

# **“What Do I Do with All My stuff?” Organizing to Preserve & Pass Down Wednesdays with Witcher**

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## **Understanding the power of our stories**

- What we do is really important, on so many levels and in so many ways.
- How we do it does not evidence that importance as much as it should—and that doesn't serve us well.
- We're losing a lot!

## **The crisis upon us...**

- We continue to see the “aging out” of the generation of born-at-the-US-bicentennial genealogists.
- Families continue to appreciate the gravity of all the “gathered stuff” and lament, “OMG, what am I going to do with all this “stuff?!”
- Virtual and born-digital data is not being well tended.
- We've been at this for a more than a generation, and we still really aren't committed to a solution.

## **Explore how we are doing our research**

- Are we doing research or collecting stuff?
- We may not be leaving our collections in good order because we are not being our best selves—we are not doing our best work.
- Genealogical Proof Standard
  1. Reasonably exhaustive research has been conducted.
  2. Each statement of fact has a complete and accurate source citation.
  - 3. The evidence is reliable and has been skillfully correlated and interpreted.**
  4. Any contradictory evidence has been resolved.
  - 5. The conclusion has been soundly reasoned and coherently written.**

## **Some very simple things we can do**

- Marco Level
  - ✓ Keep It Simple
  - ✓ Write-up your research.
  - ✓ Organize your research
  - ✓ Explain your organization in multiple places throughout our files, physical and virtual.
  - ✓ Have someone review our explanation for clarity.
- ✓ Micro Level
  - ✓ Meaningfully label every folder, paper and digital.
  - ✓ Create mini-narratives for each folder, section, notebook, etc.
  - ✓ Include generous copies (both electronic and paper) of your keyed family history data.
  - ✓ Don't leave it to someone else to folder your data.
  - ✓ Periodically ask a family member, or genie buddy, if your organization, your filing and archiving system, makes sense.