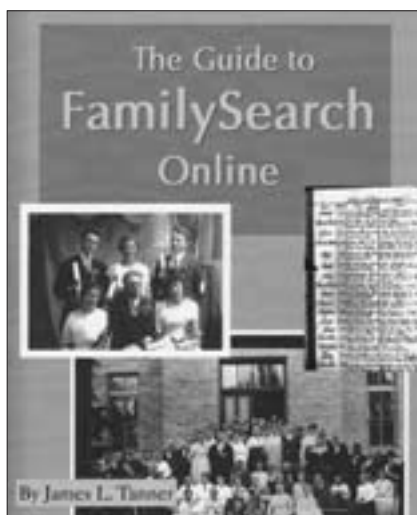


Review: The Guide to FamilySearch Online

IN RECENT YEARS, FamilySearch has greatly expanded the material it makes available to all genealogical researchers online. If you haven't checked out FamilySearch and its offerings in the last couple of years, you have overlooked a wonderful and still growing resource. In fact, our local genealogy society did a hands-on "live" program last month which just scratched the surface of what is now accessible to researchers via its online presence. In preparation for that talk, I created a handout showing various screen captures of the pages we would be visiting while using arrows to indicate key features to provide us guidance as, in real-time, we visited select elements of the online presence of FamilySearch. Too bad I hadn't had my copy of the new 369-page *The Guide to FamilySearch Online* by James L. Tanner in hand since that's what he does! I could have used his book as the basis for my talk.

If you are not familiar with FamilySearch, do not assume that the online FamilySearch website is only for members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Though there are some features specific to the needs of church members, most of what is available is for the general public to freely use. New data collections from around the world are constantly added. Briefly, the book contains:

1. Preface
2. Section One: FamilySearch.org (see next paragraph)
3. Section Two: Family Search Indexing – collaborative effort where anyone can help "index" new data collections as they become available
4. Section Three: New.FamilySearch.org – extremely large unified family tree website [not currently available to the public]



Section One is the real meat and potatoes area for your genealogical research. Select key elements covered are:

- searching and browsing records (also creating the free account needed to access some of the records found through searching),
- manipulating any found digital images (through the book I learned that one can invert the image which sometimes helps in making text more legible)
- taking advantage of "Learn more" links,
- accessing the catalog (including links to those volumes that are digitized, some on the BYU website as I discovered last week),
- courses & articles (via the Wiki) and much, much more.

Whether you are new to the FamilySearch website or are somewhat experienced with it, this book has something for everyone. Though I have mostly kept abreast of the evolution of the FamilySearch website features, if you are like me, you find it impossible to completely keep up with our fast evolving genealogical world. And, even when I am

somewhat up-to-date on what's happening, I just kind of spot "dive in" and stumble around and as new features are added to sort of check them out superficially. This often means that I learn to use a website, such as FamilySearch, the hard, haphazard and inefficient way. This book makes sure that you don't repeat my experience.

By taking advantage of the "big picture" perspective of this book when combined with its methodical approach to using the FamilySearch website features, you will be brought up-to-speed quickly. As a result, I anticipate that you will find it a joy to delve into this website and will navigate it with ease and hopefully find genealogical gems for your ancestral tree.

This book is available from FamilyRootsPublishing, www.familyrootspublishing.com/store/product_view.php?id=1593. In addition to the option to purchase the book, this page also includes an annotated table of contents which provides valuable in-depth insight into the various topics covered by the book.

Author Note: As always with technology, things change! Since the publication of this book, FamilySearch has tweaked their main search page and it now has a different look. Though, the elements discussed by Mr. Tanner still function as described.

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