November 2013 Features Update

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Global

There are no significant changes in functionality, although some bugs are fixed.

The Internet Service Provider (ISP) hosting the site suffered a disk crash on Thursday, 14th November 2013. Fortunately I had implemented a journaling recovery system for the site. Unfortunately there were deficiencies in my design which required significant manual intervention to get the recovery to work. In other words I had to use a text editor to modify the 16,898 line 60MB log file. It took until the evening of Tuesday, 19th November to restore the database to its state immediately prior to the crash. I have learned a lot in the process and the next time this happens the recovery will be much faster.

The PHP class `LegacyDate` is enhanced to support better debugging.

Most pages now accept an additional parameter '`&debug=y`' which enables debugging output. The intention is that all pages will support this parameter.

Family Tree Enhancements

The main page, "`legacyIndivid.php`" is changed to defer loading the Google® Maps API code until after the page is displayed. This speeds up the actual display, since some times the Google® server is busy, and still gives plenty of time for the functionality to be loaded before the user actually asks for a map to be displayed. This is similar to the previous global change to defer loading the Facebook® "Like" button until after the page was displayed.

Census Database Enhancements

Census Page Edit Forms

There is some additional dynamic functionality in the forms for editing a census page. This functionality is most noticeable on the 1921 census.

The fields for year of immigration and year of naturalization are expanded in the 20th century censuses to permit entering 6 characters instead of just 4. This permits entering a year value contained in editorial square brackets to indicate that the value was not actually present in the original image. The validation of the year of naturalization field no longer flags the values "na" or "nat" as errors. These values are used to report that the individual is naturalized but the year is not reported. This also means that if the transcriber tries to enter a notation of "[Blank]" into either of these columns, to indicate that the value should have been supplied by the enumerator, because the individual was not born in the British Empire, but was not, it will be recorded in the database as "[Blank", instead of just "[Bla".

On the 1921 census form if you enter a number of months attending school the occupation column is set to "Student". Note that prior to 1921 an occupation of "Student" was not accepted by the central administration, and was crossed out by the processing clerk.

On the 1921 census form if you enter a value in the Address column the Owner/Tenant column is set to the default of 'O', for owner, and the residence information is initialized to default values. If you clear a previously non-empty address value then the residence information columns are also cleared. Note that the various census enumerators were inconsistent in the way they used the two address columns on the form, because the instructions to the enumerators were unclear. This application requires that the most specific address information be entered in the second column, which should be non-blank only for the head of household.

On the 1921 census form if you clear the value of the OwnerTenant column the following residence information fields are now cleared for the transcriber.

On the 1891 census form when first editing a new page the default values for Father's Birthplace and Mother's birthplace are taken from the last non-blank line of the preceding page. This deals with the situation where the enumerator continues a family from a previous line but uses ditto-marks for these columns.

The "Match Citations" function now matches both birth and individual event citations.

Vital Statistics Enhancements

The scripts which display the details or permit updating an individual birth, marriage, or death registration are enhanced to consistently use the database table `Counties` to obtain information about the county identified in the registration. This access is now mediated through a class `County` which provides object-oriented access to the table of county information. These scripts are also enhanced to support being invoked for vital statistics entries recorded for administrative domains other than Ontario.

Bug Fixes

- There was a bug in the process for merging two individuals which meant that the second, now redundant, individual was not deleted from the database. Fixing this bug required adding new functionality to the PHP class `LegacyIndiv`. At the same time, for architectural consistency, the internal function `mergeFamilies` in the script `FamilyTree/mergeUpdIndivid.php` was moved into the PHP class `LegacyFamily` as the new method `LegacyFamily::merge`.

- If the database server was down then some scripts behaved in a less than fully informative manner. For example they would spew out error messages that were meaningless to end users, and would fail to actually display the requested web page. This is generally cleaned up so that a clear error message is displayed in the body of the web page in place of the normal response. For example:

  Genealogy: **Canada**: **Ontario**: **New Birth Query**:

  ## Ontario: Birth Registration Query

  Unable to connect to database using: username='root', host='localhost', database='jcobban_genealogy: MDB2 Error: connect failed.
  RecOwners::getEmailList: no database connection

  Contact Author
  Genealogy: **Canada**: **Ontario**: **New Birth Query**:

- There was a bug that set an incorrect value for the date added and date updated fields in the individual and family records. This was because the original designers of the tables chose to use a non-standard format for these date fields, and I failed to notice that. The logic has been corrected to set the dates correctly, and the dates have been corrected. The table definitions are changed to use the standard SQL data types for these fields.

- The page `Census1921Details.php`, used to display details of a single individual in the 1921 census did not set the link for the next individual arrow correctly. It was set to the first line of the next page, not the next line on the same page.

- The page `OcfaQuery.html`, used to initiate a search for matching individuals in the Ontario Cemetery Finding Aid database, did not position the "loading..." pop-up next to the selection list for counties.