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SILICON VALLEY COMPUTER GENEALOGY GROUP

PastFinder

Cloud computing: Something borrowed, nothing new?

By Richard Rands

Recently someone wrote me: *Sometimes I feel like technology is going to leave me in the dust if I don't get some help. Perhaps a class with some hints and tips — especially regarding "cloud computing" — would be useful.*

The suggestion is a good one, but let me say something first about the concept of cloud computing. I've been in the computer industry since the 1960s — pretty much when commercial computing began. Technology has changed, going from huge room-sized mainframe computers, to closet-sized minicomputers, to desktop personal computers, to pocket computers and smartphones.

Today's computing devices are many magnitudes faster, immensely more powerful, and marvelously more versatile. But the overall process remains the same. Somewhere, there must be a collection of hardware devices with sophisticated electronics running countless logical instructions that get the work done.

However, one aspect of computing seems to swing back and forth, over and over, like a pendulum. At the outset, computers were capable only of running programs on a local computer with data that was only available on the same computer. Users had to go to the computer to use it. I remember having to drive hundreds of miles just to get some time on a computer. Often the only time I could get was in the middle of the night.

Then terminals were invented that made it possible to log on from a distance to a remote computer. Needless to say, a major shift to remote computing followed. At one point, I managed a computer system that was used by hundreds of engineers from all over the San Francisco Bay area

working from their individual offices. But soon, the demand for computing capability was so heavy and the communication technology was so overloaded, it became necessary to revert back to local processing on smaller, faster computers, the minicomputers.



Soon, communication technology caught up with local computers, so we all made a mad dash back to more efficient remote computing. Then personal computers came along to make it more efficient to run programs locally again.

That back-and-forth pendulum swing has gone on several times. Software companies find it significantly easier to maintain their programs on their centrally located computers than to keep current the millions of copies on their users' personal computers, so what they require is to log onto their remote computers.

But having too many users makes the programs run too slowly, so users prefer

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Flip-Pal — your new traveling companion?

By Janet Brigham

Few new products have generated as much buzz among genealogy enthusiasts as the Flip-Pal, a handheld scanner that runs on batteries and can scan objects that are larger than the scanner screen.

At about US\$150, plus the cost of a \$20 neoprene carrying case, it's not an inexpensive buzz. The questions: Can the Flip-Pal do what a larger scanner can do, or more? Is it easy to use? Are the results usable?

On the **pro** side, Flip-Pal is fairly small and lightweight. At less than two pounds, it is easy to tuck into a laptop bag or a large handbag. It requires no cables or plugs, since it operates on four AA batteries.

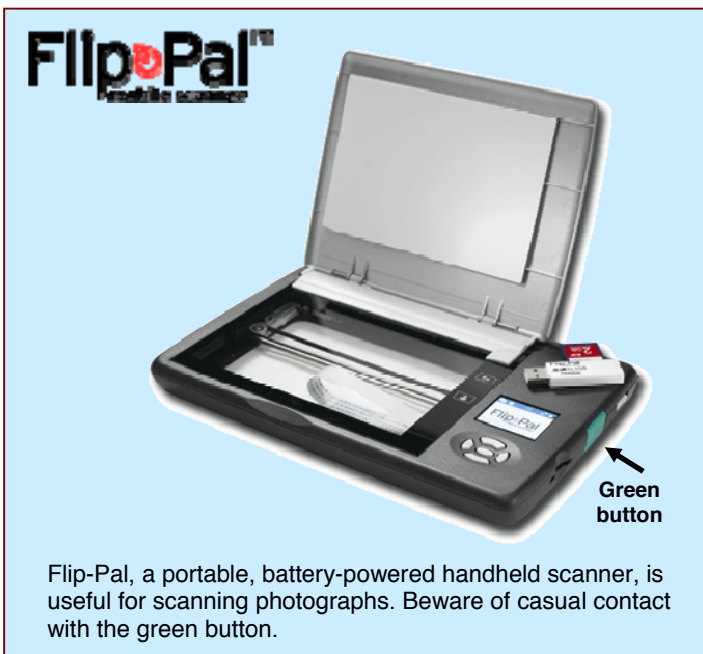
On the **con** side, the 4 x 6-inch size of the scanning glass is adequate for scanning snapshots, but larger images have to be scanned in segments and “stitched” together with software included with the scanner. It does not scan transparencies.

The “flip” aspect of the Flip-Pal is that the scanner lid detaches, and the scanner can be held directly over larger images (such as tapestries, scrapbooks, or whatever), and because the back of the scanner is transparent, you can see what you're scanning. When you scan another segment, you can make sure that you're overlapping with a segment you've already scanned. Overlapping is critical. A thumbnail view screen on the device shows the scanned image.

Images scanned with the Flip-Pal are stored automatically on a 2GB SB card that comes with the device. Also loaded on the card is the stitching software. The card fits into a provided USB adapter. This makes the unit self-contained; it does not require a computer to scan and store images.

We recently took the Flip-Pal on a two-week trip that included several days at libraries and archives. We'd used it before on photos and knew that its “stitching” software was adequate for piecing together images of photos too large for the scanner. We also knew that the 300 or 600 dpi scanning was sufficient. As it turned out, the only scanning we did was 14 pages of printed documents.

We hadn't scanned documents with the Flip-Pal before, but we knew the procedures — make sure the edges overlapped in sequential scans, so that the software could stitch the images together. Because we hadn't tried it on documents, we didn't know that the




stitching process would become neither quick nor automatic. In fact, it took me a full seven hours (yes, seven, 7, s-e-v-e-n, $56 \div 8$, $\sqrt{49}$) to stitch together the pieces of the 14 documents, using the Flip-Pal stitching software and Photoshop Elements manual Photomerge.

The stitching software that comes with the Flip-Pal works great for photos, but not for unembellished documents. Apparently something about printed text reduces the effectiveness of the stitching program. Before you decide to take this on a trip, consider what you are likely to be scanning. Experiment.

Flip-Pal has been upgraded since its initial release, so you may need some help with updating the software to the most current version for PC or Mac. Fortunately, the company has first-rate customer service by email and phone. In a world where many companies distance themselves from their users, the Flip-Pal staff is anxious to help customers solve problems.

Should Flip-Pal be your traveling companion? Yes, if luggage space is limited, if you'll be scanning only photos, and if you don't plan to scan documents.

One caution: The green button that activates the scanner is on the side, right where your fingers hold the Flip-Pal. So hold the device north-south rather than east-west, check your images as you scan, and watch out for the green button. 

Norwegian research (Part 2)

By Lesly Klippel

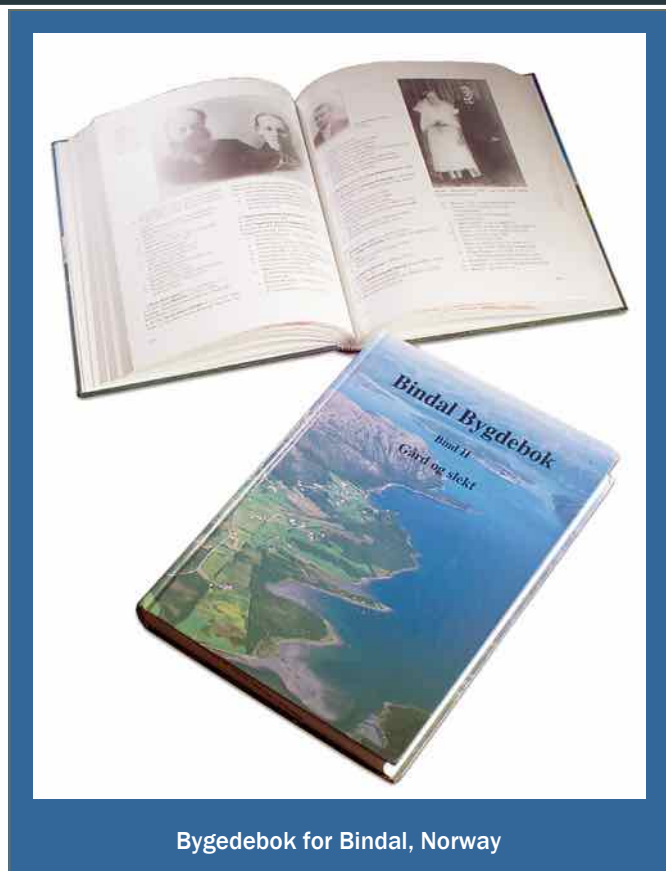
Bygdebok or community book

Although they are written in Norwegian, these local history books are a boon for researchers because many of them list the genealogies of the people living on the farms. They are available for most rural parishes, but not for larger cities. Many are on the shelves in the Family History Library (FHL) in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Some have been microfilmed. Look in the catalog at www.familysearch.org to determine if there is a Bygdebok for your parish and whether or not it has been microfilmed. Even if it has not been microfilmed, you may be able to get the book you want through Interlibrary Loan at your local public library, since many university libraries in the Midwest carry them in their collections. They usually consist of several volumes, with the first volume telling the general history of the parish.

Find the table of contents listing the farms (*gaards*). Since they are all in Norwegian, it is helpful to search them in the FHL, where you can take the book to a Norwegian expert at the counter for help in translating some of the early history. I did that once and found that a dispute between farm boundaries was solved when the

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Cloud computing (continued)

(Continued from page 1)

to run the programs on their own personal computers. Back and forth —remote, local, remote, local.

When the Internet was created, it initiated a swing back to remote computing, but before too long connecting to the Internet was so slow that we went after pocket computers so that we could keep our lives organized locally.

Now that high-speed Internet is virtually ubiquitous, we are back to having devices that connect to remote servers somewhere else to run our software and process our data, returning the results to our local computer.

This time around, remote processing has been dubbed *cloud computing*, primarily because the Internet makes it possible to cloud, or make invisible,

where the remote computers running the software are actually located.

More and more of the processing, including the data storage, can be handled by the remote equipment, and it can be in more diverse locations. It's all up there somewhere in the cloud.

It all sounds pretty nifty, but only as long as you have access to the Internet.

Has the pendulum finally stopped swinging? Not for one second! Many years of experience tells me that numerous forces will make the current swing to remote processing — no matter how lofty the cloud — less effective than a computer in our own hands, especially one that runs on a battery.

We then can expect technology to change, and we'll try the next generation cloud. Then we'll work locally again — the circle of virtual life. 

Norwegian research *(continued)*



The distinctive Heddal stave church outside Oslo, Norway, is the largest in the country. Photo courtesy of Serhan Celik. See Celik's stunning photo tour of Norway at www.pbase.com/sc_20170/norway.

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son from one farm married the daughter from the other farm.

The genealogy sections of the books are easier to follow, since they list the names of members of each family with at least their year of birth, if not their birth dates. Marriages are listed with particulars about the families, which you can translate with a Norwegian dictionary, either in book form or at a translation web site. If the family moved to another farm, that information is noted.

It is wise to check the information in the book against parish registers to verify accuracy. Since you have the name and at least the year of birth for each individual, that is an easy and fun task, especially since the majority of the parish registers are online at www.digitalarkivet.no.

Church records

The oldest church register in Norway is for Andebur, Vestfold, and starts in 1623. Most registers begin after 1650, and many of them start in the early 1700s. In 1685, a church ritual dictated that the child's name, names of the parents and sponsors (godparents) and date of the christening must be included. When an engagement was recorded, it must contain the names of the betrothed and the witnesses. Burial records contain the deceased's name, age, and burial date.

While the clergy were ordered to keep registers and told what to include in them, no instructions were provided on how the registers should be organized. Some priests listed records in chronological order,

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Norwegian research *(continued)*

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and others divided records by type of event (baptisms, marriages, and burials). As in other European countries, if there is only one date, it is the date of the church ordinance, such as christening or burial. Interestingly, because the ground was frozen in the winter, a burial could be delayed for weeks or months; the death did not necessarily occur shortly before the burial. In many cases, the priest did not come to the funeral or may have appeared only to throw dirt on the casket. In many cases, the priest failed to record the burial date. In the 1700s, less than half of deaths were recorded in the parish records.

In 1732, ministers were instructed to divide their books into baptism, engagement, and burial sections. Infants to be christened were to be noted as illegitimate if the mother was not married. She was urged to reveal the name of the father, but because for many years the law made it to her benefit to give the name of a wealthy person as the father, the name of the father might not be accurate.

For a few weeks after the birth of her child, every mother was considered to be “unclean” and needed to be led into the church by the priest to re-introduce her to the congregation. The date of the introduction is noted in the records, but the early ones list only the husband’s name. Later records include the wife’s name. Absolutions mostly listed women who had given birth before marriage.

Starting in 1812, the sections were further defined, with the birth section including the child’s name, birth and baptism dates, names of both of the parents, and names of the sponsors, with separate records for males and females. The burial section included both death and burial dates, name, age, occupation, and residence of the deceased, with separate sections for males and females. The marriage section included the names of the bride and groom; the baptism dates of each; the marriage date; the age, occupation, and residence of the groom; and names of the witnesses. Confirmations were included with the name, baptism date, residence, parent’s name (usually only the father), vaccination date, an indication of the candi-

date’s knowledge of the catechism, and a general report of his or her behavior, with separate records for males and females. Also included was a list of migrants from the parish, including name, age, occupation, and where the migrants were moving. A similar list of migrants was kept at the arrival parish.

The parish clerk was instructed to keep a duplicate register, and he and the priest compared notes twice a year and corrected mistakes. The two records were kept in separate places for safety. In 1820, an additional section was

added, containing daily ministerial duties such as when and where he gave a sermon, the topic, number of communicants,

reintroductions of mothers, and similar activities. The individual church had to pay for the book, and the vicar was instructed that it should hold the records for at least 10 years.

Starting in 1877, a great deal more information was contained in the parish registers, including records of stillbirths, lists of confirmations, lists of dissenters and their vital statistics, a note if parents married after the birth of a child but before its baptism, and a confirmation or denial of an unmarried mother’s report of the child’s father’s name.

Some parish registers included a *sjeleregister* (register of souls) of all members of a family, taken in various years in the 1700s. Rogaland is the only county with the entire record still preserved, but some parishes have some registers.

Searching church records at Digitalarkivet

Most of the parish registers have been digitized, but not all. Parish registers are being indexed, but the indexes are far from complete at present. Information is gradually being moved to www.digitalarkivet.no. Select *New site for digital archives* on the home page and then choose *Digitised parish registers*, and *Read the digitised parish registers*. Enter a county name for a list of parishes. When you select a parish, categories of records and available years will appear. Select a particular type of record and year to see the digitized parish record book.

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Norwegian research *(continued)*

Usually you will see two pages at a time. You can enlarge the image and scroll down to read the entries. You can print a PDF image. At the bottom of the screen, click on PDF1 to print both pages on one piece of paper, or PDF2 to print one page at a time. I like the second option because the image is larger and clearer, and you can print only the page you want.

Marriage records

Once a couple and their families agreed on a marriage, an engagement (*troløvelse*) was announced, and the couple was considered married. Therefore, the first child could have been born shortly after the marriage was solemnized, with no stigma. In the case of illegitimate births, often there was an engagement and the marriage took place after the birth of the child. Check the marriage records for the formalization of the marriage. Sometimes the father died before the marriage could take place.

Moveable feast day calendar

It is impossible to know the date of an event that occurred on a feast day, since the name of feast day will be listed instead of the event. Occasionally, both the name of the feast day and the date are listed. A feast day calendar is necessary to identify the day. Norway went from the Julian calendar to the Gregorian calendar on 18 February 1700. Since 11 days had to be dropped, the next day was March 1, 1700. Some examples of moveable feast days are Epiphany, Oculi, Pasche (Easter), Cantate (4th Sunday after Easter), Pentacoste, Trinity, up to 27 Sundays after Trinity, each of the 4 Sundays of Advent.

The book *The Comprehensive Genealogical Feast Day Calendar* by Inger M. Bukke (1983) is the best source for feast day information. It lists 66 moveable feast days in the Lutheran part of Europe which includes the Scandinavian countries, the Netherlands and parts of Germany, along with 29 pages, 3 columns each, of fixed feast days. The book is out of print but is available in some libraries and is on microfiche (order 6054630) that can be ordered from the FHL. FamilySearch.org has a chart to determine dates of moveable feast days (select *Learn*, *Wiki*, and search for *moveable feast day calendar for Norway*). Choose the year to see moveable and fixed feast days.


Census records

Norway started taking censuses in 1664, but until 1801, they only listed the head of the household and

all males by name and age. Starting in 1801, all persons were supposed to be listed by name and age. However, the census is far from complete, usually listing only families that paid taxes or had males eligible for military service. Some censuses between 1815 and 1860 have been microfilmed and are available through the FHL catalog. Certain censuses have been extracted and are fully searchable, free of charge, at Digitalarkivet. Click on *Database Selector*, choose *Censuses*, and the year or time span. Then choose the county of interest, and you will see a list of the municipalities, usually the same as the name of the parish. The 1865 census is useful, especially because a huge migration started in 1868, but families were still on their farms in 1865. The 1875 census is partial, but 1900 is complete.


The 1801 census lists each person living on a farm, his or her age, status (husband, wife, son, daughter, lodger, etc.), occupation, comments, and sex. Unfortunately, it does not list birth place, but lists location at the time of the census.

The 1865 census added some columns: marital status, birth place, and personal property such as livestock and crops. Each succeeding census added more columns of information. The search fields are flexible; use the “starts with” option so you need to enter only one letter (e.g., *m* for *male*, or *k* for *kvinne* [female]). Search for the name of a farm to see who lived there at the time of the census.

Researching the Norwegian records is fun and quite easy compared to some other European countries. More and more helps are appearing on the Internet, so take the plunge — the water’s great! 

Longtime SVCGG volunteer dies

Max Howarth Parker, 84, a longtime volunteer for the Silicon Valley Computer Genealogy Group, passed away August 5. A resident of San Jose, California, he assisted with memberships, enrolling new members and handling renewals at meetings.

A Navy veteran with degrees from the University of Utah and Santa Clara University, Max worked for IBM for 40 years, retiring in 1992. He volunteered for a service mission for his church and was active in the Scouting program, earning a Silver Beaver award. He and his wife, Cleone Hale, who died in 1994, raised four children. 

How I found it: The unfortunate Mr. Morley

By Richard Rands

Sometimes the complexities of our research require that we look for evidence that a particular circumstance isn't what it looks like.

Recently I have been working on a particularly devilish English line that is fraught with discrepancies and unexpected twists and turns. At one point, it seemed as though I would be able to move quickly through the daughter's line, until I uncovered her 1880 marriage registration record in Camberwell, Surrey.

In May 1880, Mary Wells, a 27-year-old spinster, married a 27-year-old bachelor shoemaker named Ernest Morley. Ernest's father, Thomas, was also a shoemaker. I expected a straightforward process of finding them in the 1881, 1891, 1901, and 1911 British Censuses, and expected to locate their children in the civil registration records.

But right off the bat I hit a significant snag. In the 1881 Census, the only Ernest Morley that fit the correct age and birthplace was a convicted felon in the Pentonville District Prison in Islington, London. The census record offered no details about how long he had been there. I had no success finding a married


Mary Morley without a husband in the same census.

I followed several theories in hope of solving the dead end, even including the possibility of transportation to Australia, or the possibility that he had murdered his wife. The most helpful detail would be to determine why and when he had been convicted, and how long his sentence was for. The free website Old-BaileyOnline.com did not list any records for an

Recently I have been working on a particularly devilish English line...

Ernest Morley. The Black-SheepAncestors.com site confirmed that there was an Ernest Morley in the Pentonville Prison in 1881.

So I turned to Ancestry.com's Special Collections, Tax, Criminals, Land and Wills section, and ran a search for Ernest Morley, born about 1853. The results returned two entries, one for 7 Dec 1874 with a seven-year conviction for larceny, and a second for 6 Sep 1880 for cheating, with five years of imprisonment. Based on the dates, although there are no release dates, it appears that the sentences overlapped.

At this point, until I find additional evidence, I will assume that Mary Wells did not marry the Ernest Morley who apparently was sitting in Pentonville Prison at the time of their wedding in May 1880. 

Some welcome changes at the U.K. National Archives

A visit to the U.K. National Archives — what we used to call *The P-R-O* (Public Records Office) — is a friendlier experience than in days past.

What used to happen was that a patron, often a wet patron who'd slogged there in the rain from the Kew Gardens tube stop, would walk through the front door and immediately have his or her belongings searched by a guard. Then the patron either showed or paid to obtain a current Reader's Ticket.

Some things are the same: Belongings still need to go into free lockers, as before, while laptops, a limited amount of paper, and pencils are fine in work areas.

Now, patrons who want to view microfilm or work at one of many new computer workstations are free to go upstairs, read microfilm, access books, make copies, and otherwise engage in typical library behaviors

without a Reader's Ticket.

Using a reading room to look at original materials requires a free Reader's Ticket, which is obtained by entering information online and going through a series of tutorial quizzes about how to handle materials such as old books and large maps. (The same process is employed at the U.S. National Archives in Washington, D.C.) Personal item searching occurs only at the entrance to a reading room.

The remodeled cafeteria is larger and has more variety, a snack bar provides sandwiches and desserts, and the bookstore has more items, with more of them discounted for quick sale.

To accommodate England's rain, the facility provides free umbrella-bagging devices. 



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Electronic contribution of articles is welcome. The editors reserve the right to accept, reject, and edit articles.

Upcoming SVCGG meetings, events

The group meets monthly except December, on the second Saturday of the month from 9 to 11 a.m. at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 875 Quince Ave., Santa Clara, California (see map at right).


See the Meetings section of our website (www.svcgg.org) for any last-minute changes.

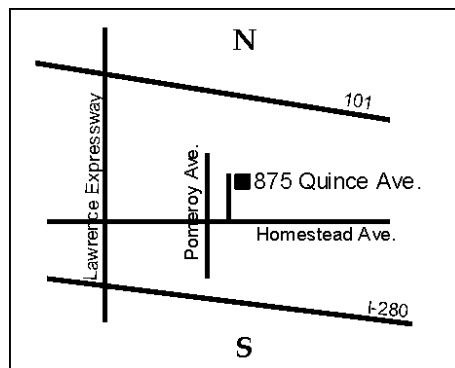
Fall Seminar, 10 September 2011, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Getting the Most from an Archive, featuring archivist Rob Richards of the National Archives at Atlanta, Georgia, in an all-day seminar. Meetings and seminars are free and open to the public.

Classes for 8 October 2011, 9 to 11 a.m.

- Swedish research

- Scanning documents (part 2 of series, Photographing and scanning documents)
- Reunion for the Mac
- Getting started with Reunion
- Cleaning your family tree in RootsMagic
- PAF & PCs for beginners 



See www.svcgg.org/directions.html

About the Silicon Valley Computer Genealogy Group

SVCGG is the former Silicon Valley PAF Users Group, a nonprofit group of some 600 genealogy enthusiasts. The group is based in Silicon Valley in the Bay Area of northern California, but members live all over the world.

PastFinder is the official publication of the Silicon Valley Computer Genealogy Group. Published monthly except December, *PastFinder* is distributed at meetings to

members in attendance and mailed to others after the meetings. Members can receive the newsletter by e-mail containing a download link.

SVCGG offers research tools and materials through its website, www.svcgg.org.

Membership dues are US\$15 per household per year, US\$20 for Canada, and US\$25 for other international locations. 