



# ROOTS AND GOLD DUST

## Genealogical Society

P. O. Box 1354 Diamond Springs, CA 95619  
Roots and Gold Dust Newsletter–April 2011

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### UPCOMING MEETING DATES & AGENDA

April 19, 2011 Doug Noble  
*Early Railroads of California & El Dorado County*

May 17, 2011 Richard Wilson  
*Collecting Family Information and Making a Family Album*

June 21, 2011 Getta Stedford  
*Researching in the New England States*

July 19, 2011 Dr. Donald MacRea, PhD,  
*The Scottish Familial System*

August 16, 2011 Paul Hodel  
*Finding Your Ancestors in the Cemetery*

September 20, 2011 To Be Decided

October 18, 2011 To Be Decided

More details to follow as we put together the speakers schedule and make arrangements for the workshops.

### RECAP OF OUR LAST MEETING March 15<sup>th</sup>

Unfortunately, March's speaker, Getta Stedford wasn't able to be here due to illness. We are happy to report that Getta is much better now and is looking forward to the June meeting when she has rescheduled to do her presentation. Good to hear you're feeling better Getta!

We want to thank Alice Morrow for the baked goodies, Carol Sexton for the drinks and Maria

Pizzicara for the tangerines. You ladies took good care of our appetites. Thank You! We also want to thank all of you who helped set up the room and put things away afterwards. Your help is always appreciated.

We had 24 in attendance, in spite of the questionable weather. This included three visitors. Due to Getta's absence, we had a change of agenda which allowed for a little longer business meeting than we usually have and which we needed. Then we opened up the floor to the membership.

Elaine Andrews showed us the book that she had picked out for the FHC library - "Swedish American Life in Chicago".

Milt Mulligan asked about transferring genealogical data from Windows to Mac programs. Several suggestions were made for him to follow. Mac genealogy programs he can use include Reunion and Family Tree Maker.

Mary Ann Dobson discussed how to scan large legal documents to avoid getting torn while copying. Suggestions were Imperial Printers and Minuteman, both located in Placerville.

Luana Zylla shared pictures of her grandparents and information about her Portuguese ancestors she received while visiting her aunt in Hawaii.

Bonnie Holbrook shared certificates from a Scottish church which listed a number of vital statistics about some of her ancestors.

Valerie Petritsch's name was drawn so she can use the German Research book at her home for the next month.

Harvey Andrews was this month's Book Can winner.

## THE ROOTS AND GOLD DUST GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

Roots and Gold Dust meetings are held at 1:00 p.m. on the third Tuesday of each month (except December) at the Family History Center in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints building at 3275 Cedar Ravine, Placerville. Refreshments are provided. Visitors are always welcome.

Our newsletter is sent out around the first of each month, depending on how fast our editor is.

For information or membership inquiries, please contact Paul Hodel at [pljhodel@hotmail.com](mailto:pljhodel@hotmail.com) or by phone at (530)622-3299.

Visit our website @

[http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~cargdgs/index.  
htm](http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~cargdgs/index.htm)

### NEXT MEETING April 19<sup>th</sup> at 1:00

April's presentation promises to be an interesting one. It will be on "Early Railroads of California and El Dorado County" featuring Doug Noble.

Doug was born in Pasadena, CA and lived one house from the Santa Fe Railroad's main line. Railroads were always of interest to him. He attended Pasadena High School and Pasadena City College, and after two years military service, obtained a degree in Biological Science from California State College at Fullerton.

He moved to El Dorado County in 1970 and both of his children were born here. He was the Assistant Planning Director for El Dorado County for 9 years and served on the Planning Commission for an additional 9 years. After leaving the county he worked as a land use consultant and paralegal.

In 1987 El Dorado County contacted him and asked if he could prepare a three paragraph article on the local railroad for their case to stop the abandonment of the railroad from Sacramento to Placerville. A few weeks later they asked him to expand the story, which became a ten page history of the Placerville

and Sacramento Valley Railroad, a division of the Sacramento Valley Railroad, the first commercial railroad west of the Mississippi.

Also in 1987 he started working part-time for the Mountain Democrat writing about restaurants, wineries and food. A few years later they asked him to also write about history. He has expanded the original railroad story over the years, adding new facts from different sources. It now takes up several file folders.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### Central Library Programs

Programs are ongoing at the Central Library, 828 I Street, Sacramento. For their class schedule, more information and to register, see [www.saclibrary.org](http://www.saclibrary.org)

#### Regional Family History Center Wednesday Classes

The Regional Family History Center at 2745 Eastern Ave, Sacramento has genealogy classes every Wednesday afternoon and evening. Visit their website to see what's coming up. <http://www.familyhistorycenter.info/>

#### In Search of Our German Ancestors Saturday, April 16, 2011 Sacramento

The Sacramento German Genealogy Society will be holding an all day seminar from 9:00 a.m. until 4:15 p.m. on Saturday, April 16, 2011 at 3349 J Street, Sacramento. The presenter will be Dr. Roger P. Minert, a professor at Brigham Young University and the author of more than 70 books and articles on German genealogy and research. It promises to be an interesting and informative day, so mark your calendar. *If any of you are interested in carpooling to this seminar, please give Paul Hodel a call.*

#### Family History Day 2011

Saturday, October 15, 8:30-4:00 – follow the blog at <http://fhdnews.blogspot.com>

## EXECUTIVE BOARD:

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## FHC LIBRARY UPDATES

Ancestry.com is now available at the FHC. They now have the library edition of Ancestry, so you'll want to stop by and check it out.

Future Training Sessions are scheduled for June 1, September 1 and December 8 (which will be a potluck). These sessions have been very informative and they are open to everyone. We'll let you know when we have the topics.

## OUR FIRST GRAND TOUR DAY ONE

by Richard Lee Swan

*We all know about the rewards for doing our family history. Sometimes they come unexpectedly.*

We started out on August 24, 1985, heading eastward to Salt Lake City. Monday was a most interesting and rewarding day at the LDS Genealogical Library. Mary did her first research on her Grabow and Rabe families and I found the missing link of my previous study -- Great Grandfather Ebenezer and his brood - with some unfulfilled leads to broaden the picture. To wit, Andrew Jackson Swan, GGF Ebenezer's son and elder brother to G.F. Ebenezer. Well, next time. All of this took from 8:15 a.m. to closing at 6 p.m.!

We had planned dinner at The Roof, at the Hotel Utah, because of the view and the sunset. But it was raining lightly. The sky was low and black - even with this disappointment, we dressed up, keeping our reservation. It is a beautifully walnut-

paneled dining room on the three levels, warm and inviting.

No sooner were we seated than the sun broke through the clouds over the mountains on the far side of the Great Salt Lake. Let me describe the total picture as it occurred throughout our dinner: Over the entire Salt Lake City valley were black and grey clouds. Just across the road to our right rose the intricate grey towers of the Mormon Temple. Amidst all this was an occasional bolt of lighting. Now the sun was lighting a small hole at the far side of this dark tunnel. It was not the usual sunset of oranges or pinks with lavender edges but a brilliant gold so beautiful that the viewers all "Oh'd!" and "Awe'd!". As the sun rays shot upward, they turned the gilded Angel Gabriel atop the Temple to a glowing brilliance that must have appeared as an omen. To me it had a spiritual feeling of "God with us". Then, as quickly as the sun had broken through, it became black again - thunder roared, the sky lit up with giant flashings, then more blackness followed by slashings of angered bolts, two or three at a time, those too far away to hear the thunder. Shades of the "1812 Overture". A heroic show -and a grand dinner!

*Richard Lee Swan is the father of our very own Mary Lee Swan Gilliland. The Mary referred to in this story is her mother, Mary. A big Thanks to Mary Lee for sharing this with us.*

## CALL FOR MEMBERS HELP

We would like to do a special supplement to the newsletter this summer featuring stories about people and/or places in El Dorado County. This is anything from the past: recent or gold rush. Please write up anything you may know about and sent it to Paul Hodel for inclusion in this special supplement. It doesn't have to be long, even a paragraph will be a big help. I know there are a lot of us who didn't grow up here, but we've still heard stories or done some research in the local area. Let's share what we have with each other and anyone else who happens to peruse our newsletter. Thanks for your help.

## SURNAME SPELLINGS

In genealogy, we are all researching at least one if not multiple surnames. Most of us are aware that many of the names we are researching may come with different spellings. Take for example the name Faris. I was working on this surname with a friend of mine as he could not find anything on his grandfather. As we drove over to the county we were going to research, I commented that we would look for Farris and Fariss as well as Faris. He assured me that it was only spelled one way - FARIS. When we arrived at the courthouse, he left to make a telephone call while I searched deed records. While he was gone, I found three different deeds for his grandfather. You probably guessed it, but the name was spelled three different ways.

Most all names have different spellings as the standardization of spelling did not come about until about 150-200 years ago. Many of the older names have a variety of spellings. My own name of Douthat has about 33 different spellings with most putting a "g" in the middle of it. We have found that most of the "ats" are from Virginia, the "its" are found in North Carolina and the "itts" in Kentucky. This is not a hard and fast rule, but it works most of the time. Each of your surnames will be found in a variety of spellings. I have also seen my name spelled Doudeth, Douthet, Douthwhite, Dowthit, or even Toudith [in German]. Even the name of Smith is sometimes found as Smyth, Smithe, Smytte, Schmidt or many other spellings. You have to approach the research with a very open mind. Since most of the names you will be researching will go at least back to the time of entry into the colonies.

Let's look at some that do not fall into the simple category. My mother's maiden name was PAINTER. Simple enough or so I thought more than fifty years ago when I started working on the family. I ran into the name spelled Paynter some, but not very often. I was back to about 1800 and suddenly the name was nowhere to be found in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, where they all came from into the southwestern part of Virginia. After researching this family for a great number of years, I was transcribing the early deed book for Montgomery County, Virginia when I located a clue. In one of my ancestors' deeds, the clerk had

written in the margin, "He signs in English 'Painter' and in German it should be 'Bender'". This was my first indication that the family was German. A college German professor explained the reason for the confusion was the pronunciation of the German "Bender". In German it would be pronounced "Baind'er" with the emphasis on the 'ain'. Once I discovered this connection, the early Shenandoah records had a number of references to "Bender" that seemed to connect with the family.

In another similar case, I was researching my wife's family. I had traced them back to North Carolina in the Wachovia settlement of the Moravians. In one of the ancestor's applications for pension from the American Revolution, he stated he was born in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. In a quick search of the Pennsylvania records, there were no Kells mentioned anywhere. Sometime later we found an immigration record where a Kell signed the Oath of Allegiance in Philadelphia after his trip to the United States prior to the American Revolution. When we found the ship's manifest, he was listed as "David Schell". All of the other names were matched with the Oath of Allegiance except him and David Schell became David Kell between the dock and the courthouse. Going back into the Pennsylvania records, we find a lot of 'Schell' names listed in nearly every county.

It seems that many of our brick walls are just a lack of knowledge about the name itself. When emigrants came to America, many times the names were changed from the former language to English for ease of pronunciation or in some cases to escape the burden of the former name in the old country. Even today, people have to go to court to change a name for whatever reason. It was not uncommon for the slaves to adopt a name of their choosing which may have been the name of the former owners or a completely different name to divorce themselves from the former owners. We have found in our many years of research that sometimes brothers and sisters will spell their names differently just to be different. Take the name of Louis/Lewis, we find that these two are used interchangeably all too often. There are hundreds of names that fall into this category. Where I grew up the name Snider was often spelled Snidow. My mother always said they were the uppity branch of the family since one

brother spelled his name with the “..er..” and the other brother spelled his name “...ow...”.

When researching, remember to be flexible in your spelling of the name especially when reading the original handwritten name. Always check the signature on a document to see if it was an actual signature or one someone else had written in for them. In this latter case, the document should also read, “His X mark” which indicates someone else has written the name there and spelled it the way they wanted to and not the way it should be spelled.

Article courtesy of Mountain Press, September 2010 Newsletter, Volume 2, Number 9. P.O. Box 400, Signal Mountain, Tennessee, 37377. You can visit their website at : <http://www.mountainpress.com>

### **GENIE THOUGHT**

*Only a Genealogist regards a step backwards as progress.*

### **GENIE RESOURCES**

In each of the monthly newsletters, we will be presenting available sources of genealogical information. These may be local research locations, websites, places to write or visit, etc. If you have a source that you would like to share, please contact the newsletter writer at [pljhodel@hotmail.com](mailto:pljhodel@hotmail.com) or call 530-622-3299.

### **Revolutionary War Southern Campaign Pension Application Transcriptions Online**

Here's a web site devoted to the Southern Campaign of the Revolutionary War. It has a number of good links to Revolutionary War information with an emphasis on the Southern Campaign as well as an interesting on-line magazine. It contains free transcriptions of over 10,000 Revolutionary War Pension Applications. The site is sponsored by the American Revolution Association and currently contains 10,496 pension application and 70 roster transcriptions, all from the Southern Campaign. Although the Southern

Campaign wasn't nearly as large or well known as the northern one, there are still a number of folks who had ancestors fighting in it. They can be found at : <http://southerncampaign.org/pen/#m>:

### **EDC History Society Webpage**

The El Dorado County Historical Society has launched its website and it's a good looking one too. You'll want to visit it soon. It has some nice information on the Fountain-Tallman Building where their museum is located. Visit them at: <http://eldoradocountyhistoricalsociety.org/> .

### **Mocavo.Com**

Cliff Shaw, who is probably best known for bringing us a site called GenCircles.com years ago, has developed a genealogy specific website called Mocavo.com. It is nice from the standpoint that it only searches genealogy sites, so you don't have to sift through all the extra hits you get with someone like Google or Bing. You will want to try them out at: <http://mocavo.com/> .

### **WHITE BRONZE CEMETERY MARKERS**

Visit a cemetery that has numerous monuments dating prior to 1900. Many of the stones from this period are severely weathered and in many cases unreadable. Some are covered with lichen and moss. However, some markers have resisted the ravages of time. They are a beautiful blue-grey color with the texture of granite. The inscriptions are as clear and readable as the day they were produced. Knock on one and you will be surprised. They are hollow. These amazing "stones" are metal. They are made from what was then called white bronze, which was really a misnomer, as these monuments are made from pure zinc. They are sometimes referred to as “Zincers”.

M.A. Richardson is credited with inventing the means of creating these zinc monuments in 1873 and soon The Monumental Bronze Company was officially incorporated in 1879 in Bridgeport, Connecticut.

The Monumental Bronze Company produced these monuments for just forty years, from 1874 to 1914. Peak sales occurred in the late 1880s. Subsidiaries were eventually opened in other cities which did final assembly work. Most, if not all, of the original casting was done in Bridgeport, Connecticut.



*"Zincers" at Alton Cemetery, Kent Co, Michigan*

In its heyday, Monumental Bronze Company produced thousands of markers, custom effigies of the deceased, and stock statues of Faith, Hope, and Charity. World War I intervened and the government took over the factory to produce gun mounts and munitions. The entire supply of zinc was required for the war effort. The Monumental Bronze Company never fully recovered after the war, though they continued to produce name panels well after they stopped producing the actual monuments.

The zinc castings were produced in pieces and fused together utilizing molten zinc at temperatures far beyond its melting point. This process fused the pieces far better than simple soldering would have done. The piece was then sandblasted and chemically oxidized to produce its granite appearance. Over time, a thin protective skin of zinc carbonate develops which giving the monuments their characteristic color. This naturally protective patina is the key to the long-term corrosion resistance of the monuments.

Custom name panels were produced and attached with screws with special ornamental heads. Stock

panels were also available with inspirational quotes, various flowers, crosses, and other popular symbols and religious motifs. The name panels could be replaced when additional members of the family died.

Monumental Bronze Company produced most of their white bronze monuments in sizes from just a few inches tall to nearly fifteen feet high. Many are in the shape of a four sided pillar that gradually tapers in towards the top. The seams run vertically along the edges. The base is often finished to resemble rough rock. The family name is often found molded into the base.

The monuments were sold primarily through catalogs and sales agents at prices ranging from under \$2 to \$5000. This was less than the prices of comparable stone monuments and the shipping costs were significantly reduced due to the lower weight. These white bronze monuments were erected in limited numbers across the entire United States and Canada.

With over one hundred years of exposure to the harsh New England weather, the white bronze monuments in Pittsfield Cemetery have remained for the most part in superb condition.

It is unusual to find a cemetery with more than a dozen white bronze monuments. The rarity of these white bronze monuments is reflective of their brief forty year production run. Many people of the late Victorian era regarded the monuments as cheap imitations of stone monuments. A few cemeteries even banned them. While these people did not accept the original claims that these monuments were superior to stone, in reality, they have withstood the test of time.

The next time you are in the older part of your local cemetery, look for a bright clean stone of a beautiful blue-grey color. Give it a knock...you might be surprised at what you find!

*We'll see you at the FHC on April 19<sup>th</sup> for our next meeting.*

