



Middlesex Genealogical Society

FALL 1991 NEWSLETTER

Vol VIII, No. 3

Dear Members and Friends,

Although our Annual Meeting held in the spring is officially the beginning of our new year, the fall somehow always feels more like it should be. This year is no different. We begin with a very interesting guest speaker, Elizabeth Moger, Keeper of the Society of Friends (Quaker) Records at the Haviland Records Room in New York City (see page 16 for more details). The meeting will be held **Monday, Sept. 30, 8 p.m. at the Darien Public Library**. Subsequent program plans include our annual ever popular Workshop to be held in January. The following two programs are still in the works. Dick Sarr, our Vice President, is always open for suggestions. He can be reached by writing to our address (see page 16) or by phone at 655-9630. He is working with Henry Hoff and Florence Wyland on Programs.

The MGS Board has been active during the summer while you languished in the sunshine. We had a very successful meeting at Ray Bartlett's home on July 23rd (in the aftermath of that storm that swept through the area) to get a feel for where we stood with projects and plans.

It looks as though our next publication is coming along just fine. Ray Bartlett talked with Grant Radmall, now residing in Utah. Grant and his wife Ruth have been "inputting" the data into the computer. The end result will be "camera ready" and should save us some printing charges. The Publication No. 5 will conclude the Spring Grove Veterans' Cemetery on which our beloved and sorely missed MGS President, Nicki Holander worked so hard. We know she's watching over us to make sure we get it finished for her!

Don't forget our Saturday Workshops continue down at Darien Public Library from 10 a.m. to 12 noon. Norm Adams is in charge. Come down and look over our collection of genealogy



material. Pat Flowers and Ray Gross have spent long hours organizing it just for your convenience. So come take a look! (That's anytime, not just on Sat. mornings.)

So, with the cool fall weather, lets get out of that house, trapse through some cemeteries, browse library shelves, and attend genealogy meetings. It will get us back into the "mystery of the lost ancestor" mode where we all love to be found! See you September 30th.

MIDDLESEX GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

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The Middlesex Genealogical Society was established for the purpose of helping those interested in genealogy to pursue the investigation of their family heritage and to provide guidance in research to that end. The Society holds at least four meetings with a program and speaker during the year, has established a Genealogy section at the Darien Public Library, provides research assistance on Saturday mornings (10-12) at the Library and publishes a quarterly Newsletter. Annual membership dues are \$10/individual and \$15/couple or family.

Original articles, notices of genealogical interest, and queries are welcomed for the newsletter. Send to the Editor:

Sherrill S. Yates
9 Wagon Road
Bethel, CT 06801

Correspondence to the Society:
Middlesex Genealogical Society
45 Old Kings Highway North
Darien, CT 06820

MGS Presents Fall Meeting

by Florence Wyland

The Middlesex Genealogical Society fall meeting will be held on Monday, September 30, 8 P.M. at the Darien Public Library. Our speaker will be Elizabeth H. Moger, Keeper of the Records of New York Yearly Meeting, Haviland Records Room Archives, Religious Society of Friends. She will talk about the background and history of the Friends Society, also known as the Quakers.

She will give a brief history of the Religious Society of Friends dating back to its beginning with George Fox's vision in 1652 on Pendle Hill in the north of England, of "a great people to be gathered." She will also talk about the minutes, registers, what can be found in the records and what cannot be found. She will cite sources of information about New York Yearly Meeting Friends' Records, first and foremost, John Cox, Jr.'s Catalogue, published in 1940.

The Haviland Records Room is at 15 Rutherford Place, New York, NY, 10003. It is open Wednesday and Thursday, 10 a.m. to noon and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. The Records Room is open to all, including non-friends. Appointments should be made by calling (212)673-6866.

Elizabeth Moger has been Keeper of the Records of New York Meeting since 1978. She is a graduate of Carleton College, Northfield, Minnesota, and of Columbia University in Library Service. She serves on the historic district board of the incorporated village of Roslyn, Long Island, and is a member of the Roslyn Landmark Society. She has served a number of years as historian of the Village of Roslyn. She is one of an editorial committee of three (the others being Hugh Barbour, Professor Emeritus of Earlham College, and Christopher Densmore, Associate Archivist of SUNY, Buffalo) to produce a history of New York yearly meeting for their tercentenary in 1995.



The Middlesex Society of Friends

by
Louise H. McLean
The Darien Historical Society Annual
May 1973

Darien can be proud of having sheltered one of the first Quaker communities in Connecticut. This distinction should be more widely known, especially since Connecticut long had the reputation of being strongly opposed to all dissenters, particularly those who called themselves friends. They were a courageous and dedicated few who chose to settle in the colony before 1750.

The first Quaker to live in Darien, then called Middlesex, was by report a quiet, determined woman named Catherine Selleck (1726-1798). Through her influence a small band of Friends who joined her eventually received official sanction in 1809, and became a dependent offshoot of the Purchase Monthly Meeting near Rye, New York.(1) Huntington's "History of Stamford" describes the origins of this local movement with a quotation from a diary written by Catherine Selleck's granddaughter Deborah Roberts. She wrote years later about a Quaker meeting that was held in the same room "in which our worthy grandmother Catherine Selleck, the first in this place, sat down in the same way, herself alone. At length others joined her and finally a meeting was allowed."(2)

This brief vignette illumines the spirit of an obscure woman, whose life otherwise can be interpreted only from the few known names and dates of her immediate family. Catherine and her husband Nathan Selleck, Jr. lived in the comfortable colonial farmhouse at 18 Old Farm Road in Tokeneke, where she must have led the busy life of a New England housewife.(3)

Catherine was the daughter of John Klock (Clock), a German immigrant from the Palatinate.(4) He found work at the gristmill at the mouth of Good Wife's River in Middlesex, where he was hired by the miller Richard Scofield. The area was then called Scofield's Landing. John Clock married Deborah, the youngest of the miller's children, and finally succeeded his father-in-law as the owner of the mill, whereupon the small settlement there became known as Clock's Landing, and later still Gorham's Pond.

At twenty, Catherine Clock married well, as the saying goes, for she became the wife of young Nathan Selleck Jr., the eldest son of the prosperous owner of "Sellecks Farms." His land included most of the present Tokeneke area and also acreage reaching north to Old King's Highway. Nathan

and Catherine were married on September 17, 1745, and were among the first young people to be married by the recently appointed minister, the Rev. Moses Mather. (4) They built their house on Selleck land in Tokeneke, on the rocky ledge in the bend of the farm path, now, Old Farm Road. There they raised their five children: Edward, Catherine, Deborah, Phebe, and Hannah.(5) Nathan's brother Silvanus lived across the road in a house now belonging to John F. Pendexter. Another brother, Gold John Selleck, lived farther down the road by the bridge. Their father's house, now 26 Old Farm Road, still exists, but has been transformed past recognition in recent years.

There seems no way of learning when Catherine Selleck first sought spiritual guidance from "the inner light" that counsels all true Friends, nor when her pious example encouraged others to join her. There may have been a few Quakers in Middlesex by 1766, for the Middlesex Society church records for that year and also for 1767, note that tax lists have been prepared of all residents, but that "professors of the Church of England, Quakers, etc. (were) exempted."(6) One wonders whether Catherine and members of her family were professed Quakers by that time.

A more likely speculation is that the Sellecks may have adopted their new faith by 1781, when Catherine's husband applied to the selectmen for permission to free his servant Jack. The selectmen "examined into the character and conversation of said servant, as law prescribed, and are of opinion that said servant is capable of taking care of himself." Selleck and his heirs "are free from any cost that shall hereafter arise because of him."(7) Since the Friends had been vigorously urging the freeing of slaves for twenty years, it may be that the Sellecks' conscience had been nurtured by their Quaker beliefs.

At least two of their daughters, Deborah and Catherine, became devout Friends, and both married men of the same faith. Catherine's husband was Wyx Seely. Deborah married Amos Roberts, of whom there is a record as having been witness to a Quaker marriage in Purchase in 1770.(8)

By 1700 the Quakers had won the right to hold their meetings in every colony except Connecticut and South Carolina, where the intolerance of the church societies and of public opinion disbarred all but a few intrepid missionaries.(9) In time, the authoritarian attitude in Connecticut decreased, as more and more parishioners became Episcopalians or dissenters of some sort, or even open unbelievers. However, they were still forced by law to pay

their tithes to the church of their fathers, and they also bore the active disapproval of the conformist majority. Of all the dissenters, the Quakers were especially feared and persecuted.(10)

In 1698, Stamford was visited by two missionaries, Roger Gill and Thomas Story, who stopped there on their way from Carolina to Rhode Island, hoping to obtain permission to hold a meeting. Each of them kept a diary of the events of the journey. The Rev. E. B. Huntington was so impressed with Roger Gill's account that he quoted from it at great length in his "History of Stamford." Gill's highly individual phonetic spelling disguises the graphic forthrightness of his comments. Here are his remarks, re-spelled for easy reading:

"Ye next day we set forward, ye land way, for New England - 2 friends to bear us company. Came at evening to a town called Stamford in Connecticut Colony - it being a pretty large but a very dark town; not a friend living in all that province as we had heard of, neither would they suffer ye testimony of truth to be declared among them, nor had it ever been declared - they being rigid Presbyterians or independents, I know not whether, but one thing I am sure of, they had one father. So we went to an Inn. I asked ye woman of ye house if that she would be willing to suffer a meeting to be in her house. She said yes, she would not deny no civil company from coming to her house.

Now I felt a great power and weight of darkness, so that I could not be clear in my spirit to peace through ye town of Stamford, and therefore I sent those friends that were with us to go and invite ye people to come to our inn, for we were of those people called Quakers, and we had something to say to them. And while our friends went to invite ye people, we went to acquaint ye justice of ye town of our intentions, and to open our minds to him, for he was an independent and seemed to be somewhat moderated before we parted with him - who answered us thus, I will not speak much to you, for we have a law that no Quaker shall preach, so I will not tolerate you. Then he added ye word, but implying as much as he would wink at ye meeting. So we appointed a meeting to be next day at ye 9th hour. So when ye time came, several of ye people came according to ye time; a Constable came with them with a warrant to command us to go out of ye town, being filled with scurrilous words and bad names, commanding ye people to depart, and commanding ye woman of ye house not to suffer us to preach in her house. So Thomas stood up to show the unreasonableness of ye warrant, and withal desired a copy, but it could not be

granted. Then when Thomas had spoken a few words to the purpose, I was moved to stand up and speak- to ye people. Then came ye Constable, commanding me in ye governor's name to be silent, and pushed me out of ye house by my arm. But ye power of ye Lord that was upon me could not be silenced by him. So when he had haled me out of ye house, ye spirit and power of ye Lord came upon me and I lifted up my voice in ye streets, cried out woe! woe! woe! unto all ye inhabitants of ye town of Stamford, who hold a profession of Christ out of ye life of Christ. This cry, with some other words to ye same purpose so alarmed ye people that ye whole body of ye town heard; and many of them being gathered together, I had time to easy my spirit among them. Then after I was easy, we returned to our inn, when several of their disputants came to dispute, who were very furious at first but were so handled by Thomas upon several points, but especially upon election and reprobation, that some confessed some truths and departed very calm - ye Lord's truth that day was over them. So being clear of ye town, we came that night to Fairfield."

As can be seen from Gill's account, the officials of Stamford, like their colleagues elsewhere, feared the influence of the persuasive Quakers. Stamford, after all, had neighboring communities of Friends living on its western border in the disputed strip of land called "The Oblong." This "no-mans land" was claimed by both Connecticut and New York for many years. Before the matter was settled, groups of Quakers from Flushing, New York risked the outcome of the dispute to move there. The first to emigrate built homes on the outskirts of Rye, and became known as the Purchase Society of Friends. Other Quakers founded smaller settlements to the northward, but avoided Connecticut, where feeling ran so high against them.(11)

The Connecticut Assembly, in fact, made very plain its intentions in an intolerant law, passed in 1705, although it was hastily repealed the following year at the command of Queen Anne. Imprisonment or exile for all Quakers had been ordered in the bill, as well as fines "for entertaining Quakers, Ranters, Adamites and other hereticks;" also fines for speaking with them unnecessarily, and even for the possession of Quaker literature. Sea captains who allowed Quakers to disembark on Connecticut shores were ordered to carry them away again. No wonder the heretics hesitated to move to Connecticut even after the repeal of this act.(12)

However, twenty-five years later, much of the evangelical fervor of the early Quakers had given way to a quiet, though no less dedicated emphasis

on reason and universal concern, service and brotherly love. The Assembly, moving with the times, voted in 1729 to excuse the Quakers from contributing to the support for the established church, if they could produce affidavits of membership in come Quaker meeting. This rather grudging permission came two years after the same privilege had been granted to the Episcopalians and other dissenters. Probably only those Friends living near the Oblong or the Rhode Island border could take advantage of the ruling.(13)

There was undoubtedly a still more liberal attitude abroad some years later when Catherine Selleck must have turned to the Quaker faith. Nonetheless, she was nearly seventy before the company of Friends in Middlesex was large enough to receive the blessing of the Purchase Monthly Meeting in 1794. What satisfaction it must have been to this elderly woman to know that she and her friends were now in the care of the larger organization.

Three years later Richard Jordan, a Quaker minister, stopped in Middlesex on his missionary rounds. He wrote thus of his journey through Connecticut:

"We took leave of friends here (i.e. Purchase) in near affection and set out for Rhode Island through Connecticut, a very rough road. On the first day we attended their little meeting at Middex(sic) to satisfaction and then took our journey by the way of Mill River, Stratford, New Haven, Guilford, Killingworth, New London, etc. and on the 4th day got to a friends house at a place called Pawtucket bridge, which is on the boundary between Connecticut and Rhode Island. This is the first friends house we have seen since we left Middex; the people among whom we have passed are generally civil and respectful to strangers."(14)

Not until 1809 did the Purchase Meeting feel that the Middlesex group was strong enough to become a formal organization. On April 29, 1809 Middlesex held its first Preparative Meeting as a small branch of the larger organization. Thereafter, it kept minutes of its meetings and appointed officers annually.

Three small, neatly written minute books are preserved in the Friends Records Room at the New York headquarters of the Yearly Meetings at 15 Rutherford Place. The first contains records of the men's preparative meetings from 1809 until 1846; the second records the women's preparative meetings until 1840; and the third contains the records of the joint meetings that were held from February 1840 until the group was "laid down" or dissolved in 1846. Miss Cook, the librarian at the Records

Room, knows of no other case in which joint meetings were held at such an early date.

There must have been a surge of local interest in the once despised faith soon after 1800. The venerable Dr. Mather passed away in 1806 after a ministry of 64 years, and in the following year fourteen members of the church announced their decision to join the Society of Friends. By 1813 twenty more had submitted certificates to the same effect, among them many of the most prominent men in Middlesex: John Bell, Thaddeus and Cary Bell, Daniel Gorham, Samuel and Jesse Selleck, Jonathan Bates, Nathaniel Slason, and Isaac Gray. (15)

There is some question as to the depth of their interest in the Quaker doctrine, for there is no record in the Friends' minute books to show that any of these men sought or were never accepted as members "under friends care." It seems more likely that they all, as Daniel Chadayne candidly said in his statement of resignation, "differ in sentiments from the worship and ministry in Society of Middlesex - have chosen to join myself to Society of Friends."

Dr. Mather's successor, the Rev. William Fisher, took office on July 16, 1807. Since all but one of the numerous resignations in that year occurred the month before Mr. Fisher began his ministry, there must have been violent disagreement in the parish at the time of his appointment.

In any case, the Quakers benefited from the general interest expressed in them at this time. The prospect of a larger congregation meant that a meetinghouse was needed. With the help of the membership at Purchase, Wyx Seely and Samuel Bishop, as agents, bought 1 1/2 acres of vacant land fronting on the recently completed Turnpike Road (now the Post Road) across from the street now known as Quaker Lane. Six months later Seely and Bishop deeded the property to two "members of the Society of the People Called Quakers of the Monthly Meeting of Purchase."(16) The later ownership of the property may be readily traced in the Darien Land Records, where it is described as being bounded on the east by Spring Grove Cemetery and on the south by the Post Road.

A small square meetinghouse was built there in 1811.(17) No one living today seems to know when or how the building disappeared. After the Middlesex Meeting was dissolved in 1846, the property with its buildings was sold by the trustees in 1862 for \$400, reserving "the privilege of removing the remains of the dead from the premises" within a year. (18) They now rest in Spring Grove Cemetery.

The minute books of the society make interesting reading, although the notes are brief and impersonal. It is evident that the guiding spirits at first were Wyx Seely, the son-in-law of Catherine Selleck, and Samuel Bishop, a descendant of Stamford's first minister, the Rev. John Bishop. Each was often appointed for a yearly term as Overseer of the society, and each frequently represented the meeting at the Purchase Monthly meetings. Other representatives to those meetings included Samuel and Jesse Whiting, Hervey Whiting, James Shaw, Azariah Waterbury, and Moses Quimby. The women's preparative minute book lists their representatives to Purchase: Phebe Bishop; Molly, Clarissa and Anna Whiting; Hannah Shaw; Deborah, Mary and Sarah Roberts.

The women were responsible for the management of the school. Their educational philosophy was simply stated and put on record. Teaching children meant "learning to fit them for business." This is the only reference to the school in the minute books, and undoubtedly represents the aim of most of the elementary schools of the time.

Occasionally there was a problem in holding the attention of the congregation at meetings. On a warm day in late June, according to one report, the hour was "pretty, well observed, not quite clear of drowsiness and some advice given-, no other unbecoming behavior known."

A backsliding member was a cause of concern at one time. Abram Tompkins, who failed to attend meetings in 1826, was reported to the monthly meeting at Purchase, but the problem was quietly referred back to the Middlesex meeting for discipline.

Each year "the subject of the Continuance of the meeting allowed at Middlesex" was discussed at the larger meeting at Purchase, before consent was given for its continuation. The congregation was obviously a small one. In 1828 there were only 34 members, of whom 14 were children.(19) By 1840 many of the elder members had died. A petition was made to allow joint meetings of men and women together. "On considering the small number of men Friends belonging to that meeting," the petition was allowed. The little group held together for only six more years before it foundered.

NOTES

1. Minute Books of the Middlesex Society of Friends at the Friends Records Room, 15 Rutherford Place, New York City.
2. Huntington, Rev. E. B., "History of Stamford," p. 335.
3. Darien Historical Society Files - Nathan Selleck Jr. House.
4. Darien Congregational Church Records - Card File of Members.
5. Gorham, Henry, "Bates Selleck and Allied Families" at Darien Historical Society.
6. Darien Congregational Church Records, Vol. A.
7. Stamford Land Records, Vol. I, p. 264.
8. Purchase Marriage Records, Friends Records Room, 15 Rutherford Place, New York City.
9. Encyclopedia Britannica, 1937 - Friends, Society of.
10. Purcell, Richard J., "Connecticut in Transition 1775-1818", Middletown, Conn. 1963.
11. Bolton, Rev. Robert, "History of Westchester County, New York."
12. Colonial Records of Connecticut, 1689-1706. p. 546.
13. Ibid., in 1729.
14. "Life and Religious Labours of Richard Jordan," Phila., 1829.
15. Congregational Church Records, Vol. B, beginning p. 156.
16. Stamford Land Records, Vol. Q, pp. 503, 543.
17. Huntington, Rev. E. B., "History of Stamford," p. 336.
18. Darien Land Records, Vol. 5, P. 323.
19. Hurd, D. H., "History of Fairfield County," Phila., 1881. p. 272.



Quaker (The Society of Friends) Records in England & Ireland

taken from
In Search of Your British and Irish Roots
by Angus Baxter

England: The Quakers have kept good records from their foundation by George Fox in the seventeenth century. These were also handed over in 1840 and are in the Public Record Office. However, before doing so, the Quakers made digests of the records and indexed them. These are kept at **Friends' House, Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ**. There are 85 volumes, containing the records of 260,000 births, 40,000 marriages, and 310,000 burials.

From the mid-seventeenth century most monthly meetings, some particular meetings, and some quarterly meetings kept records of births, marriages, and burials. The digests contain all the information in the originals (now at the PRO) except the names of witnesses to marriages. These indexes are not strictly alphabetical, but chronological within each letter of the alphabet. In some cases there are supplementary registers for material surrendered after 1840. A separate series of digests covers the period from 1837 to the mid-twentieth century.

It must be remembered that Friends, like other denominations, often failed to make entries in the original registers. Also, a number were lost before the registers were surrendered to the PRO in 1840.

The Friends' House also holds many books about Quaker history, many manuscripts of meeting records, and a number of private and family papers. There are more Quaker records in a number of County Record Offices.

The Religious Society of Friends, which has custody of the above material, will provide, at a small charge, photocopies of any document within reason. They will not supply photocopies of very old documents or those in a frail state. The library is open to individual researchers who have a letter of introduction. Overseas inquirers requiring lengthy searches will be referred to accredited researchers.

Ireland: The Society was established in Ireland in 1654 and registers of births, marriages, and deaths have been maintained from that time. There are two addresses in Ireland with which you must deal:

The Friends Meeting House - Lisburn, Co. Antrim. This office holds the registers for the various Meetings in the original Province of Ulster (nine counties). These registers include those of

Meetings at Antrim, Ballinaderry, Ballyhagen, Ballymoney, Coleraine, Cootehill, Hillsborough, Lisburn, Lurgan, Oldcastle, and Rathfriland.

The Historical Library of the Society - 6 Eustace Street, Dublin. This contains the registers and records for the other three provinces of Ireland, and also six volumes of wills dating back to the seventeenth century, plus many family trees of members, and a number of dairies and journals of early Quakers.

If you cannot get rid of the family skeleton, you may as well make it dance.

—George Bernard Shaw

Epitaph for a Dentist:

Stranger!

Approach this spot with gravity!

John Brown is filling his last cavity.

Graves are but the footprints of the angel of eternal life.

What the future has in store for you depends largely on what you place in store for the future.

Epitaph: *Gone to See for Myself*

1880 Epitaph in Nantucket, Mass:

Under the sod and under the trees

Lies the body of Jonathan Pease:

He is not here, there's only the pod

Pease shelled out and went to God

Genealogy is like love!

It's best when shared with another.

The Genealogy Bug

by Marcy Hagel

You follow many dead end trails
As you search through dusty files,
You weaken your eyes with microfilm
And travel for miles and miles,
You rummage through church records
And interview over the phone,
You look for Grandma's marriage
And find she had children alone,
You write many unanswered letters
To people across the sea,
You find your Great Uncle Zanzibar
Was hung for shooting Aunt Bea,
You ignore your dust and dishes,
You never vacuum the rug,
You've caught a disease that has no cure,
You have the genealogy bug.

taken from *The Sunny Side of Genealogy*, Compiled by Fonda D. Baselt

Common Phrases found in Probate Records

Diggin' in Old Virginia Records, CCGS Newsletter
Vol. 16, No. 3, May/June 1991
by Bill Dickerson

1. after my wifes death the articles bequeathed her be equally divided
2. all other will and wills by me heretofore made
3. are held and firmly bound...Gentleman Justices
4. and the uncertainty of the time thereof
5. at a Court held for
6. a true and perfect inventory
7. at such time or times as they shall be required to so do
8. being desirous to settle my worldly affairs
9. being sick and weak in body but of sound mind memory and understanding
10. being of sound mind but of infirm health
11. being in weak and sad state of health
12. being willing that the worldly Goods and Estates
13. but of sound and Perfect mind and memory
14. considering there the certainty of death
15. die with issue
16. do exhibit in the county court
17. disannulling, dissolving and voiding
18. do make or cause to be made
19. for them to well and timely administer
20. heirs and the heirs of those heirs forever
21. I do hereby appoint
22. I do hereby ordain, constitute and appoint
23. I give and [bequeath, devise]
24. I give and devise unto my loving wife
25. I give unto
26. I lend unto...for life only
27. in the name of God Amen, I
28. in testimony whereof I have here unto set my hand
29. in the manner and form following
30. in has pleased Almighty God to Bless me with
31. it is my will and desire
32. it is my will that my [lands, negroes, personal property, etc.] be sold
33. know all men by these presents
34. knowing the uncertainty of human life
35. make a true and just account of their actings
36. of all and singular the goods and chattels
37. pay and deliver all legacies
38. ratifying and confirming
39. residue of my estate
40. shall be disposed of as I shall hereinafter direct
41. that my executors to sell
42. the amount thereof be equally divided
43. the condition of this obligation is such that
44. thereby being ready to leave this world
45. the whole of my lands
46. therefore make and publish this my Last Will and Testament
47. to be equally divided between
48. to [her, him, etc.] and ...heirs forever
49. to have and to hold during the term of her natural life
50. to the sum of...current money
51. well and truly to be made
52. when it shall please God to Call me home
53. which have or shall come into possession [popsepsion]

Some Tidbits of Information

Lost Ancestor in the 1850's: If you have an ancestor who appears to have disappeared in the 1850's, try checking the 1850 California State Census. Over 50,000 people traveled overland to the gold fields while another went by ship. The 1852 State Census of California is especially valuable, as it asked for the person's residence. Most answered with the name of the state from which they came. By 1855, 23,000 of these people moved on or returned to their former homes.

- *The Illuminator*, Zion Gen. Soc., Vol 7. No. 2, via CCGS Newsletter

European Census: The first censuses for each of the following countries began:

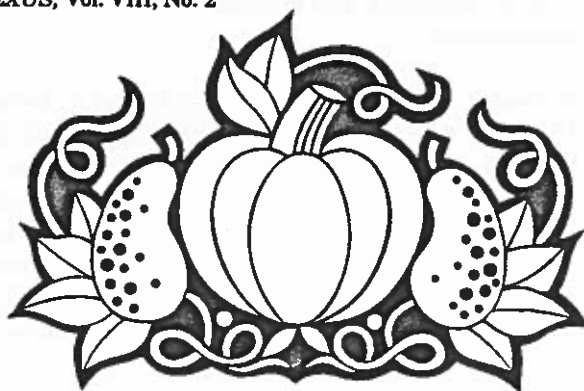
Austria	1815
Bavaria	1818
France	1801
Greece	1836
Norway	1815
Gr. Britain	1851
Prussia	1810
Russia	1897
Saxony	1815
Spain	1789
Sweden	1860
Switzerland	1860

- Saratoga Genealogical Society, via Dupage Co. Gen. Soc., via CCGS Newsletter

National Archives' Researcher Bulletin:

The National Archives will publish a quarterly *Researcher Bulletin* to inform the public about the movement of various records to the new Archives II facility in College Park, Maryland. The bulletin will also include information about the division of record groups between the downtown Washington building, Archives II and regional branches. The first issue was published this spring. For a free copy, write the Textual Reference Division (NNR), National Archives, Washington, DC 20408.

- *National Archives News Release*, 21 Feb. 1991, via NEHGS NEXUS, Vol. VIII, No. 2





Pictured at left is
Janet Jainschigg
and
Brian Stisser

MGS Community Activities

by Dick Sarr

One of our new board members, Charles Scribner, is a counselor for the Genealogy Merit Badge in Darien Troop 53. He recently invited Janet Jainschigg, our immediate past president, to meet with two merit badge candidates, to tell them about MGS, hear about their projects and have a general discussion.

Boy Scouts and Genealogy: Besides an outstanding program of outdoor activities, the Boy Scouts of America has an advancement program which enables a boy to move up through the ranks as high in scouting as his abilities and desires enable him to go. This program provides a forward moving series of tests and sets standards for passing them. It offers awards to the scout who meets the tests in the form of special badges. The earning of merit badges is an important part of this program. Merit badges encourage a scout to increase his skill in the things he likes to do. At the same time it challenges him to try other activities that may result in new interests or hobbies. Some have been known to start on their life work because of the interest generated from earning a merit badge.

Genealogy is one of 137 merit badges offered to scouts. To earn this or any other merit badge a scout must contact and work through a counselor. He is required to obtain and read the merit badge pamphlet on the subject. The counselor will guide him and make sure he understands all of the requirements, but the actual work is done by the scout.

While earning the genealogy merit badge a scout learns:

- the meaning of genealogy and genealogical resources;
- about the types of genealogical records and where these records may be found;
- about pedigree charts, family group record forms, time lines etc. and how to use them;
- how to evaluate and record genealogical information; how the development of computers, photography, microfilm and microfiche have influenced genealogy; and much more information covered by the ten requirements.

By the time a scout earns his genealogy merit badge he should have a pretty fair working knowledge of the subject.



HAPPY HALLOWEEN





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



Application for Membership

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

Single (\$10) _____

Couple (\$15) _____

Name _____

Address _____

Zip _____

Phone _____