



# TPCGS

# NEWSLETTER

August 2013

Vol. VII, No. 5

## MEETINGS AND SPEAKERS SCHEDULE

5 Sept 2013	3 pm	Thursday . . . . .	TPCGS Board Meeting . . . . .	Swasey Branch Library TPL
10 Sept 2013	6 pm	Tuesday . . . . .	Recent Genealogical Discoveries of Our Members. . . . .	Main Downtown Branch TPL
3 Oct 2013	3 pm	Thursday . . . . .	TPCGS Board Meeting . . . . .	Swasey Branch Library TPL
8 Oct 2013	6 and 7 pm . . . . .		Mary Kathryn Kozy . . . . .	South Bates Campus
7 Nov 2013	3 pm	Thursday . . . . .	TPCGS Board Meeting . . . . .	Swasey Branch Library TPL
12 Nov 2013	6 and 7 pm . . . . .		Criminal Justice Records as a source of family history . . . . .	South Bates Campus

## Message from the President

by Warren Fisk, TPCGS President

I hope you are having a great summer. If yours is like mine, it's been a busy one. For the first time, in what seems like ages, mine included a short trip to investigate a small portion of my family history. During a trip to Spokane I was able to solve a mystery about my great-grandmother. More about that at the next regular meeting.

Our next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 10th. For this one meeting **we will NOT meet at the south campus of Bates.** The meeting location change is a result of Bates Vocational School not opening until September 23rd. So our usual meeting room at Bates is not available.

As a result, **we will be meeting at the Main Downtown branch of the Tacoma Public Library. The address of the library is 1102 Tacoma Ave. S.** Another result of the change in location is that we will not have a pre-meeting. The regular meeting will begin at 6 pm and will end just before 8 pm, when the library closes.

Even with a shortened meeting we will be presenting one of the more popular meetings of the year, the "Recent Genealogical Discoveries of Our Members." This meeting, as we have often done in past, will provide an opportunity for everyone to share recent family history discoveries and the events that led to the discoveries.

So begins another year of informative meetings. Mark your calendar for the second Tuesday of each month and plan to attend. As always, please check upcoming Newsletters and the Society web site at TPCGS.org to keep up-to-date and informed on all society and local activities. The remaining meetings this season, beginning with the October 8 meeting, will be back at our usual meeting room at Bates Vocational School.

Again, the SEPTEMBER 10 MEETING for the Society WILL BEGIN AT 6 P.M. at the **MAIN DOWNTOWN BRANCH** of the Tacoma Public Library.

I hope to see you all there. Warren

## Mid-19th Century, Mid-West Library Resources

Compiled by Jean Fisher, Librarian, TPL, Northwest Room

This is the fifth and final installment in a series intended to highlight selected materials in the Tacoma Public Library's genealogy collection that may be useful for researching migrating US ancestors during the period of the westward movement after the Revolution (roughly between 1795 and 1850). Each column focuses on two states at a time.

For this last installment, we will be covering Mississippi and Iowa. Please note that this is a small sampling of just a few resources that hopefully will spark your interest. Other important sources found in the library's collection, but not listed here, include census indexes, numerous county histories, genealogical society quarterlies, and many county-specific sources covering several record types – so keep these in mind, too!

### Mississippi

King, J. Estelle Stewart. *Mississippi Court Records 1799-1835*. This compilation includes abstracts of court records of early Mississippi, including wills, marriages, and tax lists for early Mississippi counties. Also included is a list of Revolutionary War soldiers by county, and some cemetery inscriptions. Content is organized by county, and there is a full surname index. GEN 929.3762 K583M

Wiltshire, Betty Couch. *Mississippi Index of Wills: 1800-1900*. This book aims to index all wills available in every county in Mississippi from 1800 to 1900. It includes the names of more than 10,000 testators, arranged alphabetically throughout. GEN 929.3762 W713M

*Marriages and Deaths from Mississippi Newspapers, vols. 1-4* As a complete set, the four volumes in this work span the years 1801-1863, cover all areas of Mississippi, and include information from many newspapers. The author has abstracted birth, marriage, divorce,

death, and other notices. Information is organized in each volume by paper, and within that by date. Each volume includes a name index. GEN 929.3762 W713MA

Ragland, Mary Lois S. *Spreading the Word: Mississippi Newspaper Abstracts of Genealogical Interest, 1825-1935*. Although this book primarily focuses on 35 different Vicksburg papers, the author points out that Vicksburg was Mississippi's largest city until 1900, and one of the busiest ports and rail centers in the south. Therefore, Vicksburg papers carried a vast amount of news from throughout the state. The information abstracted draws mainly from marriage and death notices and is organized by paper and date, followed by a name index. GEN 929.3762 R127S

### Iowa

Des Moines County Genealogical Society. *Des Moines County Iowa, Territory of Michigan Early Marriages: 1835-1853* One of Iowa's original counties while still part of the Michigan Territory, Des Moines County was formed in 1834. This book indexes the marriages of some of the earliest pioneers in the state, and contains information from Marriage Books 1 and 2. The index is arranged into alphabetical lists by both groom and bride's names, and includes a Minister's Index showing the names of ministers who presented credentials from June 18, 1842 to July 1851. GEN 929.377793 D397DE

Des Moines County Genealogical Society. *Des Moines County Marriage Record Book #3: January 1847 through December 1853*. This book seems to continue where the previous book (described above) leaves off, listing early marriages in the young state of Iowa. GEN 929.377796 D397D

Berentson, Betty Larsen. *Iowa Connections: A Researcher's Guide to Early Settlers of Iowa, Where They Came From and the Towns They Built*. After giving some brief information on Iowa towns – when established, if name has changed, and if it still exists – the author gives a selection of information

(continued on p. 3)

## Mid-19th Century, Mid-West Library Resources (continued)

about many early Iowa towns, such as: when settled and by whom, names of early settlers, historical events, and name origins. The bulk of the book is an alphabetical listing of men, women and children “connected to early Iowa.” The information given depends on the individual, but typically contains birth, marriage and death dates, military and burial information, and more. GEN 929.3777 B452I

Sopp, Elsie. *Personal Name Index to the 1856 City Directories of Iowa*. Citing it as the main reason for this book, the forward claims that many westerners often discover that their ancestors “settled, rested, or traveled through Iowa’s rolling hills in their westward migration.” The names listed are drawn from mid-1850s city directories of seven counties in Iowa, as well as three cities in Illinois, and have been compiled into one large list alphabetically by surname. GEN 929.3777 SO67P

An extra Genie Item . . . .

### Many Kinds of Marriage Records

There are lots of different kinds of marriage records, many of them generated before the modern marriage certificates and marriage licenses existed. This is a link to an article in *Family Tree Magazine* that provides a checklist and description of the 12 kinds of marriage records to look for.

[http://familytreemagazine.com/article/Marriage-Records-Checklist?\\_mid=603222&rid=2711020](http://familytreemagazine.com/article/Marriage-Records-Checklist?_mid=603222&rid=2711020)

## COWBOY TOMBSTONE

Legend has it that Russell J. Larsen, a cowboy, had “Five Rules for Men to Live By For a Happy Life” engraved on his tombstone in Logan City, Utah. These are the words:

It’s important to have a woman who helps at home, cooks from time to time, cleans up, and has a job.

It’s important to have a woman who can make you laugh.

It’s important to have a woman who you can trust, and doesn’t lie to you.

It’s important to have a woman who is good in bed, and likes to be with you.

It’s very, very important that these four women do not know each other or you could end up dead like me.

*Snotes, the website that supports or dispels urban legends, reports that there is actually a tombstone for a Russell J. Larsen in Logan City, Utah, but the wording, although equally colorful, is not quite the same.*

What the tombstone says is “*The things I love most are good horses and beautiful women, and when I die I hope they tan this old hide of mine and make it into a ladies riding saddle, so I can rest in peace between the two things I love most.*” (Source: Find-A-Grave)

(Thanks are due to the Clallam County Genealogical Society Bulletin for this gem)



## TPCGS Programs

**Sept. 10, 2013 6:00 to 8:00 pm, Tuesday** First meeting of the 2013-2014 season will be held at the **Main Downtown Branch of Tacoma Public Library**. Program: to share the stories of recent family history discoveries and the events that led to those discoveries.

October and November meetings will be back at **South Bates Campus** at **6:00 to 7:00 pm** and **7:00 to 9:00 pm**

**October 8** Program will be presented by Mary Kathryn Kozy who has worked with genealogy and regional genealogical associations for over 30 years. Her topic will be announced later. She is a member of TPCGS.

**November 12** Program will be presented by Gail Sanders on **Criminal Justice Records as a source of family history**. Gail has worked in the records department for the Thurston Co. Sheriff’s Dept. for a number of years, and is currently also indexing the law library there. Gail is the daughter of Ellen McKanna, and both are members of TPCGS.

## From the Family Line Desk . . . .

Early obituaries had interesting descriptions of the death or of the deceased. Here are a few examples: “Stricken by Death While at a Dance – While dancing at the Dreamland hall last night, Arthur, a young man of about 25 years, living on Park Avenue, suddenly fainted and fell to the floor, striking his back across a chair. The exact nature of the man’s illness could not be determined. He showed a few evidences of epilepsy, but his condition seemed to be more of heart disease. He was unconscious and after several attempts to reach doctors by phone, during which time several people were working the prostrate man, an ambulance was finally procured and the sufferer was sent to St. Joseph’s hospital, but he died before he reached there.” Imagine this happening in today’s world!

“Man Shot by Nephew Succumbs to Bullet – Almost insane with grief and sorrow, Harry, the unfortunate young man who early yesterday morning shot his uncle, Joseph, mistaking him for a burglar prowling about their tent home at Center and Bailey Streets is still locked up in the city jail. The police are satisfied the tragedy was purely an accident and would release Harry were it not that he was in such a state of mind they fear he would do himself violence. All day yesterday he raved in his cell. Until late in the afternoon he did not know of his uncle’s death as the police feared to tell him. When he heard the sad news his grief was more poignant and his ravings more violent”

“Log Bucker is Fatally Hurt – Frank, 49, a log bucker was injured Monday afternoon at the Grisdale Construction company’s new logging camp on the Mosquito Lake road near Acme, being crushed by a rolling log he was bucking on a grade, and died while companions were carrying him on a stretcher two miles to a waiting ambulance.”

Think how differently these incidents would be described in today’s newspapers. Cell phones bring emergency help in minutes. Responders are better trained to take care of the injured and ill. Emergency rooms are better equipped. Even injuries that happen miles from the nearest hospitals can be treated in a short time by helicopter travel. It makes me wonder how accidents and illness will be handled in the next hundred years.

Few people let me know how the results of our obituaries help their research. I received a request in early July to find an obituary for Florence Williams. I received a thank you letter from Christine who said that the obituary I found helped her fill out her father’s family. She was looking for Anna Florence Rosing who had married someone named Williams. It seemed that the records just “disappeared” and sometimes there was no record of her existence at all. That can happen when you are looking for a common name like Williams. The obituary I found for Florence Williams listed her mother and siblings’ names, and that matched our requester’s records. Mystery solved! Sometimes a simple thing like an obituary with a name in it is all you need to fill in the blanks.

I have been doing research this summer on my husband’s family – McAllister, Bunting and Grangers – who lived in Okanogan, Yakima and Kittitas Counties of Washington. Last week I went to the Washington State Library in Tumwater looking for obituaries to fill in some of the blanks. They have newspapers from all over the state and I found about 12 obituaries. In case you are interested, the address for the library is 6880 Capitol Blvd. in Tumwater. It is close to I-5 and easy to find. The staff is very helpful. If you have ancestors who died in the state, this is a great place to go and do an obituary search. You might be surprised and just fill in some of your blanks!

—————Gretchen Campbell, Family Line Research



# GENIE GRAB-BAG

Compiled by Janice Weihs

## New Website for WSGS is Here!

All the web pages you are used to seeing and accessing will be available at the new site. The new website offers more options. The address is [www.wasgs.org](http://www.wasgs.org)

A new feature is the Members Only section that will include all the current WSGS members. Members can access this area using a log-in: first letter of first name plus surname all lower case: for example Robert Jones would be rjones. Password is the first letter of first plus zip code plus first letter of surname: r99999j.

After signing in members will have the ability to change their password and log-in name. Go and check it out at [wasgs.org](http://wasgs.org)

Questions, comments, problems: contact Sue Erickson who has taken on the webmaster position from Jerri McCoy. [erickson@wabroadband.com](mailto:erickson@wabroadband.com)

If you enjoyed the *Who Do You Think You Are* TV series on NBC last year you can find the series now on TLC TV at Ch. 31 (Click) or Ch. 38 (Comcast). The 8-week series began Tuesday, July 23, at 9 pm in our time zone so there is still time to watch some of the programs. Some of the celebrities featured include Christina Applegate, Kelly Clarkson, Cindy Crawford, Zoey Dechanel, Chris O'Donnell, Jim Parsons and Trish Yearwood. (You might want to check on this time and day. I found it on at 4 pm on a Sunday afternoon. Jane Irish Nelson noted on the TPCGS website, however that so far this season, each episode has covered only one ancestor of the celebrity in question. While this offers an interesting view of a slice of history, it is not exactly genealogical research.

A remarkable on-line genealogical resource is the **Hathi Trust**, a cooperative venture of large library systems and other public institutions who are supporting the online storage of their digitized books. Those materials that are out of copyright may be read online by anyone in the general public. About one-third of the collection, over 3,300,000 volumes, is freely available this way. The website [www.hathitrust.org](http://www.hathitrust.org) can be searched over the entire catalog of holdings or limited to the full view

items only.

I found the "Researcher's Guide" (on *About.com*) to be very helpful in learning to use this powerful genealogical resource. [http://genealogy.about.com/od/history\\_research/a/hathitrust.htm](http://genealogy.about.com/od/history_research/a/hathitrust.htm)

Another powerful and far-reaching website is the free on-line magazine "Genealogy in Time," which offers two unique search engines. You can find it at [www.genealogyintime](http://www.genealogyintime) One search engine is a genealogy search engine and the other one is a family search engine. The site states that "these are the most powerful free genealogy search engines available on the internet. They search 6.0 billion free online genealogy records from the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Ireland, Europe, Australia and New Zealand. They also offer a "Guide to Performing Online Genealogy Searches."

All of us have encountered documents, dating from 1500-1800, written in English, but still frequently illegible to us because of the changes in spelling, letter formation, referents, and other elements. This website offers a practical tutorial in palaeography, the reading of old hand writing.

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/palaeography/>

It includes tips on reading and transcribing documents, a reference section (dating, numbers, money, measurements,) an interactive tutorial section (documents to practice on,) and a further practice section where new documents will be added periodically.

This tutorial was developed by the British National Archives in partnership with the University College London's School of Library, Archive, and Information Studies (SLAIS).

## NEW GENEALOGY TV SERIES PREMIERING THIS FALL ON PBS

"Genealogy Roadshow" will be added to the PBS lineup this fall. The series will combine history and science to discover the stories of diverse Americans. Each person's past will link to a larger area history, demonstrating the interwoven nature of individual and community history. See local programming schedule for times and dates. In eastern US the program will air on Mondays, Sept. 23-Oct. 14, 9 pm to 10 pm EST.

The premier season will feature individuals from four American cities: Nashville, Austin, Detroit and San Francisco.

*To activate the link of blue-printed web site addresses, hold down the "Ctrl" button and click on the address.*



## BROWSING PERIODICALS . . . . . by Elaine Workman

Publications exchanged with or subscribed to by the Society are available in the Northwest Room of the Tacoma Public Library, and may be found by a call number or hanging file designator (HF). Due to limitations of shelf space, some periodicals are stored in the Basement Stacks. If you provide the library staff with the call number, they will retrieve the journals for you. Just ask.

### INTERNATIONAL / NATIONAL

**American Spirit** (DAR, Washington DC) Volume 147.3 May/June 2013: Laura KENNEDY, TV reporter; garnitures in DAR Museum; West Virginia's wild beginning; Grumblethorpe, 1744 house of John WISTER; quilt museums; William Anthony MALONE passes along a passion for American history using primary sources; historic Paducah Kentucky; The Great Colonial Hurricane of 1635; The Coast Guard Always Ready Since 1790; The Society of The Cincinnati; The Hermitage; Marinus WILLETT New York City's Forgotten Revolutionary War Hero and Statesman. (HF)

### AROUND THE U.S.A.

**CA Redwood Researcher** (Redwood) Volume 45.4 May 2013: residents of the 1860 William BARNWELL Memorial Cemetery; Humboldt County births before 1900 ALLARD-AMES; Humboldt County burials 1890-1925 WILLIAMS-WILSON; Old CLARK Family Cemetery; New CLARK Family Cemetery; Larabee Cemetery. (929.1/R248R)

**CA Lifeliner** (Genealogical Society of Riverside) Volume XLVIII.2 March 2013: Major Jonathan LADD, possible link to 1865 deathbed vigil; Heirlooms, 10 most common; how to write a provenance; pioneer home of the GIBSON Family; the Thomas BARTON Family home; Col. William Robinson MURPHY, wood carver and civil war soldier; the church that Fred build, Rev. Fred LEAZER; Judge E. G. BROWN.

**FL Buried Treasures** (Central Florida Gen. Soc., Orlando) Volume 45.1 January-March 20-13: Gotchee, Slovenia: chronological history of PHILLIPS Farm in Jobstown, New Jersey and the J.B. DEACON House; a bizarre murder; story of Albert Edward MORRIS; helpful computer tools. (929.1/B916B)

**ID Idaho Gen. Soc. Quarterly** (Boise) Volume 56.2 Summer 2013: Christian MADSEN; James

Robert WELKER; the HOLMAN Family in Rocky Bar, Idaho; acquiring Idaho Pioneer Certificates. (929.1/ID11)

**KS Kansas Kin** (Riley Valley Gen. Soc., Manhattan) Volume 51.2 May 2013: S.C. BAKER, Lardiner RANDOLPH; settlement of the Blue Valley. (929.1/K133K)

**KS Topeka Gen. Soc. Quarterly** Volume 43.2 April 2013: going digital at the cemetery; history of the Knights and Ladies of Security Home and Hospital Association; James Vanderford BLANDIN; 1915 directory of Highland Park. (929.1/T621T)

**NC Burke County Journal** (Morganton) Volume XXXI.2 May 2013: 1807-1809 county road records; estate papers of John BOWMAN vs. George KILLIAN & Thomas BLACK; county land grants; 1809 list of Captain MARLOW's Company of taxable property; 1814 returns of Capt. MCKINSY's taxable property. (929.1/J826J)

**OK Oklahoma Gen. Soc. Quarterly** Volume 58.2 June 2013: 1911-1914 inmates of the Confederate Home in Ardmore, Oklahoma; Finding Truths and Supporting Evidence for Family Lore; Frank "Pistol Pete" EATON; using PERSI. (Oklahoma City) (929.3766/OK4O)

**TX Stalkin' Kin in Old West Texas** (San Angelo Gen. & Hist. Soc.) Volume 40.3&4 May 2013: Lotie's Legacy, Sharlotta KERBS SCHLEGEL; A Tale of Two SQUYRES, Lewis LeRoy and Joseph; Seaton KEITH, Rancher; The MARTIN-HAYMAN Clan; James William Huntington MILLER; Letters to the German Homeland; MONTGOMERYS, HOOKERS AND WICKERS in Hopkins County; Reagan County marriage records, 1927-1930; civil court docket 1926-1927; Runnels County marriage records 1913-1915; criminal court docket 1935-1937; Menard County marriage records 1920-1923; 1908 San Angelo telephone directory. (929.1/ST18S)

**WA Bulletin** (Yakima Valley Gen. Soc., Yakima) Volume 45.2 Jun 2013: The Tieton Basin Story cont'd; register of voters and oath book 1932-1935 cont'd; Sylvanus Ray GEDDIS; BALL Funeral Home records cont'd; Lo-No-Hi Lower Naches High School 1928 and 1930. (929.1/Y111Y)

The New Researcher's Corner . . . . .

## Going Old Tech

My summer adventure began with the acceptance of the reality that not everything is online. Our monthly meeting speakers have said this many times. We like to think all the facts, dates and places are within reach, just a few keystrokes away. But, looking for records from small settlements in Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont in the 1700's and 1800's proves frustratingly otherwise.

Last fall I discovered, on Ancestry.com, a copy of an old birth record for my great grandfather, made from a book of Town Records for Leeds, Androscoggin, Maine. In May, I went hunting online for a copy of the original book. I know my family had more history in Leeds than I was finding. I know films are available from Salt Lake City through local Family History Libraries at Mormon Churches, so I decided to go old tech. Family Search found the same record with a source citation at the bottom – a film number.

Old tech starts with new tech by creating an account on Family Search. Yes, another password and user name to add to my growing list. My choices are always too long, too short, don't have numbers, or are entirely unsuitable. Sometime later, after indulging in some unladylike language, the web site and I finally agreed on identification. I, however, have written so many password/user name combinations that I have no idea what the end result was. I tested several of what I thought might be right combinations. A little red ink line kept popping into the sign-in box asking if I have forgotten my password, my user name, my brain, etc.; thankfully these are church people, and they do not add "you idiot!" Emails pass between the website and me. Sometime after midnight (having started this about 9:30 pm) the website and I have agreed which password/user name we had previously chosen. That one is written in my password book (after several obliterated lines with unladylike annotations). Okay, then. In the dark of the night I can log on and look for film.

After playing with the categories at the top of the Family Search home page for a while, I dove into "catalogue." Under the introduction at the top of the page was another red ink line offering access to instructions on searching. I skipped this, having just survived the instructions for creating a user name and password.

Since I knew I wanted records for specific place, I boldly typed "Leeds" into the blue box at the top on the left side, ignored everything else, and hit the search button. The website said "no results." Okay, then, the night is still--not young--but in early middle age. After a break for more unladylike language, I added a comma after Leeds. It was like winning a pinball game! No buzzers, but large to small - state, county, city—even other countries—a plethora of place names with the word Leeds scrolled down the screen.

For my Leeds in Maine, there were films of history, genealogy, deeds, town and vital records. Click on each one and details appear. I clicked on the film number for Town Records that matched the number listed on the birth record I'd found. The site walked me through ordering – a simple process. That is—simple after I'd stumbled through a dark house trying to be silent, tripped over the dog, run into a wall, and spilled my wallet all over the washing machine to get a credit card. After a few more remarks in language my Leeds ancestors would not ever have uttered, an email arrives saying my order is received. Okay then. Having survived the high tech entry to the world of microfilm, I was looking forward to low tech.

A week later another email tells me the order is shipped and several days later the last email tells me the film has arrived at my local Family History Library. In our instantaneous response world, anticipating a process unfolding is rather relaxing. There is no need for new variations of unladylike language.

My film arrived in the middle of June. I made it to the library in July after family obligations, meetings, and finally getting my patiently waiting seedlings into the garden. A very nice library volunteer showed me where films are stored, retrieved mine and said "have fun." Okay, then.

I managed to get the film reel out of the box all by myself before asking for help. Note that asking for help is a better choice than unladylike language when on church property.

The machines are intimidating, very large with film threading apparatus at the top, a large open screen below and little adjustment knobs everywhere. There is a hand crank on the right side. My volunteer helper threaded the film for me, showed me the uses for all the knobs and turned the machine on. The images shown

## Genealogy classes at the Tacoma Public Library

Do you have friends are Interested in genealogy, but they don't know where to start? Encourage them to sign up for a free class that will introduce them to the tools needed to start finding their roots. They will learn the basic steps for gathering family stories, finding and using key resources, and organizing research. They will also learn about the many genealogy resources available at the Tacoma Public Library.

The Library's **Introduction to Genealogy** class is very popular; all classes are free.

**Introduction to Genealogy** will be offered three times on the following dates: Oct. 29, 2013, Dec. 10, 2013, and Feb. 11, 2014. All the classes will meet at 6 to 8 p.m. on Tuesday evenings.

In addition:

**Online Genealogy** is being offered in the library's computer lab. Advance registration is required as spaces are limited for this hands-on library workshop. Register by going to the library's web site, <http://www.tpl.lib.wa.us/> then choosing "Schedule of Events." then go from the current August calendar on the screen to November, where that month's classes are listed and patrons can register for classes being offered. **Or** you can register by telephoning the library at **253.292.2001 ext. 1715**. This class will introduce you to *Ancestry Library Edition*, *Heritage Quest*, and other useful web sites available on the Internet for genealogical research. (Basic keyboard and mouse skills required.)

The class will be offered three times, from 5:30-8 p.m. on the following dates: Nov. 19, 2013, Jan. 14, 2014, and Mar. 25, 2014

### Officers for 2013

President . . . . . Warren Fisk  
 VP Family Line Research . . . Gretchen Campbell  
 VP Programs . . . . . Helen Stender  
 VP Education & Development . . . . . Unfilled  
 Recording Secretary . . . . . Sandra D. Johnson  
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*All officers can be reached through their email  
 address listed on the TPCGS web site at  
<http://www.tpcgs.org>*

## Going Old Tech

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down on the screen—backward and upside down—but there they were. So we re-threaded. Now they were upside down, but not backward. The third try got us right side up and backward. Only one more possible fitting—and that worked, right side up and readable script. Okay, then! I cranked, we watched, and the town records came to life.

Records of marriage intentions from 1800 came to life first, followed by records of the marriages performed by different Reverends, all written by the town clerk or constable who spoke with these living people. The calligraphy changes as each new recorder is elected or appointed. This is the real thing, a documenting of events as they occurred. The names are familiar from looking at the old census records. The next set of pages, recorded births, roll by from the past. Entire families come into being, the older relatives die; young ones grow up, marry, and have children.

Town meetings, elections, fund raising for a school, the formation of a new church, surveying for roads and highways, divisions of land, building field walls, the life of small town animates itself from the recorded pages of a small community that thrived 200 years ago. These are the lives, so much more than facts, of real people, my people.

Thursdays are my favorite day of the week now. I spend them searching the pages of the Leeds Town Records. James, my 2x great grandfather, was the Town Constable; his beautiful script handwriting created some of these pages. William, also my 2x great grandfather, was a surveyor who laid out roads and byways with rods, was paid by the number of oxen used per day to plow those roads, and served as a school director. They voted and paid taxes. Their children were born in this town. I would never have found these details on any "just the facts" website.

There are two more Maine films coming, Mount Vernon in Kennebec County and Township 6 in Penobscot County. From now on, I will be looking for sterile facts on Ancestry, Family Search, Archives and others. My people's lives I will find on microfilmed Town Records. And that's okay.

—Carol Rikerd