

THE FAMILY SNOOP

MERCED COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

VOLUME 33, No. 5

MAY 2015

May 2015 Meeting



A Potpourri Of Tips, Tricks and Utilities for Genealogists

by
Kathryn
Marshall

Kathryn Miller Marshall holds a Ph.D. in Psychology from the University of California at Berkeley where she taught for many years. Dr. Marshall is the Director of the Lodi California Family History Center.

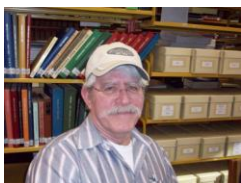
*Dr. Marshall began to specialize in the history of California between 1840 and 1865. She recently published **Discovery of California Gold**, a curriculum augmentation book for 3rd, 4th, 5th and 8th grades, which is being adopted by school districts throughout the state.*

1:00 p.m. Saturday

May 16, 2015

Gracey Room, Merced County Library

President's Message



Dear Friends and Fellow Members
I hope we don't have to wait so long to have Vauna Kelly back. What a congenial, informative speaker.

Saturday, May 16th, is a big day starting with the “Rendezvous 1825” at 9 am and Kathryn Marshall is going to treat us to a “Potpourri of tips, tricks, and techniques” at 1 pm.

Don't forget about the invitation from Stanislaus Genealogy Society to the National Archives and Sutro Library on Thursday, September 17th from 8am - 8pm. You can contact Cleta Lane at 209-577-2289 or Vicky Wolff at 209-529-9430.

Good luck, and have fun with your research.
Sincerely, Greg Entriken, President

April Meeting: Vauna Kelly Spoke on Doing English Research



We enjoyed a very informative presentation by Vauna Kelly on key points to consider while doing English research. She organized her talk in the form of telling us about important dates. Briefly:

1085 – Doomsday Book –
Earliest known census in

England taken by command of the Norman king to assess the wealth of the nobility for tax purposes.

1538 – The clergy were required to keep a record of christenings, marriages and burials

1597 – The clergy were required to write their records on parchment. Records from 1558 forward were supposed to be copied onto parchment which is more durable than paper.

1598 – Vicars were required to send a second copy of the church records to the bishop (Bishops' Transcript)

1752 – The British Empire including the colonies switched from the Julian calendar to the Gregorian calendar on March 25th, Lady's Day.

1801 – First census in Britain, only head counts.

1813 – The church started using a preprinted form which standardized the information listed. Prior to that, information in church records ranged from extremely brief to sometimes extensive.

1837 – English law required civil registration. Prior to this time, administration was ecclesiastical, since the church headed by the king or queen was the government. Civil registration recorded births, marriages and deaths.

1841 – First census in Britain where names were listed.

1851 – British censuses listed names and relationships.

1858 – Administration of English probate matters turned over to civil authorities. Prior to that time, they were handled in multiple ecclesiastical courts. Ancestry.com has indexes for probates. Look at the FamilySearch Wiki under probate records for “Principle Probate Registry.”



1974 – England reorganized their county structure. Note the earlier county lines when searching for records before this time.

1996 –
Adjustments once
again made to
county
boundaries.

Other valuable family history parish records were kept in the “Parish Chest.”

- Apprentices Records
- Bastardy Bonds (illegitimate children) – Since the financial burden of illegitimate children fell to the church, they made every effort to identify the father to make him responsible.

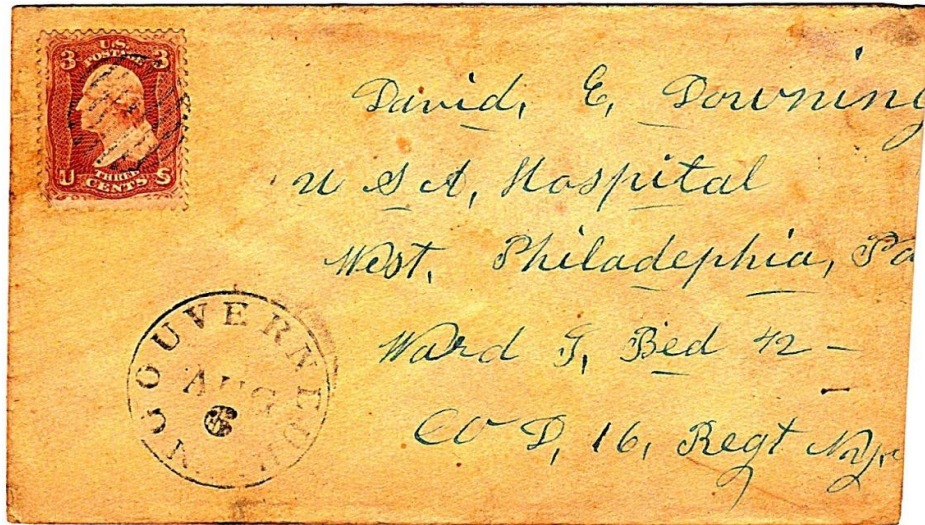
Some of the most valuable internet sources for English research are the following:

- **FamilySearch** – it has the earliest collection on microfilm. If the records have not been digitized when you search, you can order the film.
- **Ancestry.com**
- **Find My Past**
- **TheGenealogist.co.uk**
- **BMDregisters.co.uk** (also has non-conformist records. Non-conformists were those who did not belong to the Church of England.)

Several of these sites can be accessed at the Family History Center.

From The Documents File
Michael Gleason
documentingyourpast.com

The Reality of War



A lot of information on a document can catch your eye and cause you to do additional research, however, sometimes it is just the sheer poignancy of the story on the page, in this case, it is the reality of war.

The envelope illustrated above is addressed to David E. Downing, USA, Hospital, West Philadelphia, Pa., Ward F, Bed 42, Co D, 16 Regt., NY. This was mailed from Gouverneur, New York, on August 6, 1862.

According to the roster of the 16th infantry, New York, David E. (Elliot) Downing, age 18, enlisted October 1, 1861, at Gouverneur; mustered in as a private, Co. D, October 8, 1861, to serve an unexpired term of two years; discharged for disability, July 30, 1862, at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

There were only two significant battles that the 16th took part in between October 8, Downing's muster date, and July 30, his discharge date, They were, the Battle of West Point, Virginia, on May 7, 1862, where 10 men from the 16th were killed or wounded, and the Battle of Gaines Mill, Virginia, on June 27, 1862, where 166 men from the New York 16th infantry, were killed or wounded.

The Hospital in West Philadelphia, where he was treated, was Satterlee General Hospital, which was the largest Union Hospital for most of the war, with 28 wards and 3,000 beds, which explains the detailed address. I have yet to ascertain the nature, or extent of his wound(s), however, they were severe enough that he couldn't return to duty, as he was discharged while he was still recovering in the hospital.

I am happy to say that David E. Downing survived his wound(s), married Laura L. Nichols, and lived until 1924, passing away at the ripe old age of 81.

Gouverneur Museum

http://www.gouverneurmuseum.org/articles/Civil_War_Participants.pdf

Division of Military and Naval Affairs, New York

https://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghist/civil/rosters/Infantry/16th_Infantry_CW_Roster.pdf

New York State Military Museum and veterans Research Center

<http://dmna.ny.gov/historic/reghist/civil/infantry/16thInf/16thInfMain.htm>

Satterlee General Hospital, Adam Clements, University City Historical Society http://www.uchs.net/pdf/Satterlee_General_Hospital-Adam_Clements.pdf

National Parks Service, The Civil War

<http://www.nps.gov/civilwar/search-battle-units-detail.htm?battleUnitCode=UNY0016RI>

April 9th 1865, the Civil War Ends

.....Or did it?

April 9, 1865, the date Union General Ulysses S. Grant and Confederate General Robert E. Lee met in the McLean House in Appomattox, Virginia, is generally recognized as the end of the American Civil War. However, poor communications and patriotic fervor being what it was, the fighting still continued.

- April 14, 1865 – President Abraham Lincoln is assassinated.
- April 16th – Unaware of the surrender or of President Lincoln's assassination, Union General James H. Wilson and his "Raiders" took Columbus, Ga., in a battle
- April 26th – General Joseph E. Johnston surrendered to Maj. Gen. William Tecumseh at Bennett Place, a farm in Durham, NC. Other surrenders followed, the last one being Capt. James Iredell Waddell's surrender of the ship *Shenandoah* Nov. 6.
- May 12th – Confederate soldiers defeated Col. Theodore H. Barrett's Union troops at the Battle of Palmito Ranch outside Brownsville, Texas. Other surrenders followed.
- November 6th – The last took place when Capt. James Iredell Waddell surrendered the ship *Shenandoah*.

President Andrew Johnson formally declared the war over Aug. 20, 1865.

Part of this information was taken from the May/June 2015 Family Tree Magazine blog. In this issue, they feature many ways you can research your Civil War ancestor. Issues of this magazine may be found in the Doris Cochran Room of the main library in Merced.

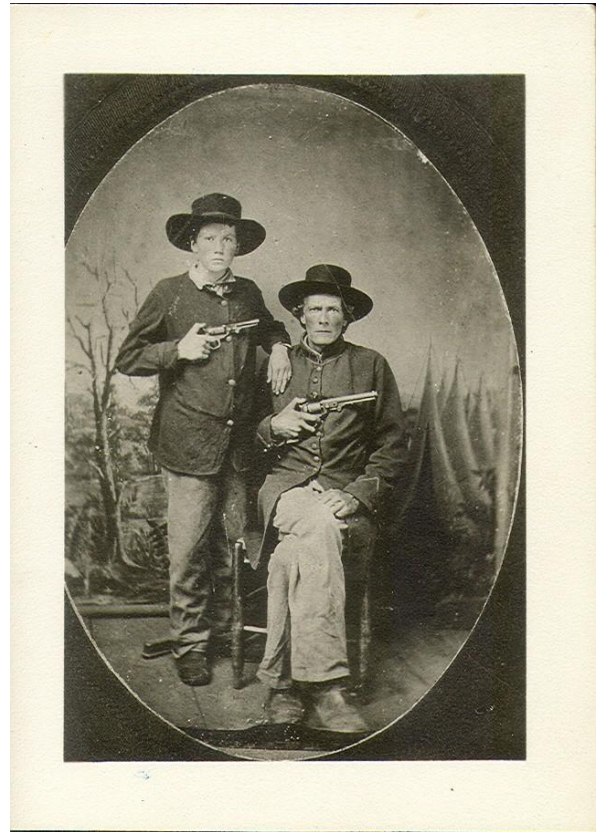
Fold3, which you can access without cost at the Family History Center, is also an excellent source for Civil War records research with their collection that includes the following:

- Confederate Soldier Service Records
- Union Soldier Service Records
- Southern Claims Commission
- Civil War Pension Index

Other good places to search for your Civil War ancestor are on Ancestry.com, FamilySearch, and the National Parks Service Soldiers and Sailors database found at: <http://www.nps.gov/civilwar/soldiers-and-sailors-database.htm>

Times we could tear our hair out – or, please don't do this to your descendants:

By Robyn Echols



The back of this family Civil War photo (a photograph of an older image) states this is a picture of "Your Grandpaw & his father your Great Grandpaw Johnson." You have no idea how much we wish they had given us great-grandpaw's first name. We know Grandpa Johnson was named James, or maybe John, as he appears on later censuses. Some censuses say the younger Johnson, born in 1845, was born in Kentucky; others say he was born in Illinois. Family tradition has him ending up in Indiana after the war. For all that, we cannot find him in the 1860 census (he was probably of an age to be "farmed out" so he was not a drain on the family's food resources), and we cannot identify in the 1850 census. Death records have proved elusive. Do you have any idea how many James and/or John Johnsons there were in the United States at that time? Lots.

One thing we could tell from this photo, the chevron on the sleeve of the father's uniform identified him as a veteran re-enlistee at the time it was taken. He had enlisted earlier for a shorter time period, mustered out, and re-enlisted. Although he remained a private, this entitled him to a bonus upon re-enlistment, higher pay and greater status.

Write It Down! Pass It On!

By Anne Field

Sunday, March 1st, there was an article in the *Modesto Bee* about researching your family history to find out if the family stories passed on generation to generation are actually true. It emphasized the point that one should interview older family members and get their memories and stories – but then check to make sure the information is accurate. Included in the article were seven tips from three genealogists, Sharon Carmak, Valerie Elkins and Lynn Palermo. The emphasis here was to write down your family history – not just the dates and places, but the stories. There were several suggestions on how to do this, but what I took away was the need to write down and share. What is the point of gathering all the information if we cannot write down things to pass on – something that you remember about your grandfather; what your great-great grandfather did in the Civil War; how your parents met and married; a brief bio of one of your ancestors. The story should be interesting to family members and not be too long as to be intimidating – especially for those family members who are not as interested in family history as we are.



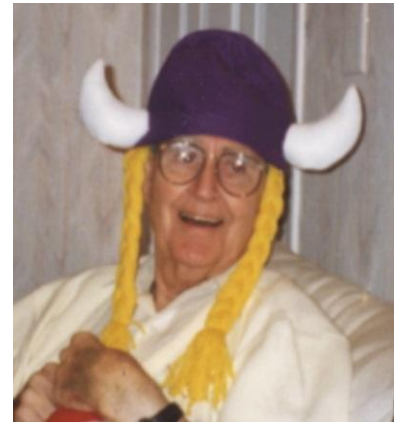
So I decided to write up something short to pass on to my nieces and nephews and great-nieces and great-nephews – my father and his sayings.

Author's father dancing the hula

My father, when he became a grandfather for the first time, wanted to be called Grumpy. We could not figure out why, because he was never very grumpy. In any case, as my sisters and I got older, we found ourselves repeating the sayings of

our father and we called them Grumpyisms. My article was only two pages. I not only talked about his sayings but gave examples of his great sense of humor – like when he would put corn candy in his mouth, like teeth, and then

jump out and scare us. Or putting rubber lizards in our beds when we were out on dates so he would know, by our screams, what time we got home. When he was a young boy, his mother, who had been raised by two British parents and liked her tea with milk, would ask him to bring her a “mouthful of milk” for her tea. He would come in the room,



not with a pitcher of milk, but with his cheeks puffed out like they were full of milk. One of his sayings: “Close your mouth! You’re letting all the flies in.” He was always big on proper manners. And when we were being selfish, “Pull up the gangplank, Jack. I’m aboard!” When we wanted someone to do something for us, “Peel me a grape!” – which meant: Get off your duff and do it yourself. And when we were driving somewhere, “What’s that in

Author's father with Viking Maiden hat

the road? A head?”

When he and my mother were dating in 1939 in Honolulu, he told her his middle initial E stood for Edmund. He had to confess when the wedding invitations were almost printed with Edmund instead of Edward.

My father lived to be 88, so all of his grandchildren knew him and loved his sense of humor. Hopefully, the little write-up that I did about my father will help his great grandchildren know more about him.

You can do this too. Pick someone to write about, tell an old family story, how the family came to America or to California, write about the ancestor who was a horse thief, something you remember about your grandmother. Put pen to paper. It does not have to be perfect the first time you set the words down. You can polish later. Just do it!

Upcoming Programs for 2015

June 20	“Finding Lost Cousins & Living Relatives” by Barbara Washburn
July 18	Birthday Month
August	No Meeting
	Join us and invite others to join with us!

Ask Our Librarian



The Merced County Librarian, Amy Taylor, came as guest to our April Merced County Genealogical Society board meeting. She listened to a list of concerns by board members and has

provided us with some answers and direction:

- I sent a message to all staff about keeping the door locked until a Genealogy Volunteer asks for it to be opened and what constitutes a Genealogy questions. Please let me know if you keep experiencing an unlocked door or non-genealogy questions being referred to volunteers.
- The San Joaquin Valley Library System virtual server that hosted the newspaper database crashed in early 2014. The server was not able to be recovered. The database still exists but we would have to purchase and maintain the server and data. The library does not have money nor staff knowledge to complete this task.
- The library asked building maintenance to leave the temperature on in the Gracey Room at all times like the rest of the library. Please let staff know if the temperature is uncomfortable.
- Routine maintenance was performed on all the computers in the Genealogy Room. They are up-to-date and functioning normally. Please let staff know if you have any issues so we may address them right away.
- Library staff is working on a genealogy materials list. Once they have it finished, they will forward it to the Society.
- There is WIFI access in the Gracey Room. As is the nature of all WIFI service, the more people that are connected and using the WIFI within the library, the slower it will be.

Genealogy isn't fatal, but it is a GRAVE disease!

Research Trip to the National Archives and Sutro Library

The Genealogical Society of Stanislaus County invites members of the Merced County Genealogical Society to join them for a research trip to the National Archives and Sutro Library on Thursday, September 17, 2015.

They plan to leave the Trinity Presbyterian Church parking lot at 8:00a.m. and return at approximately 8:00p.m.

The cost is \$40.00 per person. This will include a continental breakfast on board the bus.

It is first come-first serve and several genealogical societies in the Valley have been invites. Please contact the following if you want to go:

Cleta Lane
209-577-2289
kllusa@sbcglobal.net

or

Vicky Wolff
209-529-9430

*I'm going to name
you after your
father and your
grandfather so
genealogists have a
heck of a time
trying to research
you in the next
century.*



Membership at our April 2015 Meeting:

Attendance final count: 21 Members, 6 guests
Renewals [not including the April meeting]: 5
Total: 81 active and 41 inactive

Welcome to new members, Mike Cuchna researching in the Chicago/Czech Republic regions and Mary Nickles researching in the United States, Ireland and Germany.

The Family Snoop is published on the first day of each month except Aug and Dec. It is sent in .pdf to members who receive it by email. Back copies can be emailed to members as attachments. Send items, articles, stories, etc., to robynechols AT gmail DOT net. You can choose to receive the Family Snoop via email in a pdf format – get it sooner and in color. Contact Sharon Darby, our treasurer. **Deadline for the Jun 2015 issue is May 25th.** There is no meeting in August.

Dues are \$20 per year for an Individual or \$30 for a Family living at the same address.

The Doris Cochran Research Room is open 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. on Wednesdays and Saturdays,
BUT WE NEED SUBSTITUTE VOLUNTEERS TO HELP KEEP IT OPEN!! Please Volunteer!

Merced County Genealogical Society
P.O. Box 3061
Merced, CA. 95344

President	Greg Entriken
President-elect	Bernadette Castaneda
Vice President	Lois Jimenez
Treasurer	Sharon Darby
Secretary	Stephanie McLeod
Past President	Shari Stetson
Membership	Margie Barnhart
Hospitality	Michle Burroughs
Publicity	Open
Programs	Susan Benes, Michle Burroughs, Rosalie Heppner, Stephanie McLeod & Shari Stetson
Editor, <i>The Family Snoop</i>	Robyn Echols robynechols AT gmail DOT com

Family History Center

www.familysearch.org
 1080 E Yosemite Ave Merced. 722-1307
 Tuesday, Wednesday, 10:00 am to 4:00 pm,
 Thursday, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
 Tuesday evening, 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Free access on their computers to Ancestry and other programs. Take along your flash drive to save and download. Volunteers are there to help you and microfilms can now be ordered online.

Merced County Library

www.co.merced.ca.us/index.aspx?nid=77
 2100 O Street Merced 209-285-7642
 Fax: 209-726-7912
 Monday through Thursday – 10am to 6:00pm
 Friday & Saturday - 10:00am to 5:00pm

Merced County Courthouse Museum

www.mercedmuseum.org
 21st & N Streets Merced
 Wednesday through Sunday - 1:00pm to 4:00pm.
 Free admission.

Genealogical Society of Stanislaus County

www.cagenweb.com/lr/stanilaus/gssc.html
 Click on their newsletter to read online or download.
 Information about bus trips and programs offered throughout the year that may interest you.

Monthly Financial Report: February 2015

Income	180.24
Expenses	(137.29)
Checking Balance	\$5,625.39
Savings Account:	3,866.06
CD-9 months; matures on 10/8/14	5,842.91
CD-12 months; matures on 5/19/15	5,664.39
Total in Checking and Savings:	\$20,998.75

MCGS Website: <http://www.rootsweb.com/~camcgs>