

SAN RAMON VALLEY

GENEALOGICAL

SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER

P.O. Box 305
Diablo, CA 94528

Editor: Dorothy Stanton

Meetings: 10 a.m.
3rd Tuesday of month
(except August & December)
Danville Women's Club House
242 W. Linda Mesa Avenue
Danville, CA 94526

Volume VI No. 1

June 1990

NEXT MEETING: JUNE 19, 1990



PROGRAM: LOCAL LIBRARIES



BASIC GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH SOURCES

This month's program topic is a rescheduling of April's meeting -- well worth waiting for! SRVGS Educational Chairperson BETTE KOT, who earned her Master's degree in Library Sciences at UC Berkeley, will guide us to some of the untapped resources for genealogical research in LOCAL PUBLIC LIBRARIES.



LAST MONTH

May was our Annual Business Meeting with installation of the 1990-91 SRVGS Board of Officers. Part of the meeting was devoted to a farewell tribute to JEAN BLACKMUR, who is returning to her "hometown" roots in Great Barrington, MA. Besides presenting Jean with a Lifetime Membership so that she can keep in touch with us, several members (MARILYN FULLAM, PEGGY FRAZIER, BETTE KOT, & PATTY ERICKSON) reminisced about the genealogy class at the Veteran's Hall in Danville and the first meeting of our society at the Danville Library five years ago -- all organized by Jean! We wish Jean and Arnold happiness in their new home and will expect to see them again when they make their promised return visits to California.

THANKS to PEGGY FRAZIER and all who brought materials and helped set up for the very helpful "Book Browse and Sale".

THANKS also to the May Luncheon Committee, PATTY ERICKSON, DIANA HANCOCK, BETTY ANGELL, HELEN ROACH, ELLEN FULTON and MARGARET DOUGHERTY, for the very enjoyable third part of our meeting.



NEWLY ELECTED BOARD FOR 1990-91

President: BARBARA O'RAND
1st V-P: FRANCES LLOYD
2nd V-P (program): PAT MONTEATH
3rd V-P (membership): CAROL GLOVER
Recording Secretary: JANE STEINER
Corresponding Sec'y: JO BOLENBAKER
Treasurer: JESS SUTFIN
Parliamentarian: MARILYN FULLAM

[Committees are listed on page 2.]

A big THANK YOU to all who were willing to take responsibility for the work of our society so we can all benefit.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

JUNE

- 12 - Tuesday 10 AM Irish Interest Group [see p.3]; 7:30 PM Livermore-Amador GS meeting, 1886 College Ave. Livermore
- 12 - Tuesday 9-12, Friends of the Archives Workshop "Researching PA Records from CA -- Part II" by Helen Graves. 1000 Commodore, San Bruno. Call 876-9009 for reservation; \$10 at door.
- 13 - Wednesday 9-12, Nat'l Archives Staff Workshop: "Merchant Marine Records" by Neil Thomsen. Reserved as above; \$7.50. 10 AM, East Bay GS at Mormon Center, Oakland.
- 14 - Thursday 10:30 AM & 1 PM, SRVGS German Interest Group; 7:30 PM Contra Costa Co. GS Meeting, City Council Chambers, Parkside Dr., Concord. Speaker: Kate Prunte on "German Research".
- 19 - Tuesday 10 AM SRVGS Meeting [see p.1]; 1:30 PM, ROOTS III Interest Group [see p. 3]
- 26 - Tuesday SRVGS Library Trip to State Library in Sacramento. Meet at 8 AM, behind Lucky's at Diablo Rd., Danville to carpool.

JULY

- 3 - Tuesday 10 AM, SRVGS Board Meeting. ALL MEMBERS WELCOME!
- 9 - Monday 9 AM - 12 noon Nat'l Archives Workshop: "Basic Genealogy" by Claude Hopkins, 1000 Commodore Dr, San Bruno. \$7.50.
- 10 - Tuesday 10 AM Irish Interest Group; 7:30 PM LAGS [see June 12 above]
- 11 - Wednesday 10 AM East Bay GS Meeting, Oakland
- 13 - Thursday 7:30 PM CCCGS Meeting, Concord
- 14 - Saturday 1:30 PM California GS Meeting, 300 Brannan St., SF; topic: "Establishing an Archive in Your Home" by Mary-Ellen Jones, ret. Archivist, Bancroft Library.
- 17 - Tuesday 10 AM SRVGS Meeting
- 24-29 American Historical Soc. of Germans from Russia 21st International convention, Radisson Hotel, 500 Leisure Ln, Sacramento. For info contact: Henry Ehly, 9437 Pueblo Ct, Stockton, CA 95209.

AUGUST

- 15-18 Federation of Genealogists' annual conference "Windows to the Past" will be in Salt Lake City, UT. For information write: Windows to the Past, P.O. Box 1144, Salt Lake City, UT 84110.

[Some calendar items extracted from "Friends of the Archives" CONSOLIDATED GENEALOGICAL CALENDAR received via Peggy Frazier's MODEM]

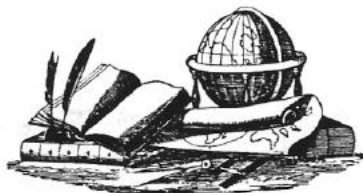
➤ **WELCOME!** to New Member: HOMER L. BREM, 2130 Canyon Lakes Dr., San Ramon (735-9525). Researching: DAVIS, TX & SC; DURHAM, TX, NC

➤ 1990-91 COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

OFFICERS to Contact

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 Friends of the Archives Rep.: FRANCES LLOYD
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 Hospitality: KATE PRUNTE
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 Library Trips: MARY JO HOSTENNY
 Newsletter Editor: DOROTHY STANTON
 Newsletter Mailing: BARBARA DITTIG
 Program Taping: WIN KYNETT
 Publicity: BETTY ANGELL
 Tape Library: BOB HEACOX



SPECIAL INTEREST STUDY GROUPS

GERMAN GROUP Meets June 14 at Kate Prunte's, 91 Madera Ct. Danville. German Interest is at 10:30 AM; "German for Genealogists" meets at 1 PM. Call 838-9873 a week before class.

IRISH GROUP Meets June 11, 10 AM at Carol Glover's, 333 Goshen Ct., San Ramon (829-7207).

PUBLISHING GROUP - No meetings scheduled until September.

ROOTS III Beginners meet June 19 1:30 PM at Shirley Terry's, 301 Almond Ct., San Ramon (829-7787); July 17 meet at Sandy Aberer's, 110 El Nido Ct., Diablo (837-8271)

SOUTHERN GROUP - No meeting scheduled until September.

RESEARCH HELPS

[SRVGS member KATE PRUNTE shares with us some of her experiences during an ancestor-hunting trip to Germany in which she landed in the middle of a family feud! She also has some advice for those planning a similar trip.]

A GERMAN RESEARCH TRIP: ALL THE WRONG MOVES IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION by Kate Prunte

The first thing I did was get on the wrong train. To this day I have to screw my mouth up funny to put any subtle difference into the pronunciation of Minden and Menden. The subtlety was lost on me as I listened to the loud speaker in the train station. One stop later, my error realized, I changed trains for Menden where my husband's great-grandparents married.

I visited the Catholic church the next morning, and my visit was fruitful, but not from the church records. The priest told me about a Prunte who was an eye doctor in town. Eye Doctor Prunte had closed shop at noon and left town. His secretary, however, was agreeable to letting me leave a note. In my best school-girl German, I told him why I was there, where I was staying, and that I hoped he'd call. I wasn't back in my guest house for five minutes when I received a call. Not from the Eye Doctor, but from a Prunte in the next small town, whom the Eye Doctor's secretary had called, because she knew he was interested in genealogy. We agreed to meet the next morning for coffee and to share information.

The distinguished Mr. Burglar Alarm Maker Prunte called for me the next morning and whisked me away with his wife in his Mercedes to the little village of Wickede, where my husband's family originated. He told me we were going to visit a woman, whom he did not know, but who had a lot of information

about Prüntes. My heart sank; I asked her name. He was astounded that I knew her, and I was highly embarrassed as I sat sipping coffee in "Cousin" Magda's parlor. Five years previously, I had met Magda through relatives in Münster. Although I did not understand all of what was said then, the gist of it was that Magda was the black sheep of the family. For that reason, I had not written to her that I was coming. Now I was caught -- empty-handed -- asking for help. Cousin Magda would have it no other way than that I checked out of the guest house and into her spare room. Mr. Burglar Alarm Maker, after sharing with us that the first Prunte showed up on the tax rolls of 1535, agreed with her, adding that the place where I was staying "was not the nicest". Magda's daughter drove me back to Menden to collect my things and settle my bill. The only problem was that the innkeeper had left for the weekend to visit his in-laws in another town. What to do . . . I finally left the key, some money, and a note saying that I had been found by "relative" who insisted I stay with them. I gave Magda's phone number in case I owed him more money -- the price of my room had never been discussed. Like a thief in the night, I crept away.

Back at Magda's I faced further embarrassment. I told her I would stay with her for a day or two and then move on to Münster, where I was expected. This was an admission [cont'd on next page]

[GERMAN trip cont'd]

that I had written to some of the family, just not to her! She insisted on calling the family in Münster, and telling them to send someone for me on Tuesday. The Church books in Wickede were full of information for me. Magda told me her side of the story about her marriage and estate battle with her mother-in-law. Magda's husband died three years after their marriage. She also gave me her opinions of the next women, her husband's cousins, I was to meet.

Once in Münster, I had to explain how I ended up in Wickede before I came to visit them. I gave them their gifts, which I had brought from the States and they gave me a wedding gift for my daughter. Mrs. Retail Baker Prünke then explained her version of Magda's marriage and estate battle. Little doubt was left in my mind but that they thought Magda was a money-grubbing, no-account peasant.

A week later, I was driven to Mr. Wholesale Baker Prünke's where I heard their version of Magda's marriage and battle. But I also learned of their families, and though ours hadn't crossed it yet, we felt surely it would. I also learned that many old people were suspicious of those who asked questions about their families. They had had to carry little green booklets during Hitler's time, proving their Gentile background.

Mr. Wholesale Baker insisted I take his daughter's car and drive to Magda's and meet with Mr. Burglar Alarm Maker. Unfortunately, while I was en route, he was called away again, and I was left with two days to kill with Magda again. My son, who had joined me in Münster was the recipient of strange vibes from Magda's son, who showed the results of never having had a man around the house, and who was perhaps a little light in the loafers. For my son's sake, I agreed to make my next stop at the archdiocesan archives in Paderborn, rather than at the next little church up the road. Prior to 1850, the Prünkes had gone to church here. You just wouldn't believe how embarrassed I was at Paderborn.

If you are going to Germany, the parishes will open their books to you without much more than family history pages. Some will let you take the books and pore over them; others will insist on "helping" you. If you have relatives, let them ALL know you are coming, stay out of family feuds. Remember that everyone closes up at noon on Saturday

and NEVER go to the archdiocesan archives on patron saint's day or without an appointment. Thanks to LDS, you can do a lot of research here before you leave.



LIBRARY HELPS

NATIONAL ARCHIVES AT SAN BRUNO

REMINDER: The Archives will not be open on Saturdays until after Labor Day.

MAYFLOWER & EBGs LIBRARY

Mr. Don Stewart has accepted the position of librarian for the Society of Mayflower Descendants Library in Oakland. He will alternate on Mondays with Kathy Beals, a member of both the Mayflower and EBGs. The Library will be open 9 AM to 4 PM Mondays. The Library will also be open on Thursday mornings from 9 AM to 12 noon and staffed by SMD members. [The Live Oak, Mar/Apr 1990]

OAKLAND FAMILY HISTORY CENTER

The FHC (Mormon Temple) News Notes Feb. 1990 announces that they now have all the 1900 Census Schedules. They also have the CA Soundex. They will be happy to have patrons donate copies of the Soundex; check with the staff about the procedure.

FAMILY HISTORY LIBRARY: ACQUISITIONS UPDATE

Indexing of U.S. Passenger and Ship Arrival Records

The March/April 1990 issue of the *News of the Family History Library* warns that although genealogical newsletters occasionally report that passenger arrival records for Ellis Island are being indexed, they are premature. Proposals have been made to index the port of NY for 1892 to 1924, but at this time, no indexing is being done by the FHL, Ellis Island Fdtn, Ellis Island Commission or any commercial enterprise.

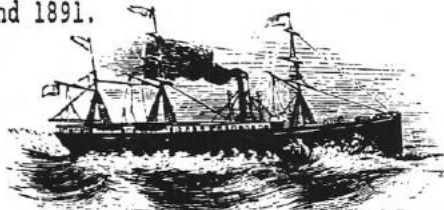
The Balch Institute at Temple University has indexed earlier passenger lists, including many for the port of NY. Although there is no public access to the index database, immigrant names from the Balch Institute project have been published in:

Glazier, *Famine Immigrants: Lists of Irish Immigrants Arriving at the Port of New York 1846-1851-7 vols.* + *Glazier & Filby, Germans to America: Lists of Passengers Arriving at U.S. Ports, 1850-1855. 9 vols.*

[LIBRARY HELPS cont'd]

The National Archives and the FHL have 27 microfilms that list ships (not passengers) arriving at NY harbor between 1789 and 1919.

A volunteer project to index the names of ships arriving at NY from 1820 to 1897 is being coordinated by Precision Indexing of Bountiful, UT. In the future the project may index the names of passengers arriving between 1847 and 1891.

HAMBURG PASSENGER LISTS at the FHL

The March/April 1990 issue of *News of the Family History Library* explains the importance of the Hamburg Passenger Lists and their availability at the Family History Library in Salt Lake through its local branch Family History Centers.

Almost one out of three central and eastern European emigrants is found on the Hamburg passenger lists. Most went to the US. (Many Europeans, however, embarked from Bremen, LeHavre, Amsterdam, Rotterdam, or Antwerp. Records of these ports no longer exist.)

The Hamburg lists are one of the finest single sources of information for locating an immigrant ancestor's place of origin in central or eastern Europe. The original Hamburg passenger records are stored in the State Archives at Hamburg. In 1984, the Museum for Hamburg History opened an Historic Emigration Office. They will search microfilm copies of the passenger lists for a fee of approximately \$30.00 per year searched. The address is Hamburg-Information GmbH, Museum for Hamburgische Geschichte Holstenwall 24, D-2000 Hamburg 36, Federal Republic of Germany.

In 1964 and 1975, the FHL obtained copies of the same lists and indexes. You can personally search for your ancestor in the Hamburg passenger lists and indexes using microfilmed records at the FHL or at any of its family history centers. These records are listed in FHL Catalog under the heading "Germany, Hamburg, Hamburg - Emigration and Immigration." The collection consists of the following:

1. Direct Hamburg Passenger Lists - 1850-1934 For 1850 to 1854 these lists are alphabetical by the first letter of the surname. For 1855 to 1934 the lists are arranged chronologically by ship. Separate indexes are available for 1855 to 1934 (126 films).

Each index covers a year or part of a year. Surnames of heads of households are alphabetized by first letter only.

2. Fifteen-Year Index, Direct Hamburg Passenger Lists, 1856-1871 (10 films) - This index, prepared by members of the LDS Church in Hamburg, includes the names of passengers sailing from Hamburg from 1856 to 1871 in one alphabetical card index. It is convenient to use, but is not complete.

3. Indirect Hamburg Passenger Lists, 1852-1910 (81 films) - Many emigrants departed Hamburg for England, where they traveled overland to a British port, such as Liverpool, Southampton, or Glasgow. Other indirect routes took emigrants through LeHavre and Antwerp. For June to December 1854 these lists are alphabetical by the first letter of the surname. For 1855 to 1910 the lists are arranged chronologically by ship. Separate indexes are available for 1855 to 1910 (12 films). Each index covers a period of one to several years and surnames of heads of households are alphabetized by first letter only.

HAMBURG POLICE RECORDS

The city of Hamburg has a resident registration office [Einwohnermeldeamt] under the jurisdiction of the police department. It is responsible for recording the arrivals, departures, and residences of the people in the city. The office also issues passports.

The FHL has 941 films that list individuals who were not citizens of Hamburg but who temporarily resided there before their departure from 1834 to 1929. The information varies but may include full name, date of birth or age, place of birth, occupation, former residence, place of employment, sponsor's verification, physical description.

Records available at the FHL include:

Passport Records for Citizens of Hamburg and Nonresidents, 1852-1929 listed in the catalog under "Germany, Hamburg - Emigration and Immigration."

Registers of Non-Citizen Workers, 1834-1890 - Non-citizens registered under the year they arrived in Hamburg with address updates each time they moved. Catalogued under "Germany, Hamburg, Hamburg - Occupations."

GERMANS IN THE MIDWEST

Looking for German ancestors settling in the Mid-west? Try Ship's Passenger Lists for the Port of New Orleans. Write Cape Girardeau Public Library, Cape Girardeau, MO 63701. They also have an index for immigrants coming through New Orleans after 1850.

[Diablo Descendants March 1990]



TAPE REVIEWS

The following tapes, reviewed by SRVGS members, are new to our JOHN KOPCIE MEMORIAL TAPE COLLECTION. The purchase of tapes is made possible by your donation of \$1.00 when you borrow the tape for one month. Tape Librarian BOB HEACOX brings the collection to each meeting.

"ANCESTORS ON THE RUN: THREE CENTURIES OF MIGRATION IN ENGLAND"

Tape Speaker: Anthony J. Camp

Review by Jane Steiner

Much of this taped talk is a very interesting history of England, but doesn't offer too much for the genealogist. However, before the end he comes up with some worthwhile suggestions.

The early vital records in England were kept in the individual parishes, and there were 12,000 parishes in England! If you know the exact parish of your ancestor, you are indeed lucky. But if you are looking for an English ancestor, and don't know where he lived, some of the following may be helpful.

1. A Baptism Index is available on the IGI from Salt Lake City.

2. Was your ancestor an apprentice in England? There were registers of apprentices. Also, there was a tax on apprentices, and those tax lists are available.

3. Did your ancestor marry in England before coming to this country? There are many marriage indexes produced by local family history societies.

4. Your ancestor might have been mentioned in a family will in England. There is a registry of wills. These indexes are found in the series known as "The Index Library" by the British Record Society.

5. Tombstones are another possibility for you, though they were primarily for people who had property. There is a registry of property deeds from 1708 to the present.

6. Ownership of property gave the right to vote. Lists of voters from 1702 to 1872 are found in Poll Books.

7. Finally, from 1851 on, a census was taken every ten years in England. More and more indexes of these are being compiled by local family history societies.

Mr. Camp mentioned three books published in England: David Hay, *Family History and Local History in England*; Arthur Willis, *Genealogy for Beginners*; and *My Ancestor was a Migrant* (I didn't get the author's name.)

Mr. Camp is a capable and clear speaker with a pleasant accent. If you have English ancestors or are interested in English history, I recommend it.

"GENEALOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON NATURALIZATION"

Tape Speaker: David Stoddard

Tape Review by Frances Becker

Unfortunately the introduction to this tape is cut off and the information as to who David Stoddard is, and where this lecture is taking place are not on the tape. During the process of the tape it becomes apparent that the meeting is in Mass. and that Mr. Stoddard is a genealogist and English teacher from Connecticut.

The information on Naturalization is in three sections: 1. The papers or documents, 2. Federal laws and their influence on immigrants, and 3. Where to find the documents.

By far the most important piece of paper is the Declaration of Intent. Sometimes these are called primary declarations. Depending on the time your ancestor filed these papers, what you find in them may be a "gold mine" or a bust. In the early days, where you find them will vary from county to county and court to court. You should always start with the Federal courts and work down to the local courts to try to locate the documents.

From 1906 to 1986 the forms have been standardized and contain quite a lot of information about the immigrant and his family. From 1907 the names of the wife and children are given. From 1906 to the present the papers are under the jurisdiction of the Dept. of Justice and do not have public access. You have to fill out form N-585 to request forms for access. This form can usually be found at the Branch Archives.

After the Civil War men were granted citizenship along with their honorable discharge papers. This was automatic, so you will not find Naturalization papers for your ancestor if he was a Union soldier. Many Irish in New England came under this law.

Unfortunately Mr. Stoddard forgot most of the time to repeat questions that were asked from the audience, so his answers had little meaning. He used an overhead projector and did not read what was being projected. This leaves the listener with some blank spots. However, there is much good information on this tape, and it would certainly be worth your time to check it out for your own use.



PLANNING A CEMETERY VISIT?

If you're thinking of looking for some ancestors in cemeteries this summer, here are some "down-to-earth" suggestions:

OLD CEMETERIES

Want to visit an old cemetery? Barbara H. Russell, in the May/June 1989 CSGA N/L, suggests writing to the local library, historical society or cemetery sexton to locate the one you want. [Or try US Geological Survey topographical maps] Some are in the middle of private land, so be sure to get the owner's permission--the farmer might not object to your visit, but his cows might!

Many old cemeteries are poorly kept and weed overgrown. Watch where you put your hands; snakes love the warmth of flat stones or like to hide under fallen ones.

Ticks are another problem. Most can be removed with a cotton pad saturated with alcohol to kill the tick so it can be removed, head and all. Some ticks are infected with either "Tick Fever", (Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever) or the newer, more deadly Lyme's Disease. If, after being bitten by a tick you notice a fever, rash, or swelling of the lymph glands, SEE A DOCTOR.

Suggested items to take to an old cemetery: a small camp shovel, or large garden trowel, garden gloves, styrofoam blocks for rubbing moss off the stones. Never use stiff bristle brushes, or any abrasive material to clean the stone; to do so could cause irreparable damage.

The lettering on worn stones can be made more legible with blue chalk, mud or shaving foam scraped off with the flat edge of a card (if no rain is expected, wash it off) or try a "rubbing". Rice paper or any strong but lightweight paper rubbed with charcoal, chalk or crayon will work. Caution: if the stone is very old, don't apply much pressure. Sometimes just spraying the stone with water or taking a photo to catch shadows is enough.

WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT TO FIND?

Cemetery records are imperfect and often contain errors. Carvers made mistakes, misunderstood local pronunciations ("Jos. R." for "Josiah"), or the stone was erected long after the fact. Be cautious; check the facts against other records.

However, cemetery records are the best substitute for death records. They antedate almost any other record. Sometimes they give

valuable information such as birth date, place of birth, parentage, and military service. Family plots give clues to relationships. Women's maidennames are seldom given but placement of the grave often clearly shows the relationship to a spouse.

CITY CEMETERIES

Larger city cemeteries, while better kept up, vary in the response that can be expected from their sexton's offices. Some are more willing than others to check their records. One Chicago cemetery responded to a query with the following:

"Our records do not include many things researchers request, like date and place of birth, date of death, maiden names and such information that may appear on a death certificate. We do not, nor are we required to, have Death Certificates. Our records are taken from a State Burial Permit, which does not include such data.

"Our information will include the names of deceased person, as buried, the date of burial and the location of burial. We will not divulge confidential matters such as names, addresses and phone numbers of any listed survivors and/or relatives.

However, if you are interested in having us provide you with what information we have or do not have, please list the full names and any other information you may have of persons you want us to research. Allow ample time for us to fit the work into our regular schedule."

[Extracted from "Vacation Time is Just Around the Corner" by Barbara H. Russell, CSGA N/L May/June 1989; "Digging for Facts in Cemetery Records" by Ruby Markland, Ancestry Vol.VIII #1; "Cemetery Information" Immigrant Gen. Soc. N/L June 1987; *Genealogical Helper* article Mar-Apr 1988, contrib. by Ginny Rei]

The following news items will be GOOD NEWS for those who have found family gravestones missing or damaged:

ILLINOIS - A recently passed law in Illinois makes it illegal to disturb graves or grave markers that are more than 100 years old without permission from the Illinois Historical Preservation Agency. [Decatur GS N/L 4/90]

ARIZONA - The first of three young men to be sentenced for causing up \$10,000 damage to a pioneer cemetery in Mesa was ordered to serve 3 years' probation and provide 360 hours of court-designated community work. [Phoenix Gazette Oct. 1989]

CALIFORNIA -- KEEP AWAY!

"If ever a state was suffering from an excess of immigration it is California. There are too many people in California. There is no need for any more lawyers, doctors, clerks or shopkeepers. The quota is filled. And there are not only too many people now, but I am decidedly of the opinion that in proportion to the population, there are more non-producers at the present time than in any other State in the Union. Keep away from California altogether or at all events keep away until a change for the better is made in the condition of affairs, and you will never regret it."

Editorial in *Kansas City Journal of Commerce*, dated 1 January 1878.

[From *Ancestors West*, SBCGS, Vo. 16, No 1, Mar 1990 via CSGA N/L June 1990]

The CSGA N/L Editor adds this comment: "To what do suppose this editor was referring? There were no clogged freeways, and no smog"

DUES REMINDER!

DON'T FORGET to pay your dues by July 1 to be included in the new 1990-91 SRVGS Membership Directory. Send to Carol Glover [see p.2] A membership form and envelope were included in the May 1990 issue of our Newsletter.



HAVE A GREAT 4TH OF JULY!

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FIRST CLASS MAIL