

SAN RAMON VALLEY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER

P. O. Box 305
Diablo, CA 94528-8305
President: Dorothy Stanton
Editor:
Meetings: 10:00 a.m.
3rd Tues. of month
(except August & December)
Golden State Rehabilitation Hospital
7777 Norris Canyon Road
San Ramon, CA

Vol. XIV No. 1

June 1998

THIS MONTH

June 16, 1998

How to Research and Write a Historical Biography of an Ancestor

SRVGS Member Muriel James is a teacher, an experienced speaker and author of about 17 books including the best-selling *Born to Win*. Her talk includes two Case Studies: Hanserd Knollys, 1509-1693 and John Sayre Marshall, 1846-1922.

LAST MONTH

Reported by Betty Vail

With a depth of knowledge and a dash of humor, Nancy Morebeck discussed the problems and rewards of researching Civil War draft records. Beginning with a brief summary of the compulsory conscription called by President Lincoln in 1863, she traced the history of the draft, explaining why only 2.5% of those whose names were called actually served and why 5% of those who went to war were substitutes.

Under the draft regulations, enrolling officers were to enroll all persons subject to military duty, men born in the United States between 1818-1843 and persons of foreign birth who had declared their intention to become a citizen. Two separate lists were generated. The first contained the names of those who were unmarried and between the age of twenty and twenty-five; the second list contained all others born during the designated years. The board was also to make an exact and complete roll of the names of persons drafted and the order in which their name was drawn from a box by a blindfolded man.

The draft generated five record groups that are valuable to genealogists: **Consolidated Lists, Descriptive Rolls, Drafted Alien Files, Medical Record Examinations and Statement of Substitutes.**

The **Consolidated List**, the most consistent, includes the names of all males born between 1818-1843 whether they were drafted or not. It records their name, residence, age race, profession and place

of birth (state or county). Copies of these can be acquired by mail.

The **Descriptive Rolls** were physical descriptions to identify the men very much as a driver's license does today. If an exemption was granted, the reason given is often very specific. Some states' records survived but some did not. In order to access these files, located at the National Archives, you need to know the Congressional District in which your ancestor lived in 1863.

Drafted Alien Files are similar to the first papers filed by new arrivals in the United States. They are especially valuable to those who have Irish ancestors because they sometimes indicate the place in Ireland in which the applicant was born. You do not need to know the congressional district in which your ancestor lived in order to access these files. These files may be found at the National Archives, 8601 Adelphi, College Park, MD 10740-6001.

Medical Record of Examinations is a report of the "physicals" given to determine if those selected for the draft were fit for service. These records have survived in some states but not in others.

Statement of Substitutes is a list of those drafted to serve in place of an individual who paid them. The name of the draftee is also given. These lists are incomplete. Unfortunately most of these records are only available at the National Archives. All of the lists

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SRVGS EVENTS

- 2 TUESDAY - 10:00 a.m., Joint Board Meeting at Frances Lloyd's, 210 Town & Country, Danville. This is a joint board meeting for the outgoing and incoming board members, lunch will be served after the meeting. All members welcome.
- 16 TUESDAY - 10:00 a.m., General Meeting, 777 Norris Canyon Road, "How to Research and Write a Historical Biography of an Ancestor; Two Case Studies: Hanserd Knollys, 1598-1693, John Sayre Marshall, 1846-1922". Muriel James
- 23 TUESDAY - 9:00 a.m., Library trip to Santa Clara Library. Meet in the back parking lot of the Lucky store on Diablo Road in Danville or in the upper parking lot of the Orchard Nursery in Lafayette at 9:30 a.m.

OTHER EVENTS

- 9 TUESDAY - 7:30 p.m., Livermore-Amador Genealogical Society, Congregation Beth Emek, 1886 College Ave., Livermore.
- 15 FRIDAY - 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. - Military - Part 2: Civil War to World War II, National Archives, 1000 Commodore Drive, San Bruno. Information/Registration 650 876-9009.
- 25 THURSDAY - 7:00 p.m., Concord/Walnut Creek Family History Center, 3700 Concord Blvd., Concord, 686-1766. "How to Classes" Tips on British Isles Research, instructor, Joyce Dye.



- 7 TUESDAY - 10:00 a.m., Board Meeting at Frances Lloyd's, 210 Town & Country, Danville. All members welcome.
- 21 TUESDAY - 10:00 a.m., General Meeting, 777 Norris Canyon Road Speaker: Robert Wendlinger "Memory Triggers for Your Family History."

NO MEETING OR NEWSLETTER IN AUGUST

OFFICERS TO CONTACT

President: Dorothy Stanton, 820-3757
Vice President: Victoria daRosa, 820-7866
Membership: Patty Erickson, 229-0889
10 Ridge Place
Pleasant Hill, CA 9452-1609
Annual Dues:
Individual \$15
Family \$20

Membership year: June 1 to May 31

NEWSLETTER

Editor:
Mailing: Barbara Dittig 648-9364
Lucy Carver 837-3146
This newsletter is published each month except August and December.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

SOUTHERN - Meets 2nd Tuesday, June 9, 10:00 a.m. at Frances Becker's, 3264 Eccelston Ave. Walnut Creek. No meeting in July. Call Frances Becker, 934-4962, for information.

IRISH - Meets 2nd Wednesday, at the home of Patty Erickson, . Next meetings June 10 & July 8. Call Patty at 229-0889.

CALIFORNIA - Meets with the Irish group.

MAC COMPUTER - Meets the Wednesday after the general meeting, June 17th, 10:00 a.m., Place to be announced.. Call Barbara Dittig, 648-9364, for information.

PUBLISHING - Next meeting June 29, 10 a.m. at the home of Barbara Johnson, 616 Camino Amigo, Danville. Call Jane Steiner, 283-0867 for details.

ROOTS USERS - Learning to use Palladium Ultimate Family Tree, will meet in Room AB, 7777 Norris Canyon Road, Tuesday, May 19th, following the general meeting.

INTERNET - Interested members should contact Robert daRoza by e-mail, vrदारोza@ix.netcom.com, to be added to the SRVGS list.

[LAST MONTH continued from page 1]
except the Case File of Drafted Aliens are at the National Archives I, Seventh & Pennsylvania, NW, Washington, D.C. 20408. In *Civil War Draft Records, An Index to the 38th Congressional District of 1863* Ms. Morebeck gives information which enables you to do the research yourself or to hire a researcher. This book can be ordered by contacting the author at 409 Dennis Dr., Vacaville, CA 95688-2119.

Ms. Morebeck suggested checking the newspapers of the period for details of specific drafts. She also recommended the military research outline, an LDS publication which can be bought at most Family History Centers and *Where to Write for Confederate War Records* by Desmond Walls Allen.

FROM CLAUDIA MORTENSEN:

NATIONAL ARCHIVES RESEARCHER

Claudia attended a Prince William Co., VA Seminar recently. She found a researcher who will do work at the National Archives for a reasonable fee and who is reliable and reputable in his area. He is Craig R. Scott, CGRS, FSA Scot, 28-18 Ft. Evans Rd., N.E. #101, Leesburg, VA 20176-4429; tel: 703-443-8852; fax 703-443-9203; e-mail <willowbend@mediasoft.net> Mr. Scott also owns Willow Bend Books in Leesburg.

FROM SHIRLEY TERRY:

IMMIGRANTS ARRIVING IN NEW YORK

I found an interesting tip in an old internet posting regarding what to do after you've found your ancestor in an index to passenger lists. First check the microfilm of the ship's passenger list, and then if the ship arrived in NYC, check the "marine news" in the back of the New York Times, which is also on microfilm, for the week the ship arrived. There might be a note about having seen icebergs, shipwrecks, etc. Sometimes they even "announced" some of the passengers' arrivals. This might be a place to find deaths that occurred on the crossing also.

CONFERENCE SYLLABI - Did you know that you can usually order syllabi from most of the national conferences? Syllabi contain the handouts from almost all the workshops offered at a conference. The Spring issue of "The Forum" said there was a limited supply of FGS conference syllabi for 1996 and 1997 available for purchase from the FGS Business Office (see address above), but they might be sold out by now.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES NEWS

Sierra-Pacific Region - San Bruno

The National Archives in San Bruno is exceeding its geographic mission of preserving records for Northern California, Hawaii, Nevada, American Samoa and the Pacific Trust Territories, by acquiring microfilm of immigration records from the East coast. Sutro Library in San Francisco holds New York passenger arrival records for Jan 7, 1820-June 17, 1874 (Record Group M237). NARA has focused on extending past Sutro's holdings.

Some of the record groups (e.g. the Passenger List Indexes in T516 and T621) are not yet complete. [(Soundex) to Passenger Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, NY, July 1, 1902-Dec 31, 1943. T62.] Patrons may donate to the National Archives Gift Fund and specify which microfilm reels they wish purchased with their contribution. Current cost is \$13 per reel [SF Bay Area Jewish Gen Soc *ZichronNote*, Sviii:1, p.13, verified 4/15/98 by Contra Costa Co Gen Soc.]

DUTCH NAMING PATTERNS

(Also Scottish)

The custom was that the 1st son be named for paternal grandfather; 2nd son named for his maternal grandfather; 1st daughter for her maternal grandmother; 2nd daughter for her paternal grandmother. If 4 children were born then all 4 grandparents are known.



INTERNET CONNECTION

Denise Schoo

Using the Internet is a powerful way to get access to information from around the world. The Internet is made up of thousands of computer databases which are linked together. The goal of this page to assist all of our members in their research efforts. The Net is constantly changing therefore not everything described here will work well or all the time as sites close, and files and addresses change. Due to my move to the state of Washington I will not be able to send these addresses hyperlinked for you, but you can still contact me at: NiseyS@AOL.com

National Park Service U.S. Colored Troops Database

A database of over 230,000 names of the United States Colored Troops (USCT) has been developed by the NPS and its partners in the Civil War Soldiers and Sailors (CWSS) project.

<http://www.itd.nps.gov/cwss/usct.html>

Vital Records Information, United States

This page contains information about where to obtain vital records from each state, territory and county of the United States. See the guidelines for information on how to order vital records.

<http://www.inlink.com/~nomi/vitalrec/staterec.html>

JewishGen Family Finder

The *JewishGen Family Finder* (JGFF) is a database of ancestral towns and surnames currently being researched by Jewish genealogists worldwide.

<http://www.jewishgen.org/jgff/>

Swedish Surnames and Researchers Database

This is a searchable database where all of you, interested in Swedish genealogy, can enter the names you are interested in and search for other researchers researching the same families/persons that you are.

<http://www.acc.umu.se/~petersj/genealog/databas/database.html>

Federation of East European Family History Societies

A new 11 Meg Website Index was just created by the FEEFHS full text search engine. Use it to find a hypertext index to each of the 211,898 unique words in the 3,631 files here. This "destination" website is built to provide you with answers to genealogy questions.

<http://feefhs.org/>

Cornwall Online's Genealogy Pages

A listing of genealogical data files for you to download. These files contain information pertaining to Cornwall, England.

<http://www.cornwall-online.co.uk/genealogy.htm>

Our Spanish Heritage

History and genealogy of South Texas and Northeast Mexico.

<http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/Ranch/5442/>

Summary of Records and Services in the United States

This is a data base to which genealogical records should be searched and what is available in the United States, including the Armenian Genealogical Society's microfilm collection. All records pertinent to your family should be considered and searched.

<http://www.itsnet.com/home/gfa/chap8.html>

SRVGS NEWS

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

FIRST, I would like to thank Shirley Terry and the rest of the 1997-98 Board and Committee Members for giving their time to SRVGS to keep it functioning. Our Society has so much to offer our members because of those who are willing to give up some of their valuable time for the benefit of us all.

A special "THANK YOU!" goes to Denise Schoo who took over the newsletter in February after Betty Vail had done such an excellent job for a year and a half. We are sorry to see Denise leave our area -- we were just getting to know her. In the short time she has been a member she has been a great asset to our society, not only with the newsletter but, also, for her generous help to those just getting started with computers.

SECOND, I want to express my thanks to the new 1998-99 Board. I will need a lot of back-up this year and am glad to have such a great Board who, along with the Committee Chairs, have generously agreed to serve. Unfortunately, we have not found anyone to take the position of Newsletter Editor..

LETTER - Recently I received a letter from Jean Blackmur. Many of you remember that Jean was responsible for getting our Society started over thirteen years ago. She now lives in Massachusetts (and in Florida). Jean writes (in part):

"One of the treats I greatly enjoy is receiving the SRVGS newsletter each month. I always sit down with it and a highlighter pen and underline those things to which I might wish to refer. I usually unstaple the page re: internet for such use. I enjoy following the many wonderful activities of the Society and am continually proud of the terrific job you all do in making it timely, relevant, and worthwhile for genealogists of all capabilities.

We never thought ahead to 1998 and what the future might hold for us. Those first meetings at the old Danville Library were certainly a challenge. In retrospect, you and Marilyn [Fullam], Mary Ella [Parrott], Patty Erickson, the Dotsons, and Betty Kot (of course), Fred Potter, Cliff Gant, Bill Allen and the rest of the dreamers..., it seems we started one heck of a great group..."

NEWSLETTER - Which brings me to my next subject: As Jean points out, the newsletter is an important and vital part of our Society. It is the center of communication for all our members. You are receiving this month's newsletter because Denise gave me a partially-completed file to which I could add the items received at the Board Meeting. We hope there will be one next month. To that end we are hoping to form a Newsletter Committee to make the job lighter. Please read the description [next page] and consider giving your help.

A PERSONAL NOTE: My [newly retired] husband Jim and I will be visiting our new first-grandchild at the time of the June meeting. Alexander Stanton Walsh was born on May 26 in Silver Spring, Maryland, a few days earlier than expected but weighing in at nine pounds! We can't wait to see him, so we leave you in the capable hands of 1st Vice-President Victoria daRoza until the end of June.

Dorothy Stanton

DO WE WANT A NEWSLETTER?

To date the position of Newsletter Editor is unfilled so the SRVGS Board is proposing a Newsletter Committee to produce our newsletter each month. We would like to find several volunteers who would be willing to be responsible for just a section of the newsletter: the Calendar page, the Society News page, Gleanings from the many newsletters and journals we receive each month, the Internet page {Shirley Terry has volunteered to contribute}. Our program reporters already take turns with writing up the speakers each month.

We are hoping to create a newsletter format in MS Word, Wordperfect, etc., which can be used by several editors in turn to put it all together. One person from the committee would need to attend the board meeting (first Tuesday of each month) to collect news items. Please give this your serious consideration. We know we have many members with the computer "know-how" to help. Call Dorothy Stanton (820-3757) or e-mail <dpstant@hotmail.com> Or contact any board member.

FROM SHIRLEY TERRY

The Federation of Genealogical Societies has embarked on a mammoth microfilming project of two major collections whose records need to be preserved and made available to the genealogical community. The records to be microfilmed are the War of 1812 Bounty Land and Pension Files (\$1,250,000) and the Compiled Service Records, Civil War, United States Colored Troops (\$416,000.)

Last month, the SRVGS board voted to donate \$200 from our treasury towards this goal. If any of you, as individuals, wish to donate towards one or the other of these projects, you can send your checks, payable to the the Stern-NARA Gift Fund and designate whether it is for the general fund, War of 1812, or USCT projects. The new

FGS Business Office address effective May 22 will be P.O. Box 200940, Austin TX 78720-0940. Their E-mail address is <fgs-office@fgs.org>.

JUNE LIBRARY TRIP

The Library Trip on June 23 will be to the Santa Clara Public Library, 2635 Homestead Rd., Santa Clara. Meet at 9 a.m. to carpool: in Danville from the parking lot in back of the Lucky Store on Diablo Rd.; from Lafayette meet in the upper parking lot of the Orchard Nursery. The Santa Clara Genealogical Society houses its collection at this library. See your directory for more details. Vern Segelke has arranged for Judy Svoboda to meet us there. Call Vern at 838-8570 to be added to the list or to cancel.

TREASURER'S REPORT

From Quentin Alexander:

Fund Balances 5/31/98	
General Fund	1368.85
Hospitality Fund Balance	260.00
Publications Fund Balance	766.91
Special Projects Fund Balance	200.00
Tape Library Fund Balance	52.11
Library Fund Gifts & Donations	<u>1,210.68</u>
Overall Total Balance	\$3,858.55

AN AWARD

The California State Genealogical Alliance Newsletter for May 1998 reports a **Distinguished Service Award** to FRANCES LLOYD, a longtime member of SRVGS. It states: "Throughout the history of SRVGS she has served in whatever office or capacity was asked of her. Her home has been the main meeting place for the Board meetings, many of the Society's classes and special interest groups." Congratulations! It's well deserved.

CONDOLENCES

SRVGS wishes to express sympathy to members Sue Hughes on the death of her husband and to Nancy Alexander on the death of her mother.

1998-99 COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Alliance Rep: FRANCES LLOYD
Cassette Library : BARBARA DYER
Education: VERN SEGELKE, PATTY
ERICKSON and CAROL GLOVER
FGS Delegate: SHIRLEY TERRY
Historian: NANCY ALEXANDER
Hospitality: PEGGY GIERKE & FRED
POTTER
Legislation: MILLIE FREITAS
Library Trips: VERN SEGELKE
Library Committee: JACK JOHNSON
Publicity: ED O'DONNELL
Special Interest Group Coordinator:
CAROL HUVANE:

:DUES! DUES! DUES!

Yes, it is that time of year again when your dues are to be paid for the coming year! We thank all of you for continuing to support SRVGS and for keeping it a social and educational experience for all of us who are interested in genealogy and the history of our ancestors. Dues are payable by June first and delinquent by July 1, 1998.

Please fill out the form below and return it with your check.

From PATTY ERICKSON, Membership

1998-1999 SVRGS MEMBERSHIP

Name _____ Phone _____

Street _____ City _____

State _____ ZIP _____ - _____ E-mail address _____

Individual membership \$15.00 _____ Family membership \$20.00 _____

_____ Add \$2.00 for postage if you live outside the bay area and are unable to pick up your handbook.

_____ Check here if you wish to contribute to the library book acquisition fund and add the amount to your check.

Please send this form and your check, made payable to SVRGS to:
Patty and Russ Erickson, 10 Ridge Place, Pleasant Hill, CA, 94523-1609.

FOOT-LOGY

SCOT OR SAXON?

During WWII, the town of Hereford, England was flooded with refugees who turned out to be Scottish, Irish, Welsh and Cornish. Phyllis Jackson, a podiatrist of Gloucestershire, noted that many of the refugees of Celtic origin came to her with bunions quite different from those of her English patients. English patients had broad feet with toes forming a "steep angle somewhat pointed from the first to the fifth toe." Celtic refugees had toe tips almost level with one another, and their feet tended to be longer and slimmer (except at the base of the big toe, where bunions form). Taking up archeology, she examined skeletal remains of a few Saxon and Celtic bones from a 6th century cemetery. She found the difference still held. Saxons had feet shaped like the modern English foot. "The cubic bone was slightly crunched in Saxon feet, but more square in Celtic."

[Discovery via Highlander, via Pomona Valley GS May 1998]

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FIRST CLASS MAIL