



Genealogy Friends News

Genealogy Friends of
Plano Libraries

Genealogy Friends News
October 2020

P.O. Box 860477, Plano, TX, 75086-0477

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Schedule of Events

Haggard Library is closed so we are holding our meetings via Zoom

Mark your calendars now for the exciting Genealogy Friends events in 2020. Meetings will be held via Zoom until further notice from 10:15 to 12:00. Invites will be send out the week before the meeting.

This Month

October 17, 2020—Zoom Meeting—Rick Voight will talk to us about Vivid-Pix Restore Software to improve pictures and documents, transcribe documents and save tags and metadata for pictures and documents.

Future Events:

November 21, 2020—Zoom Meeting—”Technology Enabled Collaboration for Genealogists” by Tony Hanson.

December 19, 2020—Zoom Meeting—Show and Tell—You will be able to share your screen so we can see the exciting family discoveries you made this year. More info to come soon.

If there is a topic that you would like to learn about either in a Saturday seminar or newsletter article, email Barbara Coakley bcoakley1620@gmail.com.

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Publications for Sale

The following are available from Genealogy Friends:

Public Land Survey Systems	\$5
Plano Star Courier Index 1904-1910	\$20
Plano Star Courier Index 1911-1917	\$20
Cemeteries of Collin County, TX	\$40
Collin County, TX Voter Registration Index 1867	\$20
Place Names of Collin County, TX	\$10
Railroads in Collin County, TX	\$10

Genfriends Membership

Our membership year runs from October 1 to September 30. Individual memberships are \$30 a year and family memberships are \$50.

The money we raise is used to purchase materials for the Genealogy Section at Haggard Library.

Download the membership form on our website <http://genealogyfriends.org/news/> send it in with payment to

Genealogy Friends of Plano Libraries, Inc
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Genealogy Education & News

Family History Federation and Parish Chest are presenting **FHF Really Useful Family History Show** on Saturday, November 14th from 4 to 10, the talks will be recorded if you can't watch them live. It is a worldwide virtual event, fee is £5 (\$6.78) <https://www.fhf-reallyuseful.com/>.

Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter has a new website. If you aren't a subscriber check it out, Dick writes an informative newsletter about what's going on in the genealogy community. <https://www.eogn.com.wildapricot.org/>

A recent edition of Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter included an article about "**Momondo Presents The DNA Journey.**" There is a link to a series of YouTube videos about 67 people from all over the world who took DNA tests. The videos are worth watching. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tyaEQEmt5ls&feature=youtu.be>

Ireland xo Reaching Out "is a volunteer based non-profit initiative which builds vibrant, lasting links between the global Irish Disapora and the parishes of origin in Ireland." If you have Irish ancestors it is a good place to post queries, meet others researching from the same location and to learn about all aspects of life in Ireland. <https://irelandxo.com/>

Swedish Genealogical Society of Minnesota Fall Virtual Conference—Saturday, October 31, 2020. The featured speaker is Thomas MacEntee. Cost is \$40 per household. <https://sgsmn.org/eventListings.php?nm=19#er33>

Texas State Genealogical Society Remembering Your Heritage conference November 13-14, 2020 includes 10 live webinars and up to 22 recorded sessions depending on the package you choose. Early bird registration has been extended through October 20. <https://www.txsgs.org/2020-conference/registration/>

RootsTech is virtual and free for 2021. 25-27 February 2021. Register now! <https://www.rootstech.org/?lang=eng> They also have recordings from prior year's conferences that you can watch <https://www.rootstech.org/video-archive?lang=eng>

Check the genealogical and historical societies in the areas where your ancestors lived. May societies are holding virtual education programs.

Some institutions are doing expanded lookups and will provide copies of records. Look for a research request form or rules for lookups on their websites and requests. Explore the online catalog and submit your requests, you never know what research question you might be able to answer.

Daughter, Sister, Wife, and Mother

By Barbara Coakley

This morning there was a story on the radio about a new study that declared Louisiana as the worst state for women to live in. This seemed ironic to me. Until the mid 1800's women in Louisiana had more rights than those living in most other states.

Laws on women's rights differed by state but most were based on the principle of unity of person and English Common Law. After marriage, men and women no longer acted as individuals, together they formed a partnership where the woman's role was secondary to the man. Once married, the husband managed all of the wife's property, both real and personal. Women could not bring suit and needed her husband's permission to make a will. Husbands could not sell real property without the consent of their wife. The wife also retained a dower right to all real property used to support her in widowhood¹.

Louisiana's law was based on French Law. "A married woman retained her legal identity, her personal property and her rights to monetary rewards from her labors within her family. A woman in early Louisiana owned half the property accumulated during marriage and she inherited her half of the property at the dissolution of her marriage²."

Finding our female ancestors can be more difficult than finding male ancestors. Women started as a man's daughter and her brother's sister, when she married she became a man's wife, and she was her children's mother. Unless a woman remained single, in most cases she did not have her own identity. To further complicate research, when she married her name changed.

Typically women generated fewer official records so to find her we need to research the men in her life. We start with her father and brothers and, once identified, we research her husband and children. The records that mention women are there, we just have to be creative to find them.

There are two common research questions, trying to locate the maiden name of a wife and trying to locate a daughter after she married. Here are few tips to solve these questions:

- Learn as much as you can about her immediate family members. Collect as many records as you can generated by her father and siblings or husband and children.
- If there were multiple husbands, research them all and all the children, not just the husband you are descended from.
- Look for naming patterns in the family. The mother's surname may be used as a first or middle name for one of her children.
- Look at neighbors and associates. Especially in early times, people didn't go far from home when they were looking for a spouse.

The research process is the same. Records searched to find women are the same ones we use to research men, we need to look at them carefully for references to the women in their lives.

- Once you determine your research question, look at all the records you already have for the family.
- Review and analyze each record and add relevant details to your research plan.
- Determine the location and time frame to be searched. If this is a new location, take the time to research the loca-



Mary Ann Newsham Starkey Sennott
 Daughter of John Newsham & Alice Walker
 Sister of John, James, William, Ellen, Joseph,
 and Thomas Newsham
 Wife of William Starkey and James Sennott
 Mother of Cora Starkey, William Starkey,
 John Sennott and Nellie Sennott

Daughter, Sister, Wife, and Mother (continued)

tion. Refer to “Researching A New Location” in the January 2020 newsletter.

- Make a list of sources to search and where to find them on your research plan.
- As you research, carefully analyze each record you find and record the results on your research log. Refer to “Analyzing Records” in the June 2020 newsletter.
- Use what you find to refine your research plan—add new locations or sources and remove those that no longer make sense based on what you found in your research.
- If you find the answer, write a conclusion to your research summarizing what you found and why you believe it answers your research question. If not, look for new sources to search especially those that are not online.

Sources to search:

- Published Records—start your search by looking at online trees, compiled family histories, county histories, journal articles, and FindAGrave to see what clues you can find from information compiled by other researchers. Look for the sources referenced. Don’t take what you find as fact until you find a reliable source to verify it. The information might not be 100% accurate but it might give you the clue you need to find the information you are looking for.
 - Online Trees—FamilySearch.org, Ancestry.com, MyHeritage, FindmyPast
 - Journal and Periodical Articles—PERSI, AmericanAncestors, Genealogy Society websites, JSTOR
 - FindAGrave—look for entries for her entire family, there might be a link to her parents.
 - Compiled Family and County Histories—InternetArchive, HathiTrust, Google Books, Heritage Quest, FamilySearch Digital Library, Library of Congress, Digital Public Library of America. Look for biographies of all male family members—fathers, brothers, son-in-laws—they might mention details about the women in their lives and their families.
- Birth, Marriage and Death Records
 - Look for both civil and church records—church records often contain more information than civil records. Look at the sponsors or witnesses, they might be relatives.
 - Look for records for as many family members as you can find. One of her children or siblings might have the information the record for your ancestor is missing.
 - At a minimum, marriage records will include the full name of the bride and might include her parents names and where she was from.
 - If a widow is marrying her name will usually be listed as the surname of her first husband. Look for Mrs.
 - If a bride is under legal age, there should be a consent for her to marry from her father or if he is deceased her guardian.
 - Check the civil marriage record to see who performed the marriage and look for them to find the congregation if they are clergy.
- Burial Records
 - Tombstone records can include her maiden name.
 - Look for funeral home and cemetery records.
 - Find out who is buried on the same plot or near by in the cemetery, they might be her relatives.
- Land Records
 - When land is sold the wife is examined separately to give her consent to sell the property. This may only include her first name.
 - Look at the other parties in the transaction—in addition to the buyer and seller look at the witnesses. Especially deeds where the consideration is below market value. The transaction could be with a relative.
 - Look for deeds of partition that mention all the heirs or transactions between siblings dividing property of a deceased father.
- Will and Probate Records
 - Wives and children may be mentioned by name in a will. Look for married daughters to be listed with their married names.

Daughter, Sister, Wife, and Mother (continued)

If there is no will, the wife and children should be mentioned as heirs.

If one of her children did not marry, their heirs will be their siblings and/or parents if there is no will.

Look at estate sales to see who purchased items, especially items that would be meaningful to a family member. The purchasers might be a relative.

- Census Records

Before 1850 women who were head of household are listed.

Beginning in 1850 all of the family members are listed on the population schedule.

Look at neighbors to see if they might be family members.

The 1890 Veterans schedules include widows of soldiers.

Mortality schedules from 1850-1880 include women who died in the 12 months preceding the census date.

- Pension Application Files

Pension laws changed over time, as a rule the laws became more liberal as time passed and there were fewer people who would be eligible.

Files exist for pension applications even if they were not successful and a pension was not awarded.

Widows and parents were eligible for pensions. In order to apply a widow had to include proof of marriage.

Look to see who the witnesses were that provided affidavits included in the file, they might be relatives.

Look for letters and questionnaires included in the file that contain details about the soldier's life.

- Court Records

Look at the parties in suits for relatives. Disputes between family members can include details that might answer your research question.

Court minute books and court papers many not be indexed. If not, check local newspapers to see if they include the court docket that lists cases to be heard.

- Newspapers

Birth notices, marriage notices, obituaries, notices of abandoned spouses, divorces

Social articles—who came to visit and who did your ancestors go to visit. Women often remained close to their families.

Articles on women's organizations can provide details about a woman's life, interests, religious affiliation, etc. that can lead you to other sources to search.

- Directories

Women are listed before they marry.

Widows are listed, often with a reference to their deceased husband.

- School Records

Student records, yearbooks, records from sororities might exist.

Teaching was one of the few occupations open to women. Look for records from teachers colleges or teachers in a school archives.

Finding our female family members can seem daunting but the clues are there if you search the men in their lives and analyze records carefully to see what details they provide about their daughters, sisters, mothers, and wives.

¹Marylynn Salmon. *Women and the Law of Property in Early America*. Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 1986. Pages 14-15.

²Sara Jane Brooks Sundberg. "Women and the Law of Property Under Louisiana Civil Law, 1782 —1835." *Louisiana State University LSU Digital Commons, LSU Historical Dissertations and Theses* (https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1319&context=gradschool_disstheses : accessed 11 October 2020) p vii.

Christina Kassabian Schaefer. *The Hidden Half of the Family*. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, 2003.

Sharon DeBartolo Carmack. *Discovering Your Female Ancestors*. Cincinnati: Betterway Books, 1998.

Sarah Emma Edmonds

Submitted by Barbara Brogdon

Emma Edmonds specialized in disguises. It was a way of life you could say. One which began in her teens.

Back then she was living on a farm in New Brunswick, Canada, being raised by a doting mother and an abusive father who resented Emma for not being born a boy. He wasn't good to her. And when he tried to marry her off at fifteen, she decided to leave.

She traveled alone to the U.S. And this is where Emma Edmonds became Franklin Thompson, probably because Franklin had more opportunities than Emma did. And Franklin became a bible salesman living in Hartford, Connecticut, and then a book seller in Flint, Michigan.

Soon the Civil War started. Emma, an ardent supporter of the Union felt a duty to serve. So she joined. As Franklin of course. Physical checks were sparse then.

Emma worked as a nurse, but yearned for something more. She wanted to become a spy. That chance came.

Emma needed to infiltrate the Confederate camp stationed near her own. So Emma did what Emma knew how to do well. She changed her identity.

Franklin Thompson became Cuff, a southern black man. She used silver nitrate to darken her skin. And then she wandered near the Confederate camp, expecting to be picked up for some work need; which she was.

She learned important information over a few days in the camp. Information such as the Army building what were known as "Quaker Guns," or cannons which looked real from a distance, but in reality were just wooden logs. Then she escaped from the camp and returned to her own where she told leadership what she learned.

Emma, or Franklin, or Cuff, or an Irish peddler by the name of Bridget O'Shea, which was a future identity, would take part in eleven spy missions during the war.

Sources:

Behind Rebel Lines: The Incredible Story of Emma Edmonds, Civil War Spy by Seymour Reit, American Battlefield Trust, "Civil War Biography Sarah Emma Edmonds" <https://bit.ly/2K6B0DG>
National Park Service, "Sarah Emma Edmonds, Antietam National Battlefield, Manassas National Battlefield Park, Vicksburg National Military Park" <https://bit.ly/2HjuHe5>



Photograph of Sarah Edmonds from National Park Service website