



MIDDLESEX GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

Volume I, Number 2

June 1984

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

Summer is upon us and all of us amateur genealogists are probably planning on how to incorporate our genealogical research into our vacation schedule. Often, we plan to visit a certain area or town to do work in the local libraries, town hall, land office, churches and cemeteries. However, once we reach the location, we are often at a loss on how to proceed or even where the information we seek can be found. We drive around the town for awhile, getting our bearings and trying to figure out where to go first.

Homework is an essential element to a genealogical visit. Before making your trip, some contact with the town should be made. Letters or calls to the local library, town offices and historical or genealogical society can ascertain where important information can be located and, most importantly, the hours these places are open. Nothing is more frustrating than arriving at a vital source to find it closed for the next few days!

A map of the area, on which you have already marked the locations of the places you wish to visit, will save time and gas. Cemeteries, especially, can be difficult to find - often hidden from the road or overgrown.

Sometimes, through prior correspondence, a person is found who is doing research on the town or your local family or has compiled a town history. A pre-arranged appointment with such a person could reveal a wealth of pertinent information and new leads on your line, so do ask about this in your letters.

Putting your schedule of visits in writing is a good idea. This way an important avenue of research will not be overlooked or forgotten and time will not be wasted. Above all, though, remember to be flexible. No matter how well-planned a visit is, unexpected problems can arise. However, the more complete your homework and correspondence has been, the better the chance your visit has of being productive.

Enjoy your summer research!!!

GENEALOGY

by Marcia Cassin

Now, the hobby that's for me
Is tracing back the family tree.
There's so much that's to be done,
It's quite a job for only one.

Mine will just be searched by me,
While some are done professionally.
I heard of one quite wealthy madam
Had hers traced way back to Adam.

These things, it seems, are seldom started
'Til all with knowledge have departed.
Had I begun ten years ago,
There's so much more that I might know.

Then, there's the fortune I have spent
On postage for those letters sent.
For every ten I wrote, what's more,
The answers only numbered four.

Some old papers, saved with care,
A bit of history seem to share.
There are faded photographs to view,
And even some old tin-types, too.

Those stern old men and ladies prim,
Most of them with jaws set grim.
In my youth I used to mock
As faces that would stop a clock.

But, now, I see so obviously
The results of clumsy dentistry.
One thing more that's plain to see...
Without them, there would be no me!

And so I search in books and crannies
For those dear old lost great-grannies,
And hope that soon my family tree
Will cease to be all mystery.

(Reprinted from the March 1980 issue of
the Maine Genealogical Society newsletter.)

HEREDITARY SOCIETIES PROGRAM

On March 26, after a brief annual meeting, the evenings program of the MGS was introduced by Mr. George Cushman. The topic was Hereditary Societies and Mr. Cushman began by describing the five types of lineage organizations: 1. Religious; 2. National; 3. Specialized in regards to origins or area; 4. Specialized because of a particular event or time; and 5. Organizations which trace back to Europe.

Religious societies admit only members who can trace their ancestry from a particular religious organization or community. An example of this type is the National Huguenot Society.

National societies are those formed to help new immigrants from a particular country become adjusted to life in the U.S. while maintaining ties with their "mother country". The Piedmont Association is a local example of this type.

Societies formed to honor a specialized origin or area are a third type. In these, members must be able to prove descent from a person involved in a particular occupation or location. The Society of the Descendants of Colonial Clergy and the Daughters of the Republic of Texas fall into this group.

Having an ancestor at a certain event or place at a particular time is a prerequisite for membership in the fourth type of society. Examples of this would be the Daughters of the American Revolution and the Mayflower Society.

Lastly, are those groups which trace back to someplace in Europe, such as the St. Andrew's Society, St. George's Society and St. David's Society.

A panel consisting of representatives from several Hereditary Societies was introduced next, each giving a short explanation of their organization and answering questions. Judge Philip Morehouse spoke first about the General Society of Mayflower Descendants. This organization, formed in 1894, has, presently, 20,000 members who can trace descent back to at least one of the 102 passengers on the first voyage of the "Mayflower" in 1620. The Society supports various genealogical programs, one of which is a project to research, prove and publish the first five generations of descendants of the Mayflower pilgrims.

Mrs. Cortland Ames represented the Connecticut Society of Colonial Dames. For this group, descent must be proved from an ancestor who lived in the U.S.

in pre-Revolutionary times. Among the society's projects are scholarships given in studies of American history, summer educational programs maintenance of three historic houses and muse in Wethersfield which show different Colonial lifestyles and slide programs and tours made available to Connecticut schools.

Mrs. George Boyd, Regent of the Darien chapter of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, discussed the programs of the DAR. These include historic preservation, the education of and the promotion of patriotism, presenting manuals to prospective American citizens and flags to organizations, advocating conservation, providing service for veteran patients and programs on national defense. The society owns and maintains buildings and a library in Washington, D.C. and schools in various parts of the country.

The final speaker was Anthony Improta, a member of the Piedmont Association. This local organization began in 1916 as a benifical aid society for newcomers to the area of Italian extraction. The members collected funds to help bring family and friends to this country. It was later reorganized and is now basically a social organization. Members must have at least one ancestor of Italian descent or be married to someone who has. The Piedmont's membership is very active in community activities and events.

The groups represented in this program were chosen because, while they do limit membership to a select group, their programs and emphasis promote more than just hereditary honor. They all provide services, educational and other, which contribute to their local communities and also on a national level.

DO YOU BELONG TO A HEREDITARY SOCIETY?

The Newsletter would be interested in publishing the names of members of the MGS and the hereditary societies to thich they belong. This could be useful information for others seeking information on and, perhaps, sponsorship in these organizations.

Nothing is more disgraceful than for a man who is nothing, to hold himself honored on account of his forefathers; and yet hereditary honors are a noble and splendid treasure to descendants.

-Plato

THE CANADIAN CONNECTION

by Jane C. Merchant

Did you know that in Canada 1983 and 1984 are the years of a Bicentennial celebration which has its origin in our American Revolution? In June of 1783, following the surrender at Yorktown, the British organized a fleet of ships to carry exiled American Tories to Nova Scotia. Known as the Spring Fleet, they transported about 16,000 Loyalists to the Maritime Province, to begin life anew. Another 10,000 made their way to the Province of Quebec and some 8,000 settled along the St. Lawrence and Lake Ontario, in what was then known as Upper Canada (Ontario). Descendants of Americans who remained in Canada, known as United Empire Loyalists, have been celebrating the arrival of their American ancestors.

For many of us who have reluctantly admitted to Tories in the family line (or perhaps family closet!), because we grew up in a tradition which glories in our victory for independence, it is a pleasant surprise to discover from a Canadian perspective these despised "Tory traitors" were responsible for the founding of three new English provinces: New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Cape Breton and for providing an established English Settlement complete with schools, universities, courts and churches, ready to receive and absorb the next wave of immigrants from England which began in 1820. According to Wallace Brown, Canadian historian, "The Loyalists performed a holding operation (for England) ...without them...modern Canada would not exist."

The importance of the Bicentennial in Canada to genealogists on both sides of the border, is that a great deal of research done, in Canada on American Loyalist ancestry, has led to an accumulation of records of the immigration, ships' passenger lists, etc., as well as statistics concerning place of origin, birth, marriage, death and cemetery records of American exiles, 85% of whom remained in New Brunswick (returns from other provinces were in larger numbers).

The research of Loyalist records has also refuted a popular misconception that the majority of Loyalists were from Massachusetts; wealthy Harvard men who would not forswear allegiance to the King. Statistics show that only 6% were

from Massachusetts, the largest number, 42%, were from New York, not only urban dwellers from New York City and Albany, but farmers of German and Scottish descent from the Mohawk Valley; 22%, of Dutch and English origin from New Jersey, and 12% from Connecticut. Southern states accounted for 8%, among them, Blacks from the Carolinas, granted their freedom in Nova Scotia.

For those who may be interested in researching their Loyalist ancestors who emigrated to Canada, there are two excellent reference books to help you on your way: Genealogical Research in Nova Scotia, by Terrence M. Punch, Petheric Press Ltd., N.S., and The Loyalists of New Brunswick, by Esther Clarke Wright, pub. by author. The book by Punch is in the New Canada Historical Society Library. The book by Dr. Wright is available through inter-library loan. Also, the 1983 Spring and Fall copies of The Loyalist Gazette, published by The United Empire Loyalists of Canada Assoc. which are devoted to the events of the Bicentennial, give excellent reference sources for research. These are available at the Ferguson Library.

Happy hunting!

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Jane Merchant is a member of the MGS and also the Stamford Genealogical Society. She is a regular contributor to their quarterly, "Connecticut Ancestry". Jane has become somewhat of an authority on Loyalist research in the process of tracing her own family history and published an article on Loyalists in the fall issue of "Connecticut Ancestry".

DID YOU KNOW...

To find out if there is a historical or genealogical society or library in a particular area which you could contact for assistance in your research, use the Directory of Historical Societies & Agencies in the United States and Canada (12th Edition, 1982). A copy is available at the Darien Historical Society. Societies are listed by state, then town, but are alphabetically indexed in the back of the book. Information includes: address and telephone, date founded, number of members and staff, publications put out, programs and period of their collections. This book can become a very useful aid in your genealogical work.

BOOKS OFFERED FOR MGS USE

Mrs. Patricia Flowers, who owns an extensive personal genealogical library, has offered to allow MGS members to use her books. If any of the following titles can help you in your research, please contact Mrs. Flowers at 31 Brushy Hill Rd., Darien, CT.

The MGS would like to thank Mrs. Flowers for her generosity in making these books available.

Index to New England Historic and Genealogical Register

Your Family Tree - Jordan & Kimball

University of New Hampshire Alumni

Directories - 1966 & 1979

Long Island Genealogies - Bunker

How to Find Your Family Roots - Beard

1st Supplement to DAR Patriot Index, 1969

DAR Patriot Index, 1966

DAR Index to Rolls of Honor in Lineage

Books (4 vols.)

The General Society of Mayflower Descendants, 1901

Society of Mayflower Descendants in the State of Florida - 1970-72

Butler's Book - Butler

The Berrys by the Beach - Getchell

History of the Buell Family in England and in America - Welles

The Colby Family in Early America - Weis

History of the Colby Family - Colby

The Book of Dow - Dowe

Flowers Family History, AGRI

The Story of Edward and Margaret Friel

Halls of New England - Hall

Marden Family Genealogy - Getchell

Moulton Annals

Munsey-Hopkins Genealogy - Lowell

Genealogy of Edward and Sarah (Burchett)

Osborn of Floyd Co., KY

Matthew Pratt of Weymouth, Mass.

Descendants of Edward Small of New England-Underhill (3 vols.)

Sprague Families in America - Sprague

The Hereditary Register of the USA

Representative Men and Old Families of Southeastern Mass. (3 vols.)

The Pioneers of Massachusetts - Pope

How to Write Your Autobiography

What to do with your Family Roots (now that you've dug them up!) - Ward

The United States Census Compendium

Vital Record Compendium - Stemmons

Handy Book for Genealogists - Everton

1790 Federal Census - MA, PA, CT, ME, VT, NH

1800 Federal Census - NH

New Hampshire Genealogical Research Guide - Towle

A Genealogists Handbook for the New England Research - NELE

Pennsylvania Area Keys - Center Co. and Chester Co.

1789 Boston Directory

Old Families of Salisbury and Amesbury - Hoyt

History of Bridgewater, Mass.

A Small Gore of Land, New Hampton, NH - 1777-1940

History of Belknap and Merrimack Co., NH

Genealogical Dictionary of Maine and NH

Irish Research - Falley (2 vols.)

Irish Beginnings - MacLysaght

Irish Family Research Made Simple

History of Hingham, Mass. (4 vols.)

Compendium of American Genealogy - Virkus (Vol. 1, 3-7)

Genealogical Dictionary of New England - Savage

History can be formed from permanent monuments and records; but lives can only be written from personal knowledge, which is growing every day less, and in a short time is lost forever.

- Samuel Johnson

DID YOU KNOW...

Genealogists are constantly coming across vital dates in their research which are double-dated (example - 7 February 1721/2). The reason for this confusion is that the switch from the Julian calendar to the Gregorian system was made by Britain and her colonies in 1752. Prior to this date, the new year actually began on March 25th. Therefore, whenever a date before 1752 falls between Jan. 1 and March 24, it should be double-dated to show both calendars. For example, 7 Feb. 1721/2 would just show that the year was actually 1721 when the event occurred, but if the year had begun on Jan. 1st, as it does now, then the year would actually have been 1722!!

It is worthwhile for anyone to have behind him a few generations of honest, hard-working ancestry.

-John Phillips Marquand

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS OFFERED

More members of the MGS have indicated a willingness to share material in their personal genealogical libraries with persons interested in the various topics. Please contact them directly to work out a mutually-acceptable method of use. Thank you to all who are so unselfish with the information they have!

"Rural Maine During the Civil War, 1864-1867" - a compilation in pamphlet form of transcripts of letters (deals mainly with Burrill and Southard families).

Descendants of John Moses of Portsmouth, NH and John Moses of Simsbury, CT - microfilm covering 700 pages of manuscript on the above two families, 1630's thru 1950's.

----Carl K. Moses, 4 Glenwood Dr., Darien, CT 06820.

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Irish Genealogy, A Record Finder (1981) Handbook on Irish Genealogy, How to Trace Your Ancestors and Relatives in Ireland (1980)

Both of these are published in Dublin, Ireland by Heraldic Artists Ltd.

Unpuzzling Your Past (A Basic Guide to Genealogy) by Emily Anne Croom

----Leo J. Dunphy, 10 Hamilton Lane, Darien, CT 06820.

*

A Genealogical Handbook of German Research by Larry O. Jensen
The Handy Book for Genealogists (7th Edition)

----Marianne Sheldon, 3 Revere Rd., Darien, CT 06820.

*

The Coward Family in America

Various materials pertaining to East Bridgewater, MA

----Robert E. Fatherley, 9 Point O'Woods Rd., South, Darien, CT 06820.

GERMAN TRANSLATOR NEEDED

Is there anyone out there who can read and translate OLD German script? I have a letter dated 1850 which I would like to have translated. If you can help me, or know of someone who can, please contact Marianne Sheldon, 3 Revere Rd., Darien, CT 06820.

AREA LIBRARIES WITH GENEALOGY COLLECTIONS

In each issue, we plan to highlight one or two local libraries which offer genealogical material. Most of these smaller facilities contain valuable information on local families, however, they usually have material which encompasses areas of the country and families not in this region. Give these libraries a try, even if your family has no ties to this area - you might be pleasantly surprised!

*

The Darien Historical Society - 45 Old Kings Highway North, Darien. Hours: Tues.-Fri., 9-1. Besides a wide assortment of books on topics dealing with New England colonial life, they have a section of printed genealogies and biographical collections. Researchers of Darien families will find directories, cemetery compilations, a photograph collection and small family files in the manuscript collection. All materials are cross-referenced in the Darien Library card catalog and the newspapers are also on microfilm there. Their genealogies are not of just local families and they have some town histories from other areas. They have complete sets of both The New England Historic Genealogical Register and The New York Genealogical & Biographical Record.

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The New Canaan Historical Society - 13 Oenoke Ridge, New Canaan. Hours: Tues.-Sat., 9:30-12:30, 2-4:30. New Canaan has a large assortment of printed genealogies and town and area histories, dealing with New England, New York, Pennsylvania, etc. They have thousands of biographical index cards on anyone who ever lived in New Canaan (1640-present), a genealogy file, Censuses on microfilm and in printed form, indexed cemetery records, school records, newspapers back to 1868 on microfilm, directories, the genealogical records of Malcolm Hunt (which encompass many other area towns) and subscribe to various genealogical society publications (CT "Nutmegger", "American Genealogist", NEHGR, NYGBR). They also are members of the New England Historic Genealogical Loan Service. Ask the Librarian for assistance to utilize the full scope of their services.

*

Note: These two libraries are non-circulating.

Blood will tell but often it tells too much.

-Donald Robert Perry (Don) Marquis

CEMETERY PROJECT HAPPENINGS

In the process of compiling and verifying the records and markers of the veterans buried in the Spring Grove Cemetery, several interesting stories have come to light. We thought our members would enjoy them. They also show the "human" side to this project.

First is that of Abijah R. Hawley of Fairfield, CT, who served in the 17th and 22nd Regiments, CVI, during the Civil War and who died at the Fitch Home. His family had "lost" him, as had the Department of Military Records. Mrs. Walter Rose of Darien, Abijah's great-granddaughter, remembers her mother, Eleanor Hawley, telling them every Memorial Day about the visits she used to make as a child with her father to visit Abijah at the Soldier's Home. After having lived in various parts of the country, the Roses' finally settled in Darien. While driving her mother around town during one of her visits, Eleanor repeatedly asked if there was a Soldier's Home in the area since everything looked so familiar. No one had heard of one. As coincidence - or fate - would have it, the first Memorial Day the family spent in Darien, Mr. Rose and the youngest son, Jim, discovered Abijah's gravestone in the cemetery while just wandering through. Abijah was finally returned to his family!

Then there is Albert O. Seeley, who also served in the 17th Regiment, CVI. He died 9 Jan. 1865 at an Annapolis, MD hospital at age 29, after having been discharged from the infamous Libby Prison. He never made it home to his family, being too ill from the privations suffered while in prison. His widow, Betsey Ann (Waterbury), died at the age of 101, never having remarried, and is buried beside him. At the time of her death, she was the oldest Civil War veteran's wife in the state of Connecticut. Their grandson, William Pratt, is a resident of Darien.

Finally, there is one Revolutionary War veteran buried in Spring Grove Cemetery. He is John Clock (b. 19 Jan. 1758; d. 10 Apr. 1838). He and his wife, Sarah (Fancher) (b. 24 Sept. 1768; d. 13 Mar. 1840), were apparently buried elsewhere and moved to Spring Grove later, where they share a common stone with their son and his wife.

DID YOU KNOW...

There are some symbols which crop up periodically in the course of doing genealogical research, especially in going through handwritten material. It is essential to know what these symbols mean or your interpretation of the information could cause you many future problems.

- * - born
- (*) - born illegitimate
- X - baptized or christened
- ⊖ - baptized or christened
- ~ - baptized or christened
- 0 - betrothed
- ⊗ - married
- 0/0 - divorced
- 00 - common-law marriage
- † - died
- + - died
- ☐ - buried
- †† - no further issue
- (†) - no further issue

(from The Researcher's Guide to American Genealogy. Greenwood, Val D. Baltimore. Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc. 1975.)

It is a shame for a man to desire honor only because of his noble progenitors, and not to deserve it by his own virtue.

-John Chrysostom

DONATIONS RECEIVED

The MGS would like to gratefully acknowledge the following persons and organizations, who have generously donated books and other research materials to our Genealogy section in the Darien Library:

Mrs. Mary Louise King
 Mrs. Dan Cuddy
 Mrs. Jane C. Merchant
 Mr. Robert E. Fatherley
 Mrs. Marianne W. Sheldon
 Mr. David Evans
 The Darien Historical Society
 Good Wife's River Chapter, National Society Daughters of the American Revolution.

If anyone else is interested in donating books, or a monetary contribution toward the purchase of books, please contact Doris Hollander, 204 Rowayton Ave., Rowayton, CT 06853.

QUERIES

Periodically, requests are sent to either the MGS or the Darien Historical Society for information of a genealogical nature. We feel, that by publishing these inquiries in our Newsletter, one of our members may have some help to give on a particular family. These queries are merely excerpts from the original letters so you might wish to contact the Editor before responding.

Seek info on JAMES SCOFIELD, b. 1 Apr. 1696, Stamford, CT, specifically dates, names of wife and children. He was son of RICHARD² (Richard¹) SCOFIELD. Also need info on James' son, JOSEPH.
----Walker T. Weed, Three Mile Rd., Box 168, Etna, NH 03750.

Seek info on ERNEST LUTHER and son, LAURENCE. They were in Darien in the early 1920's, employed by a Dairy Co. Laurence married in Darien and had dau. HELEN, b. 4/1/1923.
----Emory Luther, 34 E Townline Rd., Nanuet, NY 10954.

Seek info on GEORGE HOMAN who was prob. a blacksmith in Darien ca. 1855. He may have married CHARLOTTE MARVIN, dau. of SETH MARVIN, a refugee from Long Island during the Revolution.
----Orlo D. Center, 9019 Pontiac, Houston, TX 77096.

Interested in contacting people named KEYES or with ancestors named KEYES, particularly those who pronounced the name "Kize".
----Fred W. Farwell, 6 Pasture Lane, Darien, CT 06820.

QUERIES con't

Am compiling a genealogy on WINSHIP families. Seek info on anyone with the surname WINSHIP, past or present.
----Marianne Sheldon, 3 Revere Rd., Darien, CT 06820.

Address all correspondence for the MGS Newsletter, including Queries, articles, suggestions or any relevant items to:
Editor, Middlesex Genealogical Newsletter
45 Old Kings Highway North
Darien, CT 06820

BISHOP FAMILY ORGANIZATION AND REUNION

A Bishop family organization was recently formed and, through its newsletter and meetings, is interested in "serving as a communications network for genealogical material arising from Bishop and allied family lines" and "enhancing Bishop and allied family awareness by encouraging correspondence among family members and other interested people." Anyone with an interest in the Bishop family is invited to become a member of the organization. A check for \$5.00, made payable to "Bishop Get-Together", should be mailed to William F. Bishop, Jr., 3041 Ohio St., W. Melbourne, FL 32901.

The descendants of Rev. John Bishop, one of the earliest settlers of Stamford, CT are planning a meeting, combined with tours and programs related to this particular family. It will be held in the Stamford area July 21-22. Anyone wishing more information should contact Mrs. Edith M. Wicks, 852-B Heritage Village, Hilltop Road East, Southbury, CT 06488.

I am (We are) interested in joining the membership of The Middlesex Genealogical Society.

NAME _____
(last name) (first name or names of couple)

ADDRESS _____
(street) (town or city) (zip)

CLASSIFICATION: Single (\$10.) PHONE _____
(circle one) Couple or Family (\$15.)

Mail form and check, made payable to Middlesex Genealogical Society, to:

Treasurer, Middlesex Genealogical Society
45 Old Kings Highway North
Darien, CT 06820



45 Old Kings Highway North
Darien, CT 06820