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SILICON VALLEY COMPUTER GENEALOGY GROUP

PastFinder

Digital books for family history

Reading pixel by pixel

By Lesly Klippel

While some people insist that the best way to read a book is curled up by a fire, holding the hard copy in your hands, the current worldwide trend is to read books in digital format. If you prefer, you can still curl up by the fire and hold a laptop or an e-reader.

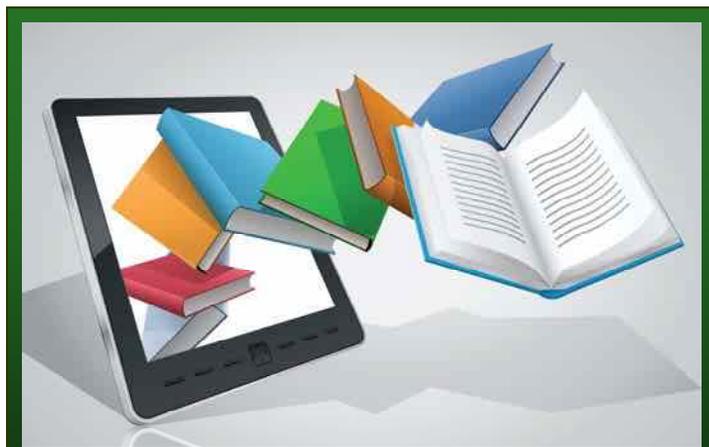
For family history researchers, the digitization of books has allowed access to books that are physically located in places far removed from the researcher. How wonderful it is to look at a book at home in your bathrobe and slippers without having to spend time and money to travel to where it sits on a library shelf. I'm so glad I've lived long enough to enjoy the benefit of this explosion of genealogy-related technology!

Google Books

Literally millions of books with genealogical information are online. Besides the university libraries that are digitizing their collections, Google Books is attempting to create a giant online library of scanned books. If the book is still under copyright, only "snippets" that include your search string can be viewed. They are allowed under the fair-use law for educational purpose or literary criticism. If the book is not under copyright or has been released by the copyright holder to be displayed in its entirety, you can search, read, print, and copy the book from the e-book version.

To search Google Books, access books.google.com or click on the More tag on the google.com home page and choose *Books* from the drop-down list.

Search for keywords, and when you find a book of interest to you, explore the possibilities. You might be able to rent the book from a digital library to be read on a portable device. If it states "e-book



Digital books abound, including many that contain valuable family history information.

available," download the Google Play software for free and then follow the instructions for "borrowing" your book to be read and "returned."

Other options include using the Worldcat.org catalog to locate the book in a library (click "Find in a library") or to purchase the book in a bookstore or through an online bookseller (click "all sellers"). I notice that some genealogy-related books that I read online a year or so ago are now restricted, since they are under copyright. Google faced legal challenges on copyright issues and was forced to pull back on its grand scheme to create a gigantic library.

(Continued on page 2)

Outside and Inside

- Digital books, above
- Ask the doc, unusual dates, page 5
- How I found it, the Irish gambler? page 7
- Upcoming meetings, page 8
- About the group, page 8

Digital books (continued)

(Continued from page 1)

Google Books is still a good place to learn what is available on your subject or surname of interest and where a book is located. Many, many books of value to researchers are freely accessible online. Give Google Books a try — you may hit genealogy pay dirt!

Clipping and snipping

Google Books has a clip feature that can be used to save text found in public domain books. On the page containing text that you would like to save, click the clip icon above the book (a pair of scissors), highlight the text you want to save, and click Translate. The text will appear on a page that enables you to highlight the text again and then copy (ctrl-c) and paste (ctrl-v) into a word processor or on the notes page of a genealogy computer program.

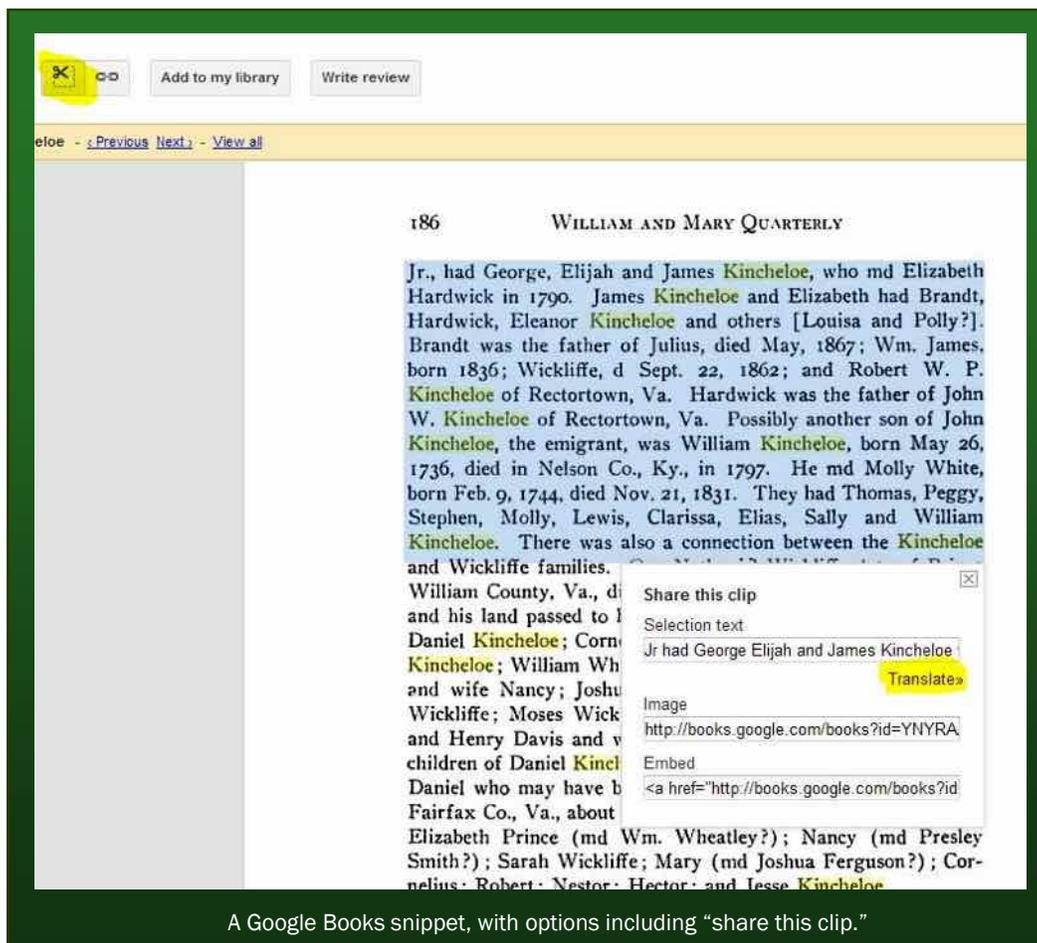
If you have a PC with Windows 7 or above, you can use the Snipping Tool to copy and paste anything from a web page into any other software. To find the

Snipping Tool, click on Start—>All Programs —> Accessories—>Snipping Tool. Use the crosshairs to highlight what you want to save. You then have several options: save the “snippet” as an image in one of several file types; copy and then paste in other software such as a word processor, presentation program such as Powerpoint, or a computer genealogy program; or send as an email attachment. You also can add highlights with a highlighter or comments with a pen. Click on the eraser icon to remove any mistakes in your highlights or comments. Remember that web pages are copyrighted and cannot be used in any publication without permission.

HathiTrust Digital Library

More than 5 million volumes have been digitized in the HathiTrust Digital Library partnership of more than 60 institutions and libraries. Your book of interest may be available online at www.hathitrust.org in e-book format or, if it is still under copyright, you can

(Continued on page 3)



A Google Books snippet, with options including “share this clip.”

learn where the book is physically located. Many of the books are in university libraries that participate in interlibrary loan systems, so you often can obtain the book on loan through a local library. Using the full-text search on the home page, I searched for my family name of *Wickliffe* and was able to read reports and speeches by my politically minded relatives from Kentucky and Louisiana. I was able to refine my search by enclosing the full name in quotes, searching for “*john wickliffe*”.

Archive.org

This San Francisco-based nonprofit organization was founded to facilitate online research. It includes texts, audio, videos, and archived web pages. Its Wayback Machine enables you to see web sites that are no longer available. On the home page, click on Wayback Machine and enter the URL of the discontinued web site of interest.



You may be able to see at least the site's home page.

Open Library, the site's interface to published books housed on the site, links to other online book collections. Through an active digital lending library on the site, you can check out, read, and renew a book for free. Again, I was able to read the Wickliffe speeches online and to search for a full name enclosed in quotes. By searching for the word *genealogy*, I brought up a long list of family history books about a variety of different surnames. As a side note, I also was able to use the site's audio archive to listen to the band called New Riders of the Purple Sage playing in a bar in West Virginia!

Family History Books

FamilySearch.org is the official genealogy web site of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. On the Books link on the home page (see illustration, next column), the user has access to more than 40,000 digitized books covering a diverse selection of topics that are valuable to family history researchers.

According to the description on the web site, “Family History Books is a collection of more than 40,000 digitized genealogy and family history publications from the archives of some of the most important family history libraries in the world. The collection includes family histories, county and local histories, genealogy magazines and how-to books, gazetteers, and medieval histories and pedigrees.”



On that same page are links to the web sites of the seven participating partners in this digitizing project: Allen County Public Library in Fort Wayne, Indiana; the Harold B. Lee Library at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, and the Joseph F. Smith Library at BYU-Hawaii; the LDS Church History Library and Family History Library, both in Salt Lake City, Utah; the Clayton Library Center for Genealogical Research at the Houston Public Library; and the Mid-Continent Public Library at the Midwest Genealogy Center in Independence, Missouri.

The Family History Library has begun digitizing all of the family books in its collection. These books are housed on the first floor of the library in the 929 section. Once a book has been digitized, it is no longer available on the shelf in the library, but it can be freely and completely read on the web site or downloaded to a computer. Copyright law prohibits the digitization of the in-copyright books without the copyright holder's permission. Books out of copyright are being digitized first, and copyright holders are being contacted for permission to place their copyrighted books online.

The books are being scanned and posted on the web site at the rate of 1,000 to 2,000 books per month. Digitizing of books housed at the Family History Library was paused in November 2012 while the book collections of the Ogden, Utah, and Los Angeles, California, FamilySearch (Family History) Centers were digitized for inclusion in the FamilySearch digital library. That project is expected to take between 3 months and 2 years to complete. In the meantime, the remaining family books at the Family History Library will stay on the shelves.

The Blog tab at FamilySearch.org reported book digitization reports for June, July, and August 2012 with lists of which books were added to the collection in those months. For example, the August 2012 report listed in the British Isles section: *Monumental Inscriptions, Paisley Abbey, Renfrewshire, Scotland*,

(Continued on page 4)

Digital books (continued)

(Continued from page 3)

1500s-1800s; Register of Ireland General Registry Office births, marriages, and deaths 1845-1959; and *The Registers of the Parish of Howden, County York, Vol. 4.*

The Compiled Family History Books list included 84 pages of various family books. The International Book list included, among other titles: Danish probate records from several counties and *Boundary Changes of the Former German Empire*. The fourth section, United States and Canada, included a digest of early Connecticut probate records, history of Clarke county, Alabama, the muster-out rolls of Illinois volunteers in the Spanish-American War, and many county histories. That list was 19 pages long. This is only one month's addition to the digitized book list! Check the list often to see whether something that will help you in your research has been added.

OCR software

Book digitizers, including FamilySearch, use a very accurate optical character recognition (OCR) system in the digitization process that allows each book to be searched for any word or word combination. When you use Family History Books to find a book you want to see, click on the title, and the book will appear in PDF (portable document file) format or in Media Viewer, a versatile Adobe reading program. You can search the book for any character string, save the book, print it, and add bookmarks and comments. You can convert the file to Word or Excel or use Adobe SendNow Online to e-mail the file. The tool box is extensive and fun to explore.

I searched for the word *Lehigh*, which is a county in Pennsylvania that I research for a friend. The list of results included *History of the United German Lutheran and Reformed Congregations of Christ*

New Digital Family History Books

August 2012 Report

Collection	Surname/Locality	Title	URL
US/CAN	I	Trace your ancestors	https://dcms.lds.org/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps_pid=IE951162
US/CAN	Alabama	Code of the city of Moultrie, 1922	https://dcms.lds.org/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps_pid=IE952288
US/CAN	Alabama	History of Clarke county	https://dcms.lds.org/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps_pid=IE951939
US/CAN	Alabama	Revolutionary soldiers buried in Alabama	https://dcms.lds.org/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps_pid=IE951930
US/CAN	Alabama	School directory : 1923-24 Pickens County, Carrollton, Ala	https://dcms.lds.org/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps_pid=IE952204
US/CAN	Alabama	The Alabama genealogical register	https://dcms.lds.org/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps_pid=IE951129
US/CAN	California	Cemetery records of Stanislaus County, California	https://dcms.lds.org/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps_pid=IE953129
US/CAN	Canada	A guide to the documents in the Manuscript Room at the Public Archives of Canada, Vol. 1	https://dcms.lds.org/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps_pid=IE951239
US/CAN	Connecticut	A digest of the early Connecticut probate records v. 1	https://dcms.lds.org/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps_pid=IE952629
US/CAN	Connecticut	A digest of the early Connecticut probate records v. 2	https://dcms.lds.org/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps_pid=IE952632
US/CAN	Connecticut	A digest of the early Connecticut probate records v. 3	https://dcms.lds.org/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps_pid=IE952635
US/CAN	Connecticut	A historical address delivered in Franklin, Connecticut, October 14th, 1868, on the two hundredth anniversary of the settlement of the town; and the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of its ecclesiastical organizations	https://dcms.lds.org/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps_pid=IE952869
US/CAN	Connecticut	Barkhamsted, Connecticut [Congregational Church]	https://dcms.lds.org/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps_pid=IE952602
US/CAN	Connecticut	Early records of baptisms, marriages, deaths, and membership of the Congregational church, East Hampton (Chatham) Connecticut	https://dcms.lds.org/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps_pid=IE952611

Sample of books listed in the August 2012 Digitized Book report, Family History Books.

Church, Shoenersville, Lehigh County, PA, 1780 - 1910, which contains hundreds of names of my friend's relatives. I also found a book written in 2011 titled *Descendants of Nicholas Kern of Northern Lehigh County Pennsylvania*, which unlocked a brick wall in my friend's pedigree. Searching on my family name of Wickliffe brought up a list of 331 books, some of which I had seen in my research, and many new ones I now can explore.

By using the every-word search function (ctrl-f or click on the binoculars to get a list of the search results), you can quickly see if the book is worth exploring further. If the book is one that you want to study, simply download it to your computer. Adobe Reader will open it and give you most of the functionality of Media Viewer. You can do everything except see a list of your search results.

A new era that enables us to do much of our research at home on the Internet has opened up for family history researchers. Digitization of records, data sharing, and research collaboration enable us to discover facts as well as life stories to expand and enrich our pedigrees. This is a wonderful age of technology to explore and enjoy! 



Ask the doctor

Understanding those unusual dates

Q My genealogy research has reached the point where I have been reading transcriptions of very old documents, such as wills, court records, and newspapers. Often there are expressions that seem to represent dates that use terms such as *Lady Day*, *Michaelmas*, and the year in the reign of a particular monarch.

Sometimes a year is listed as two consecutive years separated with a slash, such as 1768/9. What should I know about early calendars to make sense of these terms?

In the earliest recorded history, it is very clear that dating systems were built around the annual seasons, especially how the seasons related to planting and harvesting crops. Since church activities were heavily interwoven into the lives of everyone, important dates of the seasons were also established as common religious festivals or holidays.

Furthermore, as the motion of the earth around the sun became understood, a more precise calendar was required to adjust for the growing discrepancy between the seasonal or religion-based dates and the astronomical dates. Consequently, you are experiencing the result of the evolution of dating systems prior to our current methodology.

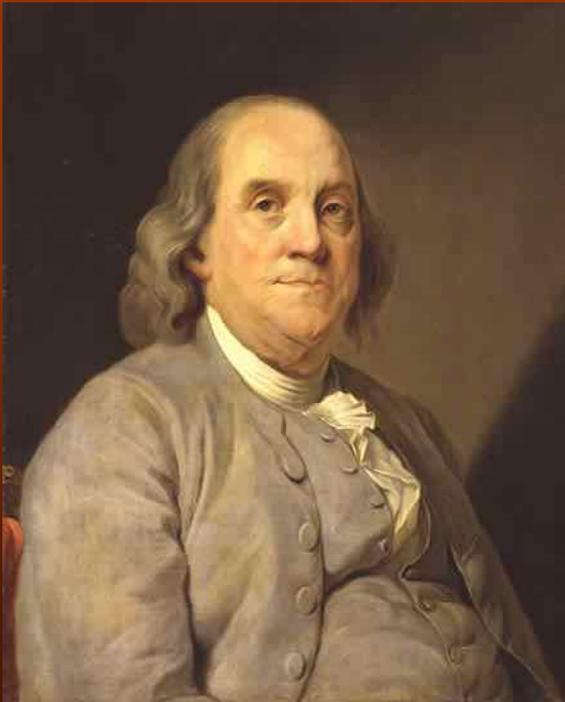
Of course, calendars in different parts of the world evolved in very different ways, largely due to local political, legal, and religious influences.

In old England, each new year began when it was time to get ready for a new growing season. At the end of winter, farmers had to hire workers, establish legal terms and conditions with landlords, and begin preparing the land for planting.

The religious festival that occurred at this time of the year was the Feast of the Annunciation, traditionally held on the 25th of March, commemorating when the Virgin Mary was told of her role as the mother of Christ. Hence, up until 1752, the first day of each year was late in what is now March and was known as 'Lady Day,' rather than being at the first of what is now January.

Any event that occurred between January 1st and the 24th of March prior to 1752 may be designated in two ways. For example, Benjamin Franklin was born in January 1705, based on the calendar that used Lady Day as the first of the year. When the first of January became the beginning of the calendar year, in 1752, the year of Franklin's birthday became 1706, under the new calendar system.

(Continued on page 6)



Benjamin Franklin was born before 1752, and thus his birth date is written as 1705/1706. What would the parsimonious, plainspoken Franklin have thought of the calendar clash that gave him multiple birth years *and* multiple birth dates? We can only guess. Franklin stated in his 1732 essay "On Simplicity":

There is in Humane Nature a certain charming Quality, innate and original to it, which is called SIMPLICITY. In latter Ages, this has been almost universally exploded, and banished from amongst Men, as the Characteristic of Folly; whilst Cunning and Artifice have prevailed in its stead, and with equal Justice been dignified with the Titles of Wisdom and Understanding.

(Wikimedia image, portrait by Joseph Siffred Duplessis, 1725-1802).

Ask the doctor (Continued)

(Continued from page 5)

Because of the calendar change, it is usually written as 1705/6, which is understandable to those who have studied the change.

When The Doctor first started doing his (or her?) own genealogy, s/he thought it meant the exact date was not known. S/he was certainly surprised when s/he discovered otherwise.

At the end of the growing season, when the harvest was in, farmers had sold their crops, and their laborers had been paid, it was time for landlords and tax collectors to go after their share. The religious festival that marked that time of the year was Michaelmas, or the Feast of Saint Michael. It fell on September 29, near the equinox, and was often used in legal documents as the time when accounts were required to be closed and rents had to be paid.

You should also note that there was a period of time when the world was changing from the old Julian calendar, implemented in 45 B.C. by Julius Caesar, to the Gregorian calendar, first introduced in 1582. In the switch to the new calendar, eleven days were skipped.

Unfortunately, for political and religious reasons, the conversion to the Gregorian calendar took place at a different time in each country. In Colonial America (and the British Empire), the switch took place in September 1752. Benjamin Franklin, who was alive at the time, saw his birth date go from January 6 to January 17. In your research, a record of a person in American or England with a birth date between 3 September 1752 and 13 September 1752 is invalid. Those dates never existed.

Russia did not switch to the Gregorian calendar until 1918, and Greece waited until 1923.

Three major dating systems are exceptions to the calendars explained above. In Sweden, the government opted not to skip the eleven days all at once when switching to the Gregorian calendar, but to

spread the conversion over twelve years, from 1700 to 1712.

In addition, church officials often used a system based on the names of religious festivals to record dates. They further complicated the system by using festivals that were not on fixed dates every year. These are called *moveable feast days*, and have dates based on lunar cycles, rather than the solar cycle. (Yes, *A Moveable Feast* also is the title of a posthumously published memoir by Ernest Hemingway; but we digress.)

The best way to convert such a date to a modern calendar date is to consult an online table such as familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Moveable_Feast_Day_Calendar_for_Sweden.

The French Republican Calendar was adopted in France immediately after the Revolution, in 1793, in an effort to remove religious and old-regime references in the Gregorian calendar. Its use was required until 1805. It gave every month the same number of days — 30 — and named the months after natural phenomena, including “rainy,” “snowy,” “windy,” “harvest,” “fog,” or “flower.” The years were numbered from the first year of the Revolution.

For example, the last day in the Republican Calendar period was written *10 Nivôse an XIV*, translated as the 10th day of Snowy in the 14th year of the Revolution. In France, the next day was officially written “1 January 1806.”

During this period additional efforts to strip old traditions from timekeeping were made. The clocks were switched to a decimal system of 10-hour days, 100 minutes per hour, and 100 seconds per minute. All days named after saints were changed to names of plants, tools, and animals. A useful conversion routine can

be found at stevemorse.org/jcal/french.html, a site created and hosted by the helpful Steve Morse.

For centuries, England also has used an alternative method, Regnal Years, for recording dates for official

(Continued on page 7)



How I found it

Mary Ann Roseanna Green Rae's famous letter and the Irish gambler

By Russell Long

I've been searching for the parents of Mary C. Green since writing "How I found it: Estella's famous fragment" (*PastFinder*, May 2012), which established that Mary C. Green was my great-grandmother.

I've kept on searching because I've wondered, what if my ancestors were just around the corner? What if, by chance, they were just hiding in plain sight? Yes, they could be. I've kept looking, hoping that, by chance, maybe something would happen. All I needed was a little help, one little tip.

Well, that's just what happened. I got one little tip, and then another, and then another. Several events gave me the breakthrough I needed.

The chink in my brick wall started with Richard Rands' presentation "Making Sense of FamilySearch Family Tree" at the 9 February 2013 meeting of the Silicon Valley Computer Genealogy Group.

Richard showed us how to activate an account on FamilySearch.org that permitted me to click on Family Tree. Genealogical family trees are available on several other sites, including RootsWeb.org and Ancestry.com.

So what could be so special about this site? I didn't know, but Richard said try it, so I did. And was it special? It was. It listed the one and only tree I've found containing my Mary C. Green.

Here was the tip I needed: Associated with this tree I discovered another Richard who was also very generous in sharing information; an individual named Richard W. Davis was a major contributor to this tree. After I contacted that Richard by email, he responded with a 22-page document containing his and my ancestors, with credible sources obtained in 30 years of research and discovery.

Richard Davis wrote:
"Here is information on the probable sons of Daniel Green (b. c1748) of Orange County, North Carolina. If you have any questions on any of this please ask me. I have seen where some believe that these Green boys are children of a David Green, however that is in error.

"I do know she was of Scotch descent and very wealthy. Daddy's father was an Irish gambler— therefore her wealth went."

"If you have any information to add to this outline, please let me know. Also I am always open to any suggestions on family relations and connections."

This information contained my Mary C. Green and four generations of ancestors, with descendants. The collection included an intriguing letter written — I call it a "famous" letter — from one sister to another.

This letter was written in 1927 by David Green's granddaughter, Mary Ann Rosanna Green Rae, to her sister, Margaret. They were first cousins of my Mary C. Green. I quote:

(Continued on page 8)

Ask the doctor (Continued)

(Continued from page 6)

and legal documents. It generally is used only to specify the year of an event and is based on the year of the then-current monarch's ascension to the throne.

Thus, the 30th of June in the second year of Richard III (whose bones were recently recovered from a parking lot in Leicester, England, which is another story entirely), actually was, for us, 30 June 1484, because he began his reign on 26 June 1483.

Conversion of Regnal years requires a list of all the

English monarchs and the beginning and ending of their reigns. An online calculator to convert Regnal years to modern years can be found at: people.albion.edu/imacinnis/calendar/Regnal_Years.html

Many other calendar systems still are in use today by various religious, racial, geographical, and ethnic groups; among them are the Jewish calendar and the Chinese calendar. A universal date conversion calculator can be found at this web site:

www.calendarhome.com/converter/

How I found it (Continued)

(Continued from page 7)

“Dear Sister Maggie: Our grandfather's name was David Green. Grandmother's name was Tabitha. I do not know what her maiden name was. I do know she was of Scotch descent and very wealthy. Daddy's father was an Irish gambler — therefore her wealth went.”

However, the phrase *her wealth went* may not be true, nor may it be true that David was “an Irish gambler.”

When she married David Green, Tabitha C. Huckaby was wealthy. And she was not a stranger to the altar, this being her third trip. Her first marriage lasted all of one year; her second lasted only a couple. And by the time she met my ancestor David Green, a widower, Tabitha C. Huckaby Randle Burton was well off.

Upcoming meetings

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). The group is not affiliated with any church or other group.

9 March 2013, 9–11 A.M.

- City directories and local histories (Pamela Erickson)
- Managing genealogy files, Part 2 (Richard Rands)
- Reunion 10 for Mac users (Martha Wallace)
- Reunion 10 for the Mac, basics (Pat Solomon)
- Getting started in genealogy (Lesly Klippel)

13 April 2013, 9–11 A.M.

- Germans from Russia
- Life in the Cloud (Janet Brigham)
- Reunion 10 for Mac users
- Reunion 10 for the Mac, basics (Debbie Callan)
- Getting started in genealogy

Shortly before marrying David (the so-called “Irish gambler”), Tabitha recorded a prenuptial agreement. He was born in Virginia. Perhaps he looked like an Irish gambler to her. In any case, she wasn't gambling on him.

According to Richard Davis, “On 18 Dec 1832 at Bedford County, David Green and Tabitha C. Burton were soon to be married so they made a marriage contract in which one should not be responsible for the other's debts and it was bonded by them and Kenneth C. Anderson and it also stated that ‘[E]xercising the same control which they now have over any property and funds which they now have or may hereafter obtain’ with witnesses William Gilchrist and J. Cunningham and Tabitha excluded certain properties which she put in control of Kenneth C. Anderson which included Lot #90, part of lot #75 and also part of lot #74 all in Shelbyville.

“In the marriage contract, Tabitha also excluded her grocery store and confectionary store carried on by Tabitha in Shelbyville.”

A lady has to hold on to her candy store, doesn't she?

Her story ended up being a sweet one for me. Thanks to the generosity of two Richards, I found my ancestors hiding in plain sight on a family tree just waiting for me on FamilySearch Family Tree.

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.

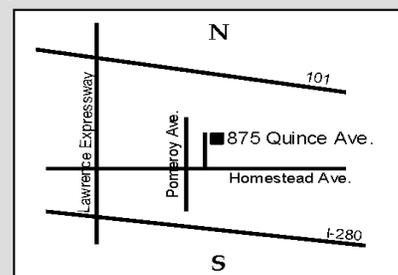
SVCGG offers classes, seminars, and publications to help family historians improve their skills in using

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Meeting site has ample free off-street parking, with a wheelchair-accessible entrance at the front.

technology for genealogy research.

PastFinder, the official publication of the Silicon Valley Computer Genealogy Group, is published monthly except December. *PastFinder* is distributed at meetings to members and mailed to others after the meetings. Members can receive the newsletter electronically by emailed download link.