

Middlesex Genealogical Society

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Darien, Fairfield County, CT

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

For me, one of the intriguing aspects of family history research is the connection to history in a broader sense. Two years ago I was developing the threads of New England ancestors who were among the settlers of Hartford, Saybrook, Old Lyme, Norwich, and New London. The family history brought Connecticut's history to life and made it seem relevant and fascinating to me. If it were not for the family connection, I would not have been motivated to read about the French and Indian War, and would not have studied Connecticut's Royal Charter of 1662.

As another example, the role of the Erie Canal in westward migration became far more interesting to me when I explored the connection with my own ancestors.

Currently, I am working on a Virginia-Kentucky branch of my family, which has led me to read about Daniel Boone and other neighbors who were pioneers in that area. One of my relatives was indicted for conspiracy with Aaron Burr and, after conviction, was sentenced to *three hours* in jail. Burr, who had been Vice President of the United States under Jefferson, was tried and acquitted. I am sure that there is a lot more to this story, and perhaps I can discover which of my relatives were heroes, villains or just onlookers to interesting episodes of history.

Finding connections to history has become one of the goals of my family research. I recommend it to everyone as something that makes the effort more fun.

David L. Mordy

□



A LETTER TO EMELINE

From Emeline Fatherley's grandfather Charles Swann Walker, reflecting on what her life will be like in 1998 when she will reach his age of 85 years.

Stamford, Conn.

July 11, 1931

My dear Emeline,

I cannot be content merely to send you a birthday card of congratulations on this, your 18th birthday. The summer that preceded my 18th birthday marked for me the beginning of a great adventure of the outcome of which I had no idea at that time. I only did what I believed I ought to do. The result was that I have received thousands of dollars in pension money, that it led to my college education and the prolongation of my life for scores of years.

So you have now become a woman, and upon what you are now doing will depend results of great import. Do that which you know to be right and a glorious future will be yours. You should live to be as old as I am. What then will you be doing in the year 1998 when you will be 85 years old? Your life is yours. Keep on growing.

Sir Harry Lauder contributes this for your inspiration:

Keep right on to the end of the road,

Keep right on to the end.

If the way be rough, let your heart be strong.

Keep right on round the bend,

Though you're tired and weary, still journey

Till you come to that happy abode

Where all you've loved and been longing for

Will be there, at the end of the road.

Grandpa

□

MIDDLESEX GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

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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 Darien Library and publishes a quarterly newsletter. Annual membership dues are \$15 per individual and \$20 per couple or family.

Original notices of genealogical interest and queries are welcomed for publication in the *Newsletter*.

Middlesex Genealogical Society
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<http://www.darien.lib.ct.us/mgs>

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UPCOMING MGS MEETINGS MARK YOUR CALENDARS

14 NOVEMBER 1998: Our speaker will be **ROGER JOSLYN**, who is a Fellow of the American Society of Genealogists and of the Utah Genealogical Association and has received an Award of Merit from the Association of Professional Genealogists and a Certificate of Appreciation from the Federation of Genealogical Societies. His talk is entitled **"THREE FEMALES 10 TO 16; MAKING SENSE OF THE PRE-1850 CENSUSES."**

6 FEBRUARY 1999: ANNUAL WORKSHOP and INTERNET WORKSHOP, jointly sponsored by MGS and Darien Library.

10 APRIL 1999: ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING. Speaker to be announced.

15 MAY 1999: Speaker to be announced.

ALL MEETINGS: SATURDAY, 2:00 PM, DARIEN LIBRARY. COME, AND BRING A FRIEND! □

REMEMBER: EVERY SATURDAY, 10:00 AM TO 12:00 NOON, AN MGS VOLUNTEER IS WAITING AT DARIEN LIBRARY TO HELP YOU WITH YOUR RESEARCH.

JANE EDMUNDSON JOINS THE MGS BOARD

At its meeting 20 October 1998 the MGS Board of Directors elected Jane Edmundson to fill a vacancy on the board. □

TITHE MAPS PROJECT IN THE UK

A collaborative effort was launched in August by the Public Record Office of the United Kingdom involving national and local archives in England and Wales. The first project to be undertaken concentrates on tithe maps and related documents, such as apportionments and files. At present, these items are deteriorating because of heavy use by genealogists, local historians, academic researchers, etc. The collaborative effort is aimed at preservation, while still making the records widely available to users in a surrogate form (e.g., microfilm, electronic). The pilot project, which began in August, is directed at the tithe records of Rutland. At the same time, two working groups are looking into the technical issues to be resolved and the administrative and practical requirements of organizing the national effort. □

MY EXPERIENCES AT THE FAMILY HISTORY LIBRARY IN SALT LAKE CITY

by Diantha Bartlett Howard

Recently I had the good fortune to visit Salt Lake City and was able to spend some hours in the LDS Family History Library there. It is the largest genealogical library in the world, with four floors open to researchers: U.S. and Canadian Books, U.S. and Canadian Microfilms and Microfiches, British Isles Books and Microforms, and a floor for all other countries.

I have never seen so many microfilm readers (625)! There are several computers on each floor as well, with the *FamilySearch* software (IGI, Ancestral File and Library Catalog). There are also self-service copying facilities on each floor (5¢ for book pages, 20¢ for microfilm pages). There is an orientation room on the main floor where presentations are given to new users, and helpful personnel are stationed throughout the library.

Before going I had found a site on the Internet with a helpful "Guide to the LDS Family History Library" at:

<http://www1.jewishgen.org/infofiles/lds-slc.txt>

This guide describes the setup of the library, as well as giving information about the surrounding area. Also, before the trip I used the Library Catalog of the *FamilySearch* software to identify call numbers of books and microfilms that I wanted to use. This saved me a lot of time when I got to Salt Lake City.

I had decided to concentrate on my English and Nova Scotian ancestry, as those records are the most inaccessible to me. For England I identified mainly parish register transcripts and census returns on microfilms. For Nova Scotia I identified church records, probate files, and some books dealing with Yarmouth County.

I was at the library nearly 10 hours, which went by all too quickly. I found the quality of the microfilms varied. For the parish register transcripts, the film sometimes missed the right-hand edge of the page. I did, however, find some information in the transcripts that was not in the IGI (which includes information extracted from the transcripts). Often the residence was mentioned if in a different parish, and sometimes occupation. The marriage records

often included the names of witnesses whose identity suggested the correct family. There were also some records of burials, although not as many as I had hoped, and, often, they did not give the age of the person. The library also contained a helpful series on locating probate records for England. Unfortunately, most of the probate records for southwest Devonshire were destroyed by Nazi bombing during World War II.

For Nova Scotia I did have a breakthrough in my research. I found a book with the 1838 Census listing of heads of families for Digby County. Because of age categories, I identified the father of my Barnaby Barnes, born ca 1819, as one of two men. Then, in probate records I "hit the jackpot." I found the probate records for my great-great-great uncle Kingsley Tibbets of Plympton, son of John and Margaret (Melanson) Tibbetts. (I have been searching for John and Margaret's parents for years.) Several family members gave depositions, including John's uncle Kingsley Melanson. I had already been alerted to a Maximin Melanson of that town whose several children included a Margaret (born the correct year), and Kingsley. In the library I found church records that took me back two more generations, and into the era of Acadian records, many of which are published and at our university library.

I wish I had had more time at the library. I didn't have the chance to check all the records I had hoped to check, nor did I have the time to ask the library staff for advice on how best to proceed from here. All in all, however, it was a good experience and one that I hope to repeat. □

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN GOING TO THE FAMILY HISTORY LIBRARY WITH OTHER MGS MEMBERS?

Researching in the Family History Library is an extraordinary experience for any genealogist. MGS vice president Donna Moughty has volunteered to explore the possibility of organizing a trip to Salt Lake City, perhaps next fall, for the purpose of doing genealogical research. If interested, *please let Donna know*. She can be reached via e-mail at:

moughty@apple.com

or by telephone at (203) 359-1113. □

A TALE OF THREE COUNTIES

Our active season opened 17 October with an illuminating talk by Joan Morales entitled "A Tale of Three Counties [Green, Delaware and Schoharie, NY]: Migration Along the Susquehanna Turnpike."

The Susquehanna Turnpike was begun as a business in 1800 and ran from Salisbury, CT, to Wattles Ferry on the Susquehanna River. Although standards for the road (e.g., width and surface material) were established by government, its construction and maintenance were in private hands and those who used it were charged a fee by the owners of the turnpike business. A number of turnpikes were built by private organizations in the early 1800s because government was reluctant to assume the responsibility and expense of road building and maintenance.

Nevertheless, the Susquehanna Turnpike was a huge improvement over the old Indian trails it replaced, which were narrow, as well as being quite steep in places. Families moving west could carry their belongings in wagons, rather than on pack animals—or on their backs. Turnpikes remained an important link in westward migration until the Erie Canal and railroads were built.

Migration west became heavy as new families were established and sought land of their own to farm. Much of this migration went through New York State. Some of the migrants settled in New York; some simply tarried a while before moving on to Ohio or Michigan. In any event, from 1800 to 1810, while Connecticut's population remained steady, New York State's doubled.

Those researching migrants who used this route to move west need to keep a few things in mind:

- The boundaries of Green, Delaware and Schoharie Counties (the three counties covered in Joan's presentation) changed over time.
- They were also split. Today there are *more* than three counties in the area described.
- Towns along this route that were thriving communities in the early 1800s may be empty shells today.
- A town's name may have changed.
- A town may have been in several different counties over time.

All of which can make it very difficult to even decide where to look.

Joan recommends creating a timeline for your ancestors so that you know where they were and what they had to contend with at various times. Then, learn all that you can about the history of the area your ancestors were in or passing through so that you can determine which organization might have the records of interest to you. Towns in New York State usually have town historians, and consulting them can turn up useful information. Check town, church, court, property and board of supervisors records, and remember that these are not generally indexed so be patient. No one ever said it would be easy! □

TORREY AS A FINDING AID

by David Mordy

Have you ever wanted to find all the books in the library that refer to a particular ancestor? We have no database that enables us to do that. There is, however, a New England finding aid that goes a long way in that direction. It is the 10-volume manuscript of the book *New England Marriages Prior to 1700* by Clarence Almon Torrey, which is available as a reference at the New England Historic Genealogical Society in Boston. For any name, this manuscript shows cross references to many or most of the other books in the library that mention the name. The widely published volume of Torrey (which is at Darien Library) contains only names and marriage dates, without the cross references that might lead you to additional sources. □

PHILADELPHIA ARCHIVES AND RECORDS CENTER MOVE

The move of the Philadelphia City Archives, the City Records Center and the Registry of Wills Archives to their new home at 3103 Market Street, Philadelphia, scheduled for early October, should now be complete. According to Deputy Records Commissioner David Weinberg, "The new facility is equipped with comfortable and well designed reading rooms, ample space for individual research, network capability to access the Internet, integration of the City Archives, City Records Center, and the Registry of Wills Archives into a single service location, and easy access via SEPTA (the regional rail system) and Amtrak." □

COMPUTER CORNER

by David V. Bowley

Mailing Lists...sounds boring. Properly employed, however, these lists can bring rich rewards for genealogists using e-mail and the Internet. For example, I recently joined the Sussex, England, mailing list to try to get more information on RAPLEY and LEPPARD.

Most such mailing lists are associated with RootsWeb and have an address similar to:

SUSSEX-PLUS-D@rootsweb.com

To subscribe, all you do is enter the address in the "To" box on the e-mail form on your screen and type the word "subscribe" in the text box, *nothing else*. The "D" in front of the "rootsweb" is important as this brings you a daily digest or index of messages rather than say 10 complete messages, nine of which you may not wish to read. If you don't find the list useful or are going on a three-week vacation, turn the list off by sending the message "unsubscribe" to the same address that you used to subscribe.

When you join the list, you introduce yourself and tell the list members what your interests are by surname, place and time period. I put RAPLEY and LEPPARD in my first post and almost immediately got a response from a Leppard in Cheltenham, England. We exchanged e-mails and soon found that we were related. He has sent me his family tree and also an old Leppard will. The very next day I spotted a message from a lady in New Zealand who said she was going through a microfilm of Kirdford Church in Sussex where my great-great-grandparent Rapleys lie buried. I asked the New Zealander to watch out for the name Rapley, and she replied with a list of Rapleys from the baptismal and marriage registers saying that she had already written them down as *she* was a Rapley descendant. We haven't yet established any connection, but she was able to verify three of the marriage dates that I had.

There is big news from LDS. They have just announced that they have released two sets of compact disks for sale to the general public. Each of these sets contains almost five mil-

lion names. The first is *British Vital Records Index (1538-1888)*, item #50028, five CDs, \$15. Four of these CDs contain birth and christening records; the fifth one lists marriages. The second set is *North American Vital Records Index (1620-1888)*, item #50029, seven CDs, \$19 (currently back-ordered). Six of these CDs contain marriage records; the seventh lists births and christenings. Another LDS CD now available to the general public is the *Family History Source Guide*, item #50176. At \$10 it is a bargain.

Paul Smith, a physician in the UK, has assembled a long list of "Archaic Medical Terms for Genealogists," along with their definitions, at:

<http://www.gpiag-asthma.org/drpsmith/amt1.htm>

This is a work in progress that continues to expand, but it already contains an enormous amount of information. A recent printout is 20 pages long!

A 19-page genealogy dictionary is available on the web at:

<http://www.electriciti.com/~dotts/diction.html>

Anyone who has ever pondered the meaning of words found in old records will find this useful.

A handy chart that will allow you to approximate a birth year for anyone in the 1850-1920 federal censuses is available at:

<http://www.genrecords.com/library/birthyear.htm>

A chart that achieves the same purpose for the 1790-1840 federal censuses can be found at a linked site:

<http://www.genrecords.com/library/birthyear2.htm>

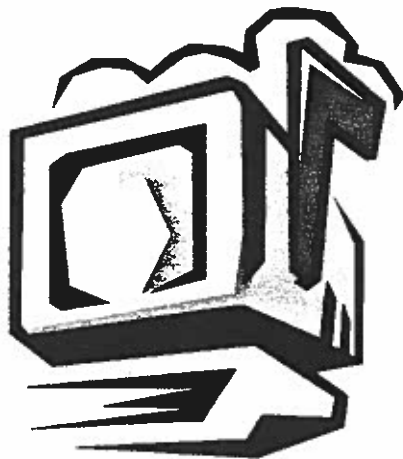
The General Register Office for Scotland at:

<http://www.open.gov.uk/gros/groshome.htm>

has just added the 1891 Census to its Scots Origins database.

And, finally, the MGS board has asked Darien Library to review the possibility of buying access to Ancestry databases, which can be found at ancestry.com. These databases are being added to daily and are a great Internet resource for genealogists. We have also asked for improved facilities for reading genealogical CDs on a library workstation. This will allow us to read disks such as the PERSI index

on CD, and will encourage people to donate disks that they own but use infrequently. □



UPCOMING SEMINARS

New England Historic Genealogical Society has announced several upcoming programs that are sure to be of interest:

- "Dating Your Family Photographs" with Nancy Rexford who spoke so informatively and entertainingly at Genealogy Seminar 98 in Greenwich last February, Saturday, 23 January 1999, at NEHGS, 101 Newbury Street, Boston, MA.
- "English Family History for Americans: An In-Depth Research Program on the Origins of English Surnames" with Dr. George Redmonds who is a noted English surnames and place-names expert, 13-15 February 1999 at the Orange County Hilton in Irvine, CA. Dr. Redmonds will use original sources such as parish records, manorial and court records, maps and diaries to shed light on the often great amount of information that can be gleaned from a surname. Consultations with NEHGS staff will be available.
- Weekend Seminar in Lakeland, Florida, at the Four Points Sheraton Hotel, 19-20 February 1999. Lectures will be on a variety of topics, such as research techniques and methodology, by both NEHGS staff and guest speakers.
- NEHGS Research Program to Washington, D.C., 25 March to 1 April, 1999. A variety of activities is planned, including visits to the National Archives, National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) Library, and the Library of Congress. NEHGS staff genealogists Scott Andrew Bartley, David Allen Lambert, Gary Boyd Roberts, and Henry Hoff (C.G., F.A.S.G.) will be available at these sites for individual assistance and scheduled personal research consultations. Staff from the National Archives, the DAR Library and the Library of Congress will give orientation lectures at the beginning of the week to acquaint you with the rich resources available.

Advance registration is required for all of these programs. For more information, call the NEHGS Education Department, toll-free, at 1-888-AT-NEHGS. You might also want to visit their website at: www.nehgs.org

National Genealogical Society 1999 Conference in the States will take place in Richmond, VA,

during May 1999 and will be hosted by the Virginia Genealogical Society. For more information, visit their website at:

<http://www.genealogy.org/~ngs/> □

PROPOSED DESTRUCTION OF CANADIAN CENSUS RECORDS

New England Historic Genealogical Society has received a number of letters on this subject in recent weeks and has posted one example under "Hot Topics" at their website: www.nehgs.org

Apparently, Statistics Canada has decided that the 1901 census is the *last* one that will ever be made public. If Statistics Canada has its way, the 1911 census, which normally would be released to the public in 2003, will *never* become available to researchers, nor will any subsequent censuses.

The issue is privacy, even though the hold-before-release period in Canada is 92 years, 20 years *longer* than in the USA. The Office of Privacy Commissioner actually hoped to have the 1911 census records destroyed, but the National Archives of Canada has *so far* refused to approve. Nevertheless, Statistics Canada has decided *not* to transfer custody and control of the 1911 census records to the National Archives of Canada in 2003, as they are scheduled to do, so the records remain at considerable risk.

The letter posted by NEHGS is an appeal by a Canadian citizen for help and support from citizens of *both* Canada *and* the United States in protecting Canadian census records and insuring eventual access to them by researchers. The writer suggests that you make your shock and dismay known to:

- Dr. Ivan Fellegi, Chief Statistician, Statistics Canada, 120 Parkdale Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A6, Canada. E-mail: fellegi@statcan.ca
- Hon. John Manley, PC, MP, Minister of Industry (to whom Statistics Canada reports), The House of Commons, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A6, Canada. E-mail: Manley.J@parl.gc.ca
- Hon. Sheila Copps, PC, MP, Minister of Heritage, The House of Commons, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A6, Canada. E-mail: Copps.S@parl.gc.ca

Remember, if we do not help, we cannot criticize or complain. □

SOME CONNECTICUT SURNAMES

BOOTH, Joshua	b 16 May 1697	Enfield, Hartford Co., CT>East Windsor (Ellington), Hartford Co., CT
" Oliver, Sr.	b 29 Dec. 1725	Enfield, Hartford Co., CT>Lempster, Sullivan Co., NH
" Simeon	b 10 May 1641	England>Saco, York Co., ME>Enfield, Hartford Co., CT
" William	b 1664	prob Saco, York Co., ME>Enfield, Hartford Co., CT
FROST, Daniel	b ca 1613	Nottingham, Notts., Eng.>Fairfield, Fairfield Co., CT
" Rebecca	b 1640	Fairfield, Fairfield Co., CT>Enfield, Hartford Co., CT (m Simeon BOOTH 5 Jan. 1663/64)
GRANT, Ruth	b 26 Feb. 1701/02	Enfield, Hartford Co., CT>East Windsor (Ellington) Hartford Co., CT (m Joshua BOOTH 5 Sept. 1722)
HEBARD, Lydia	b 6 Oct. 1788	Windham, Windham Co., CT>Randolph, Orange Co., VT (m Simeon BOOTH 28 Mar. 1816)
INGHAM, Ruth	b 1722	Saybrook, Middlesex Co., CT>Lempster, Sullivan Co., NH (m Oliver BOOTH Sr. ca 1750)

Submitter: Dorothy Shillinglaw

Note: a = arrived; b = born; ca = about; m = married, prob = probably.

**Deadline for next Newsletter
12 January 1999**



Middlesex Genealogical Society
PO Box 1111
Darien CT 06820-1111

MEETING
14 NOV. 1998, 2 P.M.
DARIEN LIBRARY

