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# The Livermore Roots Tracer



Livermore-Amador Genealogical Society

P.O. Box 901, Livermore, California 94551-0901 http://l-ags.org & http://twitter.com/lagsociety

# Membership News

# Welcome New Members

Gene Block, Leslie Steuben

Thanks to the generosity of the following L-AGS members:

### **Patrons**

Anonymous, Dick & Jean Lerche, Kay Speaks, Duncan Tanner

### **Benefactors**

Kristina Ahuja, Marilyn A. Cutting, Linda Driver & Walt Crawford, Gail Fairfield, Richard & Wanda Finn, Rae Jean & James Kenyon, Cindy McKenna, Patricia Moore, Ileen J. Peterson, Peggy Weber

Total L-AGS Members as of April 22, 2014: 127 Memberships and 153 Members

# Meeting News

**General Meetings** are held on the second Monday of the month at 7:30 p.m. at Congregation Beth Emek, 3400 Nevada Court, Pleasanton. Map:

http://www.L-AGS.org/maps/Pls-BethEmek.html

**Study Group Chair** *Vacant study.chair@L-AGS.org* 

# **Study Group Forum**

study.group@L-AGS.org

**The Master Genealogist Group** meets on the third Saturday of the month, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon, at 7077 Koll Center Parkway, Suite 110, Pleasanton. <a href="http://www.l-ags.org/maps/Pls-KollCenter.html">http://www.l-ags.org/maps/Pls-KollCenter.html</a>

John O'Neill Private Co A 49th Infantry

**TV-TMG Chair** (Kay Speaks) *tvtmg.chair@L-AGS.org* 

# L-AGS Leadership for 2014

| President                  | president@L-AGS.org        | Patrick Lofft |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------|
| First VP and Program Chair | program@L-AGS.org          | Pat Northam   |
| Second VP and Membership   | membership@L-AGS.org       | Thomas Mathew |
| Business Manager           | business.manager@L-AGS.org | Duncan Tanner |
| Corresponding Secretary    |                            | Cheryl Palmer |
| Recording Secretary        |                            | Julie Liu     |
|                            |                            |               |

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# A Message from our President

When an elder dies, a library burns down.

-African Proverb

I lovingly treasure a few paragraphs written by my great-grandmother, Mary (née Doyle) O'Neill. In 1864, she wrote a letter to her husband, John who had recently enlisted with the New York State Volunteers as an infantry private. Her letter was returned a few months later with the rest of his personal belongings. Fortunately, her daughter and grandson saved the handwritten fragments remaining of my ancestor's letter.

I often wish my parents and grandparents were alive to answer the many questions I have about them. What subjects did they enjoy or dislike in school? Where did they learn to swim? How did they decorate their bedrooms? What chores were they given? Who were their high school crushes? What were their first jobs? What were their joys and difficulties as parents? What foods and entertainments did they most enjoy or least enjoy?

How many of your ancestors left something in writing for you? How many paragraphs have you prepared for your grandchildren? As genealogy hobbyists, we research obvious and obscure records and newspapers to "put flesh on the bones," as speaker Ron Arons explained in a recent presentation. Will your genealogy files contain numerous personal nuggets for your grandchildren? Will *putting flesh on your bones* be an effortless task for your descendants?

Consider putting aside your all-encompassing autobiography and writing just a paragraph. Write with a typewriter. Answer one question with a pen. Record a memoir with a pencil. Disclose a tidbit of your personality. Yes, those sheets of paper are surely too personal for immediate publication. Place them in a labeled folder in your genealogy file or your sock drawer. I believe in a month's time your folder will include copious treasures for your descendants like the one written by my great-grandmother. Mary's letter to John as partially transcribed below, showed warning signs of her impending depression, which would eventually incapacitate her.

"Dear John try and see if the[y] will let you come home and give them all you have got for I would rather have you than the hole world I never new what trouble was before theis dear John what came over for you to inlist for to gow and sell your self from your family."

In 1864 Mary, age 27, lived on a hardscrabble farm in very rural northwestern Pennsylvania. In addition to managing a farm, she cared for three children, an infant, a toddler, and a seven year old. Could she manage the farm, care for three little ones, and seek employment outside the home? In 1871, the Crawford County Commissioners ". . . proceeded to Spartansburg to take charge of the property, 115 acres of land, stock, household goods, etc. and make provisions for the children . . ." If you are curious about Mary's saga, see "John O'Neill, Private, Co. A, 49<sup>th</sup> Infantry, b. 1830-d. 1864" published in the *Livermore Roots Tracer* in 2010 and reprinted in this issue.

The paragraphs accumulating in your folders will probably be less dramatic, but who knows. The power of your disclosures will reflect your willingness to be vulnerable, reflective, and introspective. We all must write a paragraph each day!

Sincerely,

# Patrick Lofft

# From the Editor's Desk

In this issue of the *Livermore Roots Tracer*, Pat Northam demonstrates the importance of reviewing your genealogy resources on a regular basis for newly added and updated record collections. She explains how her research took her to the Oakland Public Library where she discovered what *really* happened to her great-grandmother and the circumstances surrounding her death.

In case you missed it, Pat recently sent an email to L-AGS members about Ancestry.com's newly added collection, *California, Marriage Records from Select Counties, 1850-1941*. The *select* counties are Alameda and Marin. While searching through the collection, Pat discovered the marriage certificates and marriage record indexes for her grandparents and her grandfather's siblings.

One hundred and fifty years ago in May 1864, John O'Neill, died at Spotsylvania Court House, Virginia. To commemorate his death, we have reprinted Patrick Lofft's article as it first appeared in the November 2010 issue of the *Livermore Roots Tracer*.

Danielle Forestier takes an in-depth look at a Ruth Family tradition. Drawing on pension files, marriage records, divorce records, census records, and missing person's reports, Danielle discovered some surprising information about her grandfather. He seems to have followed in his father's



footsteps, by having a secret wife.

Some of you will remember Paul Kasameyer, a former L-AGS member. He passed away suddenly on March 22. Paul and his wife, Ann were active members. They could not attend our general meetings because their symphony practice sessions occurred on the same night. Over the years, Paul par-

ticipated in the Members Helping Members email exchange. Paul and Ann also volunteered several times at the Alameda County Fair L-AGS Booth. His obituary is reprinted in this issue.

Leora Frise and Delores Olness recently attended the 33rd Annual Ancestor Roundup Genealogical Seminar in Seaside, California. Read a summary of the lectures Leora attended and learn which ones inspired her to get busy on her book projects.

As they do in every issue, Sue Johnston and Kay Speaks have compiled a unique list of genealogy resources on the web. This time, their list focuses on social history and your family. One of my favorites is the *Colonial Currency* web. If you are interested in America's colonial currency, be sure and check out this website.

Thanks for reading!

Teresa Costa Fraser, Editor

# The Livermore Roots Tracer

The Roots Tracer is the quarterly publication of the Livermore-Amador Genealogical Society. The mission statement of the Roots Tracer is:

"Instruct. Inspire. Inform."

We encourage members to submit articles for publication. Material can be e-mailed to: **rootstracer.chair@l-ags.org** or mailed to L-AGS, P.O. Box 901, Livermore, CA 94551-0901. Want ghostwriting help? Just ask!

# The Roots Tracer Staff

| Editor                    | Teresa Costa Fraser     |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| Associate Editor          | Jane Southwick          |
| Web Editor                | Vicki Renz              |
| Compositor                | Andi Winters            |
| Printing and Distribution | n Teresa Costa Fraser   |
| G.R.O.W. Columnists       | S                       |
| Susan C                   | G. Johnston, Kay Speaks |

# Finding Genealogy Gold in Local Records

By Pat Northam

We all have at least one ancestor who seems elusive to our research efforts in discovering the details of their life and death. One of my elusive ancestors is my great-grandmother, Mary Carstulovich Vitaich (aka Marietta, Marrietta), a native of Austria, what is today Croatia. Finding her death certificate and substantiating the circumstances under which she died has been challenging. According to family sources, Mary died on 20 February 1890 while giving birth to her daughter, Mamie. This article identifies the local sources I used to discover what *really* happened to my great-grandmother.

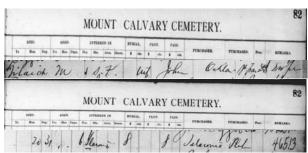
# Record of Deaths, 1889-1894

While researching the Alameda County, *Record of Deaths*, *Volume C*, *1889-1894* (LDS Film 1376380), I discovered Mary Vitaich died on 20 February 1890. She was 31 years, 7 months, and 5 days old, calculating her birthdate at about 15 July 1858. The cause of her death was ovarian cancer. Her death and age were confirmed for me. I also searched the *Record of Deaths* for her daughter, Mamie. Her death was listed as 25 July 1890, calculating her birth at about 5 January 1890. This refutes the family lore of Mary's dying on the same day as Mamie's birth.

### **Register of Interments**

Checking to see what was new on the SFGenealogy.com website, I was pleasantly surprised to discover a *Register of Interments for Mount Calvary* <a href="http://tinyurl.com/m9tdttv">http://tinyurl.com/m9tdttv</a>.

I searched the register and found a listing for Mary Vitaich. She was buried in the Slavonic plot of Mount Calvary Cemetery in San Francisco.



Mary Vitaich's interment as listed in Register of Interments for Mount Calvary at SFGenealogy.com website.

The cost of burial was listed as \$8.

I had previously discovered that her remains were transferred to Holy Cross Catholic Cemetery in the 1940s with those of her husband John (and presumably her children, Johnny and Mamie). Holy Cross Catholic Cemetery was established in



Special marker dedicated to Catholics moved from Mt. Calvary Cemetery in San Francisco.

1887 300 acres of a former potato farm in Colma. Mary is buried in Section V with special memorial marker inscribed folas lows: "Interred here the remains of 39,307 Catholics moved

from Mt. Calvary Cemetery in 1940 and 1941 by



Memorial inscription in Section H of Holy Cross Catholic Cemetery, Colma, California.

order of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors. Rest in God's loving care."

# Alameda County Death Certificates, 1870-1904

During a long lunch break from Superior Court jury duty in Oakland, I visited the Oakland History Room at the Oakland Public Library on 14<sup>th</sup> Street. It is located just two blocks north of the courthouse. I had recently discovered that the Oakland History Room Collections <a href="http://tinyurl.com/ks9phfg">http://tinyurl.com/ks9phfg</a> included birth and death certificates for 1870-1904.

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family was living in Livermore, having moved from San Francisco. I also learned that Mary had been under a doctor's care for about six months. The cause of her death was due to ovarian tumor and dropsy, no operation. Mary had been dealing with the disease for more than seven years. As I finished reading her death certificate, I felt content knowing what *really* happened to my greatgrandmother and the circumstances surrounding her death.

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Marrietta Vitaich's original death certificate discovered at Oakland Public Library.

Imagine my excitement as the librarian handed me an old weathered book of birth and death certificates, originals no less! She discussed how to use the book and gave me permission to photograph the images. Buried in the book was my greatgrandmother's original death certificate.

As I skimmed the 125-year-old death certificate absorbing all the details, I was surprised to learn that the family was living in Oakland at the time of Mary's death. Her residence listed an Oakland address, one that was not familiar. I thought the

# The Next Chapter

Mary left behind six living children. Her widowed husband and children moved to Livermore in late 1890, presumably to live close to his sister, Anna and brother-in-law, Peter Catanich. Stay tuned for the next chapter of my family's history.

Pat Northam enjoys the challenge of staying on top of local collections of records. She currently serves as First Vice President & Program Chair of the Livermore-Amador Genealogical Society. Pat can be contacted at pnortham@sonic.net.

# Secret Wives: A Ruth Family Tradition?

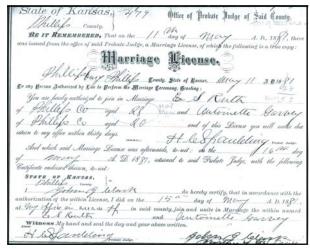
By Danielle Forestier

My grandfather, Earl Francis Ruth, Sr. was considered a hero in our family. Yet, he seems to have followed in his father's footsteps, by having a *secret wife*.

# **Edmund Sylvester Ruth**

Earl's father, Edmund Sylvester Ruth married three times. His first wife died of a fever and left behind two very young children. Their maternal grandparents raised them and Edmund had no contact with them. His second wife was my greatgrandmother, Marie Antoinette Garvey. He abandoned her after the Civil War, leaving an infant and a tiny grave. His third wife was Elizabeth Luty, a mail order bride. After Edmund died, she filed for his Civil War pension for their two young sons.

In reviewing Edmund's pension file, it appeared that much effort was taken to prove that his first and his third wives were his *only* wives. The pension file is several inches thick with affidavits from family and friends, all of whom attested that they knew nothing about a middle wife. A middle wife did in fact exist as a variety of records proves. She was Marie Antoinette (Garvey) Ruth, my great-grandmother. Earl Francis Ruth was her son. Her marriage certificate shows that Antoinette Garvey of Phillips, age 20 married E S Ruth of Phillips County, age 28 on 15 May 1881 in

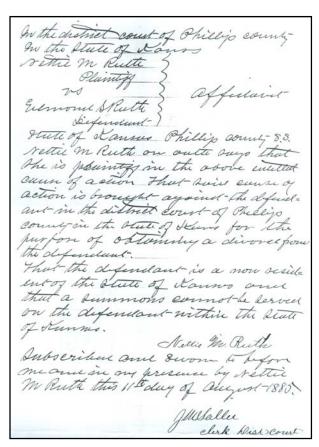


E. S. Ruth and Antoinette Garvey Marriage License and Certificate, Phillips County, Kansas, 15 May 1881

Phillipsburg, Phillips County, Kansas.

Census records further support the identification of Marie as the wife of Earl S. Ruth. The 1885 Kansas State Census enumerated 1 March 1885 shows Marie A. Ruth, age 23, married, and also Earl Ruth, age one. They were living with her father, Garvey Obed, widowed, age 69 in the Township of Arcade, Phillips County, Kansas.<sup>1</sup>

Later that year, Nettie [aka Antoinette] M. Ruth filed an affidavit in the District Court of Phillips County for the "purpose of obtaining a divorce from the defendant" [Edmund S. Ruth].



Nettie M. Ruth vs. Edmond S. Ruth, District Court of Phillips County, Kansas, 11 August 1885

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>1885 Kansas State Census, Phillips County, Kansas, population schedule, Arcade Township, p. 16-17, dwelling 40, family 45, Marie A. Ruth; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (http://www.ancestry.com: accessed May 2014); citing Kansas State Historical Society Microfilm reels K-1 – K-146.

### Following In His Father's Footsteps

In 1910, Earl Frances Ruth, a young man now, was residing in Mindanao, Philippines with his first wife, Ida. On 18 June 1910, he was enumerated in Ludlow Barracks PI 21<sup>st</sup> U.S. Infantry.<sup>2</sup> The census record shows that he held the rank of Sergeant Co. L, age 26, and was in his first marriage, which commenced three years previously in about 1907. The census record also shows that Ida was the wife of Sergeant Ruth, age 22, in her first marriage, and childless.

ers were interviewed about Captain Ruth's mental condition:

[Captain Wolner] said so far as he could observe the Captain was in a normal mental condition and that there was no criticism whatever to be made of the manner in which he had conducted his military affairs.

... It was Lt. Fury's opinion that Ruth had probably returned to France. He said that he had translated a number of letters for Captain

| Bretiefield . Homer 6. | Sol Cok.     | M W 365          | Georgia  | Terrgia Terrgia      | 6nglish | Soldier |
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1910 U.S. Census of Ludlow Barracks, Mindanao, Philippines for Earl Ruth, 18 June 1910

During World War I, Earl served in France. After his return to the United States, he was discharged at Camp Dix [now Fort Dix], located approximately 16 miles southeast of Trenton, New Jersey.

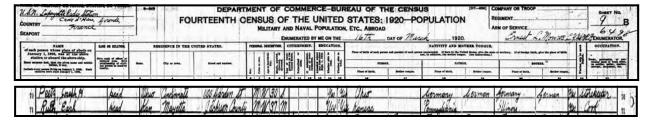
A few weeks later on about 13 May 1919, his wife, Emily [Ida?] Ruth accompanied by a representative of the American Red Cross, filed a missing person report with the Bureau of Investigation. She claimed that when "he returned from overseas it was her impression that his mind was affected." She noted they had been married for eleven years. In a subsequent interview, she accused Earl of "fraudulently receiving money from the U.S. Army." <sup>3</sup> Emily or Ida may be the same woman.

According to R. J Hughes's report, several offic-

Ruth, which he received from a French woman. He said that he had kept the address of this person from one of Captain Ruth's letters, which is as follows: "Germaine Forestier, St. Vincent De Paul, la Gironde, France." It was the Lieutenant's opinion that he had returned to France on account of this woman.

... From the statement of these two officers it would not appear that Ruth was inclined to be financially crooked as there was not any discrepancy found in his financial affairs with the company and that if he had intended to be crooked in this respect he might have absconded with a considerable amount of money.

...Lt. Felkner, the adjutant of Company 5, with whom Ruth had been associated for some time ... scouted the idea that there was anything



1920 U.S. Census of U.S.N. Lafayette Radio Station, Croix de Hin's, Gironde, France 16 March 1920

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>1910 U.S. Census, military and naval population schedule, Ludlow Barracks PI 21<sup>st</sup> U.S. Infantry, Mindanao, Philippines, enumeration district (ED) 169, sheet 2. A, line 29 and 31, Earl and Ida Ruth; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (http://www.ancestry.com: accessed May 2014); citing NARA microfilm publication T624.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup>"Investigative Case Files of the Bureau of Investigation 1908-1922: Old German Files 1909-1921." *Fold3.com* (http://www.fold3.com: accessed May 2014) entry for Captain Earl Ruth, case 360314, citing NARA M1085. [Before it was called the FBI, the Bureau of Investigation investigated real and perceived threats to citizens].

mentally wrong with Ruth. He believed that he had deliberately deserted his wife and that he was capable of complete understanding of what he was doing.<sup>4</sup>

In 1920, Earl was enumerated in U.S.N. Lafayette Radio Station, Croix de Hin's, Gironde, France. The census record shows that he was 37 years old, married, and employed as a cook. The census record also shows that his wife, Germaine was 19 years old and born in France.<sup>5</sup>

Upon his retirement from the Army in 1935, the *Kansas City Times* published an article detailing his military service and the courtship of his wife, Germaine, during World War I in France. Germaine later wrote a note to her son, Earl Ruth, Jr., referring to the article and documenting its errors. The handwritten note is transcribed below *exactly* as it was originally written:

Letter written by Germaine c. 1972 [handwritten and added to original note]

The newspaper is wrong!

Your Father and I met in late 1919 [1918], soon he and his regiment were ordered back to the U.S., he wanted me to marry him, but my Father said no, we do not know anything about your or your family, so if you want my Daughter, you will come back, and by that time we will get some information, we did and they were the best, a good and moral man, and good family.

He came back the first of August 1920 [1919] (My Father had died 10 days before), had taken a leave of absence from the army, had a civilian job for the gouvernement at Crose d'himes a suburb of Bordeaux; the U.S. had started to bild 8 radio towers, with the understanding to turn it to the French government when the war would end but, they were not finished so had several months to go. Your Father was in charge of all the foods to by for all the working men, included the seeing of the kitchen so they would cook

# **Ruth Family Lineage**

### **Iacob Ruth**

b.1792, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania d.1830, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania m. 16 March 1814

### Susannah Johns

b. 31 October 1796, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania d. 31 March 1884, Sterling, Whiteside County, Illinois

### **Peter Ruth**

b. about 1817, Pennsylvania

d. 19 April 1895, Toutle, Cowlitz County, Washington m. 16 March 1841

# Marie Gibboney

b. 1822, Pennsylvania

d. 4 April 1907, Toutle, Cowlitz County, Washington

# **Edmund Sylvester Ruth**

b. 28 April 1849, Cherry Tree, Indiana County, Pennsylvania

d. 2 February 1909, Provolt, Grants Pass, Jackson County, Oregon

m.  $2^{\rm nd}$ , 15 May 1881, Phillipsburg, Phillips County, Kansas

### **Marie Antoinette Garvey**

b. 23 October 1861, Bedford, Lawrence County, Indiana

d. 29 January 1940, Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri

### Earl Francis Ruth

- b. 2 October 1883, Phillipsburg, Phillips County, Kansas
- d. 5 March 1936, Kickapoo, Leavenworth County, Kansas
- m. 21 February 1920, Saint-Loubes, Gironde, France Marie Germaine Forestier
- b. 20 September 1900, Petit Bordeau, Izon, France
- d. 26 December 1988, Sarasota, Sarasota County, Florida

# Earl Francis Ruth, Jr.

- b. 12 August 1921, Fort Leavenworth, Leavenworth County, Kansas
- d. 29 March 1997, Oakland, Alameda County, California
- m. 2 May 1942, Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri **Dorothy Margaret Steil**
- b. 11 December 1919, Mason City, Cerro Gordo County, Iowa
- d. 7 January 1999, Norwalk, Fairfield County, Connecticut

Danielle Forestier (née Dinah Ruth)

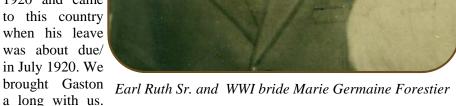
Daughter: Jetta Ruth Son: Mark (née Ruth) Toms

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup>Ibid

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup>1920 U.S. Census, military and naval population schedule, U.S.N. Lafayette Radio Station, Croix de Hin's, Gironde, France, enumeration district (ED) none, 9 B, row 71-72, Earl and Germaine Ruth; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (http://www.ancestry.com: accessed May 2014); citing NARA microfilm publication T625.

good food. That where, he met Henry Bufor. your Father gave him a job of cook. He was already married and Mrs. Henry did not want to come to the U.S. but did later.

We were married Feb. 1920 and came to this country when his leave was about due/ in July 1920. We



He was then 16 and that is.

When they took the picture for the newspaper your poor Father was already afflickted with the cancer to wich he died March 6 1936. [Germaine's handwriting]

Retired Feb 35 (Earl

Ruth Jr's handwriting)

Earl brought Germaine's brother to the United States with her. Later he brought their mother,

Germaine's sister, and other brother. When the boys were grown, he set them up in business for themselves, one as a grocer and the other with a shoe repair shop. The family all considered him a hero for caring for the Forestier family as his own. He died when my father was a teenager. My father always said the Army killed him with Camel cigarettes. His photo is inscribed on the back by one of Germaine's brothers "Ours Best Friend."

I have not yet solved the mystery of his first wife. No one in the family has ever mentioned her. Based on the dates and lengths of marriages, it seems as if Ida and Emily are likely the same person. I am curious to learn more about her. What was her surname? Were they divorced? Did she die early, leaving him free? What did she do after filing her report with the Bureau of Investigation? I hope that I will discover whatever happened to her. Hopefully, there are not any more secret

# José Silveira Santos Farm

By Teresa Costa Fraser

In 1892, my 3<sup>rd</sup> great-grandfather, José [aka Joseph] Silveira Santos was killed by a runaway accident. At the time of his death, he owned a 45 -acre parcel in Centreville, Washington Township, Alameda County. This is the story of how I tracked down his property with grave markers, newspaper articles, probate records, and maps.

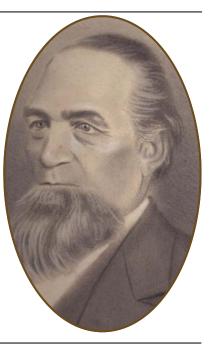
It all started when I was trying to discover the specific date and place of my great-grandfather's

<sup>1</sup>The Morning Call (San Francisco), Volume 72, Number 165, 12 November 1892, "From Across the Bay," page 7, column 5, Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, University of California, Riverside. (http://cdnc.ucr.edu/cgi-bin/cdnc : accessed 2013), California Digital Newspaper Collection.

death. I knew he had died sometime in 1892 as inscribed on his

Santos continued on Page 12

Portuguese immigrant José Silveira do Santos (1826-1892). Reprinted with permission of Michele Walters.



# John O'Neill, Private, Co. A, 49th Infantry, b. 1830 - d. 1864

By Patrick M. Lofft

Editor's Note: 150 years ago in May 1864, John O'Neill, the husband of Mary (née Doyle) O'Neill, died at Spotsylvania Court House, Virginia. To commemorate his death, the following is a reprint of Patrick Lofft's article as it first appeared in the Livermore Roots Tracer, November 2010.

I was led to the following information about my great-grandfather, a Civil War veteran, by a letter, dated June 12, 1918 that was, fortunately, retained among family memorabilia. The Bureau of Pensions, in replying to my grand-aunt's inquiry regarding her deceased mother's former pension, misidentified the death location as Spartansburg, Pennsylvania, but correctly identified the death date as May 10, 1864. Since I was living in Maryland at the time, I visited NARA and requested the complete pension file and compiled service record.

On December 1, 1855, Mary Doyle married John O'Neill in Barndarrig, parish of Kilbride, County Wicklow, Ireland. Together with John's father, Tom O'Neill, all three traveled to America before February 23, 1858 when John signed a Declaration of Intent to become a citizen of Pennsylvania.

On March 25, 1858, John contracted for a bleak farm of 115 acres and 80 perches [115.5 acres] on

Sundback Road about five miles southeast of

Spartansburg in Crawford County, northwestern Pennsylvania.

Google Earth now shows that field to be a portion of a slightly larger farming enterprise. Sour horization of you con Sour horization of our will and book to Chalder I hope John Son Willcome

Apparently, farming was not rewarding for John and his family as the 1860s progressed. John learned that volunteers were eligible to collect a bounty of \$100 from the government plus addi-

tional bounties from the state and local communities. In 1864, John traveled northeast approximately 30 miles to Jamestown, New York, where on January 20 he enlisted as a private with Company A, 49th Regiment, New York State Volunteers.

Shortly after John entered the army, Mary, poignantly wrote, in part, "Today I was at the tavern and got your letter Dear John you had a home But I hope you will have one agin Dear John try and see if the[y] will let you come home and give them all you have got for I would rather have you than the hole world I never new what trouble was before this" [sic] This letter contained no periods. Luckily, fragments of this letter survived in a trunk in the family attic. It was among the personal effects returned to Mary following John's death at age 34 during the May 8-21, 1864 battle at Spotsylvania Court House, Virginia. This battle, sometimes simply referred to as the Battle of Spotsylvania, was the second major battle in Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant's 1864 Overland Campaign of the American Civil War.

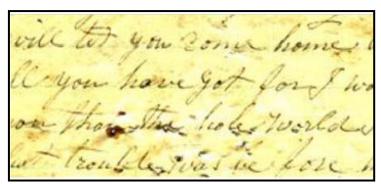
Mary's depression, as hinted at in her writing, became extremely serious during the next seven years. In 1871, the Crawford County commissioners transferred her to the Dixmont Insane Asylum near Pittsburg and proceeded to take charge of the property. According to an article in the Crawford Journal, Thursday, September 1871, "Upon reaching the premises a pitiful sight was present-

ed to the Commissioners.

Three girls, aged seven, nine and thirteen respectively [actually the oldest was a boy], were the only occupants of the house,

and had been the only tenants for nearly a week. For more than a month previous to that time they had been the abused victims of an insane mother, living as they did, more than two miles from neighbors who might interfere in their behalf."

Mission, San Jose, and Rancho Del Aqua Caliente



John O'Neill 1830 - 1864, m. 1855, Mary Doyle 1837 - 1883 Mary Ann O'Neill 1863 - 1943,

m. 1888, James Simon Lofft 1861 - 1909

Bernard Thomas Lofft 1895 -1965, m. 1938, Grace Geraldine Eltges 1910 - 1977

**Patrick Michael Lofft** 

Mary O'Neill died November 11, 1883, aged 44 years and 5 months in the Providence Asylum, Buffalo, New York.

Nov. 12th, 1883, Mrs. Mary O'Neill O'NEILL at the Previdence Asylum, aged 44 years and 5 months. Interred at Limestone Hill Cometery on New York, Erie and Corry, Pa , papers he 14th. lease conv.

Santos continued from Page 10

grave marker.<sup>2</sup> As I was searching local historical newspapers for a death notice or obituary, I discovered a two-sentence paragraph in the San Francisco Call Across the Bay column stating that his will had been filed for probate.<sup>3</sup>

# **Following the Trail of Evidence**

Last November, I headed to the Superior Court of

California, County of Alameda, Court Clerk's Office located in Oakland. Unfortunately, I did not realize they closed at 2:30 pm due government backs. I was only able to obtain the Inventory 1878 Farm Ownership Map 005, Washington, Newark, Ex and Appraisement secmy tion of great-

grandfather's probate file that afternoon. Thankfully, it included the description of his real property as transcribed below:

Real Property as follows:

The said deceased owned that certain tract of land in Washington Township County of Alameda State of California lying on the Southerly side of the road leading from Niles to Centerville and about one half mile East of said town of Centerville containing 44, 528/1000 acres and particularly described as follows:

Commencing at a point in the middle of said Road leading from Centerville to Niles, [-?] same being the North Westerly corner of the

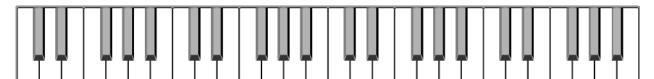
> tract of land herein described running South 14° 20' East 10.395 chains along the Easterly line of the land of Mr. Beck: thence North 75° 46' East 3.765 chains along the line of

the land of Mr. George; thence South 57° 5' East 23.20 3/4 chains along the line of land owned by said George and Mr. Andrade; thence North 34° 37' East 14.855 chains along the line of land owned by said Mr. Rodrige and Mr. Francisco and to the corner common to said Francisco and Mr. Fiallo and Mr. Crosby; thence North 57° 9' West 24.13 3/4 chains along the line of land owned by said Crosby and to a point in the middle of the aforesaid County Road, thence along the middle of said road on a line common with the line of lands

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>Holy Cross Cemetery [aka Holy Spirit Cemetery] (Fremont, Alameda County, California), Joseph S. Santos marker, personally read, 2013.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup>The Morning Call (San Francisco), "From Across the Bay."



# In Memoriam

Paul William Kasameyer September 9, 1943 – March 22, 2014

Resident of Livermore since 1974

Paul Kasameyer passed away suddenly while biking in Arizona with his wife Ann and friends. Paul is survived by his wife of 48 years, Ann (Dombrosk) Kasameyer; their three children: Karen Kasameyer and husband John

Laplante of Seattle, WA; Amy Kasameyer and partner Jeff Shaw of Berkeley, CA; and Alan Kasameyer and wife Kate Kasameyer of San Mateo, CA; grandchildren Emma, Zoe, and Casey Laplante and Georgia and Jonah Kasameyer; and brother Robert Kasameyer of Rogers City, MI.

Paul was born in Detroit, Michigan to Alfred and Frances Kasameyer. He received his B.S. in physics and Ph. D. in

geophysics from M.I.T. After receiving his Ph.D. in 1974, Paul was associated with Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory for almost 40 years as an employee and a consultant. He made significant contributions to the Laboratory's programs using a wide range of geophysical methods.

An avid and accomplished musician, Paul played piano, harpsichord, and percussion instruments. He was a member of the percussion section and board member of the Livermore

Amador Symphony. Paul particularly enjoyed playing piano duets with his wife Ann, accompanying other musicians and playing in chamber music groups.

Paul loved traveling, hiking, and tandem biking with his wife Ann. When not planning their next

trip or showing off pictures of the previous trip, he was often found researching genealogy, playing with his grandchildren or volunteering with the Livermore Amador Symphony, the Family History Center and other local organizations.

He will be remembered for his sense of humor, quick wit, kindness and generosity. He will be greatly missed.

A memorial service for Paul will be held on Friday, April 4 at 11:00 am at the First Presbyterian Church, 2020 Fifth Street, Livermore, CA.

Those wishing to make a contribution in Paul's memory are asked to consider making a donation in his name to the Livermore Amador Symphony for their music library or to a charity of their choice.

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# Family Heirlooms: Great-Grandma's Wedding Ring

By Teresa Costa Fraser

Vincenzo Massera and Nellie (Lyons) Massera, my great-grandparents were married on 22 September 1906 in Salinas, Monterey County, California. When they exchanged rings, Vincenzo gave Nellie a yellow gold wedding band engraved with their initials, *VM* to *NM*. Today, one hundred and seven years later, her wedding ring occupies a special place in my jewelry box, as well as in my heart.



Nellie Olive (Lyons) Massera 1906 gold wedding ring<sup>2</sup>

Nellie Olive Lyons was born April 1884 to George Wesley and Oniska (Harris) Lyons in Castroville, Monterey County, California. Nellie was the oldest of eight children, including twins, James and Jessie Lyons. <sup>3</sup>

Nellie, age 19, married Geremia Massera on 21 July 1903. Geremia, age 29 was a native of Switzerland and a resident of Castroville, California. The 1900 United States census shows that he lived two farms over from the Lyons' family. Nellie and Geremia's first son, Edward W. Massera

was likely born in about 1905.

Geremia died sometime after October 1905 leaving Nellie a widow. He is buried in the Massera Family Plot at Calvary Cemetery. The Diocese of Monterey owns Calvary Cemetery, located on Old Cemetery Road a few yards to the North of Highway 183, just outside the City limits of Salinas. The cemetery was established in 1870 on two acres of land belonging to George Graves, a local farmer.

Nellie gave birth to their second son, John Massera on 27 July 1906 in Castroville, Monterey County, California. I believe Edward died shortly after John's birth on 21 August 1906. He is buried in the Massera Family Plot at Calvary Cemetery next to his father, Geremia.

In September 1906, Vincenzo, Germia's older brother asked Nellie for her hand in marriage. Not everyone was happy with the proposal. According to family lore, Nellie's mother told her she would never speak to her again if she married Vincenzo.

After Nellie and Vincenzo were married, they resided on Soledad Street in Salinas, California for

<sup>1</sup>"California County Marriages, 1850-1952," index and images, FamilySearch (http://familysearch.org: accessed May 2014) entry for Vindoza [Vincenzo] Massera and Nellie [Massura] Massera, 22 Sept 1906; citing Monterey, California microfilm 1290901.

<sup>2</sup>Nellie Olive (Lyons) Massera, wedding ring, 1906, owned by great-granddaughter Teresa Louise (Costa) Fraser, [ADDRESS FOR PRIVATE USE,] Dublin, California, 2014. The band is inscribed *VM* to *NM* and *AT* to *TT*.

<sup>3</sup>1900 U.S., Monterey County, California, population schedule, Castroville, p. 9, dwelling 107, family 157, Nellie O. Lyons; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (http://www.ancestry.com: accessed May 2014) citing NARA microfilm publication T623.

<sup>4</sup>Calvary Cemetery (Salinas, Monterey County, California) Geremia Massera marker, NE quarter, 4; personally read, 2009.

<sup>5</sup>Monterey County, California, certificate of birth no. 576 (1906), John G. Massera; Office of the Monterey County Clerk-Recorder, Salinas.

6"California Death Index," database, *Ancestry.com* http://www.ancestry.com: accessed May 2014), entry for Edward W. Massera.

<sup>7</sup>Calvary Cemetery (Salinas, Monterey County, California) Edward Massera marker, NE quarter, 4; personally read, 2009. many years.<sup>8</sup> On 12 September 1912, they welcomed a new addition to their family, Rena Louise Massera [my grandmother].

Nellie died on 2 November 1928 at the age of 44

<sup>8</sup>1910 U.S., Monterey County, California, population schedule, Castroville, p. 9, dwelling 107, family 157, Nellie O. Lyons; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (http://www.ancestry.com: accessed May 2014) citing NARA microfilm publication T623.

at the San Francisco University Hospital. Her wedding ring returned to Vincenzo. When he died on 7 September 1962 at the age of 92, my grand-mother became owner of Nellie's ring. The wedding ring sat in her jewelry box until she gave it to me in 1976 when I married.

Nellie's wedding ring already has a rich 107-yearold history. Now, I am wondering who I am going to pass the ring to next.

Santos continued from Page 12

of Mr. Levartz and Mr. Overacker South 75° 37′ West 14.355 chains and to the place of beginning.<sup>4</sup>

Now that I had a description of my great-grandfather's property, I figured I could easily locate it on a map. I searched the *Historic Land Ownership and Reference Atlases, 1507-200: Alameda, 1878 Collection* at Ancestry.com and found the *Farm Ownership Map 005, Washington, Newark, Ex Mission, San Jose, and Rancho Del Aqua Caliente.* It included Centreville. I searched through the names of the Centreville property owners, parcel by parcel, but did not find Joseph Santos.

## **Washington Township**

I also *googled* Washington Township, Alameda County to see what I could discover about the area. I found a website for the Washington Township Historical Society, but it did not appear to have been updated in a while. It did however have links to local history resources that led me to the Museum of Local History in Fremont, California. Their website states that they are a "non-profit all volunteer group of people dedicated to researching and preserving the diverse history of Washington

<sup>4</sup>County of Alameda, California, probate case files, Joze S. Santos (also called Joseph S Santos) 1892, Inventory and Appraisement, Superior Court of California, County of Alameda, Court Clerk's Office, Oakland.

# Township."

In February, my husband and I visited the Museum of Local History located at 190 Anza Street in Fremont, California. We met Gil Garza and Patricia Wipfli Schaffarczyk. I explained that I was searching for my 3<sup>rd</sup> great-grandfather's property that he owned upon his death. They were quite familiar with the Santos family name. In fact, Patricia was familiar with the Santos Farm. She remembered a barn being moved from the Santos' Farm to the Shinn Historic Park and Arboretum in Fremont. She searched through the museum's archive for a report on the Santos Farm and then telephoned an active member of the local historical preservation community for more information

Santos continued on Page 16



Shinn Historic Park and Arboretum, Fremont, California. The Shinn house dates back to the 1850s.

Santos continued from Page 15

about the report. He was certain the report was available online.

As I was showing Gil the Farm Ownership Map, I noticed the initials JSS and 17A on one of the parcels. My greatgrandfather's initials were JSS. I did not realize until later that I had located a portion of my greatgrandfather's property.

al boxes filled with

Santos family photographs and even a makeshift album of Santos family photographs glued in a book of home plans titled The Radford Ideal Homes. I knew a member of our family created the photo album because it included a photograph of my 2<sup>nd</sup> great-grandparents, John and Frances Aurora (Santos) Davina.

### A Wild Goose Chase

Before heading back to Dublin, we hurriedly drove north to the Shinn Historic Park and Arboreturn located at 1251 Peralta Blvd. in Fremont. It was nearly dark. We parked our car and started walking down the driveway past the Shinn House, a wooden Victorian style house. We could see an old red barn through an orchard of fruit trees. I was doing the happy dance while Barry photographed the barn and surrounding orchards. I had to remind myself that it was possible that this huge barn did not belong to my ancestors.

The next day, I googled "Santos Farm + City of Fremont" and one of the results that popped up was a detailed report titled, "Santos Farm, 1481 Mowry Avenue, Fremont, Alameda County, CA" from the Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Online Catalog, Historic American Building Survey/Historic American Engineering Record/Historic American Landscapes Survey



One of two barns located at the back of the Shinn Historic Meanwhile, Patricia Park and Arboretum. It was salvaged and brought from found several archivthe Santos' Farm at 1481 Mowry Avenue in Fremont.

Silveira Santos' Farm.

Collections. The contents of the report included an historical context section outlining the history of the Washington Township and arrival of the Portuguese immigrants to the area. This was of great interest to me. After reviewing the report, I realized that the Santos barn at the Shinn Park Arboretum came from the Joseph John Santos' Farm, not the José

I also discovered that the City of Fremont, Community Development Department has a number of Historical and Architectural Assessment reports available online. The reports were compiled by architectural historians and include a list of Alameda County public records and sources. Of great interest to me were the maps and records the architectural historians were able to obtain from the Alameda County Assessor's Office.

# Plotting Great-Grandpa's Land Description

A few days later I found an online deed platter metes and bounds at genealogytools.net/deeds/index.php. I used it to plot out my great-grandfather's property description. Not only was I able to see the shape of his 45-acre parcel, but I also located his property on the Farm Ownership Map I had discovered earli-

### **Creating a Historic Map Overlay**

Finally, I created my own historic map overlay using Lisa Louise Cooke's book, The Genealogist's Goggle Toolbox. The map overlay enabled me to see exactly where my great-grandfather's

Santos continued on Page 18

# 33rd Annual Ancestor Roundup Genealogical Seminar

By Leora Frise

Dolores Olness and I recently attended the 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Ancestor Roundup Genealogical Seminar. It was held at the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day

Saints in Seaside, Monterey County, California. The Commodore Sloat Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), sponsored annual event.



### **Keynote Presentation**

Ralph Severson, director of the Oakland FamilySearch Library kicked off the event with his keynote presentation, "An Introduction to Family Search and Family Tree." He explained the new features of FamilySearch.org and how to research the website's millions of records more easily. Before heading off to the first classes scheduled for the day, a member of the Commodore Sloat Chapter, DAR briefly discussed DAR applications and searching for Revolutionary War Patriots. The following is an overview of the classes I attended and some of the subjects discussed in each:

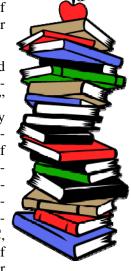
# **Genealogical Seminar Classes**

The first class I attended was "How to Write Your Own Personal History." Lecturer, Dana Parry presented numerous ideas for creating personal histories. I write an annual Christmas letter, so I am already recounting the events of the year and sharing my personal history with my family and friends.

The next class really inspired me to get busy on my book projects. I plan to write several family history books, so I attended the "Organize Your Genealogy into Family Heirloom Books" class. Lecturer, Letty Rodella displayed several wonderful heirloom books she created, including some with fancy paper. The layouts of her books were in chronological order, which will not work for my books. I plan to write four books, one for each of my grandparent's lines. So far, I have a collected a great deal of information. But it is not very well organized. Letty suggested we include an ancestor chart followed by family group sheets in our books. She said she also includes copies of census records, birth and death records, obituar-

ies, pictures, diplomas, newspaper clippings, and of course source citations for each.

The third class I attended was "Publishing my Ancestor's Story on Amazon.com." Lecturer, Susan McNelley discussed how she used CreateSpace with the intent of selling her book on Amazon.com and receiving a royalty for each book sold. CreateSpace is a DBA of OnDemand Publishing LLC, part of the Amazon group of companies. While her



presentation was full of interesting ideas and hints, I do not plan to publish for profit. Susan also discussed the elements of images, endnotes, bibliography, and index. Finally, she discussed the publishing process, which includes editing, formatting, and design. Publishing a book will not be easy or inexpensive, but that is not going to stop me from writing the books I have planned.

"How to Use Your PC for Genealogy," was the final class I attended. Monterey Bay Computer Works, a local Windows and Macintosh specialist presented many practical tips on using your personal computer for genealogy. I learned how important it is to back up my computer files on a regular basis. Why? Because it is not *if* my computer will crash, but *when* it will crash. I also learned that defragging my computer hard drive

and using a security system are also good ideas.

One of the classes offered that I didn't have time to attend was "Danya's Genealogy Toolkit." With a little sleuthing, I discovered later that her genealogy toolkit is located at <a href="http://www.ongrannystrail.com">http://www.ongrannystrail.com</a>. It includes many useful websites.

The seminar was well worth the \$30 registration fee as it also included a printed syllabus and very nice lunch. Dolores and I enjoyed the drive to Seaside. We were



Dolores Olness and Leora Frise

able to return home before it was dark. It was well worth the trip to attend this well organized seminar. I look forward to attending the 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Ancestor Roundup next year.

Leora Frise is a lineal descendant of an American Revolutionary War Patriot. She joined the Livermore-Amador Genealogical Society in 2012. In addition to L-AGS, she is an active member of the Josefa Higuera Livermore Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution. She can be reached at leorafrise@comcast.net.

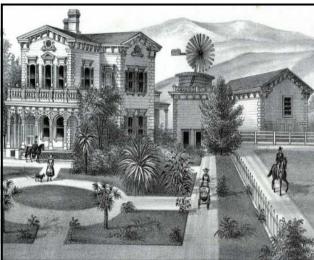
Santos continued from Page 16

property was located on the County Road leading from Niles to Centreville [now Peralta Blvd.] in Centreville [now Fremont]. It is also interesting to note that the Howard Overacker, Esq. residence as illustrated in the *Historic Land Ownership and Reference Atlases*, 1507-200: Alameda, 1878 Collection was just across the County Road from my great-grandfather's property.

Although I was disappointed to learn that the old



Historic map overlay of José Silveira Santos Farm [highlighted]



Residence of Howard Overacker, Esq

red barn at Shinn Park and Arboretum did not belong to my ancestors, I did track down my great-grandfather's property on Peralta Blvd. I also had some fun learning how to plot a land description and creating a historic map overlay. Finally, I was pleased to learn that the Museum of Local History in Fremont is dedicated to researching and preserving the diverse history of Washington Township. I may donate my Santos genealogy research to the museum to ensure that it will be available to others for years to come.





# G. R. O. W.

# Genealogy Resources On the Web — The Page That Helps Genealogy Grow!

Compiled by Susan Johnston and Kay Speaks



**Try:** (migration OR pioneer) AND (letters OR diaries)

# Focus on: Social History and Your Family

What do you really know about your ancestors' lives? Opportunities to experience those lives abound on the Internet. Take advantage of those opportunities and turn your family history into a work worth reading.

# **Home Economics Archive (HEARTH):**

http://tinyurl.com/63hojl. Start with the "Subjects" page to find bibliographies on the home economics practices of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Start with the "Browse" page to read contemporary articles on important concepts of the period.

# **Gode Cookery:**

http://tinyurl.com/bzkpe. This site spans the 15<sup>th</sup> through 17<sup>th</sup> centuries and defines terms your female ancestors used and recipes they would have learned.

# A Glossary of Archaic Medical Terms:

http://www.archaicmedicalterms.com/. What is that cause of death? Find the modern equivalent, a history of a disease, or documentary examples of that strange thing that killed your subject on this site. This site includes foreign terms, as well as those used in the U.S.

## **Medical Heritage Library:**

http://www.medicalheritage.org/. You learn your subject's cause of death, but you need to know more than the meaning of the medical term. What were the symptoms? How was it treated at the time? This site indexes medical literature of the period, and most of the works are available online. Read the search help, though. Some of the tricks are not obvious.

# **Project Gutenberg, American Bestsellers:**

http://tinyurl.com/p4wvj76. What little time your ancestor could spend reading was probably spent with the popular literature of the time. What were those bestsellers? Start here, and then continue with this list from the Northern Illinois University Library (http://tinyurl.com/p5czc8c). Most of

these books can be found on the *Internet Archive*. How many have you read?

# **How Much Is That in Today's Money?**

http://tinyurl.com/7y2aq5d. How often have you asked that question? For insight into the problem, start here. Continue with *Colonial Currency* (http://tinyurl.com/nmxywpl).

### California as I Saw It:

http://tinyurl.com/cymmzk. Men from all parts of the U.S. participated in the Gold Rush. If your subject was one of those, begin your background research at this *American Memory* collection. Continue with the California State Library's collection (<a href="http://tinyurl.com/qxjqhs8">http://tinyurl.com/qxjqhs8</a>); then visit Yale University's Beinecke Digital Collections site to read original letters and diaries (<a href="http://tinyurl.com/nosu8nk">http://tinyurl.com/nosu8nk</a>) and search "gold rush").

# National Museum of American History, Surveying and Geodesy:

http://amhistory.si.edu/surveying/. Many young men spent time with the highway surveyor. What were their duties? What did those arcane tools look like? The photographs are wonderful on this site! For more history of surveying, continue to *The American Surveyor* and its "History" tab (http://www.amerisurv.com/) and the online collection of the Wisconsin Historical Society (http://tinyurl.com/q5vnu27).

# **Historic American Roads, Trails and Migration Routes:**

http://tinyurl.com/7mlo4qa. This migration site includes small migration routes, as well as the better-known major routes. Don't forget to Google the route name to find more information.

# The Association for Gravestone Studies:

https://gravestonestudies.org/. What does the symbol of this tombstone mean? Who carved this beautiful marker? Start your search for more information about an ancestor's tombstone here.

# Future General Meetings

Congregation Beth Emek, 3400 Nevada Court, Pleasanton Visitors are always welcome.

June 9, 7:30 p.m.

Kay Speaks USCIS (USCustoms & Immigration Service)

July 14, 7:30 p.m.

Virginia Kysh Cemeteries Are Not a Dead Subject

August 11, 7:30 p.m.

Sally Stevens Western Migration During the Gold Rush Era

The Livermore-Amador Genealogical Society is exempt from Federal Income Tax under Section 501(c)(3)(public charity) of the Internal Revenue Code and California Taxation Code 2301g.

Livermore-Hmador Genealogical Society

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