

MiddleSex Genealogical Society

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Darien, Fairfield County, CT

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

One significant change in genealogical research during the past year is the increase in the amount of primary information that is now available on computers and the Internet.

As I recall, a year ago there were 20,000+ genealogy sites in Cyndi's List on the Internet—including many sites with third- or fourth-hand information. A careful person has had difficulty using some of the information because no source was identified, and the information might or might not be reliable.

We can be grateful that the LDS Church has now made its Family Search information available on the Internet. Many of the LDS records are taken from primary sources; however, there are also contributed items of information that contain mistakes. In some cases it is helpful to send a form to Salt Lake City to obtain identification of the source of the information.

We note that some steps have been taken during the last year to bring us closer to primary sources of data. At the Darien Library we now have the NEHGS Register on CD for display on the computer. Just this week, I noticed an example of primary data now on line: the Vital Records of Saybrook, Connecticut. As another example, there is now a statewide project in New York for the entry of cemetery information into computers and the Internet. Data entries for a few cemeteries are already on line. Of course, this effort depends on volunteers to enter the data, and it will undoubtedly take years to enter the bulk of the cemetery information.

For the time being, much genealogical research must still be done the old fashioned way, pouring through documents on paper. Nevertheless, we are pleased to note the progress of online information, and glad of the cooperative effort between the Middlesex Genealogical Society and the Darien Library to provide tools and information for you.

My two suggestions: (1) freely use the newly available data as long as you know and trust the source; and (2) be sure to record the source of your data as you compile your genealogy. This way, you can speed up your research and improve the quality of your compilation at the same time.

David L. Mordy

Thus, everything that is partakes of what has been.

Marquis De Chastelux (1734-1788)

EXPANDED HOURS AT FAMILY HISTORY CENTER IN NEW CANAAN

An announcement was made in April that the LDS Family History Center at 692 South Avenue, New Canaan (telephone 203-966-8475), would henceforth be open Tuesdays 9 am to 12 pm, Wednesdays 9 am to 12 pm and 6 pm to 9 pm, and Thursdays 6 pm to 9 pm—a total of 12 hours per week.

More good news: The center's microfilm copier has been repaired and is in good working order. Also, the center now has three computers available for use and some additional CD ROM disks, such as the Family History Source Guide, the 1851 Index to the British Census for Devon, Norfolk and Warwick Counties, and the Indexed 1881 British Census (including Scotland, Wales, Isle of Wight, and Naval Information).

If you haven't visited in a long time, the Family History Center is now down the stairs, then straight ahead, on the left.

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 P.O. Box 1111 Darien, Fairfield County, CT 06820

Homepage: http://www.darien.lib.ct.us/mgs

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UPCOMING MGS MEETINGS MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Recent newspaper and magazine articles, as well as television programs, have generated an interest in genealogy that is much broader than ever before. To accommodate those newly intrigued by this activity, and at the same time help those members of MGS who wish to improve their research skills, our society will offer a 1:00 pm introductory session presented by MGS Vice President Donna Moughty before each general meeting. You may know people who have been "bitten by the bug" recently and are eager to learn more. Please invite them to attend our expanded meetings and share in a remarkably informative experience.

16 OCTOBER 1999: Introductory session at 1:00 PM, GETTING STARTED ON FAMILY RESEARCH; general meeting at 2:00 PM, USING THE U.S. CENSUS, presented by MGS President DAVID MORDY and MGS Vice President DONNA MOUGHTY. In addition to population schedules, valuable but rarely used special schedules such as mortality, veterans, farm and industrial will be discussed.

13 NOVEMBER 1999: Introductory session, IMMIGRATION, PASSENGER AND NATURALIZATION RECORDS. Our speaker at the general meeting that follows will be SUZANNE McVETTY, who will talk to us about the NATIONAL ARCHIVES, NEW YORK CITY BRANCH. Suzanne McVettty, Certified Genealogist and a board member of the Association of American Genealogists, is an expert on New York City, Long Island, Irish and Quaker genealogy. She is an accomplished speaker who is comfortable addressing audiences of different ages—with mixed levels of training and varied experiences. She has an uncanny knack for presenting professionally reliable material in a light and entertaining manner.

5 FEBRUARY 2000: ANNUAL WORKSHOP and INTER-NET WORKSHOP, jointly sponsored by MGS and Darien Library

8 APRIL 2000: Introductory session, COURT AND LAND RECORDS. General meeting: ROGER JOSLYN's tentative subject is WRITING YOUR FAMILY HISTORY. He is a Fellow of the American Society of Genealogists and of the Utah Genealogical Assn. and has received an Award of Merit from the Association of Professional Genealogists and a Certificate of Appreciation from the Federation of Genealogical Societies.

13 MAY 2000: Speaker to be announced.

ALL MEETINGS SATURDAY AT DARIEN LIBRARY: 1:00 PM INTRODUCTORY SESSION; 2:00 PM GENERAL MEETING. COME, AND BRING A FRIEND!

SCRIBNER HISTORY

by Charles Scribner

When I first entered the fascinating world of genealogy and started researching my family's history, I soon realized that while it was time-consuming, it was also fun and very interesting. Working with my brother-in-law, Lynn Hanks, I learned right from the outset that my lineage was no farther away than Fairfield County. As we gathered information, we noted the points of interest that follow, which we passed on to family members along with a preliminary copy of the Scribner genealogy. I am submitting this information to the MGS Newsletter, hoping that it will pique the interest of other members and encourage them to further their own research.

In colonial days the Scribner name had many different spellings, e.g., Skrivener, Scrivner, Scrifner, Scriven, Screven, etc. As the years went by, Scribner came into more common use in America. Some stayed with Scrivner (the English spelling) which is occasionally seen today.

The party of colonists that founded Jamestown, VA, in 1607, headed by Captain John Smith, included a Matthew Scribner (Scrivener).

John Scribner (Scriven) settled in New Hampshire in 1652. He married Mary Hilton, daughter of Edward Hilton, one of the founders of New Hampshire.

Benjamin Scribner (Scrivner), my probably immigrant ancestor, married Hannah Crampton in 1680 in Norwalk, CT. During his lifetime Benjamin claimed a relationship to the New Hampshire Scribners.

Hannah was the daughter of John and Hannah (Andrews) Crampton, the granddaughter of Francis Andrews and the great-granddaughter of Giles Smith. Francis Andrews and Giles Smith were included on the list of the first settlers of Hartford, CT.

John Crampton was a veteran of the Indian Wars. He received large grants of land in Norwalk from his fellow townsmen in gratitude for his valiant service.

The Revolutionary War found the Scribners divided; some were Patriots (Rebels) and some were Loyalists (Tories). Many Scribners from Connecti-

cut served in the military. Elijah Scribner from Wilton was killed in action serving the rebel cause. Nehemiah Scribner from Norwalk was tried and jailed for treason because he served the British.

Many descendants of Benjamin and Hannah removed from this area to other parts of the country. Some moved to New York State during and after the Revolution, some to eastern Pennsylvania, some to Ohio in 1835, and some to Wisconsin in 1851. Many of the Loyalists went to New Brunswick, Canada, with the "Spring Fleet" of 1783.

Several Scribners served in the Civil War. My own great-grandfather, Eben, served with General Sherman in Georgia and was wounded at the Battle of Peach Tree Creek near Atlanta.

The Scribner name is scattered across the United States. There is a town of Scribner in Nebraska; a Scribner Street in Grand Rapids, MI; a Scribner Hill in Wilton, CT; and a Scribner Avenue in Norwalk, CT. The town of New Albany, IN, was founded by three Scribner brothers from Norwalk, CT. Scribner High School in New Albany is named in honor of the three brothers.

The famous Charles Scribner's Sons Publishing House and Bookstore in New York were founded by Charles Scribner, a descendant of the original Beniamin.

The foregoing information has been gleaned from town hall records, historical manuscripts and books found in libraries and historical societies throughout the area, as well as material found on our own MGS shelves at Darien Library.



NY DAR RECORD INDEX

by David L. Mordy

There are hundreds of volumes of New York State DAR records at the New York State Library in Albany, but they were difficult to use in the past. There is now a new, two-volume index that makes this material much more accessible. If you have an interest in NY DAR records, be sure to ask at the Reference Desk for the new 1998 index. This will improve substantially your chances of finding useful material.

15 MAY 1999 DOUBLEHEADER

BEGINNERS' PROGRAM

Donna Moughty introduced genealogy to beginners at 1:00 pm by explaining the basics. Start with yourself and work from what you know to what you don't know. She explained pedigree charts and source documentation, pointing out the difference between primary and secondary sources.

How to get information was discussed: contacting relatives, obtaining vital records, consulting census, court/land, church and government records, newspapers, city directories, local histories, etc.

A good place to start is the MGS corner at Darien Library. Then visit a Family History Center and such major repositories as the National Archives Northeast Region Branch, New York Genealogical & Biographical Society and New York Public Library in New York City; the New York State Library in Albany and the Connecticut State Library in Hartford.

To learn more, join a genealogical society, subscribe to publications, use reference books, attend conferences, travel to where your ancestors lived, find a research buddy, and *always* ask questions.

CONNECTICUT PROBATE RECORDS

At our 2:00 pm general meeting, Phillip Morehouse, a former Darien Probate Court Judge, outlined the probate system in Conecticut, then described the original general court, county courts and district courts that cover areas smaller than counties; e.g., Norwalk Probate Court covers Wilton as well. All of these courts are created and governed by state law. The town must provide space, but probate fees cover the cost of the judge and staff.

He mentioned that studying law was a little like learning a new language and explained some of the terms used. He defined fiduciary and explained the differences between: an administrator and an executor, devisees and legatees, conservator and guardian.

Then he went on to describe the records created by a probated will and how a genealogist can gain access to them. First, always bring your Middlesex Genealogical Society membership card, which will allow you to inspect the records. Probate files begin with an application for administration or probate and list beneficiaries, along with their Social Security numbers and addresses. There will be tax forms and a list of bills paid, such as cemetery and hospital. No deed can be produced by a dead person, but you might find a Certificate of Devise transferring ownership of property. Probate files are a rich resource.

USING GENEALOGY TO DISCOVER YOUR FAMILY'S MEDICAL INHERITANCE

Anita Lustenberger, M.S., C.G., spoke to us on this important subject at our 10 April 1999 meeting. She used the phrase "whole family documentation" to clarify the usefulness of adding medical history and cause of death to pedigree sheets wherever possible and showing disease paths through both parents. She then described the difficulty of separating genetic causes of disease from environmental or lifestyle factors and interpreting information found in sources available to genealogists.

A genealogist might be able to uncover medical information in:

Government Records

- Death certificates
- Coroners' inquests
- Federal and state censuses
- Military service and pension records
- Veterans' home records
- Prison records

Private Records

- Hospital and medical records
- Funeral home records
- Cemetery records
- Diaries, letters and family papers
- Insurance papers
- Orphan and children's homes and special schools
- Pension records

Other

Obituaries and news accounts

Remember that in tracking susceptibility to a specific disease collateral lines are important, too. And sometimes ethnicity, religion and family origin play a part. Look for several relatives with the same disease, onset of the disease at a younger than normal age, and absence of proven risk factors. You might also want to look up an article by Anita entitled "How to be a Family Health Historian," which appeared in the June 1994 issue of the National Genealogical Society Quarterly.

COMPUTER CORNER

by David V. Bowley

Since our last article in April, search capability on the MGS computer at the Darien Library has expanded enormously. For example, the society has a one-year subscription to Ancestry.com. This means that when you access Ancestry.com and enter a name to be searched for, within seconds all 1600 or more of the site's databases are searched for that

name and the results appear on the screen, showing how many 'hits' there are in each of the databases. These databases include most of the state censuses, the Social Security Death Benefit Index, and periodical entries from PEPSI to name just a favy. In each case of



PERSI, to name just a few. In each case, clicking the underlined word will link you to more information.

The LDS FamilySearch program, which went online experimentally in April, has now gone on line permanently and can be accessed from the computer menu. Place the name that you want searched on the screen and scroll down to click on the search button. The search results appear almost immediately, and you can click an underlined name to get more details. You should be aware that not all of the I.G.I. is on line as yet. So far, only the British Isles, North America, and Finland are covered. We will continue to keep FamilySearch on CD ROM disks to be used on the old computer (behind the new one). Although it is slower, it is complete and it does allow you to "filter" your search by state or county.

The New England Historical and Genealogical Society Register is now available on CD ROM and covers all the volumes from 1847 to 1994. For the time being we will retain the hard copies and microfilm copies of the earliest issues, but the CD ROM version is fully searchable and brings up on the screen copies of the actual pages, which can be more conveniently viewed using the zoom feature. Members who haven't yet used the dreaded computer might like to try this out as eventually the demand for shelf space in the library will mean that hard copies of issues, which occupy six feet of shelves, will have to go!

The British Public Record Office has announced that it is planning to digitize the 1901 Census. This census was taken on 31 March 1901 when the population was over 32 million. The PRO plans to make the scanned returns electronically available via the Internet. This valuable asset will be available on the first working day of 2002. Meanwhile, I have a personal copy of the Indexed 1881 Census, which was released in the spring on 25 CD ROM disks, I would be prepared to do 'lookups' for any members who care to contact me. It is a fascinating document; for instance, I found that one of my wife's great aunts married a lighthouse keeper off the coast of the Channel Island of Jersey.

I received an e-mail from Grant Radmall, who is a Trustee of our society, telling me of some ancient computer disks (circa 1982) that he thought might be of use to us. They contain, in fact, the original text of our Publications Nos. 1 and 5, which dealt with the soldiers from the Fitch Home who were buried in Spring Grove Cemetery. There is also a most interesting regimental account, written by the late Vicki Hollander, who was one of the early presidents of our society.

Grant e-mailed the files to me as an attachment to a message, and, with the help of Darien Library staff, I transferred both of these documents to the MGS web page where they reside for your delight and edification. I am sorry that they aren't fully searchable, but you will find the cemetery listings, which are posted in two versions, are in some sort of order.

MGS AT DARIEN LIBRARY

by David V. Bowley

Saturday morning workshop volunteer assignments for the current season have been distributed, and the workshops themselves resumed at Darien Library 11 September. These workshops place an MGS volunteer in the library every Saturday morning from 10 am to noon to assist anyone seeking advice or help with research.

The Library Committee met once during the summer, and there is nothing to report except that we did some sorting and discarding of periodicals, which cleared some shelf-space.

A correction to the first paragraph of our April 1999 report: Our continuing effort to save space at the library has necessitated the archiving of our microfiche collection. Request access if needed.

NATIONAL GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY CONFERENCE 31 MAY—4 JUNE 2000

This conference, entitled "New England—A Bridge to America," will take place in Providence, RI, from 31 May to 4 June 2000. A number of MGS members have expressed an interest in attending, and Donna Moughty has volunteered to coordinate conference and hotel bookings. It is, however, necessary to commit early to insure space and convenient accommodation. If you are interested, please let Donna know by signing up at our 16 October meeting. Alternatively, you can reach Donna via telephone at (203) 359-1113, or via e-mail at moughty@apple.com

Don't miss this rare opportunity to attend a major national conference so close to home.

A SURPRISING OUTCOME

by Charles H. Granger

A lady in Pennsylvania, who knew that I could do lookups in Greenwich, asked if I would look for information about her grandparents. Although they were Greenwich residents, they were supposedly both killed in a European automobile calamity in 1967.

Having been told that the grandparents died elsewhere, it seemed useless to check on their deaths in Greenwich Vital Statistics. Therefore, I looked in the probate records where I quickly found one for the grandmother and learned:

- The grandmother had not been killed in Europe in 1967, but had died in Greenwich in 1983.
- The grandparents had been divorced in the 1970s.
- In 1983, when the grandmother died, the grandfather was still alive and living in a Southern California town.

I do not know why the granddaughter had been misinformed about her grandparents. Perhaps it was an attempt to conceal the divorce, which might well have been considered a family disgrace. In any event, knowing that the granddaughter was a mature adult, I sent her the full Probate Court docket. She thanked me right away and commented that she would have to take some time to look into this new information and determine what action, if any, might be useful.

THE MORAL: Anyone who asks a genealogical question must be prepared for the possible range of answers.

CLOUDED CORRESPONDENCE

The Yucaipa Valley Genealogical Society reports the following examples of actual correspondence received by the Family History Department in Salt Lake City.

- Our 2nd great-grandfather was found dead crossing the plains in the library.
- For running down the Wheelers, I will send \$3.00 more.
- He and his daughter are listed as not being born.
- I would like to find out if I have any living relatives or dead relatives or ancestors in my family.
- Will you send me a list of all the Dripps in your library?
- My grandfather died at the age of 3.
- Documentation: Family Bible in the possession of Aunt Merle until the tornado hit Topeka, Kansas.
 Now, only the Good Lord knows where it is.
- I have a hard time finding myself in London. If I
 was there I was very small and cannot be found.
- Will you please send me the name of my first wife?
 I have forgotten her name.
- Further research will be necessary to eliminate one of the parents.



MENNONITE CEMETERY DATABASE

The Mennonite Historians of Eastern Pennsylvania Library is compiling a database of inscriptions from 85 cemeteries in Bucks, Montgomery and northern Chester Counties, PA.

Records cover Mennonite, Brethren, Brethren in Christ, Lutheran, Reformed, Union, Evangelical, community and family cemeteries. About 50,000 records have been entered so far in what is an ongoing process.

The database can be used at the Mennonite Historians of Eastern Pennsylvania Library in Harleysville, PA, or mail requests can be addressed to the library at Box 82, Harleysville, PA 19438. The fee for reports requested by mail is \$5 for the first page, \$2.60 for each subsequent page.

QUERIES

Instructions:

Genealogical queries will be published in the MGS Newsletter, space permitting, and at the editor's discretion, giving preference to Fairfield County, other Connecticut counties and nearby Westchester, Putnam and Duchess Counties in New York. Queries that are too vague or general will not be used. Make queries brief, but include known dates, places and other identifying information. Don't abbreviate, as we will do that.

Query Fee: Member queries under 50 words, free. Over 50 words, or nonmembers, \$5.

Address: Query Editor, MGS, P.O. Box 1111, Darien, CT 06820-1111. Please include your name, address, and e-mail address, if any.

Note: All locations are in Connecticut unless otherwise specified.

100. WATERBURY—NEWKIRK—COOKE. Need birth date and parents of Sarah Newkirk, wife of John Waterbury, 1681/82 to 1710, who built Buttonwood Farm, Stamford (now Darien). John and Sarah were parents of General David Waterbury and Sylvanus Waterbury who was a Loyalist with two sons, Sylvanus and Peter Cooke Waterbury.

Also need maiden name (probably Cooke) and parents of Sarah, wife of Sylvanus Waterbury, born 1730, Stamford, died 1787, New Brunswick, Canada. Jane Edmundson, 35 Bridge St., Apt. 302, Westport, CT 06880.

101. SEELEY—SHELDON. Seek parentage for Sarah Ann Seeley (b 13 Oct. 1801 in CT; d 3 Feb. 1869, Clifton, IL). Married John B. Sheldon about 1820-21, probably in Otsego Co., NY. Cannot find 1801 CT birth for Sarah Ann Seeley; would like to link her to one of the Seeley families living in Otsego Co., NY, in 1810 or 1820 census. Marianne Sheldon, 3 Revere Road, Darien, CT 06820; e-mail: mwsheld@javanet.com

102. FROST—BOOTH. Need information on parents/wife of William Frost, born 1589 Nottingham, Notts., Eng.; died Jan. 1644/45 Fairfield, Fairfield Co. Four children, born in Nottingham, came to Fairfield with him in 1639: Daniel (born ca 1613,

died 1681/82 Fairfield), Elizabeth (born 1614); Lydia (born 1618), and Abraham (born 1622).

Also need information on 1st wife of Daniel Frost above. Their daughter, Rebecca Frost (born 1640, Fairfield; died 25 Dec. 1688, Enfield, Hartford Co.), married 5 Jan. 1663/64 Simeon Booth of Saco, ME; Salem, MA; and Enfield. D. Shillinglaw, 27 DuBois St., Darien, CT 06820; e-mail: sd-shillinglaw@prodigy.net

103. FOSTER. Seek wife of Josiah Foster, Jr., of Ridgefield, Fairfield Co., mother of William Foster, 1753-1836, of Onondaga Co., NY. Jane Edmundson, 35 Bridge St., Apt. 302, Westport, CT 06880.

104. MORGAN. Seek information on wife (Martha _____) and children of William Morgan, 1732-after 1802, of Norwich. Two of their children, Daniel and Martha Morgan, were baptized 2 June 1776 in Norwich. Census of 1790 shows 4 males and 3 females, so there may have been 3 other children in the family, names not known. David L. Mordy, P.O. Box 1051, Darien, CT 06820; e-mail: dlmordy@aol.com

105. DOTY—CADY. Seek proof of Keziah Doty's parents. LDS Ancestral File lists them as Samuel and Zerviah Lovell Doty. Keziah, born ca 1756?, Coventry, Tolland Co.; married Elias Cady, son of Ebenezer and Prudence Palmer Cady, who moved first to western Connecticut and then to Canaan, Columbia Co., NY. Jane Edmundson, 35 Bridge St., Apt. 302, Westport, CT 06880.

106. MILLS. Need info re parents and/or siblings of John Mills, born ca 1788 or 1789, Darien area, died 20 July 1848; resided in Norwalk. He married Cynthia Green of Pound Ridge, NY, who died 1 March 1834, age 45. They had a child, Smith Mills, born Darien, 8 June 1818; died 8 Jan. 1899; resided in Rowayton; had many children. Another child of John Mills may have been Nancy Mills who died 25 Oct. 1847, age 29. Nan Eckfeld, 704 N. Main St., Kenton, OH 43326; e-mail: eckfeld@kenton.com

Note:	Queries	аге	also	posted	on	the	MGS
website.							

DEADLINE FOR NEXT NEWSLETTER
12 OCTOBER 1999

PROTECTING OUR MOST PRECIOUS DOCUMENTS

Since 1952 the Declaration of Independence, Constitution of the United States, and the Bill of Rights have been displayed in the Rotunda of the National Archives in sealed, shallow, glass boxes filled with humidified helium. At night they are lowered into a 55-ton steel and concrete vault that provides protection in case of fire—or explosion of the largest atomic bomb known at the time it was constructed. The National Archives has been using space-age technology to examine the documents regularly through the glass for changes and/or deterioration—and discovered a few years ago that the glass that forms the boxes was deteriorating and would eventually become opaque. Archivists, architects, engineers, design and exhibit specialists, chemists, physicists, and conservators have worked with experts in materials and fabrication from the National Institute for Standards and Testing to help the National Archives create new encasements for these precious documents that will protect them well

into the next millennium.

On 17 March 1999 Archivist of the United States John W. Carlin unveiled a model of the new encasements made of titanium, aluminum and tempered glass. Construction of the display system will parallel renovation of the National Archives and Records Administration building on Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, DC, and should be completed in 2003.

A NEW GENEALOGICAL SCAM

It has been reported that ads are appearing in genealogical publications offering "original looking obituaries." Should you answer the ad and pay the fee you will get an obituary that is composed of information that you provided, and then filled out with mention of events around the time of the death to give the appearance of authenticity. A genuine obituary can be a valuable secondary source of information, but the "original looking obituaries" being peddled currently have no value whatsoever and will certainly mislead the unwary.

