A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

March was, as usual, a busy month for GSP. The annual all-day Ulster Conference was held March 10th. WHYY-TV came to our office on March 14th to do filming and interviewing for a TV show that will likely air this month, and the Annual Business Meeting for Members was held March 30th. There were, additionally, the meetings scheduled at the office for Special Interest Groups and ROOTS LUNCHES. So, a busy month with much excitement and creativity in the air…and it continues.

Volunteers have resumed scanning projects already in the works for the website as well as new projects, new publications are near completion, and plans are being made for additional services and programs during this year. Check the website frequently for events, schedule, and announcements and find similar information in the GSP emails you receive. All of this is in the service of helping you find your ancestors! Discover and enjoy!

Carol M. Sheaffer MD, President

The GSP online newsletter

We look forward to keeping you informed by giving you dates and times of upcoming events, answering questions and being a source of information to our membership.

UPCOMING EVENTS

GSP 2019 Events

GSP will host two lunch events each month – ROOTS and ROOTS FOCUS. Both are designed to allow researchers to discuss genealogy over brown bagging lunch. ROOTS will be an opportunity to discuss all questions with each other and share research, artifacts, photos and questions. ROOTS FOCUS will offer an opportunity to discuss a specific topic. Participants need to register in advance as space is limited. Participants are also asked to bring their own lunch, however, GSP will provide coffee, tea, and dessert.

Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania
2100 Byberry Road, Suite 111
Philadelphia, PA 19116 - 267.686.2296  gsp.deborah@gmail.com

REGISTRATION
GSP Members Free; GSP Non-Members $5
Advance Registration Required Due to Space Limitations.

EMAIL to Register: info@genpa.org

(Continued on page 2)
Ulster Conference Surname Exchange

At this year’s Ulster Conference on March 10th there was an added attraction. Each person had the opportunity to complete an Irish Surname Exchange Index Card and post it for that day with the hope that another attendee might have information that would be helpful.

Additionally, those who completed the cards could also give permission to print the information in the GSP Newsletter. The submitted queries will appear in the next several issues of the newsletter, minus the name of the submitter. Should readers wish to contact the submitter, they may send their name and email address to editor@genpa.org and your information will be sent to the submitter who can then contact the reader directly.

Below are the first batch of Irish Queries:

1. William Savage, born about 1810 in County Down
2. Pancoast, Shearer, Fife, Gunn, Campbell
3. Banford, Macauley, Hogan
4. Daniel Leonard, Anna Best Monihan, Amelia Gruninger
5. County or Townland of birth for Christopher Clark (e) 1754 – 1830 died in Kentucky
6. John Malloy and Ellen O’Toole who married in Philadelphia 1889
7. Wallace (Londonderry), Robinson (Donegal)
8. Patrick Daly emigrated to Pennsylvania from Derrynoose/Keady 1832
9. Budd/Lawrence (Laois), Bradin/Braden (Mayo?)
10. Francis Murphy came to Philadelphia in 1816 from County Wexford

Registration for the following events …
GSP Members Free; GSP Non-Members $5
Held at GSP Office. Advance Registration Required Due to Space Limitations
EMAIL to Register: info@genpa.org

11 April 2019 ~ 12 Noon-2 PM
ROOTS: Bring Your Ancestor to Lunch
Note Change from Tuesdays to Thursdays

Led by Carol M. Sheaffer at GSP Office
Bring Your Lunch-Coffee and Dessert Provided

25 April 2019 12 Noon -2 PM
ROOTS FOCUS: Philadelphia Research
Note Change from Tuesdays to Thursdays

Led by Carol M. Sheaffer
Bring Your Lunch, Coffee and Dessert Provided

28 April 2019 11 AM-12:30 PM
DNA SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP
Note Change from Saturday to Sunday for April

DNA Discussion:
DNA Testing and Genealogical Research

28 April 2019 1 PM - 3 PM
PRE-PRO SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP
Note Change from Saturday to Sunday for April

GSP’s newest special interest group can help you reach your goal of being a professional genealogist or improve your research skills.
Bring Your Lunch, Coffee and Dessert Provided
RECORDS FROM TWO FAMILY BIBLES

**Lippincott Family Bible**
Joshua W. Lippincott son of Samuel R. and Mary W. Lippincott, born 10\textsuperscript{th} mo 20\textsuperscript{th} 1840
Mary E. Parry, daughter of Samuel and Martha H. Parry, born 4\textsuperscript{th} mo 6\textsuperscript{th} 1839
Mary E. Lippincott, wife of Joshua W. Lippincott died 2\textsuperscript{nd} mo 26\textsuperscript{th} 1866
Samuel Parry died 1\textsuperscript{st} mo 23\textsuperscript{rd} 1868
Joshua W. Lippincott and Mary E. Parry married Philadelphia 12\textsuperscript{th} mo 3\textsuperscript{rd} 1863
Samuel P. Lippincott born Philadelphia 10\textsuperscript{th} mo 23\textsuperscript{rd} 1865

**Springer Family Bible**
James Maharg Springer married Annie Elizabeth Evans at Philadelphia, 9 February 1874
James Springer Jr married Mary Wildermouth 24 Sep 1917

**Deaths**
John Wills Springer died 28 May 1877
Edwin Howard Springer died 26 February 1880
Laura Virginia Springer died 28 July 1882
Harry Robinson Springer died 10 September 1884
Frank Leonard Springer died 28 August 1894
Annie Elizabeth Springer died 11 August 1896
Clara Viola Springer died 5 February 1899
William Evans Springer died 4 January 1911
Annie Elizabeth Springer (nee Evans) mother born 20 October 1851 died 16 November 1913
Mercy Wildermouth 2\textsuperscript{nd} wife died 28 September 1918
James M. Springer born 29 June 1847 died 8 December 1924
Mary Frances Springer Livingston died 1953

**Births**
John Wills Springer born 4 December 1874
James Maharg Springer born 20 June 1876
Mary Frances Springer born 10 March 1878
Edwin Howard Springer born 9 February 1880
Laura Virginia Springer born 24 April 1881
Harry Robinson Springer born 26 October 1888
William Evans Springer born 2 March 1886
Charles Herbert Springer born 25 January 1888
Albert Ellwood Springer born 28 May 1890
Annie Elizabeth Springer born 6 August 1892
Frank Leonard Springer born 30 June 1894
Clara Viola Springer born 21 July 1896
GSP ANNUAL MEETING March 2019

The Annual GSP Business Meeting for members and Board, mandated by our By-Laws, was held March 30, 2019 at the GSP Office. Financial, Program, Website, and Publications reports, as well as The First Family of Pennsylvania Program were discussed.

The slate of nominees was presented and voted on favorably. We welcomed Joseph Roby as a new Board Member and Angie Indik as a new 2nd Vice-President. Both have been active volunteers and supporters of GSP. Both have been serving as GSP Newsletter Editors and have worked on several events.

Angie Indik has created most of the County Research/Resource Guides posted on our website, along with a Guide of NARA. Currently she, in collaboration with Nancy J. Janyszeski, is creating a book of county maps and early development of those counties. She will be Chair of the Social Media Committee.

Joseph Roby has contributed many articles to the GSP Newsletter, has been instrumental in establishing and developing the new Pre-Pro Special Interest Group for those interested in pursuing a career as a professional genealogist and has joined Board Member Frank Straup in managing our facility, creating an inventory of collections to be scanned and placed on website and maintaining adequate stock of publications and for sale items. Both are valuable assets to the Board and the organization.

Additional elections were actually re-elections: Nancy C. Nelson as 1st VP, Nancy Janyszeski as Treasurer, and Carol Sheaffer as President.

Volunteers were recognized for their work over the past year:

- Mary Phelan and Doug Mondel: Scanning Early Member Records
- Doug Mondel: Friends - Compiling Conscientious Objector Records
- Tina Lamb: Scanned Berryman Collections
- Frank Straup: Organization and management of storage contents – collections, publications, supplies, Re-indexing Philadelphia Mayor’s Records: Redesigned genealogy form packets for sale
- Debbie Malinowski: Scanned Mulligan Funeral Home Records
GSP NEWSLETTER
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* Angie Indik: Research/Resource Guides most Pennsylvania Counties and NARA for website. Newsletter Editor and currently working on county formation and map book

* Joseph Roby: Newsletter Editor and currently joining Frank Straup in organization and management of storage rooms and processing of collections for website use. Instrumental in establishing and developing Pre-Pro Special Interest Group

* Nancy Janyszeski and Valerie Lutz: website management and content

* Nancy Janyszeski: Newsletter formatting, editing; Constant Contact E-mails

* Jane Benner: Library Management, Published 3 volumes of Phila Child School Records, Abstraction of Marriages from Der Bauerenfreud

* Nancy C. Nelson: First Families of Pennsylvania

* Joan Clancy-Flynn: Checking website collection uploads for errors

* Florence Gallagher: Working on new publication for Philadelphia Researchers


Carol M. Sheaffer

THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS
INDEXED VS. IMAGE-ONLY RECORD COLLECTIONS

Tip: When reading this article, you may want to have Ancestry.com and/or FamilySearch.org open in your favorite browser to follow along.

Over the past two decades or more, and especially in the past 10 years, amateur genealogists have typically started their search for their ancestors online. Genealogists today have many ancestral bread crumbs left for us on our computer screens by companies such as Ancestry, FamilySearch, and countless others. We could spend the rest of our lives glued to our devices and still not even scratch the surface of what is available out in cyberspace. Of course, the records that have been digitized are only a fraction of what is accessible at libraries, archives, historical societies, genealogical societies, and other repositories.

Like most of you, when I first started researching my family online, I didn’t really know the best ways to find records. I thought I could just plug my ancestor’s name into a search box and magically all of his/her records would fall in my lap. Okay, maybe I wasn’t quite that naïve, but you get the picture. I have the benefit of a history degree, so researching, and therefore searching, come naturally. However, after a period of using the search boxes on websites like Ancestry, I realized I was missing a big chunk of the record collections these companies offered (and I was paying for!). Many of the collections and databases online have not been indexed, which means I never would have found them by searching if I hadn’t been proactive. I’m going to share what I’ve learned, but first let’s go over a few definitions so we are all on the same page.

**Indexed record collection** – a collection of records which a person (or computer) has read, organized, and made searchable. Sometimes there are corresponding images, but not always. It is common to find mistakes made by the indexers. An indexed record collection should not be confused with an index, which is a collection without the original source material, but important information such as names and dates have been pulled from the record and transcribed and/or abstracted.

**Image-Only record collection** – also known as an image-first and/or a browsable collection. Digital images of a source, which are viewable page by page. This type of collection is NOT searchable. The FamilySearch Wiki has a helpful page on how best to work with these collections: [https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Navigating_FamilySearch_Browsable_Images](https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Navigating_FamilySearch_Browsable_Images)

(Continued on page 7)
If you have searched for an ancestor by using a search box, you have used indexed record collections. So, I won’t spend time telling you how to find these collections. It is the image-only collections which can be tough to find if you don’t know where to look. Websites differ, but the idea is the same on all the major genealogy sites. I’ll use Ancestry as the first example.

Unfortunately, like most websites, Ancestry does not have a “Sort” feature for indexed and image-only collections. However, you can sort by location, date, and/or type of collection. There are a few ways to access these features, but here is one of my favorites: Along the top menu on the Ancestry.com website, click on the “Search” tab. Then click on the first option in the drop-down menu, “All Collections.” Resist the temptation to use the search boxes and scroll down about half way down the page until you see the map. You have the ability to narrow down the record collections by location. I think the Card Catalog is easier to sort collections for type of collection and date. In my opinion, the Card Catalog is less visually appealing, but can get you to the desired record collection faster.

The best place to try to sort image-only vs. indexed record collections on your own is the Card Catalog. Go back to “Search” at the top of your screen, then click on that. Choose “Card Catalog” near the bottom of the drop-down menu. The Card Catalog lists all of Ancestry’s collections (as I’m writing this article, it is well over 32,000). In order to narrow the number of collections down, we have to enter something in the “Title” or “Keyword” boxes, or we can use the filtering options below the boxes on the left-hand side of the page. I find the keyword box very helpful, so we will use that for now.

Let’s say I want to find records substantiating my family’s lore about an ancestor who may have died in a Union prisoner of war camp. He was a private citizen, not a Confederate soldier, however at least two of his sons fought for the Confederacy. I might enter “US Civil War” into the keyword search box in the Card Catalog to see how many collections Ancestry has which relate to the American Civil War. This search comes up with 118 record collections, some of which I can tell don’t pertain to my ancestor. However, I see some which I’ve never seen before and look promising. I choose a record collection entitled, “U.S., Union Provost Marshal Files of Individual Civilians, 1861-1866.” If you click on this collection, you might notice something different from the other collections you are used to using. There are no search boxes, only an option to “Browse this collection” on the right side of the page. We’ve found an image-only record collection on Ancestry!
Now what, right? Lucky, I have a name which will really help me. To keep using my example, I find the ancestor in question (one of my paternal 3rd great-grandfathers, Francis M. Weems) in the correct surname range image set. There are pages and pages of letters and military documents, all of which document his two-year journey from Florida to see his family in Maryland (through many Union lines and military districts) before he died. I’m still trying to find out if he actually died in a federal facility or with family in Baltimore. But without this image-only collection, I probably would not have known what happened to him in the last few years of his life.

One other tip on image-only record collections like the one mentioned above: check the other images/pages surrounding your ancestor’s records. It is very possible you may find relative of that ancestor. Perhaps an even more common occurrence is that your ancestor’s name was not spelled correctly on the original record. Using my Francis Weems again as an example, I have found records which have spelled his surname Weims, Wiems, Weem, Weams, and more. Don’t forget to look for common misspellings in the record collections.

Let’s move on to FamilySearch.org. I actually like the way FamilySearch displays and sorts out their record collections. In many respects, FamilySearch surpasses Ancestry in this department. One sorting feature, “Sort by Records,” is a powerful tool if you know how to use it. Here’s how:

Go back to the main search page (“Search” then “Records”) and scroll down to below the map and click on “Browse all published collections.” This will take you to a list of FamilySearch’s record collections. The trick comes in how you sort this list. The default way is alphabetically, but you want to change it. Click on the word “Records” on the right side of the page, directly under the shaded-out word “Previous.” The list will still be sorted alphabetically, but it is first sorted by the number of records. Since image-only collections are not indexed, there is no count of the number of records included. Only the words, “Browse Images” appear. This is great for us because it creates an alphabetical list of the image-only collections on FamilySearch! If you want to get fancy, you can try to use the “Title” or “Last Updated” columns in conjunction with the “Records” column to sort the image-only collections in a different manner.

There is also an option to sort the record collections by location. On the top of the FamilySearch homepage after you log in, click on the “Search” at the top and then “Records” in the drop-down
menu. Ignore the tempting search boxes on the left and click on an area of the map on the right side of the page. Since this is the Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania’s newsletter, let’s choose the Keystone State. Click on the U.S., then find Pennsylvania in the menu and click on it.

You are now at the Pennsylvania research page. Again, ignore the search boxes under “Indexed Historical Records” and scroll down until you see “Image-Only Historical Records.” All the records found in these collections would never be found if you had stopped at searching only the indexed collections. Notice under the “Military” subheading that there are four more collections besides the five listed. If you scroll down even farther, there is a section called “Catalog Material.” I think FamilySearch’s catalog, books, wiki, and more are better left for another article, but many of the image-only collections available on FamilySearch can be found by searching in their catalog.

Patience and persistence can yield rich results in the field of genealogy. Do you have any tips or tricks for navigating genealogy websites? Have you had success finding an ancestor in an image-only record collection? Let us know!

editor@genpa.org

Joseph Roby, GSP Copy Editor
The Evolution of the Calendar

Robert F. Morris

Our calendar wasn’t always as we know it today. Astronomical computations and religious customs have brought changes over the centuries which are sometimes perplexing to those interested in genealogy and history.

For example, your research may disclose incontrovertible evidence that a great, great,... great-grandfather died in, let us say, February 1750. Then you go to the City Hall to consult the will and see that he signed it in November 1750. He died in February, yet there in his own handwriting is his signature in November of the same year. Then, there is the confusion of some important dates in history being commemorated annually on a date ten or eleven days later than the original date. Some dates are expressed as to the year with two consecutive years, e.g. 1723/4.

April was not always the fourth month of the year, as indicated by William Penn, who, in writing his famous Charter of Liberties closed that great document with, “...In Witness whereof. I the said Wm. Penn have hereunto this Charter of Liberties, set my hand and broad seal, this five and twentieth day of the second month vulgarly [commonly] called April, in the year of our Lord, 1682.”

Now that the tercentenary of the granting of the Charter for Pennsylvania is nearly upon us, questions as to its date are bound to come up. At the Land Registry Building, London, in Colonial Entry Book [CO5/1236, pp. 1-21,], the date on the copy of the charter is 4 March 1680/1, and at the end there is an added date entry of 4 March 1681. At Harrisburg in the William Penn Memorial Museum and Archives Building the date on the charter itself is “...the fourth day of March in the three and thirtieth year of our Reigne.” The grantor, King Charles II, claimed his reign began in January 1649, when his father was beheaded; three and thirty years later, including 1649, would be 1681, however there was an interregnum period under Cromwell and the coronation of Charles II was not held until 1660. The date of March 14th, not the 4th, is used by some who wish to express “new style” and “old style” calendars. All these apparent anachronisms can be explained by a brief review of the history of our calendar.
There were at least ten in ancient times; Roman, Chinese, Jewish, Greek and others. These systems were keyed, in general, to the regular and constant movement of the heavenly bodies. The Roman Republican Calendar, from which ours evolved, was based upon the orbits of the moon around the earth and the earth around the sun. There seemed to be twelve lunations, or orbits of the moon around the earth, during one complete cycle of the four seasons, or an orbit of the earth around the sun. A lunation took about 29 1/2 days, which, times 12, gave a year of 354 days. The Roman civil year was actually 355 days, but it was more than 10 days short of the solar, or astronomical year of 365 and a fraction days.

Since the civil calendar year was shorter than the true solar year it caused events observed annually at certain seasons of the solar year to move forward on the calendar. The seasons were moving backward through the civil calendar and days needed to be added to it to allow the solar year to catch up. By the time of Julius Caesar, ca. 100 B.C. to 44 B.C., this annual difference was officially noted. In fact it was determined that within a period of thirty-five years a given date would move through all four seasons and return to where it started. The Alexandrian astronomer, Sosigenes made remarkably accurate calculations and about 46 B.C. Caesar, as Roman Emperor and Pontifex Maximus, decreed changes.

Sosigenes had observed that a complete orbit of the earth around the sun took 365 days and six hours. The number of days in the existing twelve months were therefore varied to take up the extra days and the remaining six hours were included by adding one day at the end of February of each year evenly divisible by four. Such quadrennial years were called bissextile, or leap years. It then became necessary to adjust the civil calendar to some definite point on the solar year, so sufficient days were intercalated [inserted in the calendar] between November and December of 46 B.C. to make that particular year 445 days long and to bring the vernal equinox to the beginning of the new year, March 25th. With these changes the Julian Calendar, named after Julius Caesar, went into effect in the year 45 B.C. It was soon used in the commercial and religious countries of the occidental world. This same system, with years numbered from the birth of Christ, and with refinements later instituted at the time of Pope Gregory XIII, is the calendar now used throughout the civilized world. Others have survived, such as the Chinese and Jewish calendars, but they are used mainly for religious purposes and limited historic references. When used they are usually transposed parenthetically to our own.
The Evolution of the Calendar

The months of the Julian Calendar, from the beginning of the year: (\(R=\) Roman Republican Calendar days. \(J=\) Julian Calendar days).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>(R)</th>
<th>(J)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Martius</td>
<td>31 days</td>
<td>31 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aprilis</td>
<td>29 days</td>
<td>30 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maius</td>
<td>31 days</td>
<td>31 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iunius</td>
<td>29 days</td>
<td>30 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quintilis</td>
<td>31 days</td>
<td>31 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sextilis</td>
<td>29 days</td>
<td>31 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>29 days</td>
<td>30 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>31 days</td>
<td>31 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>29 days</td>
<td>30 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>29 days</td>
<td>31 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ianuarius</td>
<td>29 days</td>
<td>31 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Februarius</td>
<td>28 days</td>
<td>28 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>355 days</td>
<td>365 days</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The days, in the original Latin and as adopted in the Saxon tongue were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dies Solis</td>
<td>Sun’s Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dies Lunae</td>
<td>Moon’s Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dies Martis</td>
<td>Tiw’s Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dies Mercurii</td>
<td>Woden’s Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dies Jovis</td>
<td>Thor’s Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dies Veneris</td>
<td>Frigg’s Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dies Saturni</td>
<td>Seterne’s Day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At this juncture we may as well deal with the determination of Easter, which, although seldom of genealogical concern, nevertheless is integral in our calendar. It was desired to have the full moon and the vernal equinox as determiners of Easter and also have it always on a Sunday. Moreover, it was not to coincide with the Jewish Passover date which is ordained to be celebrated on the 14th day of the Paschal month. The Paschal month is that of which the 14th day, or full moon day, falls on or next follows the vernal equinox. Thus it can be seen that the calendar computation was complicated.

In 325 A.D. the ecumenical General Council of Nicaea decreed that Easter should be on the Sunday immediately following either that full moon which occurs on the day of the vernal equinox, or if there is no full moon on that day, then on the Sunday following that full moon which occurs next after the day of the vernal equinox, March 21st. For practical purposes if one thinks of Easter as falling on the first Sunday after the first full moon after March 21st it will usually but not quite...
always come out right.* It can occur on our present calendar as early as March 22nd and as late as April 25th.

As noted earlier, the Julian calendar set the equinox on the first day of the new year, March 25th, but by the fourth century it was found to fall on March 21st. No effort was made at Nicaea to correct that disparity and by 730 A.D. it was noted that on March 21st the sun had progressed three days north of the equator and the vernal equinox had correspondingly retrogressed to March 18th on the civil calendar. In the thirteenth century the difference was seven days and in the fifteenth century nine days.

Pope Paul III, 1534-1549, being aware of this widening divergence, obtained authority to make corrections and proceeded with astronomers of the time who correctly determined the changes required. However, no action was taken during his reign, nor those of the next five popes. In 1572 Ugo Buoncompagni, 1502-1585, became Pope Gregory XIII. Realizing that the problem would not go away but indeed would become worse, he put three astronomers to work on it. They recalculated and verified what predecessors had found before—that the solar year was not exactly 365 1/4 days long as previously supposed, but was only 365 days, five hours, forty-eight minutes and forty-six seconds. So the civil year under the Julian calendar then in use was eleven minutes and fourteen seconds longer than the true solar year.

This overage amounted to the addition of one whole day in 128 years and in the twelve centuries from the Council of Nicaea to the sixteenth century amounted to ten days. Thus from a given point, say March 21st in the year 325 A.D. to March 21, 1572 there were ten extra days of civil time. In those days the sun had advanced north of the equator by that amount but the civil calendar read March 21st. Conversely, when the sun was actually on the equator the civil calendar read March 11th, back into winter. The calendar was working backward through the seasons of the true solar year.

Gregory, being satisfied with the astronomical calculations, then set forth a revision of the Julian calendar in a brief issued in March of 1582. He directed that the day following the Feast of St. Francis, October 5th, be reckoned as October 15th. This advance of the calendar shortened the year by ten days so that the next vernal equinox would fall correctly on March 21st instead of March 11th. In order to remove

*The ecclesiastical full moon is not quite the same as the astronomical, or solar, full moon. A study of such elements as the epacts, the Sunday or dominical letters, the golden numbers, etc. is required to make precise calculations. These factors are described in many prayer books to be found in American and British churches.
The Evolution of the Calendar

the extra day every 128 years and thus keep the civil calendar in line with the solar year for future centuries he ordered that there would be no leap year on centesimal years except when a centesimal year could be evenly divided by 400. In other words, centesimal years though always evenly divisible by four and eligible to be a leap year, would not be a leap year unless evenly divisible by 400. The year 1600, evenly divisible by both four and 400 would be a leap year; the year 1700, divisible by four but not by 400 would not be a leap year; nor would 1800 or 1900. The year 2000 would be a leap year, and so on until the forty-first century, when an additional calculation would have to be made. Under the Gregorian reformation it was also decreed that the first of the year would be January 1st instead of March 25th. The coincidence that Annunciation Day, or Lady Day was March 25th had been of no consequence as to the start of the new year.

This Gregorian, or new style calendar was adopted in 1582 in the Italian states, Portugal, Spain and France. In the Roman Catholic states of Germany it went into effect in 1583 and in the remainder of Germany in 1700. Other countries of Europe followed except Russia, which did not adopt it until 1917. England and her colonial possessions adopted the Gregorian calendar in 1752, although Scotland had put it in effect earlier. By 1752 the Julian, or old style calendar was eleven days out of kilter.

Let us now turn to the “Reform of the Calendar Act.” This changed the calendar in use in England and colonial America from the Julian to the Gregorian and prescribed all of the provisions of the calendar under which we now operate. An understanding of it will give us the clues to solve the dilemmas expressed at the beginning of this treatise.

Spread over twenty-six closely written pages of the records of Parliament in 1751 under C. 20-23 Anno vicejimo quarto Georgii II, beginning on page 329 we find:

CAP XXIII

An Act for Regulating the Commencement of the Year; and for Correcting the Calendar now in Use.

Whereas the legal Supputation of the Year of our Lord in that Part of Great Britain called England, according to which the Year beginning on the twenty-fifth Day of March, hath been found by Experience to be attended with divers Inconveniences... And whereas... Julian Calendar, hath been discovered to be erroneous, by means whereof the Vernal or Spring Equinox, which at the Time of the General Council of Nice in the Year of our Lord three hundred and twenty-five, happened on or about
the twenty-first Day of March, now happens on the ninth or tenth Day of the same month . . . That in and throughout all his Majesty's Dominions . . . from and after the last day of December one thousand seven hundred and fifty-one . . . that the first Day of January next following the said last Day of December shall be reckoned, taken, deemed and accounted to be the first Day of the Year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and fifty-two . . . and that the natural Day next immediately following the said second Day of September (1752) shall be called, reckoned and accounted to be the fourteenth Day of September, omitting for that Time only the eleven intermediate nominal Days of the common Calendar . . . Be it further enacted . . . That the several Years of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred, one thousand nine hundred, two thousand one hundred . . . or any other hundredth Years of our Lord, which shall happen in Time to come, except only every four hundredth Year of our Lord . . . whereof the Year two thousand shall be the first, shall not be . . . Biflexile or Leap Years, but shall be taken to be common Years, conforming of three hundred and sixty-five Days, and no more . . .

The Act went on to prescribe that the payment of rents and interest would not be accelerated by reason of the Act; nor would contracts, annuities or agreements terminate earlier; the age of persons born before the 14th of September would be reckoned the same as it would have been without the passage of the Act. Tables and rules for the determination of Easter and other movable feasts were set forth as reckoned by the new calendar.

Now that we have learned from the Calendar Act that in 1750 in colonial America February followed November in the same year, it is easy to understand how that legal testament mentioned earlier could have been drawn in November 1750 though the decedent died in February 1750.

Quakers usually stated the months before the days, but William Penn dated his Charter of Liberties “. . . this fifth and twentieth day of the second month . . .” (1682), rather than writing–second month, twenty-fifth. They often used all numerals as 2-9-1800 for February ninth, 1800, but sometimes, though not often, they transposed the month and day, as 9-2-1800, meaning the same date. Prior to 1752 March was stated as the first month whether after the 25th or before, and you may find as consecutive days 1-24-1750 and 1-25-1751. Today, genealogists would write those two contiguous days as March 24, 1750/1 and March 25, 1751.
The Evolution of the Calendar

Where so-called “Old Style,” (O.S.) and “New Style,” (N.S.) dates are used we make our own confusion. The practice stems partly from continued usage of a necessary expression which existed at the time the calendar change was made in 1752. Contracts, annuities, ages of persons, etc. were then materially affected by dropping the eleven days. During the lifetime of the person or contract double dating was often required for legal or precise reckoning, but that time has long since passed.

When King Charles II made his grant of Pennsylvania to William Penn he used the date 4 March 1680/1. There was good reason for double years because in France it was 1681, while in England and America it was still 1680. Charles considered himself Emperor of France as well as King of England, as evidenced by numerous fleurs-de-lis which embellish the patent and as actually stated in the preamble. Today it could be written March 4, 1680/1 or March 4, 1681. The latter is just as proper and is preferred by historians who do not wish to confuse readers and also do not wish to create an impression that they didn’t know which year it really was. But to write the date as March 14, 1681 (N.S.) hardly contributes anything to the knowledge of history.

Penn’s first landing in Pennsylvania on October 28, 1682 is properly marked upon the spot. It was in what is now lower Chester, Delaware County, just above the twelve mile radius from New Castle, Delaware. Thoughts have been promulgated to designate the date as O.S. and append a new date, November 7, N.S. Let’s let the marker alone. Betsy Ross was born on January 1, 1752—the first day of the first year that the first of the year was in January. Let’s let the date for that great lady rest in peace and not move her up to January 11, N.S. [the eleven days were not dropped until September of that year]. If one would like to re-state dates way back in history to O.S. and N.S. terms he would embark on a sizeable and complicated task. What about the year 1700 which was a leap year in England but not in France?

In all fairness, it should be pointed out that there is reasonable purpose in stating two calendar dates in certain cases. For instance, if you are regarding a date in the year 5735 A.M. [Anno Mundi—Jewish Calendar], you may wish to state that that year was equivalent to the period between September 17, 1974 and September 5, 1975 on our present calendar. But to interpolate only eleven days or less for O.S. and N.S. hardly serves a practical purpose. For genealogical clarity from March 25th back to January 1st. Let’s say your records show certain ancestors made their “second appearance” [final appearance
Before the Board of Overseers of a Quaker Meeting for permission to marry] on April 10, 1730. But the records also show they did actually marry on January 10, 1730. In order to clear up any suspicion that they married three months prior to officially obtaining their permission a genealogist would show the marriage date as January 10, 1730/1. He could also write the dates according the Quaker method as: 2nd mo. 10, 1730 and 11th mo. 10, 1730.

There is a simple and practical way out of all these dilemmas caused by calendar changes. That rule is: Don’t try to modernize dates at all! Competent historians have seen no purpose in modernizing dates. Genealogists have not either, except for clarity in the uncommon cases noted above.

A Formula to Determine a Date of Birth from a Tombstone Inscription

Let us say you have found the tombstone of an ancestor, and on that stone you find the date of his death and his age at death. You want to determine the date of his birth. He died 16 April 1904.

He was age 61 (years) 1 (month) 10 (days)
1843 (year) 3 (months) 6 (days) = 6 March 1843

But, too often it is more complicated than that. He died 16 April 1904.

His age was 83 (years) 8 (months) 21 (days)
What you do is borrow 30 days from April for a total of 46 days—and borrow 12 months from 1904 for a total of 15 months, having already borrowed a month. So you get:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{age} & \quad 83 \text{ (years)} \quad 8 \text{ (months)} \quad 21 \text{ (days)} \\
1904 \text{ (year)} & \quad 4 \text{ (months)} \quad 16 \text{ (days)} \\
& \quad +12 \text{ (months)} \quad +30 \text{ (days)} \\
1903 \text{ (year)} & \quad -15 \text{ (months)} \quad -46 \text{ (days)} \\
1820 \text{ (year)} & \quad 7 \text{ (months)} \quad 25 \text{ (days)} \text{—or born,} \\
& \quad 25 \text{ July 1820.}
\end{align*}
\]

To check this, say he was born 25 July 1820, and lived to the age of 83 years, 8 months and 21 days. Put everything back that you have borrowed.

\[
\begin{align*}
1820 \text{ (year)} & \quad 7 \text{ (months)} \quad 25 \text{ (days)} \\
83 \text{ (years)} & \quad 8 \text{ (months)} \quad 21 \text{ (days)} \\
1903 \text{ (year)} & \quad 15 \text{ (months)} \quad 46 \text{ (days)} \\
+12 \text{ (months)} & \quad +1 \text{ (month)} \quad -30 \text{ (days)} \\
1904 \text{ (year)} & \quad 16 \text{ (months)} \quad 16 \text{ (days)} \\
& \quad 12 \text{ (months)} \\
& \quad 4 \text{ (months)} \\
\text{Dorothee Hughes Carouso}
\end{align*}
\]
Pennsylvania Featured County - Blair County

Pennsylvania became a state December 12, 1787. There are 67 counties and 2561 municipalities. Blair County was established on February 26, 1846 from parts of Huntingdon and Bedford Counties. The county seat is Hollidaysburg.

Prominent People: Bob Sheetz, Richard T. James, Stan Jones, Janet Blair, Steve Mason, William Nesbit, Pat Malone, Wade Schalles, Charlie Crist, Doug West & Susan Candiotti

Microfilm copies of county records along with the tools to help research county records are available at the Pennsylvania State Archives - PHMC > Archives > Research Online > Research Guides > County and Municipal Records (under Genealogy)

Finding Family and Historical Records in Blair County

I. Register of Wills: http://www.blairco.org/Dept/RR/Pages/default.aspx

II. Blair County Vital Records: http://vitalrec.com/pacounties2.html


IV. Blair County Historical Society: http://www.blairhistory.org/

V. Blair County Genealogical Society: http://bcgslibrary.org/

VI. History of the City of Altoona and Blair County: including sketches of the shops of the Pennsylvania Railroad Co. by James H. Ewing and Harry Slep (free eBook): https://archive.org/details/historyofcityofa00ewin_0/page/n8

VII. Meet the Blair Family by M.A. Miller (free eBook): https://archive.org/details/meetblairfamilyb00mill

VIII. A History of Blair County, Pennsylvania. From its earliest settlement, and more particularly from its organization, in 1846 to June 1896... by Charles B. Clark (free eBook): https://archive.org/details/historyofblairco00clar/page/n1

IV. Chronology of Pennsylvania Counties: http://buckscountyhistory.com/chronological.htm

X. Pennsylvania Resource Guides: https://genpa.org/public-%20collections/pennsylvania-%20resources/
The newest GSP Special Interest Group, PrePro, has now had two monthly meetings. Offered for those working toward becoming a professional genealogist, members are reading and discussing relevant assignments and plan, over time, to cover topics like research techniques, research reports, contracts, fee setting and collecting, and building referral sources. Discussions have been lively and productive.

Recap from our last meeting

We discussed starting out our genealogy careers as record pullers, either for clients or for other professional genealogists to lighten their work load.

The possibility of our group helping with GSP research requests was discussed.

We also discussed tools to help decipher old handwriting. Kip Sperry’s book, Reading Early American Handwriting was brought up as a good resource. Another great option is on BYU’s website: https://script.byu.edu/Pages/home.aspx
DNA CORNER

The monthly DNA Special Interest Group has been meeting since last May. Those attending discuss DNA testing, use of DNA results, concerns about privacy, use of new tools, raw data transfer to other testing sites, pros and cons of testing sites, and the challenge of using DNA Results in family research.

One of Many Helpful Hints Shared at Last DNA Group

Private Ancestor trick - if you have any Ancestry ThruLines through a "Private Ancestor" (someone who is only listed in a private tree) you can still see that ancestor’s name. Click on the Private Potential Ancestor box > Click again on the Private Ancestor under the Relationships tab, not List > You will be taken to a page to request tree access from the tree owner, however on this screen you can see the Private Ancestor's name.

To attend Special Interest Groups, please check website for dates/times of meetings and how to indicate your intent to come. The groups are free to GSP Members; non-members there is a $5.00 fee.

Q&A

Do you have questions about Pennsylvania genealogy? We have answers! For example, we can answer questions such as “Where/How can I find marriage license records?” or “When did Pennsylvania start recording birth certificates?” We’ll feature the question and answer in the newsletter. Submit your questions (not family specific research) to: editor@genpa.org

Share your Research or Family History Story

Briefly share amusing, touching, unusual, interesting or tragic stories you have unearthed in your family research - Submit your story in plain text to editor@genpa.org
GSP has a number of volunteer opportunities at home, in the office or on location. E-mail at gsp.deborah@gmail.com or editor@genpa.org or call the office 267-686-2296

Newsletter: Joseph Roby, Angie Indik-Copy Editors, Nancy Janyszeski, Carol M. Sheaffer

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GSP does not offer phone consultations. We require that all research requests be in writing. Request Form – PDF Document
Check the Research page on our website for additional information. https://genpa.org/research/
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