

SAN RAMON VALLEY

GENEALOGICAL

SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER

P.O. BOX 305
Diablo, CA 94528-8308

President:

Barbara Dyer

Coord. Editor: Sharon Clay

Meetings: 10:00 a.m.

3rd Tues. Of the Month

(Except August & December)

Alamo LDS Church

Stone Valley & Smith Roads - Alamo

Vol. XV| No. 5

November 2000

THIS MONTH -November 21, 2000 PREPARING FOR A RESEARCH TRIP"

David Abrahams has been studying his family history for the past 13 years. During that time he has made many trips around the country and to England. In doing so, he has learned what is essential and how to pack the most into the smallest space. He will discuss the planning of the trip, organization of materials to be taken, tips on conducting interviews, taping the interviews and making copies of photos and other documents. He is past president of the Livermore-Amador Genealogical Society, is a member of the SF Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society and the JGS of Great Britain, and a Co-Regional Director for the California State Genealogical Alliance.

LAST MEETING- October 17, 2000

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS - by Francis Lloyd

Have you ever wondered just what goes on with our study groups? Who goes? What do they do? Could your problems be solved if you became a part of a group? Could you possibly help others solve their problems? Could someone translate this foreign document? Could we ride pool to a library or other society meetings? Is that missing link tucked in a book on another member's shelf or might your book of marriage records from grandfather's home county contain someone else's elusive grandparent's record? How does a person maneuver through the Internet and which addresses are most useful?

These were the questions that brought us together at the October general meeting. After a brief introduction, the room divider was pushed aside and the fun began. Each group had a table. Each table held an array of books, newsletters, maps, CDs and decorations pertaining to the group. The fun was in visiting each table, talking with the group members and, of course, stopping for cookies, breads and juice as we went.

Our society's study groups now number 10. They are (in alphabetical order).....

CALIFORNIA - currently meeting with the Irish Group. Plans are underway to form a separate group. Contact person is Carol Glover.

GERMAN - meets 10:00 a.m. - noon, the 4th Wednesday (except July, August and December) at members' homes. The

German group has been meeting since approx. 1994. Contact person is Barbara Johnson.

INTERNET: Group has been communicating through email messages since 1998. Contact person is Robert daRosa.

IRISH: MEETS 10:00 A.M. - Noon, the second Wednesday (except July, August and December) at Patty Erickson's home. Group has been meeting since circa 1994. Contact person is Patty Erickson.

NEW ENGLAND: the new group on the block. Time and day to be announced. Contact person is Barbara Dyer.

PENNSYLVANIA: meets 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. the fourth Monday (except July, August and December) The group started meeting in May 2000. Contact person is Barbara Johnson.

PORTUGUESE: Meets 12:15 p.m. (Except August and December) after the general meetings at the home of Millie Freitas. The group has been meeting since Sept. 1998. Contact is Millie Freitas.

PUBLISHING: meets whenever a member requests assistance. The group has been meeting since 1987. Contact is Jane Steiner.

(Continuation of notes from OCTOBER 2000 meeting)

TMG USERS GROUP:(The Master Genealogist) meets following the general meeting, same location. Bring a sack lunch. The group has been meeting for many years, since the ROOTS genealogy program came out. Contact person is Dorothy Stanton.

SOUTHERN: meets 10:00 a.m. - noon, the second Tuesday in members' homes. The group has been meeting since 1994. Contact is Frances Becker.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

by Barbara Dyer

Monthly travel has been the rule for me and my husband since February, combining trips to visit family and friends, with business and genealogy. I'm not complaining, we enjoy travel, but it is time to stay at home and write. As Betty Kot said in our September program, the work of researching, collecting and assembling information about ancestors could be lost if we don't put it in a form available to family and others who would benefit. Do you, like I, become slightly panicked thinking your hard work could become land fill?

As Betty recommends, I have selected three generations from one ancestral line to write about and to give to family for Christmas. To meet my goal, I have been reading "Print, Publish, Preserve", the self publishing guide written by our very own Publishing Special Interest Group. I confess that I had not previously read it. My excuse being I have only recently become interested in publishing. It is a wonderful little book, a treasure chest of information and I urge everyone to read it before you begin writing. It could save you hours of wasted time. The book is available at monthly meetings or by mail at SRVGS, P.O. Box 305, Diablo, CA 94528-0305.

Speaking of Special Interest Groups, our October meeting seemed to have been well received. A representative from each of nine groups including the new Pennsylvania and New England groups spoke briefly about the SIG. Then the members moved into the gym and moved from table to table where each SIG displayed a variety of books and materials. Members could browse through books, look up information, ask questions and sign up for a SIG. Bob Heacox of the Roots/Ultimate Family Tree SIG demonstrated The Master Genealogist to which many in that SIG are converting. Even if you missed the meeting you may still sign up for a SIG. The lists will be posted at the November meeting.

A list will also be available for those who do not wish to participate in a SIG, but who would be willing to mentor. A Mentor would select a subject(s) in which they have research experience such as a geographic region. The Mentor would not do the actual research but would offer to guide another person who needs help in that subject or area of research.

SRVGS November 2000 Treasurer Report
 by Nancy Alexander, Treasurer 2000-2001
Fund Balances: 10/31/00

General Fund	3397.02
Hospitality Fund	70.78
Publications Fund	931.22
Special Projects Fund :	200.00
N.A.R.A. Fund	94.00
Cassette Tape Library Fund	57.85
Library Fund:	
Prior Year Gifts & Donations	203.80
Current Year Donations	276.00

Overall Total Balance: \$5230.67

NEW AT THE FHC - ALAMO by Pat Isom

There are a number of new acquisitions in the Danville FHC. Foremost among these is the Vital Records Index for Western Europe. This includes 21 compact discs and consists of birth, christening, and marriage records for various regions and countries. The Vital Records Index for Mexico has also been ordered and this consists of four compact discs. If you have ancestry from Utah, the Mormon Immigration Index would be of particular interest to you. This database includes immigrant age, country of origin, ports of departure and arrival, and contains transcriptions of autobiographies, journals diaries and letters of approximately 1,000 passengers.

The FHC has also purchased videos on how to use PAF, beginning and intermediate. The Ancestry videos are on order as is a new video on how to utilize "Ancestry.com".

The FHC has acquired Letter Writing Guides for Germany, Italy, Poland, Portugal and Spain. There are also new Resource Guides for Norway, Brazil, Mexico, and African-American research.

We are still looking forward to the publication of the 1880 US Census Index as well as the 1881 Canadian Census Index. These are expected in 2001.

Newsletter Editorial Team

Coordinator: Sharon Clay 462-4518

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e-mail VSEG@Juno.com

Mailing:

Barbara Dittig 648-9364

Lucy Carver 837-3146

Deadline to put information in newsletter is the last

Thursday of the month.

SRVGS CALENDAR NOVEMBER 2000

7 Tuesday - 10:00 a.m. Board Meeting at home of Francis Lloyd 210 Town and Country Danville.

7, 14, 25 Tuesday - 10:00 a.m. Member Education Class, Genealogy on the Internet at the Family History Center on Stone Valley Road. Note that classes are to be offered on Tuesday mornings when the Library is usually closed. Class size will be limited to 6 persons each session. Advance sign up is requested. Note: Classes will also be available December 5th and 12th.

21 Tuesday - 10:00 a.m. General Meeting at LDS Church, 2949 Stone Valley Road on Smith Road, Alamo. From I-680 freeway, take Stone Valley Road east.

28 Tuesday -9:00 a.m. Library Trip to the Family History Center in Oakland. (510) 531 - 3905 Car pools will meet behind Albertson's off Diablo Road in Danville. Note that the Library Trip Coordinator is Michael Fiorenza. If you sign up for a trip and wish to cancel, please call him at 820-8294.

DECEMBER

5 Tuesday 10:00 a.m. Society Cookie Exchange 10:00 a.m. Frances Lloyd's home. **Everyone welcome.** Bring two dozen of your favorite holiday cookies to share. Beverages will be served.

5 & 12 Tuesday 10:00 a.m. Genealogy on the Internet at the Family History Center on Stone Valley Road, Alamo. Sign up in advance.

19 Tuesday -**NO MEETING IN DECEMBER. SIG's do not meet in December either.**

SRVGS Special Interest Groups: NOVEMBER

GERMAN - Meets 10 a.m. November 29 (fourth Wednesday) at the home of Bob and Fran Schweitzer, 2493 Lariat Lane, south Walnut Creek.. If you need directions or if you regularly attend, but cannot attend this meeting, please call them at 935-5744 or e-mail *rbtschw@pacbell.net*.

IRISH & CALIF. - Meets November 8, (second Wednesday of month) at 10:00 a.m. at home of Patty Erickson, 10 Ridge Place in Pleasant Hill. Phone (925) 229-0889.

PENNSYLVANIA - This is newer group and will meet November 27 at 1:00 p.m. at Francis Lloyd's, 210 Town and Country Drive, in Danville. Phone 837-9382.

PORTUGUESE - Meets third Tuesday of month after the general meeting. Bring a bag lunch. Confirmation of the meeting will be announced at the general meeting. The contact person is Millie Freitas, 837-2483.

SOUTHERN - Meets November 14th (second Tuesday of the month) at 10:00 a.m. at the home of Patty Erickson, 10 Ridge Place in Pleasant Hill. Phone (925) 229-0889..

PUBLISHING - A future meeting will be scheduled as interested persons express a need. The contact person is Jane Steiner, 238-0867.

INTERNET - Interested users communicate via e-mail. Members should contact Robert daRoza, *vrdaRoza@ix.netcom.com* to be included.

ROOTS GROUP. This is a genealogy software users group for Personal Computers. Their primary focus has become the use of Master Genealogist. It will be announced if the group will meet after the General Meeting. The distributor of "Ultimate Family Tree" software has announced that it will not be producing newer versions of this product. Customer support services will be dropped after about 6-9 months. The contact person is bob Heacox, *riponolive@worldnet.att.net*.

CALENDAR OF OTHER EVENTS:

- 9 Nov. Thursday: Contra Costa County Genealogical Society meets 7:30 p.m. on second Thursdays. They have a **new meeting place: LDS Church, 3700 Concord Blvd, Concord.** They are sponsoring a research trip to U.C. Davis Library on Saturday, November 18.
- 14 Nov.. Tuesday Livermore Amador Genealogical Society (LAGS), meets 7:30 p.m. at Beth Emek, corner of College and South M St., Livermore. For information call Debbie Pizzato, (925) 606-7466.
- 16 Nov.. Thursday The Mt. Diablo Genealogical Society will meet 1 to 3:00 p.m. on third Thursdays in the Community Room of the Civic Bank of Commerce, 1940 Tice Valley Road, Walnut Creek. Muriel James is scheduled to speak.
- 21 Nov. Tuesday. - San Mateo County Genealogical Society typically meets on the third Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. at the Belmont Central School, 525 Middle Road. Their web address is <http://www.genealogy.org/~SMCGS>. Their library at 25 Tower Road in San Mateo, off Hwy 280, is open Wednesdays 10 to 4 and Thursday thru Saturday 1 to 4 P.M. No help on Fridays. Phone (650) 572-2929.
- 2 Dec. Saturday Workshop 10 to 3 at the national Archives in San Bruno. It is hosted by the San Francisco Bay Area Genealogical Consortium and the S.F. Bay Region of the Calif. State Genealogical Alliance. The cost is \$20 per society. Handouts will be mailed ahead of time. There will be a charge per person to cover lunch. Reservations are required. Contact Cath Trindle at CathT@aol.com

23rd Psalm for Genealogists

Genealogy is my pastime, I shall not stray
 It maketh me to lie down and examine tombstones
 It leadeth me into still courthouses
 It restoreth my Ancestral Knowledge
 It leadeth me in the paths of census records and
 ships' passenger lists for my surnames' sake
 Yea, though I walk through the shadows of research
 libraries and microfilm readers
 I shall fear no discouragement, for a strong urge is within me
 The curiosity and motivation, they comforteth me
 It demandeth preparation of storage space for the
 acquisition of countless documents
 It anointest my head with burning midnight oil
 My family group sheets runneth over
 Surely, birth, marriage, and death dates shall follow me
 all the days of my life
 And I shall dwell in the house of a family history-seeker
 forever.

Book Review by Barbara Dyer

In the SRV Genealogical Collection at the Danville Library are three books: Clarence Almond Torrey's *New England Marriages: Prior to 1700* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc. 1985 with an introduction by Gary Boyd Roberts. This introduction should be read by anyone using Torrey. Also there are two supplements to his book by Melinde Lutz Sanborn containing New England marriages found since Torrey's work. Torrey's book is a compilation of 37,000 marriages arranged alphabetically by groom and it is a mainstay for research in New England plus parts of bordering areas such as Long Island.

The original is a 12 volume manuscript prepared by Torrey over decades on slips of paper and is in a handwriting difficult to decipher. He examined 2,500 printed works of standard well known references looking for mention of marriages or inferred marriages. He abstracted the groom's name, year of birth and death, if known, name of bride, her dates, date of marriage and place of residence, and often subsequent places of residence.

It is important to understand that while the original contained references to the source where Torrey obtained his information, the book does not. GPC excluded the references because of the time it would take to transcribe them and the cost involved which would cream too massive and too costly a publication. This is a major drawback even though the book is valuable when treated as an index. "It is not in and of itself a source", Dearborn states¹.

One of several copies of the original is owned by New England Historical and Genealogical Society (NEHGS). It has never been filmed but fortunately for all of us doing New England research, NEHGS is undertaking the monumental task of publishing Torrey including sources on CD-ROM. I look forward to its release with great anticipation.

¹ David Curtis Dearborn "Inside Torrey: Perspectives on New England Marriages Prior to 1700" *New England Ancestors* Vol. 1 #3 (Summer 2000)

HAPPY THANKSGIVING



NEW MEMBERS TO ADD TO ROSTER

Please add these new members to your membership list:

Don & Mary Lou Burns
970 El Cajon Drive
Danville, CA 94526
Phone 820-3768 E-mail: burnsmlda@aol.com

Mary Ann Nichelini
8 Yorkshire Drive
Oakland, CA 94618 Phone: 510-547-1278

Frank Zuerner
1886 Green Valley Road
Alamo, CA 94507 Phone: 838-7911

Books & Tapes To Investigate

If you are headed for a research trip, in addition to the points presented by our speaker this month, you may want to prepare yourself by listening to the following tapes from our tape library:

- C-69 BEYOND THE INSCRIPTION: GATHERING FULL CEMETERY INFO) by Pat Geyh
- C-102 SCOTLAND LAND AND CHURCH RECORDS by Patrick Cadell.
- C-188 ATTICS AND BASEMENTS: RESEARCH IN THE COUNTY COURTHOUSE by Shirley Wilson
- C-52 HOW TO CONDUCT EFFECTIVE COURTHOUSE RESEARCH by Marsha Hoffman Rising.
- M-64 PROBATE RECORDS - by Judy Svoboda
- C-183 PROBATE RECORDS - MORE THAN A WILL - by Sammie Townsend Lee
- C-162 FAMILY DETECTIVE WORK IN LAND RECORDS - by Marsha Hoffman Rising
- M-56 USING NEWSPAPERS AS AN AID TO GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH by Marjorie Bell.
- M-04 PREPARING FOR A GENEALOGY TRIP by Bette Kot
- M-26 UNTAPPED SOURCES IN LOCAL PUBLIC LIBRARIES by Bette Kot

Check out these books in our collection at the Danville Library:

THE LIBRARY: A GUIDE TO THE LDS FAMILY HISTORY LIBRARY - by Johni Cerny & Wendy Elliott
R929.3 LIBRARY

HOW TO TRACE YOUR ANCESTORS TO EUROPE.
By Hugh T. Law. R929.1072 LAW

HIDDEN SOURCES: FAMILY HISTORY IN UNLIKELY PLACES by Laura Szucs Pfeiffer.



INTERNET LINKS & REFERENCES

There are literally thousands of terrific Web pages with genealogical or family history research focus, and new ones are added each month. How do we keep up (or do we even want to!)? But, do you ever feel like if you don't check out "that" particular resource that you may have missed the ONE lead that will break down that *stone wall* you have been beating your head against? How do you know which are the bad sites, with unreliable information? There are no warranties on the Internet. You must always assess the reliability and credentials of every Web site. Do you have your own list of **best Web sites**? You might want to check against an expert. George G. Morgan, who writes for Ancestry Magazine, and has a column on the http://www.ancestry.com/daily_news web site has listed his favorites. Each of these is "clickable" and has a summary of the database. Go to http://www.ancestry.com/dailynews/05_21_99.htm#3. (There is a period in front of the htm#3).

Some of his favorite sites include:

1. Cyndi's List of Genealogy Sites of the Web.
2. Family Search (the LDS Church searchable records.)
3. US GenWeb Project
4. GENDEX - Index of Surnames
5. RootsWeb
6. National Archives & Records Administration
7. Library of Congress Catalog
8. Library of Congress List of Links to Other Institutions' Online Catalogs.
9. AfriGeneas
10. Native American Resources
11. Notable Women Ancestors
12. Getty Thesaurus of Geographic Names
13. Census Online
14. The Census Online (and other important data bases)
Also contains census records and passenger lists and other materials.
15. Civil War Rosters - Arranged by State.
16. A Barrel of Genealogical Links
17. Ancestry.com
18. Genealogy Records Service (GRS)
19. The Genealogy Forum on America Online.
20. Librarians Serving Genealogists
21. 10,000 Year Calendar

Remember these resources should be considered secondary resources that help lead you back to the original source. Primary sources are your best evidence and resources. Weigh the evidence and develop your own conclusions.

CONTRA COSTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY HISTORY CENTER OPENS

The CCHS History Center has been relocated to 610 Main Street, Martinez. Their phone number is (925) 229-1042, and their FAX: (925)-229-1772, e-mail: cchistry@ix.netcom.com. If you have a need for Contra Costa historical information, they may have it. They have received lots of files and folios from the county library, and now have room to house them.

SONOMA COUNTY RECORDS ON-LINE

The Sonoma County Genealogical Society's Index to Sonoma county Death Records (1873-1905) is now on-line at <http://rootsweb.com/~cascgs/dr.htm>. The 360 page book is due out soon from Heritage Books, Inc. It contains an alphabetical list of 9,555 death records giving date of death, age at death, sex, marital status, nativity, and some additional comments for many entries. The on-line index column headings are: Surname, Given Name, and Age at Death.

HELP!!!

There are a couple of WebSites that list people who are willing to do "Random Acts of Genealogical Kindness" in different geographical areas. Check these web sites: <http://helplist.org//> and <http://raogk.rootsweb.com>. Then look for the state or country where your ancestors lived. You can examine the items the volunteers in the area will search and contact them directly. You should offer to pay postage, copying fees and perhaps some type of gratuity for their services, but these are not professional genealogists.

WHY ATTEND A GENEALOGY INSTITUTE

1. Improve your research skills
2. Discover new sources to help propel your research
3. Enjoy in-depth study opportunities with nationally recognized experts.
4. Socialize and exchange information with people who share your passion for genealogy.
5. Take advantage of opportunities to participate.



REPORT ON SAG TRIP TO SLC

by Sharon Clay

For the past 10 years the Swedish American Genealogist has sponsored a research trip to Salt Lake City. Last month I attended for the second time. This year's group numbered over 50, plus 8 experts on the reading, translating, and discerning records involving Swedish genealogy, and even the Swedes who settled in America in the 1600's in New Sweden, Delaware.

I have done Swedish research at the FHL on my own, and the staff at the desk in the first basement is very helpful. But, having people who can come to you at your film reader, or who can spend time with you looking at your information, going over your research with you, translating passages from books, letters or histories helps immensely.

To relate one incident that Priscilla Sorknes, from Minneapolis and Elizabeth Torsell, from Stockholm, helped me with was on a clerical record. I asked Priscilla for help reading a record and she pointed out that two of the men on the record had the same wife. One of the men had died, and the other one had married her within two years. Both men had the same last name and I assumed they were brothers. I searched for several hours to find their parents names when I went to Elizabeth for help, again in reading the old Swedish script. I related to her how the one man had died and that his brother had married his widow. She said, "how do you know that he was a brother?" I said "Well, they have the same last name." She was quick to point out that at that time in Sweden, when a man became a soldier on a farm, he frequently took the name of the farm. The first man had taken the name Åhnstrom when he became soldier on the Åhnstad farm. When he died, leaving a widow, the farm replaced him with another person. He assumed the name of the farm also when he took the position. So, when he married the widow he was called Åhnstrom as well, though that wasn't his original name.

If Elizabeth had not stopped me and straighten out my thinking, I would have gone on with my research, looking for parents of the two brothers - both called Åhnstrom, when in fact, neither of them were born with that name.

Many of the people go on this trip year after year, and if you are interested in doing in-depth research on your Swedish roots, I can recommend the trip. There are classes each morning, one group dinner, two social get-togethers, and hotel room at the Best Western. For more information, contact me at sharoncl@ix.netcom.com or 462-4518.

GENEALOGY SOFTWARE -WHAT TO BUY?

Are you happy with your computer genealogy program? Have you been thinking about becoming "computerized", but still haven't decided what program to get? This is a big problem, and puzzling. There are a lot of programs available, and unless you work with them, or hear from someone else about a program, it's very hard to make an evaluation.

However, the NGS Newsmagazine for July/August 2000 printed a software review, by Bill Mumford, on 14 different programs. For a full copy of this report, check Bill's website at www.cadvision.com/mumford/reportcard/, but here is summary of his findings.

He reviewed Family Tree Maker 7.0, Family Tree Detective, Ultimate Family Tree 3.0, Family Origins 8.0 (Version 9 is now out), Family Tree Creator, Legacy 3.0, Ancestral Quest 3.0, Master Genealogist Gold 4.0, Generations Grande Suite 6.0, Personal Ancestral File 4.0, Family Ties 6.0, Brother's Keeper 5.2g, WinFamily 6.01g, Tree-O 2.1. (Family Ties is from a Pleasanton company.)

The points he looked at were: Planning tools, ease of data recording and editing and entry of notes, pictures and sound; analytical tools (search fields, merge), source documentation; types and numbers of reports, charts and lists and their accessibility; convenience and help in publishing; ease in transferring information to the Internet; ability to import and export information to GEDCOM files. He has also added a note on extras such as organizers and other software that may be included in the program.

Summary: The program aspects that he rated the highest:

Planning Tools: Family Origins 8.0, Legacy 3.0
 Data Recording: Tree-O 2.1, Ultimate Family Tree 3.0
 Analytical Tools: Master Genealogist Gold 4.0, and Ultimate Family Tree 3.0
 Source Documentation: Ultimate Family Tree 3.0 and Master Genealogist Gold 4.0
 Reports: Ultimate Family Tree 3.0 and Master Genealogist Gold 4.0
 Charts: Family Tree Maker 7.0, and Master Genealogist Gold 4.0
 Publishing: Ultimate Family Tree & M. G. Gold
 Multimedia: UFT, and Legacy 3.0 and Generations Grande Suite 6.0

Total Top Ratings went to: Master Genealogist Gold 74.1%, Ultimate Family Tree 73.3%, and Legacy 71%.

Note: Legacy has been updated several times since rating. Upgrades are available free on-line.

BOOKS, BOOKS, BOOKS

The National Genealogical Society has many books available through their Library Loan Service. Access the catalog from their web site at www.ngsgenealogy.org. In the library pages, you will find a link to the catalog and a link to instructions for borrowing books. An order form may be obtained from the web site or by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to NGS Library Loan Service, 4527 17th St. North, Arlington, VA 22207-2399. Many of their books are also available for purchase from the author or publisher.

STANDARDS FOR SOUND

GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH

Recommended by the National Genealogical Society

Remembering always that they are engaged in a quest for truth, family history researchers consistently -

- ◆ record the source for each item of information they collect.
- ◆ test every hypothesis or theory against credible evidence, and reject those that are not supported by the evidence.
- ◆ seek original records, or reproduced images of them when there is reasonable assurance they have not been altered, as the basis for their research conclusions.
- ◆ use compilations, communications and published works, whether paper or electronic, primarily for their value as guides to locating the original records.
- ◆ state something as a fact only when it is supported by convincing evidence, and identify the evidence when communicating the fact to others
- ◆ limit with words like "probable" or "possible" any statement that is based on less than convincing evidence, and state the reasons for concluding that it is **probable or possible**
- ◆ avoid misleading other researchers by either intentionally or carelessly distributing or publishing inaccurate information
- ◆ state carefully and honestly the results of their own research, and acknowledge all use of other researchers' work.
- ◆ recognize the collegial nature of genealogical research by making their work available to others through publication, or by placing copies in appropriate libraries or repositories and by welcoming critical comment.
- ◆ consider with open minds new evidence or the comments of others on their work and the conclusions they have reached.

A Woman's Expenses In 1851

An article from the *Newton Daily News*, 24 Aug. 1908, was based on prices quoted in an old memorandum book. The writer of the article, remarking on the increased cost of goods in 1908, lamented about "the good old days".

The lady who kept the account book was a teacher. For teaching eleven weeks she was paid a total salary of \$83.00. She paid \$3.25 to travel from Westfield, MA, to New York and an additional \$3.00 for a ticket from New York to Pennsylvania.

Regular expenses included her boarding house at \$10.00 per month, pew rent at church (66-2/3 cents per quarter), and washing - beautifully ironed and delivered to her door - for 23 cents a dozen.

The lady bought a pair of shoes for \$1.25, a pair of "gums" (rubber overshoes) for 37-1/2 cents, and some congress gaiters (high-top shoes with elastic at the top) for \$2.35 a pair. Her gowns were made of "delaine", "debage", and "mull." Fitting and sewing one of them cost her \$1.75. She had another dress cut (no mention of having it sewed) for 37-1/2 cents. A portrait sitting and a single daguerreotype portrait cost her \$1.50.

The lady's account book lists many prices ending with 1/2 or 1/4 cents. Some things cost a "fip" (6-1/4 cents) or a levy (12-1/2 cents).

A package of "wafers" was purchased, although no price was quoted in this article. In 1851, there were no envelopes, and so letters were folded and stuck together with red "wafers". The author of the newspaper article commented that perhaps the readers would remember their grandfather keeping a box of wafers on his desk, close beside the sand sprinkler with which he blotted his letters.

This lady burned "fluid" in her lamp - a highly flammable precursor to kerosene. She wrote of buying "cachous", no price quoted. Cachous were defined as "small lozenges, with no purpose, so far as is generally known, than to promote the fragrance of the eater".

Original Source: From the Jasper County Gleaner, August 1999. From the Contra Costa County Genealogical Society Newsletter, Vol. 15, No. 4, April 2000.

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GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

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FIRST CLASS MAIL