



Middlesex Genealogical Society

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Perhaps it should come as no surprise, but I continue to be struck by the fact that I am so unknowing about people, places and things that relate to family history. Genealogical activities point up all the things that I should have known and didn't, so discovering these things is a pleasant surprise.

Recently a family member showed me two old birth certificates from our family, and they proved interesting not just for the names, dates and places, but also for the art. These certificates dated from 1792 and 1812, and were decorated with hand-colored hearts, angels, flowers and birds.

After a little checking, I discovered that this type of art is called Fraktur, after a type of German lettering, and this art on baptismal certificates was popular all during the 1800s among German settlers in Pennsylvania and other places. There have been a number of books written about Fraktur and the artists who did this work. In many cases the style of the artwork makes it possible to identify a specific artist. Antique collectors are interested in this art.

I have recently seen similar artwork displayed at a Shaker museum in Massachusetts, although I am not aware of any historic connection between the Shakers and the Pennsylvania Germans.

All of this goes to prove that genealogy is broad enough to incorporate things of interest not just to the analytical mind but to the artistic instinct as well.

As we start our fall season for the year 2000, I wish all readers happy hunting in their family history and trust that you will find a few interesting and curious surprises during your search.

David L. Mordy

MGS VOLUNTEERS AT WORK

by Jane Edmundson

Middlesex Genealogical Society volunteers, who stand ready to help genealogical researchers by appointment, have answered several requests over the summer resulting in productive meetings. One request was an emergency call from a visitor to Darien who was about to leave for Ireland. An MGS volunteer who has made several research trips to Ireland was called and a message left. The telephone message was relayed to her while she was doing research in Salt Lake City, and she was able to connect with the family before their departure for Ireland. Another caller was surprised to learn that his potential MGS helper was a personal friend with whom he was to have lunch the following day. You never know where help may come from, but if you or a friend have a problem in your family research or in using the computers in the Genealogy Room at Darien Library, an appointment for help can be made through the Information Desk at the library, 655-1234, ext. 114.

If you would like to *be* a volunteer, please call the Information Desk and leave your name, telephone number, and your area of experience or expertise. As announced last winter, the Saturday morning workshop program has been changed to a system of "help by appointment," and we hope that those who can use help will feel free to call the Information Desk to arrange for a mutually convenient time to meet with a volunteer at the library. Genealogists are generally a generous group in sharing their time and knowledge, and this program is in that tradition, whether you are giving or receiving help.



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*.

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UPCOMING MGS MEETINGS MARK YOUR CALENDARS

14 OCTOBER 2000: MELDON J. WOLFGANG III will be our speaker. Newspapers are surprisingly good sources for certain time periods, and he will talk to us about **USING NEWSPAPERS FOR RESEARCH**.

Well known for his entertaining, insightful and enthusiastic presentations, each jam-packed with information, Mel Wolfgang draws upon research experiences spanning more than a quarter of a century. A former teacher, author and local government official, he is now the owner and proprietor of Martlet Books, a rare and antiquarian bookshop in Pittsfield, MA. He is also the founder and owner of Jonathan Sheppard Books, publishers of U.S. and European map reprints for genealogists and historians. He has been a speaker at several NGS and FGS annual conferences and has spoken at seminars and meetings arranged by the American Society of Genealogists, the New England Historic Genealogical Society, the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society, the New Jersey Historical Society, Palatines to America, and a host of other regional and local groups.

18 NOVEMBER 2000: FREDERICK C. HART JR., CG, of Guilford will be our speaker. Focusing on the Colonial period, his talk is entitled **"CRUISING LONG ISLAND SOUND: TRACING ITS EARLY FAMILIES WITH A REGIONAL VIEW."**

Fred Hart is a lifelong resident of the Long Island Sound area, and is also a professional genealogist specializing in Connecticut families. He is active in several genealogical organizations and has authored numerous journal articles concerning New England families and subjects.

27 JANUARY 2001: ANNUAL WORKSHOP and INTERNET WORKSHOP jointly sponsored by MGS and Darien Library.

31 MARCH 2001: Speaker to be announced.

19 MAY 2001: Speaker to be announced.

ALL MEETINGS SATURDAY, 2 PM, AT DARIEN LIBRARY. COME, AND BRING A FRIEND! ■

HENRY B. HOFF JOINS SCENIC AMERICA

Henry Hoff, an MGS trustee since 1989, has become Director of Development at Scenic America, a national scenic conservation organization located in Washington, DC. Henry remains a consulting editor of *The New York Genealogical and Biographical Record* and a contributing editor of *The American Genealogist*. ■

THE AMERICAN BRANCH OF THE BONAPARTE FAMILY

by Charles Cotter

"Hooray!" silently exulted Miss Elizabeth Patterson as she marched down the aisle on the arm of Jerome Bonaparte¹, brother of Napoleon who was a leader of the French and soon to be hereditary Emperor of France and all its conquests. The marriage took place in Baltimore on 24 December 1803; she was 18 and he a year older.

"I do," intoned Jerome at the altar (trusting his brother would be in a good mood when Jerome returned to France).

"Provided it lasts," muttered William Patterson, father of the bride, arms merchant during the revolution, and now one of the richest men in the state of Maryland, thereby anticipating Laetitia Bonaparte's comment, "Pourvu que ca dure," at her own son's coronation. William Patterson did what he could to secure the marriage, which was performed by the highest Catholic ecclesiastic in the United States.

Jerome had been touring the French possessions in the Carribean and when his ship became separated from the fleet on the return trip, it put in at Baltimore to avoid British Navy patrols. There, he met Elizabeth, a southern belle already "famous for her beauty, ambitious and as headstrong as she was beautiful," who set out to make the catch of the season.

True to form, Napoleon refused to recognize the marriage and ordered his brother to return alone. When the truant finally did return in 1805, however, he was accompanied by his bride on a ship belonging to his father-in-law. He debarked alone in Lisbon and proceeded to Alessandria in northern Italy, where he failed to get the consent of his brother who petitioned Pious VII for an annulment. When the latter refused, Napoleon prevailed on the French Council of State to denounce the marriage, but, of course, this did not change matters for the church, nor did it have any effect in the United States.

Nevertheless, Jerome was married off shortly thereafter to Princess Catherine of Wurtemberg and became King of Westphalia, where he proceeded to deplete the treasury with his extravagances and earn the sobriquet "the jovial king." He served with the Imperial Army and, in the Russian campaign, was ordered to execute an encircling maneuver that might

have changed the course of the campaign if it had succeeded.

The operation failed, some suggest due to a lack of energetic prosecution on Jerome's part, and he was placed under the tutelage of Marshal Davout. Still, he persisted in his military career and led a division at Waterloo where he performed well. The Westphalians tossed him out after the battle, and he vegetated until his return to France in 1847 as the political tide began to turn in favor of Louis Napoleon Bonaparte who was to become Emperor in 1852. He became successively Governor of the Invalides, Marshal of France, and President of the Senate. He died in 1860, a late bloomer without doubt.

In the meantime, Elizabeth, whom we left on the banks of the Tagus, was not so easily discouraged. Forbidden to land on the continent, she sailed on to England. There, she gave birth on 1 July 1805 to Jerome Napoleon Bonaparte² and then returned to Baltimore. The Emperor allotted her a pension of 60,000 francs a year, provided she would drop the name Bonaparte and stay away, which she refused to do.

She remained in Baltimore until 1815, when she divorced Jerome by special act of the Maryland legislature, and then departed forthwith to Paris where she became the toast of the most exclusive salons "for her extraordinary beauty, caustic wit, and [aura] of Brummagen royalty that surrounded her" (G. S. Gansmer). She spent lavishly to educate her son and maintain her position in society, yet she invested carefully.

After her fling, she lived obscurely in a Baltimore boarding house for the last 18 years of her life, accumulating nearly \$2 million, thanks to her financial acumen. She left the money to her grandsons when she died in 1879, her own son having been a bit of a disappointment. (The purchasing power of such a sum would amount to at least \$20 million today.)

Her son, Jerome Napoleon Bonaparte² (1803-1870), kept in touch with his father, the King, but resided mainly in Baltimore. He married Susan Williams who bore him two sons, Jerome Napoleon Bonaparte³ (1830-1893) and Charles Joseph Bonaparte (1851-1928). Jerome Bonaparte graduated from West Point and served in the U.S. Army, but resigned his commission to become an officer in the French Army where he saw plenty of hard fighting in the

Crimea at Balaklava and Inkerman. He continued to serve in the Austrian campaign of Northern Italy and Algiers, and was a colonel during the siege of Paris in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870. He was expelled when the revolutionaries took power in the city and barely escaped to America.

On 7 September 1871 he married Caroline LeRoy Appleton, a descendant of English nobility and widow of Newbold Edgar of New York City.

They had, first, Louise Bonaparte-Patterson (1873-1923) who married Count Adam Moltke Huitfeld (1864-1944) of the Danish Foreign Office. The blood lines have continued through their numerous descendants, but of course, the Bonaparte name was lost. They had, second, Jerome Napoleon Charles Bonaparte⁴ (1878-1945), a lawyer in Baltimore who married Blanche Pierce in 1914. He died without posterity, thus ending the American Bonaparte line that had endured 140 years.

Jerome Napoleon Bonaparte's³ brother, Charles Joseph Bonaparte (1851-1921), graduated from Harvard Law School and was a jurist closely associated with the Reform Party. In fact, he was known as a "professional reformer." He became acquainted with Theodore Roosevelt in his work and was eventually appointed to his Cabinet, first as Secretary of the Navy in 1905, and then, second, as Attorney General in 1906. During the following three years he appeared before the Supreme Court in 50 cases, initiated 20 suits under the anti-trust laws, brought about the dissolution of the American Tobacco Company, and founded a branch of the department that evolved into the Federal Bureau of Investigation. In 1875 Charles Bonaparte and Ellen Channing of Hartford, CT, married in Newport, RI. He died without issue.

For more information, see:

- Didier, E.L., *Life and Letters of Madame Bonaparte* (1875).
- Kierston, F.M., *The Jovial King* (1937).
- McCartney and Durance, *The Bonapartes of America* (1939).
- Mitchell, Sidney, *A Family Lawsuit—The Story of Elizabeth Patterson and Jerome Bonaparte* (1958).
- Sirjean, Gaston, *Genealogique des Maisons Souveraines du Monde* (1962). ■

U.S. CENSUS IMAGES ONLINE

Competition seems to be expanding the options available to genealogists. Two organizations announced during the summer that they will begin putting the actual images of U.S. Federal Census Schedules online this fall.

GenealogyDatabase.com:

SierraHome's Generations brand and Heritage Quest announced that GenealogyDatabase.com, a collection of genealogy data and fully digitized U.S. Federal Census images from 1790 to 1920, will become available by subscription in the fall of this year. Fees have not yet been announced.

New, more complete and accurate indexes are being prepared. The 1790, 1800 and 1870 indexes have been completed, and indexing continues for additional census years at the rate of 500,000 names per week.

The entire 12,555 rolls of microfilm of U.S. Censuses from 1790 to 1920 have been digitized, and original images that had become bleached or darkened have been restored using the latest digital technology.

Annotations of genealogical significance have been added to various census pages by professional researchers, who are sharing knowledge gained by them while working closely with these records over the last 10 years. Users of the database will be able to post their own annotations and personal notes to individual pages of the censuses, thereby constructing a valuable thread of discussion and additional research.

Ancestry.com:

Shortly after the report of GenealogyDatabase.com's census images' going online appeared, it was announced by MyFamily.com that starting this fall the ImagesOnline databases at Ancestry.com would also include all U.S. Federal Census Schedules from 1790 to 1920. Again, in digitizing the images, substantial improvement has been made in legibility. Access will be through an Ancestry.com "Census Subscription." For a limited time Ancestry.com subscribers may sample the promised improvements by viewing the digitized pages of the 1790 Federal Census without incurring additional expense.

Ancestry.com is also in the process of building a "census substitute" for the destroyed 1890 Federal Census Schedules. Access to the 1890 census substitute is available through their regular subscription. ■

COMPUTER CORNER

by David Bowley

John Snelson of Southern Cross Connect Pty Limited in Australia has created a wonderful piece of shareware, called *Palm Tree*, which enables a genealogist to carry all of his or her data in a Palm Organizer that will fit into a shirt pocket or pocketbook.

Palm Organizers are becoming increasingly popular devices and are used as address books and calendars. Data is entered with a small stylus, which can be used to write graffiti like characters onto the screen or to tap them onto a small keyboard or numeric pad also displayed on the screen.

Information can also be downloaded from a desktop or laptop computer into the Palm Organizer, and it is this feature that is used to load genealogy data. A GEDCOM file is created and converted into a format suitable to the Palm Organizer. (At present these data conversions are accomplished by sending your zipped GEDCOM file to John Snelson as an e-mail attachment. He will reformat it and return it to you.) I loaded a 1000+-person file into my organizer and it works fine.

The display is interesting and John provides a clever "Diana Tutorial" to demonstrate how to navigate the data. This consists of the ancestry of Lady Diana and embraces multiple relationships and complex consanguinity lines to list all of the children of any person, whether married or not.

The small screen can show three generations at the same time with birth, christening, marriage, death and burial dates.

The *Palm Tree* program also gives each person an identifying number and allows for searching by this number. Searches can also be performed by using the surname or first name, and the program will sort and produce an alphabetical list by either of these two variables.

A "hot sync" cradle device is supplied with the organizer, and this is used to update quickly the hand-held device from the main computer. It comes with an excellent handbook, and *Palm Pilot, the Ultimate Guide*, contains a myriad of programs on a CD ROM disk that can be used to download free programs daily, such as "Avant-go" which gives you the front page of *The New York Times*. An excellent chess game is also available!

I have downloaded my ancestry into my Palm Pilot

and am taking it to the FGS meeting (6-9 September) at Salt Lake City. It is much lighter than my "luggable" laptop!

The Palm hand-held organizer Model IIIe can be purchased for \$149 at your local computer store, and the *Palm Tree* program, v. 1.90, can be found on the Internet at John Snelson's website: <http://www.southernx.com.au/palmtree.html> ■

ORIGINS TO BE MORE THAN SCOTS

Origins.net, currently the sole provider of Internet access to the official genealogical data of Scotland—birth, death and marriage records dating back to 1553—has been selected by the UK's Society of Genealogists to provide exclusive Internet access for an initial 10-year period to important elements of its valuable collections of indexes and genealogical data. The first of the Society of Genealogists data sets should appear on the Origins.net website late this year, and will include:

- Apprentices of Great Britain series
- Bank of England Wills
- Vicar General Marriage Licence Allegations index 1694-1850
- Faculty Office Marriage Licence Allegations index 1715-1850
- Trinity House petitions, apprenticeships, pensions & almshouse applications 1780-1890
- Prerogative Court of Canterbury (PCC) Wills 1780-1800 (six volumes A-Z)
- Boyd's Marriage Index
- Boyd's Inhabitants of London
- Boyd's London Burials 1538-1853
- Teachers Registration Council Registers 1902-1948 (subject to Data Protection Act limitations)
- London City Apprenticeship Indexes compiled by Cliff Webb
- London Consistory Court Depositions Index 1700-1717

Researchers around the world will have pay-for-view access to indexes of the society's genealogical data and, where available, to images of the source documents. For some sources, once ancestral information has been located, copies of the records can be ordered online. These documents will be prepared and sent

directly from the society.

All genealogical information currently available to members in the library will remain available at no charge (other than membership subscription). As the society's material becomes available on the Internet, however, Origins.net will make it available through terminals in the library at no cost to the society. Members who wish to access the database from locations outside the SOG library will be entitled to a number of free accesses each quarter.

For additional information visit the Society of Genealogists website at <http://www.sog.org.uk> or the Origins website at <http://www.Origins.net> ■

UPCOMING SEMINARS

Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy will be held 8-12 January 2001 at the Wyndham Hotel in Salt Lake City, UT. Ten courses are offered: American Records & Research: Focusing on Localities; Tracing Immigrant Origins; Scottish Research; Scandinavian Research; Preparing a Family History in the New Millennium; U.S. Military Records; Research Methodology (Problem Solving I); Advanced Methodology (Problem Solving II); Making the Most of Your Computer as a Serious Genealogist; and The Internet: A Tool for Genealogical Research. The number of classes in each course varies, but seems to run somewhere between 16 and 20. There are optional evening classes as well and the Family History Library is nearby, so there will be plenty to do. For more information visit the Utah Genealogical Association's Website at: <http://www.infouga.org/institut.htm>

Genealogy Cruise 2001: A Family History Odyssey, hosted by George G. Morgan, online genealogy columnist for Ancestry.com, has been announced by Aha! Seminars, Inc. The cruise will run from 1 to 4 February 2001 aboard the *Regal Empress* from Port Manatee (Tampa Bay) to Key West and back to Port Manatee, FL. A series of onboard genealogy workshops presented by George and others will help you hone your family history research skills, and you will have an afternoon and night in Key West. Rates start at \$449 per person (double occupancy) and include workshops and all onboard meals. For more information visit the Aha! Seminars Website at <http://ahaseminars.com/cruise/> or contact the Jim Garciga Travel Agency at

(800) 881-3600; e-mail JimGarcigaTravel@cs.com ■

THE COMMANDMENTS FOR NAMES

Submitted by Lynn Hanks

1. Thou shalt name your male children: James, John, Joseph, Josiah, Abel, Richard, Thomas, William.
2. Thou shalt name your female children: Elizabeth, Mary, Martha, Maria, Sarah, Ida, Virginia, May.
3. Thou shalt leave *no* trace of your female children.
4. Thou shalt, after naming your children from the above lists, call them by strange nicknames such as: Ike, Eli, Polly, Dolly, Sukey—making them difficult to trace.
5. Thou shalt *not* use any middle names on any legal documents or census reports, and, only where necessary, you may use only initials on legal documents.
6. Thou shalt learn to sign all documents illegibly so that your surname can be spelled, or misspelled, in various ways: Hicks, Hiks, Hix, Hixe, Hucks, Kicks.
7. Thou shalt, after no more than three generations, make sure that all family records are lost, misplaced, burned in a court house fire, or buried so that *no* future trace of them can be found.
8. Thou shalt propagate misleading legends, rumors, and vague innuendo regarding your place of origin: (a) You may have come from: England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales...or Iran. (b) You may have American Indian ancestry of the _____ tribe. (c) You may have descended from one of three brothers that came over from _____.
9. Thou shalt leave *no* cemetery records, or headstones with legible names.
10. Thou shalt leave *no* family Bible with records of birth, marriages, or deaths.
11. Thou shalt *always* flip thy name around. If born James Albert, thou must make all the rest of thy records in the names of Albert, AJ, JA, Al, Bert, Bart, or Alfred.
12. Thou must also flip thy parent's names when making reference to them, although "Unknown" or a blank line is an acceptable alternative.
13. Thou shalt name at least five generations of males, and dozens of their cousins with identical names in order to totally confuse researchers. ■

PSMEDIA CITY DIRECTORIES AT DARIEN LIBRARY

by Kim Paterson

MGS and Darien Library have jointly subscribed to PSMEDIA City Directories, and access is available on a computer in the Genealogy Room at the library.

Eventually, PSMEDIA hopes to have all existing city directories throughout the United States available in a digitized format. With the directories genealogists may look for addresses and occupations of their ancestors, thereby enabling them to search census records more productively. Directories list heads of household, whether male or female, and usually all employed persons within a household.

Some directories are of businesses only, and these help to find either an ancestor who had a business and where it was located, or to pinpoint where someone worked. Besides businesses, all government functions are listed, as well as all churches. This can identify where some people were married (via the minister's name), or help determine the denomination to which a family belonged. Most insurance companies, banks, cemeteries, societies and clubs are also included, along with the names of their presidents, etc.

Page size can be adjusted to enhance readability, and all pages can be printed. (*Note:* If increasing the page size results in a page too wide to print in "portrait" format, switch to "landscape" for your print-out.)

A search can be done by surname, city or state, or all of the above. *Never* use first names in your search as the search will then retrieve all persons with that first name, regardless of surname. ■

NATIONAL ARCHIVES PROGRAMS

The National Archives and Records Administration at 700 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW (between 7th and 9th Streets, NW), in Washington, DC, frequently presents programs that are of great value to genealogists. Unfortunately, their calendar of events does not arrive here early enough for us to provide our readership with timely program information. Should you be in the neighborhood of our nation's capitol, however, a telephone call to (202) 501-6694 will enable you to learn what is on the schedule and make arrangements to attend offerings of interest. ■

8 APRIL 2000 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Our Annual General Meeting started with a reading of the Treasurer's Report by our retiring Treasurer, Catherine O'Hara. After the Treasurer's Report was read and accepted, election of three members of the Board of Directors took place: R. Geoffrey Blain, Charles Cotter, and Philip Morehouse. (*Note:* R. Geoffrey Blain has since resigned because of relocation to Mallorca.) Dale Pollart, already a member of the board, has agreed to serve as Treasurer.

MGS Trustee Henry Hoff then gave a talk on "There Must be Something in Print: Effective Research in Secondary Sources."

As always, whatever indexes exist should be your first stop. If you suspect that someone in your family has been mentioned in print, consult all available sources because you may find that the answer you seek is already on a library shelf. For example, there are good, every-name indexes for *The New England Historical and Genealogical Register* (NEHGR), *The American Genealogist* (TAG), and the *New York Genealogical & Biographical Society Newsletter* (NYG&B). The *Periodical Source Index* (PERSI) and the *American Genealogical-Biographical Index* (AGBI) are both part of the database at Ancestry.com. (*Note:* Access to the Ancestry.com database is available on our computer in the Genealogy Room at Darien Library.)

Look for family and name associations, also ethnic and religious societies. And even if the male line has died out, you may still find information in genealogies of families into which the women of the family married. Effective research can be done in secondary sources, even though all genealogical problems may not be solved. ■

2000 NGS CONFERENCE IN THE STATES

The 2000 NGS Conference in the States, which took place 31 May to 3 June in Providence, RI, was a great success. The Rhode Island Convention Center in Providence, which housed the conference, proved to be an excellent choice. It is huge and bright with ample room and flexible space. Careful preparation by

the host organization and good signage within the building made it easy to find one's way around.

MGS members David Mordy, Donna Moughty, Kathleen O'Farrell, Kim Paterson, Marianne Sheldon, Dorothy Shillinglaw, Carol Weed and Florence Wyland were among the attendees. With more than 200 lectures scheduled on a dizzying variety of topics, however, no two people ever followed the same schedule.

There was something for everyone; choosing a topic of interest was never a problem. Choices were carefully made, however, because each one involved an opportunity cost of interesting subjects that had to be missed. A 586-page *Program Syllabus* containing the handouts for every talk was provided for each attendee, and Repeat Performance, which taped all talks at the conference, had a sales booth where orders could be placed for missed presentations or those you might want to rehear.

Ninety-two exhibitors had booths in the Exhibitors Hall. Genealogical societies, as well as commercial organizations, were there to answer ques-

tions and demonstrate their services and products. It was possible, for example, to preview the excellent new *Ancestors* series now being aired on PBS stations, watch demonstrations of new products, browse books and CDs, consult with people from organizations such as the Family History Library and NARA, or ask state genealogical society representatives for suggestions about research in their states.

Attendance at the conference was truly a rewarding experience. We hope to explore some of the presentations in future issues. ■

QUERIES will return in subsequent issues.

**DEADLINE FOR NEXT NEWSLETTER
17 OCTOBER 2000**



Middlesex Genealogical Society
PO Box 1111
Darien CT 06820-1111

MEETING
SAT., 14 OCT. 2000, 2 PM
DARIEN LIBRARY

