dates from records often missing or lost today.
- 2) Written by non-scholars who record at random what they have heard, read, seen, know, believe, and hope.

3) Include details on persons who cannot be found in any other source—births with complete dates, nicknames as they may be recorded in the local sources, places of burial, and perhaps places of origin and ethnic background.

4) Identify migration patterns, especially before 1850.

5) Reprint family Bible data.

6) Provide naming patterns, including middle given names for persons identified in census enumerations with initials only.

7) Describe the kinship networks in *your own family* background. You will often get the “ah-ha” sensation as you match your family traditions to these details.

8) Bridge the ocean with accuracy—exact location where the family came from.

3. Multi-Ethnic Backgrounds and mixed and blended families.

Acadian

Africaner

Black Dutch

Cajun

Cavalier

“cherokee”

Cohoe

Covenanter

Cracker

Creole

Dunkard

Factor

Hessian

Highlander

Hillbilly

Hillman

Huguenot

Indentured Servant

Melungeon

Metis

Mulatto

Native American

Negro

Octaroon

Palatine

Pennsylvania Dutch

Puritan

Quadroon

Quaker

Red Shanks/Stockings

Redemptioner

Saltzburger

Scots-Irish (Scotch-Irish)

Slave

Tuckahoe
Undertaker
Waldensian
Walloon

Check *American Heritage Dictionary or Oxford Old English Dictionary or Black's Law Dictionary* for definitions.

4. Women who outlive 3-5 husbands. The Southern climate was good to women. The normal problems which shortened their lives were less important in the South. So you must watch for the change of surnames for your ladies—and particularly the mother who carries a different names than several sets of sons. The *Surname Target*, from Derek Harland, *Basic Course in Genealogy, Volume 2* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1958) p. 127, will help you. This target is adapted as a research strategy in Arlene H. Eakle and Linda E. Brinkerhoff, *Family History for Fun and Profit*, 2003 (Genealogical Institute, Inc. PO Box 129, Tremonton UT 84337-0129) pp. 97-102.

5. Burned Courthouses. FACT: 393 Southern courthouses have sustained record losses from fire, storm, flood, the chaos of war, and official carelessness. FACT: only 99 Southern courthouses suffered losses during the years 1861-1865. And while almost one-fourth of all courthouse losses were Civil War related, not all of them were enemy caused. FACT: Many records survive—some were literally snatched from the flames. Others were secreted in false doors, hollowed-out fence posts, and spaces between the walls of both government and privately-owned buildings. Some were buried in the wet sand along river banks to be reclaimed after the war. Some were moved from harm's way long before the enemy was sighted. Some were captured by Army units who carried them away to safety. The Civil War becomes a convenient excuse for county personnel who have no knowledge of what happened to their early records. They just know the records are not part of their current inventory.

6. Named Land Tracts. Land tracts are given names and these names are traceable—to identify the correct landholdings, to identify estates in country of origin, or to trace intermarried families, and to determine which children got which properties. For example, see Donna Valley Russell, "Finding Land Tracts," *Western Maryland Genealogy* 3 (Jan 1987): 26-29. The Arthur M. Tracey Collection, Maryland Hall of Records, Annapolis MD, includes indexes to land tracts before 1800 in Baltimore, Frederick,

Carroll, and Washington counties. Index cards were made for names of patentees and for tract names with map coordinates included. Pennsylvania Warrantee Maps are being digitized for online searching by Gregory A. Boyd. Check <http://www.ancestortracks.com>