# Recording people

DATA FOR HISTORY, LEIPZIG, APRIL 2019

# Contexts in which we record people

- Genealogy (BMD; census returns; relationships)
- Correspondence
- Bibliographic records
- Historical texts (journals; newspapers; etc.)
- Museum and archive catalogue records
- ... and more, I'm sure

# Disambiguating people

- Need for (and absence of) unique persistent identifiers
- 'bibliographic authority file' approach; bundle metadata into the identifier
- Ideal solution would have unique identifiers plus sufficient machineprocessible metadata to disambiguate
- What data do we need to disambiguate people:
  - ► Name
  - Date and place of birth and death
  - ▶ … Ś

#### One authority to rule them all?

Current authorities tend to focus on subsets, e.g.:

- VIAF: bibliographic people (authors; subjects)
- ▶ ULAN: artists etc.
- WikiData: 'notability'
- WikiTree accepts everyone, but API design pretty closed at present
- Linked Pasts idea of distributed resources following common standards (and supported by shared software)

### Standards for biographical data

- GEDCOM (ancient, but the only format actually supported for genealogy)
- SNAP-DRGN (Pelagios)
- SARI (George to comment)
- CIDOC CRM relevance?

#### Genealogical data

- Many search sites are secondary sources (FreeBMD, FreeReg, FreeCen)
- Most 'curated' results are
  - Behind paywalls
  - On single name study sites
  - On personal sites
- Lack of sources, or sources cited 'anecdotally' rather than via URLs (FreeREG working towards having persistent URLs)
- Co-reference between existing sources already an issue

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While most other genealogy sites charge you to find and read records, FreeCEN

is dedicated to keeping our searches free. A small donation towards our costs 9

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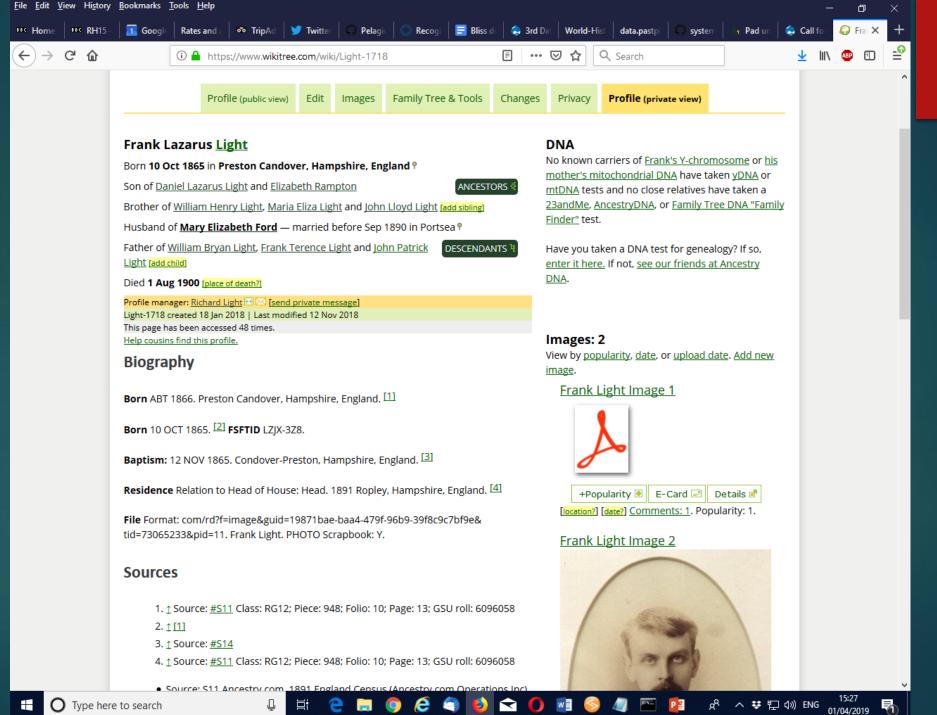
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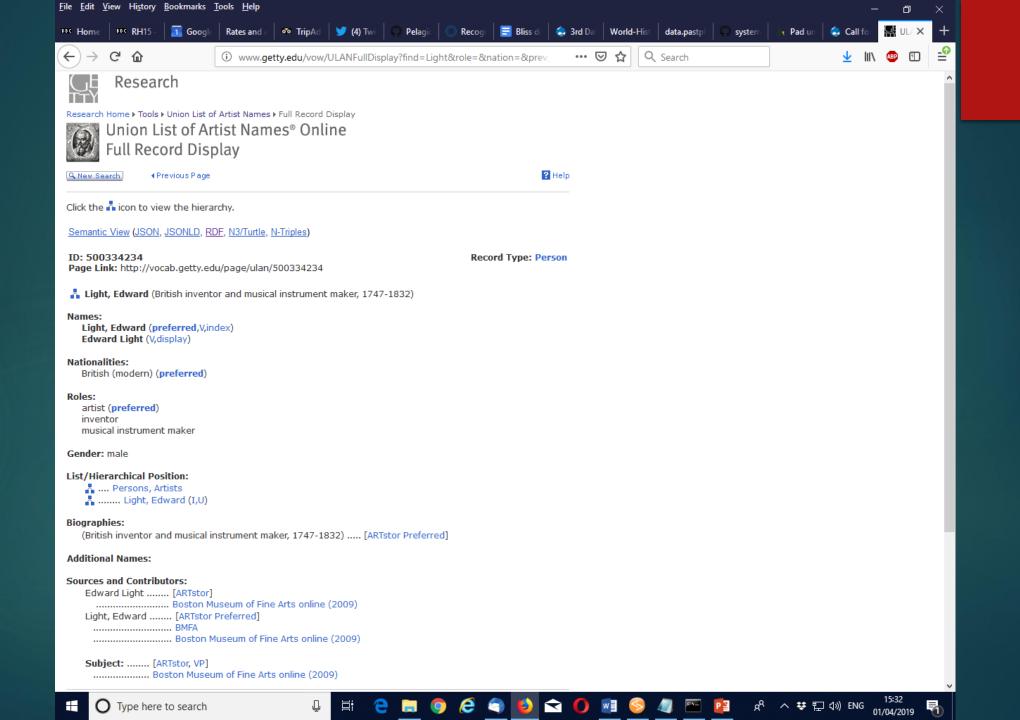
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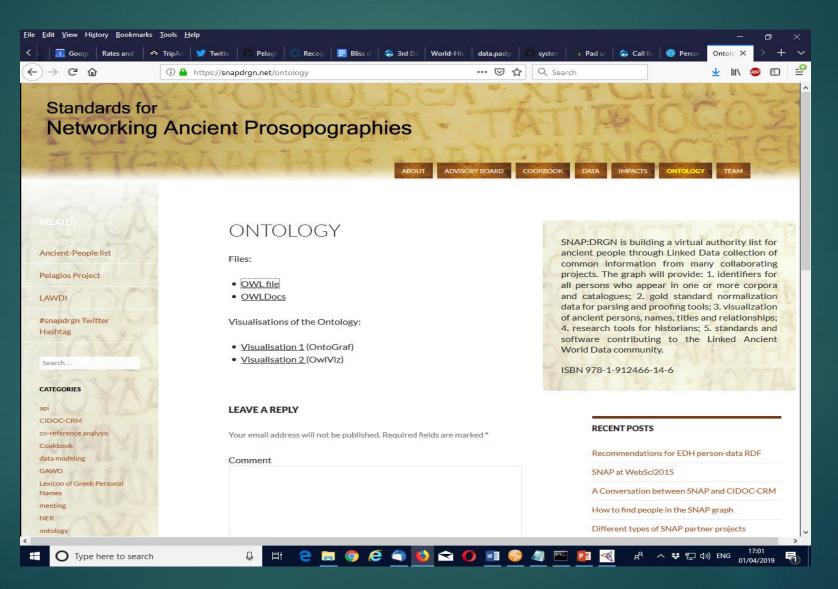
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