



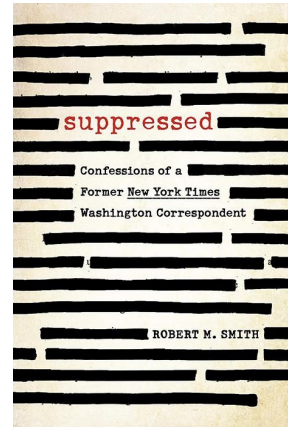
National Archives at Kansas City Newsletter

Upcoming Virtual Programs at the National Archives

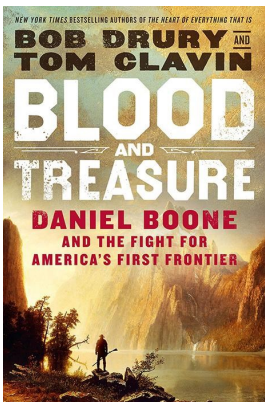
The National Archives is continuing to offer a full slate of public programs in May. An extensive list can be found [here](#). Below are several highlights on a variety of topics. All programs are scheduled according to Eastern Daylight Time.

Suppressed: Confessions of a Former New York Times Washington Correspondent

On **Thursday, May 6 at Noon EDT**, the National Archives will host **Robert M. Smith** for a discussion of his book, *Suppressed: Confessions of a Former New York Times Washington Correspondent*. Four million people in nearly 200 countries read the *New York Times* to get a supposedly objective view of the news and to learn what the *Times* thinks is important. But they aren't always getting that kind of view. In his book, Smith, a *Times* former White House and investigative correspondent, discloses how some stories make it to print while others are ignored, how the filters work, and how the paper may have suppressed some of the most important stories of the day—the My Lai Massacre and Watergate. This **free program** is available via live stream on the National Archives [YouTube Channel](#).



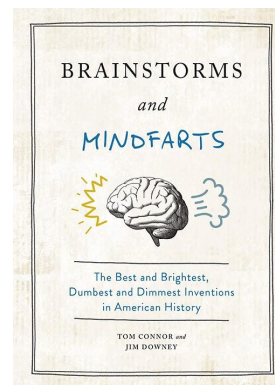
Blood and Treasure: Daniel Boone and the Fight for America's First Frontier



On **Monday, May 10 at 5:00 p.m. EDT**, the National Archives will host **Bob Drury** and **Tom Clavin** for a discussion of their book, *Blood and Treasure: Daniel Boone and the Fight for America's First Frontier*. It is the mid-18th century, and in the 13 colonies founded by Great Britain, anxious colonists desperate to conquer and settle North America's "First Frontier" beyond the Appalachian Mountains commence a series of bloody battles. These violent conflicts are waged against the Native American tribes whose lands they covet, the French, and finally against the mother country itself in an American Revolution. In their book *Blood and Treasure*, Drury and Clavin tell the true saga of the legendary figure Daniel Boone and the bloody struggle for America's frontier, as told through the eyes of those who witnessed it. This **free program** is available via live stream on the National Archives [YouTube Channel](#).

Brainstorms and Mindfarts: The Best and Brightest, Dumbest and Dimmest Inventions in American History

On **Thursday, May 27 at Noon EDT**, the National Archives will host **Jim Downey** for a discussion of his book, *Brainstorms and Mindfarts*. Innovation and entrepreneurship appear inextricably woven into the American DNA. Throughout American history, the great inventors and innovators gazed into the future and saw the products and services that would transform the world. As of 2018, the U.S. Patent & Trademark Office had granted its 10 millionth patent. Downey presents a collection of the brightest and most innovative American inventions along with the frivolous and utterly useless ones lost to history. This **free program** is available via live stream on the National Archives [YouTube Channel](#).



May 2021

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Upcoming Events

Unless noted, all events are held at the National Archives 400 W. Pershing Road Kansas City, MO 64108

NOTE: All in-person public events at National Archives facilities nationwide are cancelled until further notice. This includes in-person public programs, tours, school group visits, public meetings, external conferences, and facility rentals.

National Archives Offers Virtual Genealogy Series

In lieu of the autumn 2020 Virtual Genealogy Fair that could not be held due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we are pleased to offer a new Genealogy Series. Instead of a single-day event, the program sessions will be broadcast individually during May and June. You are invited to watch and participate in real time with the presenters and family historians from around the world on [YouTube](#).

Over the two months, the sessions will offer family history research tools on Federal records for all skill levels. The May sessions are broad and will appeal to the beginner and beyond. The June sessions are focused on specific topics and may be better suited for the experienced researcher. All are welcome! Session descriptions, videos, handouts, and participation instructions are below.

- Open with no reservations required
- Watch the broadcasts via [YouTube](#)
- Participate and ask questions via chat during the scheduled broadcasts
- After the scheduled broadcasts, video recordings and presentation materials will be available online

Below are the May dates, times, and program topics.

Tuesday, May 4, at 1:00 p.m. EDT - Preserving and Digitizing Personal Photo Albums and Scrapbooks

Preserving photo albums and scrapbooks can be especially challenging, often because they are bound and contain a variety of problematic materials. This session addresses how to work with the poor quality materials commonly found in personal scrapbooks and albums, how to maintain the integrity of the arrangement, and how to store photo albums and scrapbooks appropriately. Pro tips for home users include ways to digitize albums, organize electronic files, and preserve them as electronic records. Examples come from both National Archives and personal collections.



Wednesday, May 12, at 1:00 p.m. EDT - Finding Genealogy Resources and Tools on Archives.gov

This presentation will provide an overview of what's available for genealogists on the archives.gov website, and demonstrate how to navigate to its many resources and tools, including the National Archives Catalog, the Access to Archival Databases (AAD) system, the Microfilm Catalog, topic pages, articles, reports, and blogs. We'll explore the Genealogy portal page, and also see how the website is organized, which will enable you to do even more expansive searches for information.



Wednesday, May 19, at 1:00 p.m. EDT - Tips and Tools for Engaging Family with Your Research Finds

As the family historian, you have amassed information and records that will one day pass to the next family historian. How do you share your findings with others? How to engage young family members involved with all your hard research may be another story. Education staff members Missy McNatt and Dorothy Dougherty will demonstrate fun and engaging ways to connect research to your family, including younger family members. This lecture will highlight activities related to our most popular genealogy records, such as Immigrant Ship Arrivals, U.S. Census Records, Naturalization records, and Military and Pension files. The presenters will also demonstrate new ways to share your research finds online, using social media tools.

Hidden Treasures from the Stacks

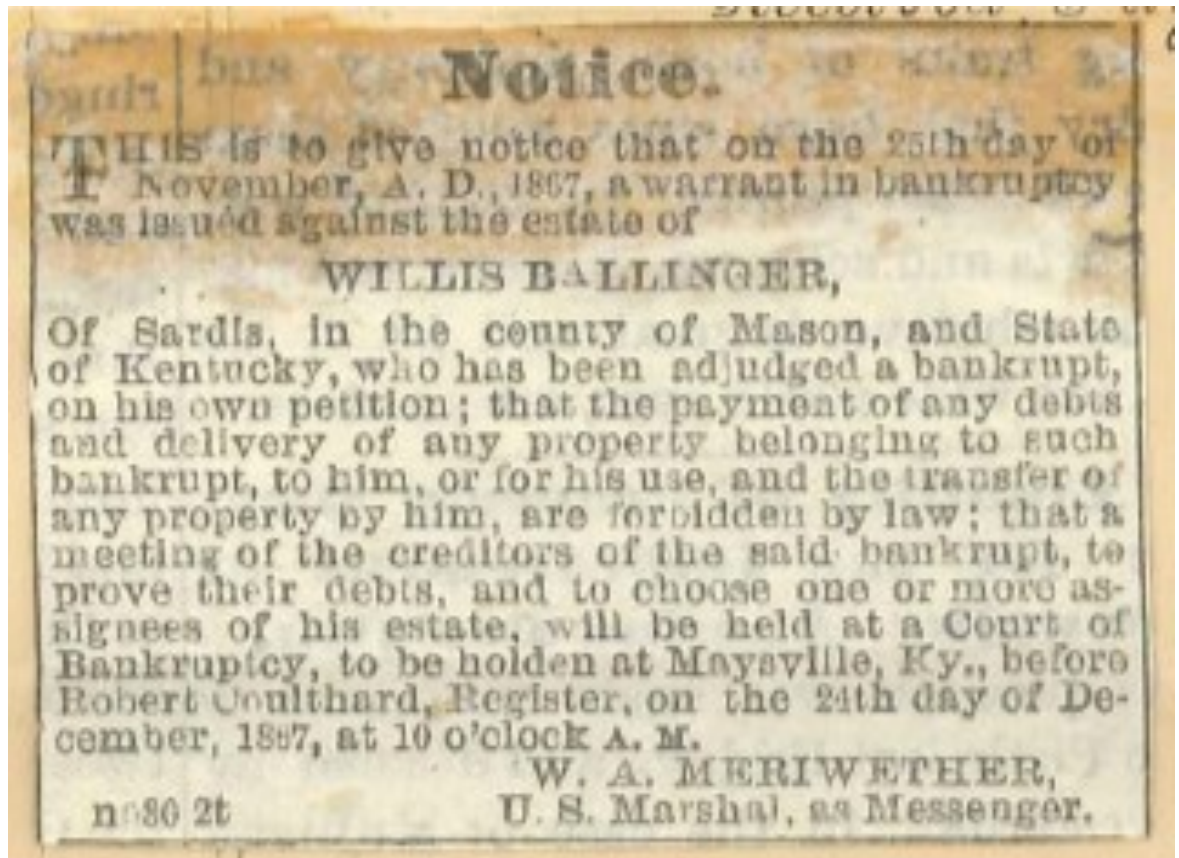
No Assets: Seeking Debt Relief in Louisville, Kentucky

The [Bankruptcy Act of 1867](#) provided much needed debt relief following the Civil War. The Act favored debtors over creditors - a change from previous Federal bankruptcy legislation that provided few options for an insolvent, and was accessible for a limited number of years. Though the intent of the law was to address the economic downturn, everyday people experiencing everyday challenges turned to the Act for relief. Day laborer Willis Ballenger of Sardis voluntarily filed for bankruptcy in the U.S. District Court in Louisville, Kentucky, in November 1867. His file is unique because there are two copies in two different hands of the schedules which list his debts and assets.

I owe no debts to the United States, nor no taxes or assessments under the law thereof
I owe the State of Kentucky the county levy for 1867 2.50 [sic]
I owe no laborers, clerk or house servants
I owe no person whole the law of the United States is entitled to any priority or preference over other creditors
I own no real estate
I own no stocks in trade
I own no property, and have no interest in any other directly or indirectly

He claimed \$500 in assets should be exempted under the 14th section of the Bankruptcy Act of 1867. These items and their value are detailed on "Form No. 20 Exempted Property" such as spoons, water baskets, and beds.

Ballenger owed so few secured debts and owned so few assets, why would he have filed? A close examination of the filings points to over \$1,000 of unsecured debts over a 10 year period, 1857-1867: doctor bill, hotel bill, horse, whiskey (\$170 in 1858, \$200 in 1857), merchandise, goods, shoes, and drugs. Many of the debts, such as large sums for whiskey and expenses for drugs, seem at odds with his occupation as a day laborer.



Above: Ballenger's bankruptcy was announced in local papers to allow creditors to file for monies owed. Majority of documents in the file note his surname as Ballenger, but the U.S. Marshal Meriwether spelled it Ballinger. Citation: Notice, 11/30/1867; Bankruptcy Case 259 Willis Ballenger, Bankruptcy Act of 1867 Case Files, 1867-1879; Series National Archives Identifier: 719123. U.S. District Court for the District of Kentucky. Louisville Term; Record Group 21, Records of the United States District. National Archives at Kansas City.

Incorporating U.S. Census Records

The 1850-1870 U.S. Federal Censuses help to fill in gaps for understanding Ballenger's mounting debts and circumstances before and after filing. According to the 1850 Census, the single 19 year-old lived and worked as a barkeep in Mason County, Kentucky. By 1860, he was a tavern keeper with real estate valued at \$900 and personal estate valued at \$100.

(Continued on next page.)

(Continued from page 3.)

He continued living in Mason County, Kentucky, but had two sons Thomas Lewis, age 4, and David W. age 1; however, the Federal Census Mortality Schedule points to a heartbreak for the family - the passing of Mary A. Ballenger (age 26) and Amos Ballenger (age 5 months) in December 1859 to scarlet fever.

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SCHEDULE 3.—Persons who Died during the Year ending 1st June, 1860, in District No. 2 in the County of Mason State of Kentucky, enumerated by me, Wm. R. Lashbrooke Ass't Marshal.

NAME OF EVERY PERSON WHO DIED during the year ending 1st June, 1860, whose usual place of abode at the time of death was in this family.	DESCRIPTION.					PLACE OF BIRTH, Naming the State, Territory, or Country.	THE MONTH in which the person died.	PROFESSION, OCCUPATION, OR TRADE.	DISEASE OR CAUSE OF DEATH.	NUMBER OF DAYS ILL.	
	Age.	Sex.	White, black, or mulatto.	Free or slave.	Married or widowed.						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Ruth B. Mattingley	5	f				Kentucky	November		Dysentery	2 months	1 ✓
Greenberry W. Mattingley	3	m				Do.	July		Scarlet fever	1 month	2 ✓
Grenar	17	f	13	S. I.		Do.	August	House servant	Scrophula	1 year	3 ✓
Henry Caldwell	14	m				Do.	February		Scarlet fever	6 days	4 ✓
Andrew Caldwell	12	m				Do.	February		Scarlet fever	4 days	5 ✓
William Caldwell	9	m				Do.	January		Scarlet fever	5 days	6 ✓
Sarah Walker	36	f			m	Do.	July		Consumption	1 year	7 ✓
Mary A. Ballenger	26	f			m	Do.	December		Scarlet fever	4 days	8 ✓
Amos Ballenger	5	m				Do.	December		Scarlet fever	18 weeks	9 ✓
											10 ✓

Above: Of the 35 deaths that are listed on page 1 (of 3), 13 individuals died of the highly contagious scarlet fever. An additional three deaths resulted from fevers that lasted similar lengths of time. Citation: Mary A. Ballenger and Amos Ballenger; Schedule 3- Persons who Died During the Year ending 1st June, 1860 in the District No. 2 in the County of Mason State of Kentucky; Microfilm Publication: Federal Mortality Census Schedules, 1850-1880, and Related Indexes, 1850-1880, T655, roll 14; National Archives and Records Administration (NARA); Washington, D.C.

By the 1870 Census, Willis was remarried. Together with his wife Sarah they had Charles age 4, and Francis age 3. Thomas Lewis was now age 13 and David W. was age 11. They continued to reside in Mason County, Kentucky. Willis changed his occupation to farming. Their financial situation had also changed since the last Census; the real estate was valued at \$700 and the personal estate was valued at \$300.

1850, 1860, and 1870 Census data explain the “why” behind some of his debts - goods for his occupation, medicine for the treatment of his late wife and son, and doctor services in 1866 for the birth of his son Charles.

Conclusion

No assets were recovered in Ballenger’s case. The assignee in the case paid \$22.90 on Ballenger’s behalf - \$12.00 for a claim and \$10.90 to cover printing costs in the area newspapers. It is unclear how and if payment was made to the assignee for his work on the case.

This bankruptcy is an example of everyday people who used bankruptcy legislation to address their insurmountable debt. U.S. Federal Census records provide some answers to address why debt was accrued - something that is not explicitly listed in bankruptcy filings.

[Bankruptcy case files from 1800-2003](#) are available for research at the National Archives at Kansas City. For more information, email kansascity.archives@nara.gov.

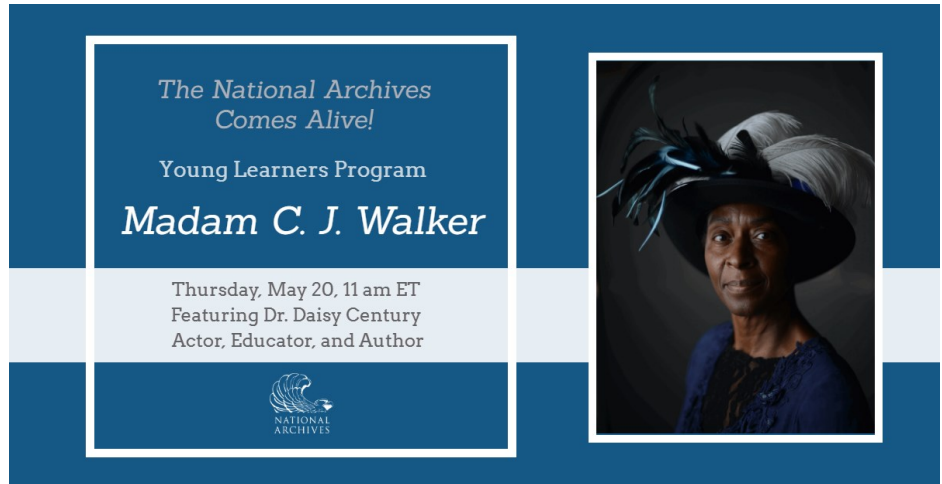
May Virtual Programs for Educators and Students

Upcoming Summer Workshops: This summer, the National Archives and our Presidential Libraries will host several professional development opportunities for educators. Educators can participate in document-based workshops on finding and teaching with primary sources, and on specific historical topics. A list of various professional development workshops are available [online](#).

Young Learners Program - Meet Madam C.J. Walker on Thursday, May 20 at 11:00 a.m. EDT

Madam C. J. Walker is portrayed by **Dr. Daisy Century**, actor, historian, interpreter, and reenactor. Madam C. J. Walker was born Sarah Breedlove and was an early advocate who sought equality for African Americans. Madam Walker amassed her fortune through dedication, hard work, and innovation. As America's first female self-made millionaire, she was a philanthropist who enthusiastically supported Black colleges and universities.

At the end of the program, **A'Lelia Bundles**, Madam C.J. Walker's great-great-granddaughter, will lead a question-and-answer session and share information about her book, *All About Madam C. J. Walker*. This **free program** is available via live stream on the National Archives [YouTube Channel](#).





The National Archives
Comes Alive!

Young Learners Program

Madam C. J. Walker

Thursday, May 20, 11 am ET
Featuring Dr. Daisy Century
Actor, Educator, and Author



National Archives Facility Information Regarding COVID-19

(updated as of April 30, 2021)

The National Archives is committed to the health and safety of our visitors and staff. We are continuing to monitor the situation regarding COVID-19. National Archives staff will continue to serve the public remotely by responding to emailed requests for records and [History Hub](#) inquiries. Finally, all in-person public programs and events are suspended until further notice. We will continue to update the public as agency guidance becomes available. Follow the National Archives at Kansas City on [Facebook](#) or on Twitter [@KCArchives](#).

GENERAL INFORMATION: The National Archives is open Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Closed on weekends and Federal holidays. Hours are subject to change due to special programs and weather.

The National Archives is located at 400 West Pershing Road, Kansas City, Missouri, 64108, and is home to historical records dating from the 1820s to the 1990s created or received by Federal agencies in Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota.

For more information, call 816-268-8000, email kansascity.educate@nara.gov or visit www.archives.gov/kansas-city. Tweet us [@KCArchives](#). Follow us on Instagram at: [kansascity.archives](https://www.instagram.com/kansascity.archives). Find us on Facebook www.facebook.com/nationalarchiveskansascity.

