# BLOG YOUR FAMILY HISTORY

Finding Blogs
Reading and Responding to Blogs
Set Up Your Own Blog

What is a family history blog?

- BLOG is short for weB LOG
- Family history blogs may be used to:
    - Create an online journal
    - Share news, information and photos with family and friends
    - Share your opinions or expertise
    - Connect with lost cousins (collateral lines)
    - Have a central place for genealogy links & resources

How Blogs differ from websites
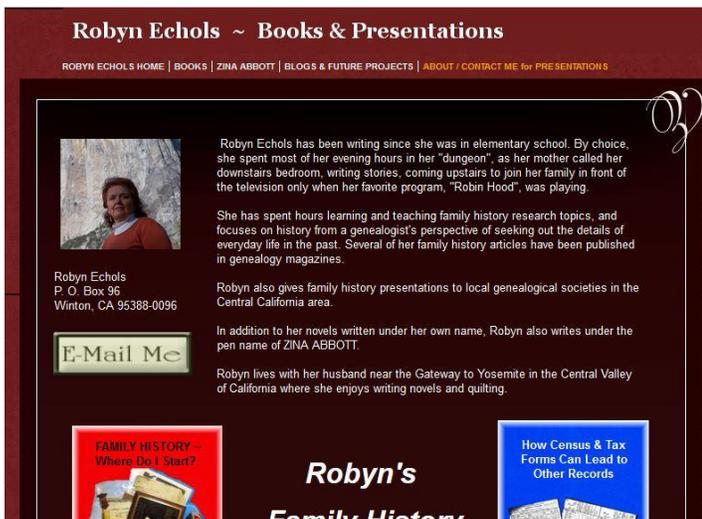
- Website pages remain the same unless the webmaster (owner) makes style changes to the pages.
- Navigate web pages site by using tabs

- Blogs may also have tabs, but the pages change and move down as more current entries are added.
- Readers may leave comments on a post allowing for greater interaction.
- Blogs: Scroll down or use the blog archive to find earlier posts
- Both websites and blogs may or may not have ads. Websites may have sidebars, but blogs almost always have sidebars.

With a Gmail account, you can find and follow other blogs several ways:

- Subscribe to follow by email.

- Save your favorite blogs to your READING LIST on your Blogger dashboard

Blogger

Robyn Echols's blogs

New Blog

Hobusch-England Family History
62 pageviews · 4 posts, last published on Nov 1, 2015
View blog

Robyn's Books
436 pageviews · 2 posts, last published on Oct 29, 2015
View blog

Quilt Gateway
1081 pageviews · 23 posts, last published on Sep 22, 2015
View blog

Reading list | All blogs

Add

All blogs
Blogger Buzz

Fire Star Press
Genealogy's Star
medieval research with ...

The Genealogical State of the States

James Tanner at Genealogy's Star - 13 hours ago

There is no real second place in the list of the genealogically valuable U.S. state websites. The Washington State Digital Archives wins hands down, no contest. Unfortunately, although there are some other notable collections, most of the states have a miserable level of digital offerings. Currently, the State of Washington has preserved 165,412,383 records and made 64,505,776 records available as of November, 2015. They have also added 2,638,172 records in the past month. At the other end of the spectrum, most of the states make no attempt to systematically digitize their records a... more »

Genealogy Links

- Stephen P. Morse One-Step Web Pages
- FamilySearch
- Cyndi's List
- Find-a-Grave

My Blog List

The British GENES blog
UK Press Online discount code - The *UK Press Online* website

(www.ukpressonline.co.uk), which offers digitised access to many well known historic UK based tabloid newspapers, as well as...
8 hours ago

Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter
(+) Does It Still Make Sense to Buy Genealogy CDs? - The following is a Plus Edition article written by and copyright by Dick Eastman. Several articles have appeared online in the past few years describing t...
22 hours ago

The Ancestry Insider
Darned Federal Birth Certificates - *We depend upon records to reveal the "truth" about the past.

- When you find a blog you like, review the other blogs that may be listed on that site. If you like it, save it to your blog's sidebar of favorite links.

How to Create a blog: Major Blogging Platforms/Providers

- Blogger – https://www.blogger.com   (Look for Blogger Getting Started Guide)
- WordPress.com - https://wordpress.com   (Look for WordPress Getting Started Guide)
- WordPress.org – https://wordpress.org
- Weebly – http://www.weebly.com   (Look for Beginner's Guide to Weebly)
- Tumblr – https://www.tumbler.com   (More like Instagram)

How do you choose which is best for you? Blogging platform reviews:

- Choosing a Blogging Platform: Comparison + Quick Reference – http://www.bloggingbasics101.com/choosing-a-blogging-platform-quick-reference
- Top Ten Reviews – http://blog-service-review.toptenreviews.com/

How-To's & Recommendations:

- How to start a blog
    - http://www.genealbloggers.com/blog-resources/
    - http://www/wikihow.com/Start-a-Blog/
- Tips
    - Have several way for people to follow your blog
        - By email
        - By various readers (RSS) – One RSS option: Feedly
    - Share your blogs and posts on other social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Google+, Pinterest, YouTube, Instagram, etc.
        - Share This – http://www.sharethis.com/
        - Shareaholic – https://shareaholic.com/
    - Join Geneabloggers – Online Genealogy Blogging Community – http://www.geneabloggers.com/suggest-blog/

Setting up a new blog with Blogger (Blogspot)

You must have a gmail (Google) account to use Blogger

Sign in with your gmail.com at *http://www.blogger.com/*

Or, find another Blogspot blog and click on **CREATE BLOG:**

Confirm Your Profile

Blogger

Welcome to Blogger   Language: English ▼

Confirm Your Profile

The profile that readers will see when they view your posts is shown below. Using a Google+ Profile gives you an identity on Google properties and connects you with your readers, allowing them to share and recommend your content on the web and on Google+. If you want to use another identity such as a pseudonym, you may choose a limited Blogger Profile instead. More information about profiles on Blogger.

You will be seen as...

Blogger profile

Display Name   Robyn Echols

Share your posts with the world of Google+. Upgrade to a Google+ profile

Email Notification

Feature
announcements   ☑   Send me feature announcements, advice, and other information to
                                  help me get the most out of my blog. ❓

Continue to Blogger

Create a **title** and **URL (web address)** for your blog**:**

Blogs List › Create a new blog   ✕

Title   Hobusch & Echols Family History

Address   hobuschecholsfamilyhistory.blogspot.com   ✓

                                    This blog address is available.

Template

Simple   Dynamic Views   Picture Window

Awesome Inc.   Watermark   Ethereal

              You can browse many more templates and customize your blog later.

                                    Create blog!   Cancel

To reach your Blogger dashboard, click on DESIGN:

Your **Blogger dashboard** will list all your blogs:

When you first open the blog, you see the **OVERVIEW** screen. Note the **Pageviews** and **Updates:**

- If you set up your blog to moderate comments before posting them, you will find the comments information here
- You may see how many people have accessed your blog in the previous few days.

Set up your template

Click on TEMPLATE DESIGNER to make changes to layout:

Use BLOGGER TEMPLATE DESIGNER to individualize your blog:

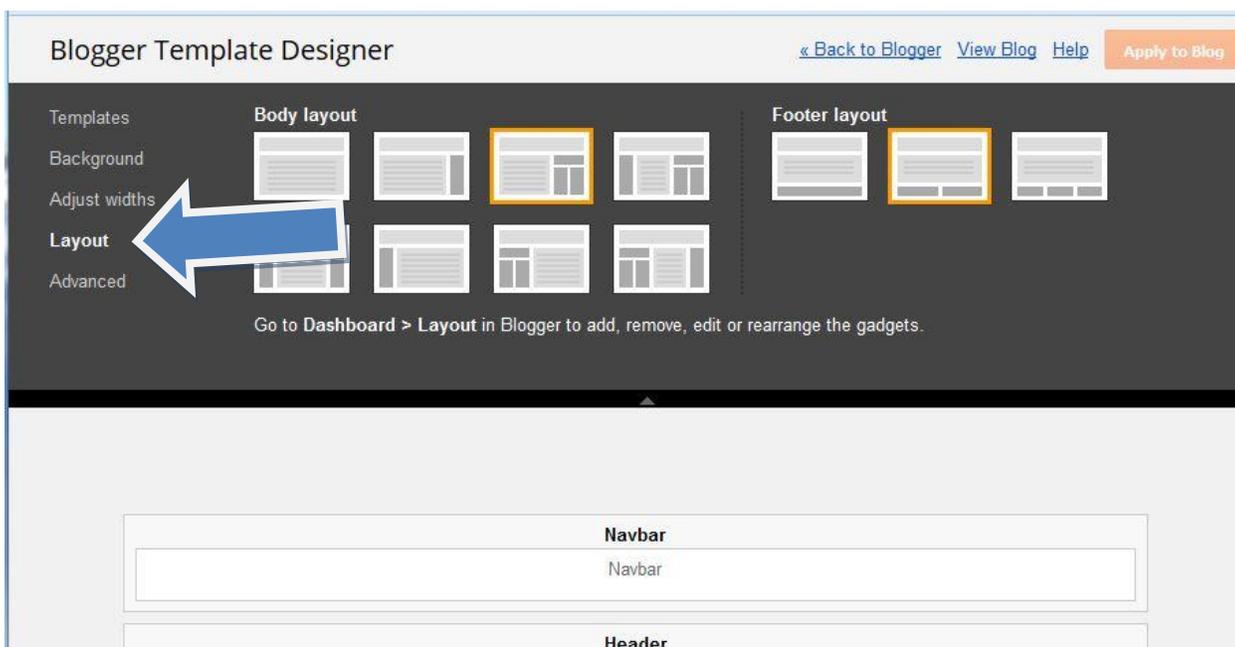**Add a title, a banner or both using the LAYOUT tools:**

Title and banner image:

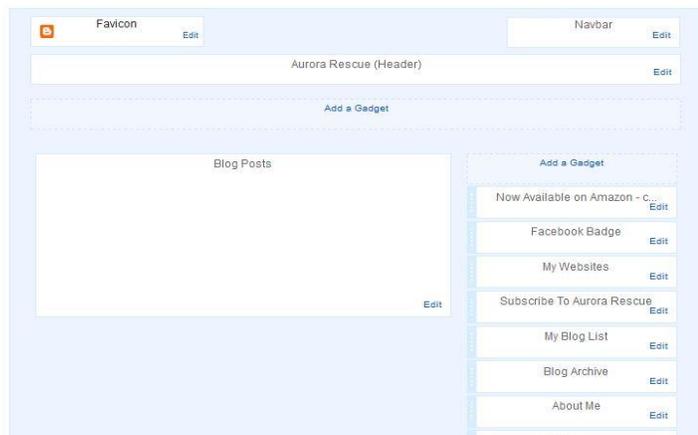Banner image with the title added with a photo editing program:

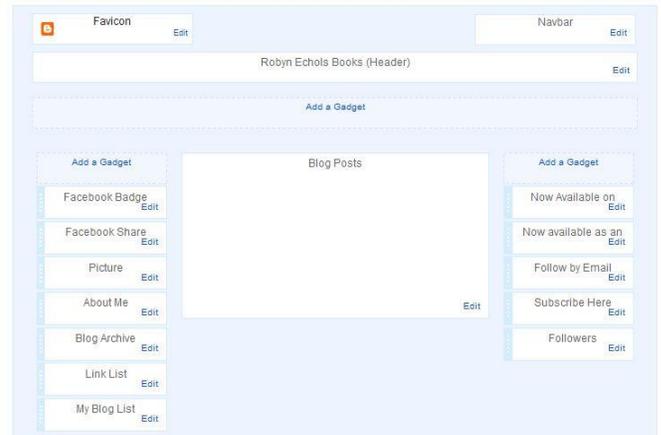**Under LAYOUT on BLOGGER TEMPLATE DESIGNER, choose your layout design:**

- There are several layout designs to choose from. Set up sidebars with useful information such as gadgets for searching the blog, translate, blog index (labels), blog lists of favorite sites, blog archive, etc.

Example of layout design with one sidebar on the right:

Example of layout design with two sidebars on the right:

Example of layout design with two sidebars, one on each side of the blog post window:

Use LAYOUT to add **Gadgets** to your blog page. Gadgets are like apps, or tools.:

Add GADGETS, including top tabs:

Click on the **Add a Gadget** link to bring up the **ADD A GADGET** window:
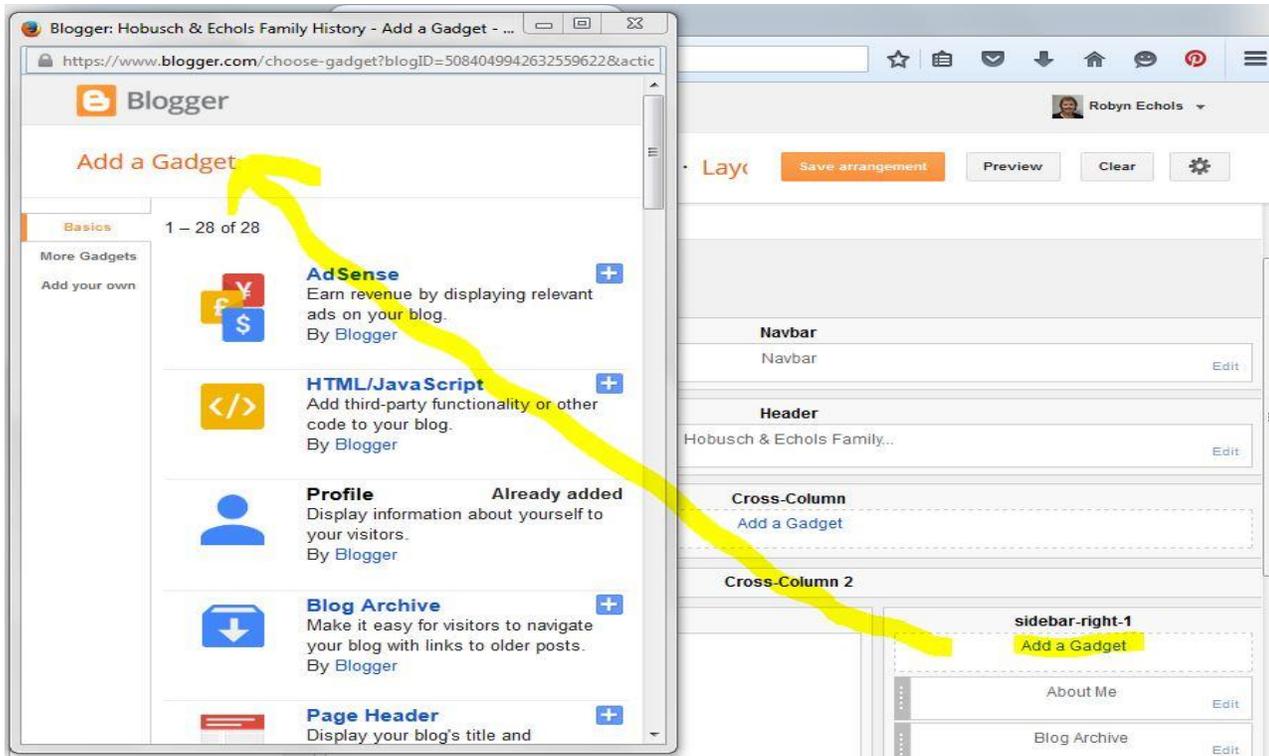
Some Gadgets. The ones circled in yellow may be helpful to genealogists:

Blog's stats
Display the number of pageviews to your blog.
By Blogger

Video Bar
Display YouTube clips for your readers to watch without leaving the page.
By Blogger

Blog List
Show off what you read with a blogroll of your favorite blogs.
By Blogger

Follow by Email
Make it easy for visitors to subscribe to email delivery when you publish a post.
By Blogger

Feed
Add content from an RSS or Atom feed to your blog.
By Blogger

Slideshow
Add a slideshow of your favorite photos to your blog.

Logo
Show your Blogger pride by adding a logo to your page.
By Blogger

Poll
Survey your visitors by adding a poll to your blog.
By Blogger

Subscription Links
Let your readers easily subscribe to your blog with popular feed readers
By Blogger

+1 Button
Let visitors quickly recommend your brand and your content.
By Blogger

Translate
Let visitors translate your blog into different languages.
By Blogger

Newsreel
Display current headlines from Google News to your blog.
By Blogger

Newsreel
Display current headlines from Google News to your blog.
By Blogger

List
Add a list of your favorite books, movies, or anything you like.
By Blogger

Google+ Followers
Highlight your total Google+ audience (both its size and some friendly faces), and offer visitors the chance to follow you on Google+.
By Blogger

Google+ Badge
Tell your visitors that you're on Google+ and let them follow you with a single click.
By Blogger

Attribution   Already added
Display your blog's attribution data.
By Blogger

Example: Add **FOLLOW BY EMAIL**. Click on the Add a Gadget link. (1.), when the **Configure Follow by Email** box comes up (2.), complete the information and click on **Save,**
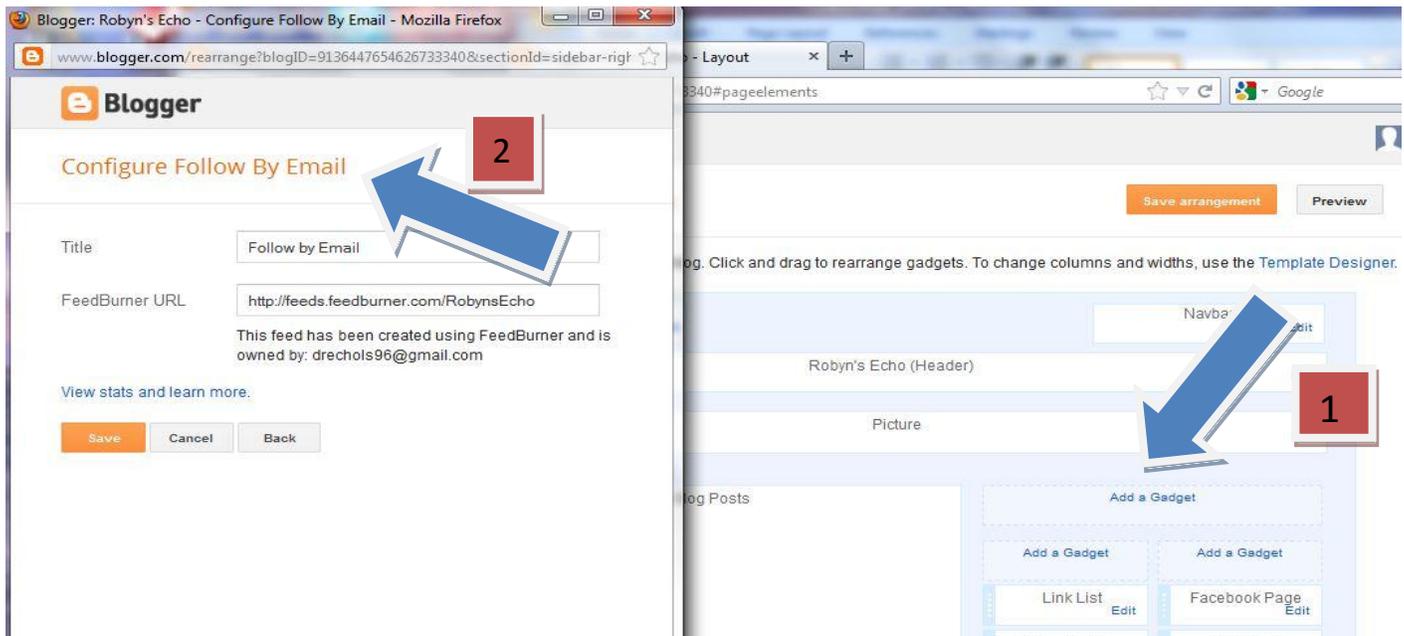
An excellent tool for genealogy blogs is a **Labels** gadget. **Labels = Index**. You might want to change the name of your labels title to index.

Labels
Show all the [ ] in your blog.
By Blogger

Pages
Display a list of stand-alone pages on your blog.
By Blogger

Link List
Display a collection of your favorite sites, blogs, or web pages for your visitors.
By Blogger

Text
Add a text message to your blog.
By Blogger

Popular Posts
Display a list of the most popular posts from your blog.
By Blogger

Search Box
Let visitors search your blog, blogroll, and everything you've linked to.
By Google Custom Search

Index (Labels)
- 1940 Census (5)
- 52 Ancestors in 52 Weeks (52)
- 52 Weeks of Abundant Genealogy (3)
- 9/11 (2)
- Advent Calendar of Christmas Memories (9)
- Amanuensis Monday (1)
- Ancestor Landing Page (2)
- AncestryDNA (1)
- Award (3)
- Blog Book (2)
- Blog Mention (1)
- Blogging (1)
- Blogiversary (3)
- Blurb (2)
- Book Review (2)
- Bread (1)
- BYU Conference on Family History & Genealogy (16)
- Cemeteries (1)
- Christmas (12)
- Civil War (10)
- Contest (4)
- Cookbook: The Best of

Robyn Echo

Save arrangement   Preview   Clear

ets. To change columns and widths, use the Template Designer.

Navbar   Edit

(der)   Edit

Edit

Add a Gadget

Follow by Email   Edit

Add a Gadget   Add a Gadget
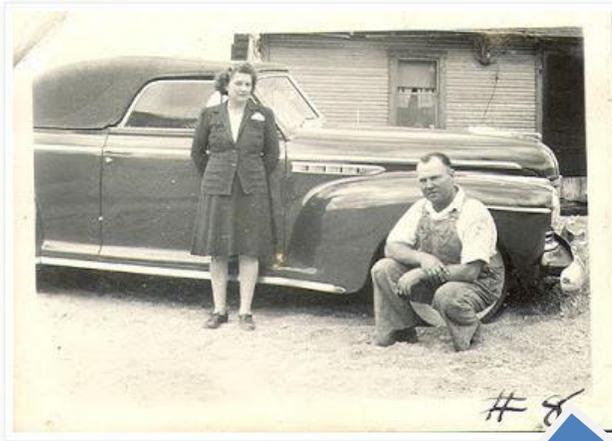
Link List   Facebook Page

- After saving the Gadget, it will appear on the layout page.
- Slide it up or down the column of gadgets to put it in the desired position for your blog.
- Click **Save arrangement,** then click preview to see if it really where you want it on your blog sidebar.

When you write a blog post, add labels. Labels are key words about the contents of the post. Example, the labels for this post were George Frederick Hobusch, Henrietta Virginia Hobusch, Photo: Jean & George, family history.
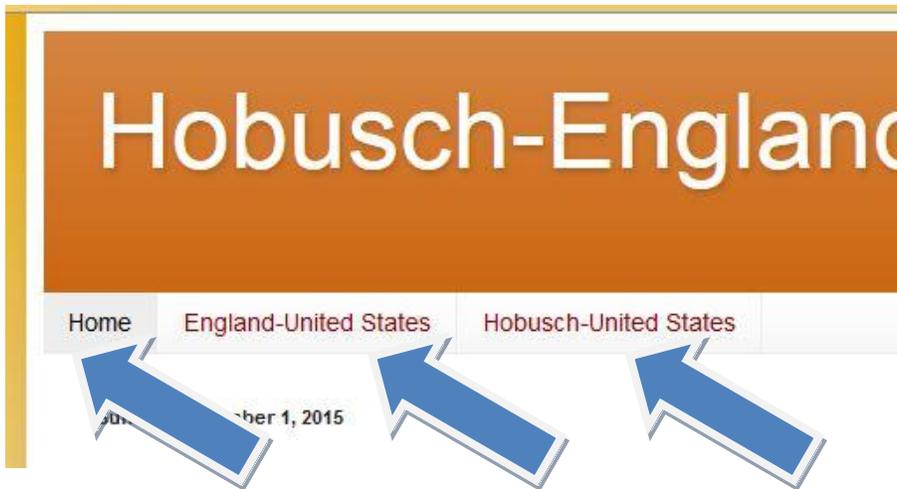

Add PAGES to your blog using the CONFIGURE PAGE LIST gadget:

- Pages are static. Where blog posts roll down with the most current post at the top, pages stay the same unless edited by the blog owner.

- Pages are good for pedigree charts, photo collections, contact information, locality information and research sources.

- You can also add links to websites and other blogs using the **CONFIGURE PAGE LIST**.
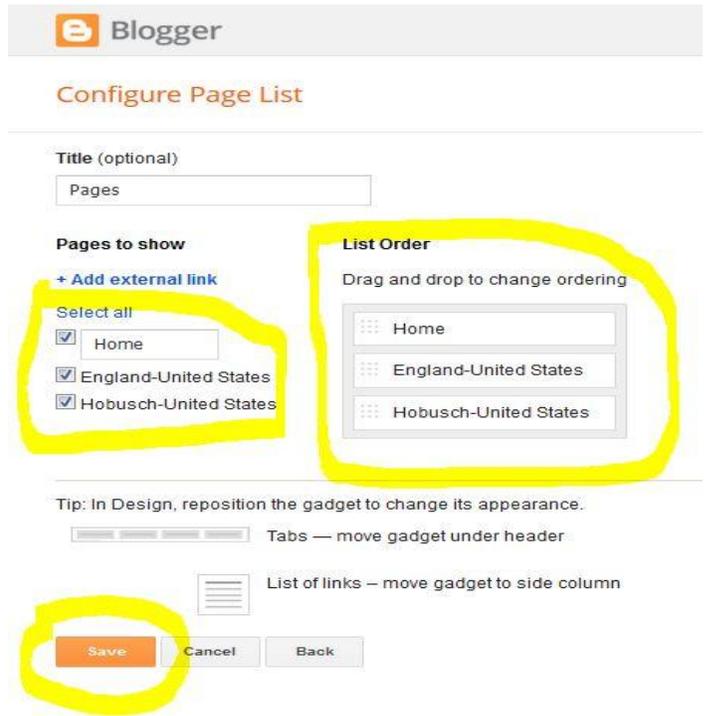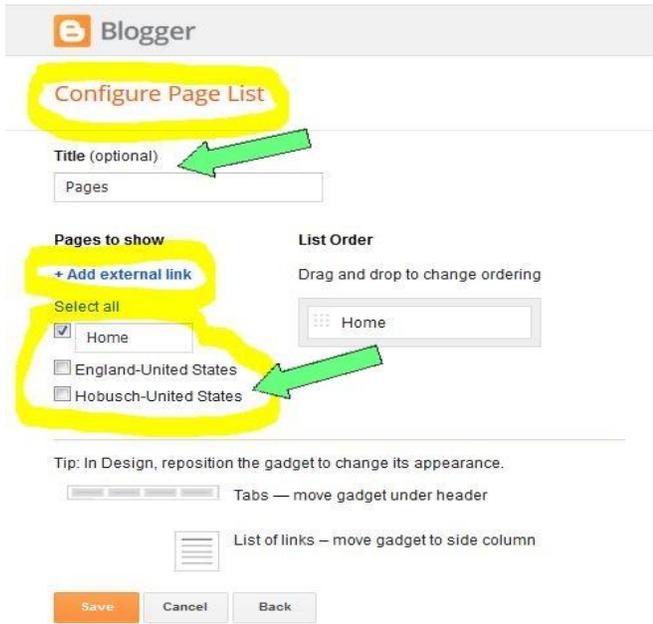
Page tabs on your blog under the banner.

Check your settings:

Add other blog authors to collaborate on the blog:

Choose how to handle comments. You may want to moderate comments before you release them to the public to avoid people trying to sell sunglasses, etc., or using your comments section to espouse religious or political commentary.

Mobile & email:

How to write a blog post:

- Make regular posts

To bring up a blank screen for a new post, in the Blogger dashboard, click on either the **orange box with pencil** next to the blog on which you wish to post, or

Click on the orange **New Post** when your blog is in the **posts** section of your blog I.D. board

On the blank post window, Add the title & start to write in the post window.

Except for short posts, add pictures for more interest:
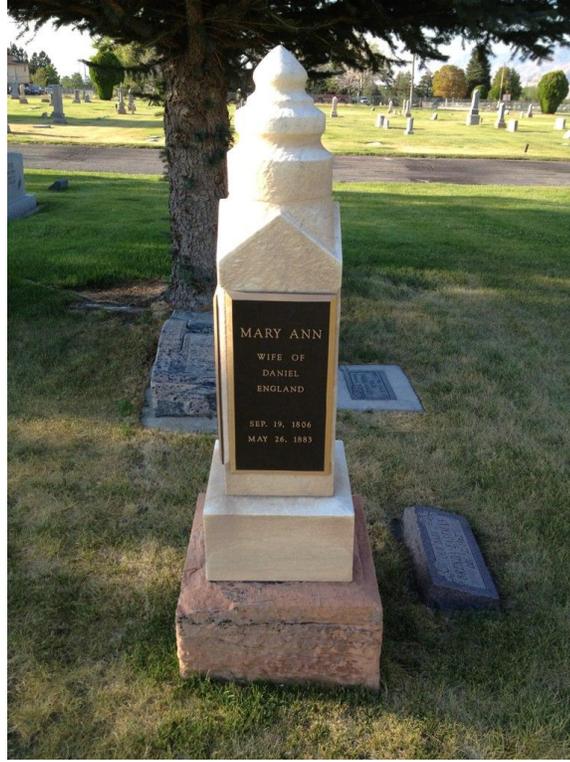
To add an image, click on **IMAGE** icon:

On **SELECT A FILE** screen, click on **CHOOSE FILES**. Select photo from your computer, highlight it and click on **ADD SELECTED**.

In the body of your post, select size, position and add a caption, if desired.

Add labels to make it easier to find your blog post. These labels will show up alphabetically in your labels (index) gadget:
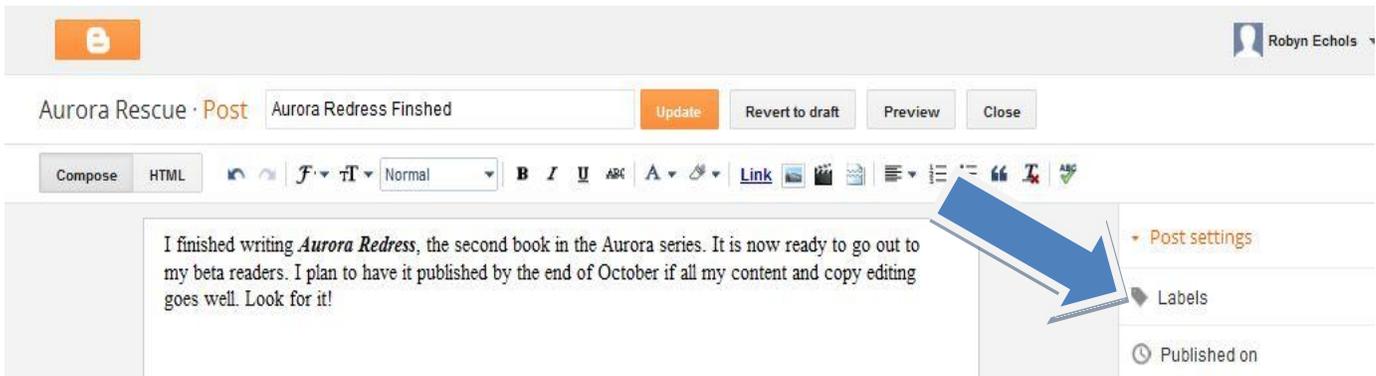
After adding labels, save your work and preview.
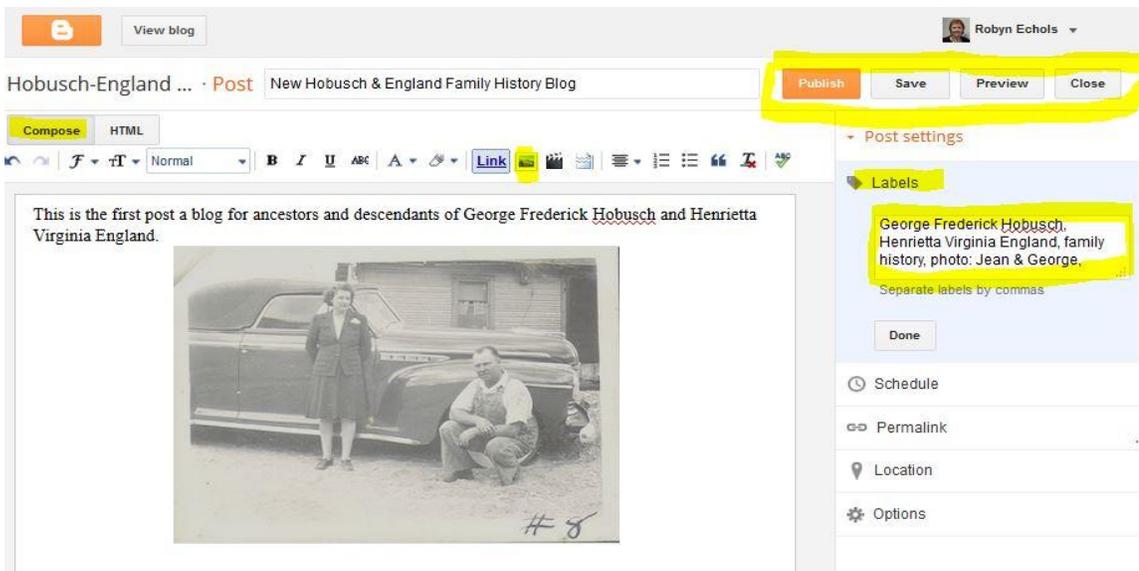
Preview your post before you publish it.

The published post:

The blog post is added to your list of Blogger posts. To view the finished blog post, click on VIEW. If you wish to edit your post, click on **EDIT**, or to view, click on **VIEW.**

<u>Rules, Rules, Rules…</u>

- Keep children safe on the internet. Do not use the names of living people, especially ANY MINORS in any of your posts. PERIOD! END OF DISCUSSION! If anything, use code such as M-3 or C-1.
- Protect the privacy of family members and friends. Use a nickname for a spouse (mine is "Buck"). Avoid using names, especially surnames, of living people.
- Use the 110 year rule for naming ancestors on family history posts. Some companies still ask you to give your mother's maiden name, so do not post your deceased mom's name where a con artist can find it.
- Make it easy for people to connect to your blog: subscribe by email, RSS Reader.
- Avoid audio and video that automatically plays. Too many people hate it. Add a link for your visitors to see and hear your audio/video.
- Respond to blog post comments. Delete those that are spam or unsuitable (no flaming). Better yet, set it up so you review comments before they become active.
- Stay positive. No "flaming." Unless you delete an entire post, an unflattering or insulting "rant" stays in the blog archives for years.
- Check for spelling and grammar, even after you publish. Go back and edit if you find errors.
- Post often.
- Let family and friends know about your blog.

Now create your blog and Share your Family History
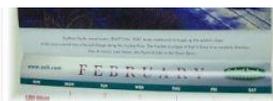
My family seems to have this fascination with trains. It may be because my grandfather was an engineer on a train. My uncle was killed in June of 1955 while working as an electrician on a train.

I enjoyed this photo of a Santa Fe engine I took while Buck was working for Wesson Construction to repaint the Bradley Overhead in Merced. The train company is now the Burlington-Northern Santa Fe, and the color scheme of their engines is entirely different.

My brother loved model railroading, and belonged to the local club before his death in 1998. He was disabled, so Buck built him a work bench, and

the club helped him get set up so he would work one-handed. His specialty was trees.

MONDAY, JANUARY 23, 2012

Engineer Battalion (Const) in Vietnam War

This weekend I did a lot of Vietnam War research, particularly regarding the engineer battalions that were sent over there and the projects they worked on. I have my husband's stories for my novel, *Family Secrets*, but I wanted to flesh them out a little by getting the "bigger picture".

Served in U.S. Army Co. D 84th Engineer Battalion (Construction) 1967-68

Actually, what prompted me is I ran across the coffee can in which my husband had stored his original DD-214, patches and ribbons from his army service. My husband is not a coffee-drinker. But, coffee cans are among his all-time favorite containers for storing items, especially in his shop, which is where I found this little jewel.

Unfortunately, you can see from the back of his DD-214 (which I used as the backdrop) and some of the ribbons, not all his war memorabilia stored well in the coffee can.

Genealogy Blogs:

Best Genealogy Blogs of 2015 - http://www.familytreemagazine.com/article/best-genealogy-blogs-2015

Top 40 Genealogy Blogs in 2013 - http://www.familytreemagazine.com/article/top-40-genealogy-blogs-2013

Cyndi's List Blogs for Genealogy - http://www.cyndislist.com/blogs/

10 Genealogy Blogs Worth Reading - http://genealogy.about.com/od/blogs/tp/genealogy.htm

Top 50 Genealogy Blogs - http://www.blogmetrics.org/genealogy

Genealogy Blog Finder - http://blogfinder.genealogue.com/

Jana's Genealogy and Family History Blog - http://janasgenealogyandfamilyhistory.blogspot.com/

Ancestral Discoveries (Janice Sellers) - http://ancestraldiscoveries.blogspot.com/

Robyn Echols website with family history PowerPoint presentations I give: www.robynechols.com/contact.html

This pdf of **BLOG YOUR FAMILY HISTORY** will be available on this website until at least February 1, 2016,