



Middlesex Genealogical Society

Darien, CT Vol. XII No. 3

Summer, 1996

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.

Our Society is indeed fortunate to have Henry Hoff as a trustee; our Vice-President & Program director Geoffrey Blain had been having difficulty in getting a speaker for our Annual General Meeting on April 20th and Henry, who is a busy man (especially at this time of the year!) came to our rescue with his splendid talk on making better use of Genealogical periodicals, which I know that you all enjoyed .. and will put into practice! Geoffrey Blain has put a lot of effort into putting a fine program of speakers together for the next year so I hope you will support him by coming to our last meeting of the season on May 18th, when Howard Bird Jr of New Canaan will speak on "Publishing Your Family History"

This is the mid point in my term of office & as Dave Pollet, Lynn Hanks and our indefatigable Librarian Chic Scribner step down, we welcome new Board members George Jordan & Matthew Millar.

I would like to thank Florence Wyland for the wonderful job which she continues to do as Newsletter Editor. We have published extra issues this year & she has risen to the occasion. I have particularly enjoyed her two articles on her odyssey to find more about her Quaker ancestor John Bates, which she was reluctant to publish as she thought that they "weren't good enough" ! Please support her with articles of your own Genealogical searches ..the deadlines are three weeks before each general meeting.

David V. Bowley

MIDDLESEX GENEALOGY SOCIETY

MGS has grown to 124 members as of March 1, 1996. As we grow we continue to expand our services. Not only more CD Rom Disks, but also Books. Be sure to read the Presidents Message and the Library News by Chick Scribner for the details. The Board wishes you to continue to pass on your ideas for our future and any suggestions on purchases. Donations have helped us move forward and also your membership dues. Your financial support allows us to have the Family Search on CD Rom, our four general meetings a year and also your receiving your MGS Newsletter four times a year with up-to-date notices of what's going on in the world of Genealogy. We still have some outstanding membership dues, so please send them in as soon as possible.

ROBERT FATHERLEY MEMORIAL C.D. COLLECTION.

Middlesex Genealogical Society is pleased to announce that with the enthusiastic support of the Darien Library, the most generous donation made to the Society by Mrs Em Fatherley is being used to start a special collection of Genealogical CompactDisks, which can be read on the existing Family Search workstation. David Mordy is working on this project with the Library & any further contributions to this collection would be most welcome.

MIDDLESEX GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

**1996-1997
OFFICERS**

David Bowley	President
Geoffrey Blain	Vice-President
Karen Polett	Secretary
Ruth McGrath	Treasurer

MEMBERS at LARGE

Charles Cotter
George Jordan
Matthew Millar
David Mordy
Philip Morehouse
Donna Moughty
Marianne Sheldon
Dorothy Shillinglaw

Florence Wyland	Newsletter Editor
David Mordy	Computer Services Chairman
Richard Sarr	Publications Chairman

TRUSTEES

Mary Freedman
Henry Hoff
Thomas Kemp
Grant Radmall

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 \$15/individual and \$20/couple or family.

Original articles, notices of genealogical interest, and queries are welcomed for the newsletter.

Middlesex Genealogical Society
P.O. Box 1111
Darien, CT 06820

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

MAY 18, 1996 MGS

HOWARD BIRD, JR. of New Canaan will talk about his family research and the incorporation of the results into a published book. Howard & his family have lived all over the world. He is a trustee emeritus of the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation. He has been a visiting lecturer at more than thirty colleges and universities. Ray Bartlett, MGS past President, will lead this meeting as David Bowley is on a 4 week journey to London and Wales, where he was born.

OCTOBER 12, 1996, MGS

SUZANNE McVETTY will speak on **ELLIS ISLAND**. Suzanne is a board member of the Association of Professional Genealogists and has spoken to groups in America and abroad. She is entertaining, yet professionally reliable. One of her specialities is Ellis Island & Its Records.

NOVEMBER 16, 1996, MGS

ANN WILLIAMS will speak on **GRAVEYARDS**.

1997

FEBRUARY 8, 1997, MGS
WORKSHOP HENRY HOFF

APRIL 19, 1997 MGS

Annual General Meeting
NEW ENGLAND TOWN RECORDS
ANN SMITH LAINHART - Ann has been lecturing on the local and national level for 15 years. She is a member of the Association of Professional Genealogists, the Genealogical Speakers Guild, and several local genealogical societies.

MAY 17, 1997 MGS MEETING

All MGS meetings start at 2:00 pm

THE VISIT

by Florence Bates Wyland
(continued from Spring, 1996)

I recently spent eight days in London, England and the Visit couldn't have been more interesting and exciting. We spent every day at libraries, of course. I had joined the Society of Genealogists before I went so I had access to their records right away. The parish records are there in large bound books, a section for each county. Naturally, I concentrated on London/Middlesex and found many Bates. In fact some were back in the 1500's. I made as many copies as I could to study at home and try to put the pieces together later.

The most thrilling time was when on the fifth day, I finally found the Quaker Burying Ground. The Checquer Alley address I had been searching for, had been changed and the area is now called Bun Hill Burying Grounds. My daughter, Martha and I walked and walked, rode the tube, and finally came upon the area behind some other buildings, (now surrounded by high rise apartments.)

There was a small Friends Meeting House there and we knocked on the door; We were greeted warmly and ended up having a walking tour of the area from a wonderful, portly English gentleman who told us the stories and history of this place. He also had ancestors buried there. The area is just a square green of grass, with one very old tree in the center called a Plane Tree. There are no gravestones, as they don't use them as they are "plain people." There is one plaque put up in modern times to say that George Fox is buried there together with the twelve thousand other Friends. Our John Bates is buried there also, as he was among the thousands who died during the Great Fire of 1666. Finding this area has been my 15 year quest and I finally made the connection across the Atlantic, 11 generations back!

Our John Bates was a young man when he joined the Friends movement and he

attended meetings. "On the 21st of March, 1664 as they left a meeting, a Vintner of Smithfield marked many of them on the Back with Red-Oker as they came out of the Meeting-house, by which Mark he swore against them, though he knew not their faces: He acted this with much Levity and Derision. Upon his evidence the Justices sent twenty three of them to Newgate Prison. On the 22nd, at the Session at the Old-Bailey, ten of the said People received Sentence of Transportation to Jamaica, namely, Francis White, **John Bates**, Robert Thomas, John Gibson, George Pryor, Nicholas Bly, George Turkington, Anne Blow, Amy Walker, and Christopher Todd. And at the same Session Dorothy Adderton, a feme Covert, was sentenced to Bridewell." *

These people never made it to Jamaica, I'm sorry to say, but were thrown in the "nasty holes of Newgate Prison," where they lived through the horrible pestulance (plague of 1665) to die in the prison when it burned down in the Great Fire of London, 1666. Their bones were carried to the outer limits of the City and thrown in a hole in the ground and covered with dirt. This is what became the Bun Hill Fields Burying Ground.

Near by is the Methodist Cemetery, with monuments and markers where many famous people are buried such as John Bunyan, author of 'Pilgrims Progress', Daniel De-Foe author of 'Robinson Crusoe', Issac Watts, writer of many of the best known hymns in the English Language, Susanna Wesley mother of John Wesley founder of the Methodist Church. We visited the chapel where John Wesley preached, the founder of the Methodist Church. His mother had 19 children and their house was next door. The Methodists were also non-conformists and they also had to bury their people outside the City limits.

Martha and I found the original site of the Newgate Prison and some parts of a stone wall that was left. There is a plaque on the

wall of the new Old Bailey Court Building today, indicating that it was built on the original site of the old Newgate Prison. This is all across the street from St. Paul's Cathedral. The Cathedral had withstood the "blitz of 1940" when the Germans bombed London and most of the area around the Cathedral has been bombed to pieces, even though the large lead dome was 'ground zero' the enemy bombers missed it. Twelve Quaker Meeting Houses were hit and destroyed. Today, the Quakers (Friends) do much genuine social work helping the very poor of East London.

At the Museum of the City of London, they have preserved the door from the old prison. Outside the Museum one can walk around and see large parts of the ancient walls and towers built by the early Romans.

We researched at The Society of Genealogists; The Public Records Office (PRO), The Guildhall, The Friends Library, etc. Made copies wherever I could. Copies cost 10 pence a page, about \$.17 American. We did some hand copying also using only a pencil. The Guildhall told us, after much searching, that 1665-66 was too far back to have any original court records from the Old Bailey for that time period, and if there was anything, it would be on parchment, very little help, and written in Latin.

Hope you like hearing a little of what life was like in England in the seventeenth century. Our Visit to London in 1996 has enriched my life and broadened my knowledge of our history..... To come to the end of this part of the story, I believe my remaining BATES family emigrated to America that same year, 1665 and settled on Long Island to enjoy all the freedoms that the New World offered.

* from: A Collection of The Sufferings of The People Called Quakers, by Joseph Besse. 1753 (concluded)

SALT LAKE CITY RESEARCH TOUR October 27 - November 3, 1996

The New England Historic Genealogical Society's popular "Salt Lake City Research Tour" will be a week full of research, consultations with NEHGS staff, special group meals and activities. Research daily at the Family History Library while staying at the Salt Lake City Marriott, only 3 blocks from the Library. \$750 per person, double occupancy. For more information write to NEHGS Education Dept., 101 Newbury St., Boston MA 02116-3007. Space may be limited so register early.

CHILDREN'S GENEALOGY AT THE DARIEN LIBRARY

Did you know there were books at the Darien Library especially for young people who are interested in family research? To name a few:

Ancestor Hunting, Henriad J 929.1

Where Did You Get Those Eyes, Cooper J929.1

Roots for Kids, Genealogy Guide for Young People, Beller QJ 929.1

Who Do You Think You Are, Hilton J 929.1

Did You Know.....?

That a freeholder is a person who owns property rather than rents it.

That a husbandman is a farmer; a master of a family.

That a yeoman is a freeholder who works his own small estate; an attendant in a royal household; a rank below that of gentleman.

That a zax is a tool used for trimming slates used in roofing.

HALBERT'S LATEST TWIST TO THEIR OLD SCAM

by James L. Swarts

We recently discovered in our mail that those professional genealogical flim-flam artists from Bath, Ohio have put a new twist on their old snake medicine routine with a pitch from a supposed same surname individual for the same old phoney book they have been pushing for years.

For those new to genealogy who may not be familiar with Halbert's of Bath, Ohio (and their many pseudonyms) we provide a little background: For many years this company has been selling books it purports to be genealogies or family histories of almost every surname in the telephone book. All of their books are the same and include some basic genealogical research information and very elementary history lessons followed by pages of blank family group sheets with names and addresses of persons of the same surname that have been extracted from numerous phone books around the country. They then advise you to write to these persons who might, or might not, be related to you. All this bound in hard cover for \$27.50 plus shipping and handling.

In 1985 Sharon Taylor and Halbert's Inc. signed a consent agreement with the United States Postal Service "to refrain from soliciting money or property through the mail" after receiving a cease and desist order from the Postal Service Judicial Officer. In 1988 the Postal Service filed a petition against them alleging breach of the 1985 consent agreement. The respondents chose not to contest the complaint and again signed a consent agreement by which they agreed "to refrain from soliciting... under any name, through any corporation, or through any other device." So much for the power of consent agreements.

Anyway, with their current offering I received a letter supposedly written by one James M. Swarts whose address is %Halbert's in Bath, Ohio. Even if such a person exists, the letter is signed by William C. Forman over the typed name "James M. Swarts, i.a." (i.a. = in absentia.) The title for this book is The World Book of (Surname.) In 1988 they were using the title (Surname) Immigrants and Their New World Descendants. Although they may have changed the name, the game's the same.

Aside from everything else wrong with this offering was the fact the letter was addressed to the name I use for my telephone listing, not my correct name. Of course, that was the same mistake with their 1988 letter which I still have in my files. Believe it or not, the two letters are almost identical except for the change of letterhead, the title of the book, and a price increase.

So fellow genealogists, beware! "They're back!" Like the proverbial bad penny, I strongly recommend anyone receiving one of these mailings to either trash it or send it to the Postal Inspector requesting enforcement of the previous consent agreements. Whatever you do, don't waste your money on any offer from Halbert's.

From the Rochester Genie Society, Vol 12, #3 Fall 1991.

JULY 12-13, 1996 **NEHGS**

The New England Historic Genealogical Society presents the annual **New England Summer Conference** for genealogists, co-sponsored by the Connecticut Society of Genealogists at the Hartford Marriott Hotel in Farmington, CT, 15 Farm Springs Road, Farmington, CT. For more information, call NEHGS at (617)536-5740, ext. 202.

RESEARCH IN RHYME

I started out calmly tracing my tree
To find, if I Could, the makings of me.
And all that I had was great grandfather's name,
Not knowing his wife or from which way he came.

I chased him across a long line of states,
And came up with pages and pages of dates,
When all put together it made me forlorn,
I'd proved poor great grandpa had never been born.

One day I was sure the truth I had found,
Determined to turn this whole thing upside down.
I looked up the records of one Uncle John,
But found the old man to be younger than his son.

Then when my hopes were fast growing dim,
I came across records that must have been him.
The facts I collected then made me quite sad,
Dear old great grandfather was never a Dad.

I think maybe someone is pulling my leg,
I'm not at all sure I wasn't hatched from an egg.
After hundreds of dollars I've spent on my tree,
I can't help but wonder if I'm really me.

by Mrs. Chas. Dean (From Keys to the Past, WA Vol. 8, #1)

Books by Diane Snyder Ptak

Certified American Lineage Specialist

Cast In Stone: Selected Albany, Rensselaer and Saratoga County Burials

A Collection of 8,500 burial records from 122 cemeteries. Maps & index included. - US\$38.00

A Passage in Time: The Ships that Brought Our Ancestors includes a history of immigrant ships 1700 to 1940 and an extensive bibliography of ship-related texts, libraries, etc. A key finding aid to uncovering descriptions and the history of ships. - US\$13.00

A Compilation of American and Canadian Passenger/Emigration Registers Searching for the elusive passenger list, 1620-1930, is made easy with this bibliography organized by time period. Sample passenger lists are included. - US\$13.00

Lost and Found: Albany (NY) Area Church and Synagogue Vital Record Compendium Names, dates and locations of birth, baptism, marriage, death and burial records (if known) for more than 110 houses of worship in Albany and Rensselaer Counties and some surrounding townships. Roman Catholic vital statistics are included. - US\$12.00

Surnames: Their Meanings and Origins

The major types of surnames are described with examples and spelling variations. Locating the ancestral origins is made more efficient with the 25 nationwide name and emigrant lists that identify origins and locations of a surname. A must for the novice or advanced researcher. - US\$12.00

The American Loyalists: Origins and Nominal Lists Master alphabetical listing of all Loyalist biographical and military source materials and their respective availability. Sources from all the original colonies as well as Ontario and the eastern Canadian provinces are included. A master roster of all the original Loyalist Canadian lands also makes its debut. General mid-eighteenth century sources with family details are also included. This is a must for anyone researching loyalist families and pre-Revolutionary War records. - US\$14.65

Diane Snyder Ptak researches in all US states and Europe. Specialties- Mid-Atlantic and New England States -Ireland, Germany, England, Loyalists, etc. -Military Records and Military Biographical Records -Passenger Lists -Conditions on the Ship of the Immigrant Ancestor -Challenging Cases. Visits NYS Library and Archives, National Archives, Mormon Library, Cemeteries, Court Houses, etc. Estate Heir Researcher, Prepares Lineage Papers, Author, Lecturer; 15 Years Experience.

Call for more information:

Diane Snyder Ptak
12 Tyce Rd., Albany NY 12203
Phone (518) 456-3370

CANADA

INTERNET ADDRESS OF:

ONTARIO CEMETERY FINDING AID
<http://www.islandnet.com/homepage.html>
Over one million names in this data base.
Has the ability to search for given name.



LOOKING FOR SEELEY & MATHERS IN CONNECTICUT AND IOWA

Royce M. CHAMBERS is looking for any family relationship between his second wife's great grandfather, ELI SEELEY, originally from Fairfield County, CT and any of the SEELEYS of Fairfield County, who show as descendants of Rev. Richard MATHER.

ELI SEELEY was an early day pioneer who in 1841 "entered a section" of land near the present town of Primrose, Iowa in Harrison Township. George Seeley, one of Eli's sons (never married) was one of six children of Eli and Martha Seeley. The others were Lucy, Marietta, Thodore, Ada and William. A son Anthony died in infancy.

The family fortune was built by Eli Seeley who was born in Fairfield County, Connecticut in 1813, and went as a pioneer to Lee County, Iowa in 1841. He secured a quarter section of land and then returned to Connecticut. When he went back to Iowa two years later, he broke 40 acres of sod on his claim, built a house and enclosed his land with a fence. The following spring he bought 900 sheep in Pennsylvania and drove them across Ohio, Indiana and Illinois, crossing the Mississippi on the old ferry at Fort Madison.

The following year, 1845 he married Martha Beeler whose parents settled in Lee county in 1836. Her father was from Virginia, and was a veteran of the War of 1812.

Eli Seeley's sheep prospered and his other ventures as well. His land holdings swelled to 1600 acres in Lee County, and elsewhere it totalled more than 3,000 acres. His farm home was one of the finest farm homes in southeast Iowa, and he was known as one of the wealthiest men in Lee County. When he died in 1896 he was 83 years old. His son George, inherited part of the estate but died the following year in Texas. His last request was to enlarge and beautify the

Sharon Presbyterian Church and cemetery of which he left a fund for this purpose.

Source: From the editorial page of the Fort Madison, Iowa Democrat, Monday November 16, 1964.....

The Descendants of The Rev. Richard Mather that married persons named Seeley who could have been related to our subject, Eli SEELEY of Fairfield County, CT.

1. 2-12-1822, Abigail Seeley married David Selleck of DARIEN, CT. He was a son of one Charles Sellick and wife Hannah Mather, daughter of Deacon Joseph MATHER and wife Sarah Scott m. 5-27-1777. This Joseph was one of the sons of The Rev. Moses MATHER.

2. Edith Adelia Mather (a twin) b.11-10-1854 d. 7-16-1926 married Edward Oliver SEELEY 2-1-1880. Edith was the daughter of Nathaniel Oliver Mather; son of Francis William Mather of Chautauqua, New York; son of Nathaniel MATHER of Lyme, CT.

3. Betsey A. Waterbury, b. 9-20-1835 at DARIEN, CT married Oscar Seeley of DARIEN, CT 9-19-1858. Betsey was the daughter of Charles Waterbury and Emily Sellick of Darien, CT, married 10-25-1830, and Emily Sellick was the daughter of David Sellick and Hannah MATHER of DARIEN, CT.

4. Albert M. Seeley, b. 7-24-1860, was the son of Betsey Waterbury and Oscar Seeley of Darien, CT. We do not know if he married or had any children.

If anyone can add any information to this story, please write to ROYCE M. CHAMBERS, 2959 Sylvan Lane, St. Charles MO 63301. (314)723-5728 or talk to David Bowley.

Note: This query was referred to MGS by the Darien Chamber of Commerce.

Deadline
for next
NEWSLETTER
September 24th



Ever wonder how to put it all together?
Come and find out!

DARIEN LIBRARY

at the

HOWARD BIRD, JR.

The speaker will be

"FAMILY RESEARCH AND PUBLISHING A BOOK"

May 18, 1996 at 2 PM

Mark Your Calendars



Middlesex Genealogical Society
PO Box 1111
Darien CT 06820-1111

