



Middlesex Genealogical Society

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Darien, Fairfield County, CT

November 2005

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

For those of us who have been working on our family history for more than five years or so, the landscape has changed dramatically. I frequently joke during seminars about the lack of exercise my arm gets now vs. my finger—rolling microfilm vs. clicking a mouse. Hardly anyone visits the National Archives any more to do census research since all of the population schedules of the censuses are available online as images. Those who are just entering this wonderful, addictive hobby get a glazed look when you talk about Soundex (although just last week I was working in Albany at the N.Y. State Archives which still uses Soundex for some of their vital record indexes).

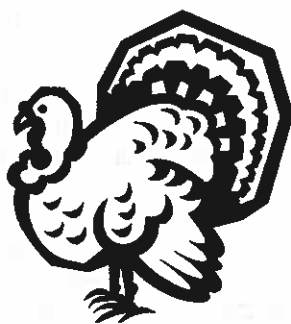
Immigration is another set of records that have come a long way in the past few years. In 2001 the Ellis Island database went online and, for those of us who had ancestors that immigrated after 1892, it was exciting. Although the WPA had indexed New York arrivals from 1897, we picked up another five years of those dreaded, unindexed years. Last year Ancestry.com began an immigration project to index New York records from 1847 to 1892. The manifests of that time give such a limited amount of information (name, age, occupation and nationality) that it is often difficult to make a positive identification of a specific individual (e.g., there are over 240 Michael Daly's). Sometimes, however, the people traveling together will allow us to identify our family. Now, the addition of the Castle Garden database at <http://www.CastleGarden.org> adds an additional resource. But wait—Castle Garden opened in 1855 and closed in 1890. If you look at their Website, it indicates the time period of their records is 1820 to 1913, so, clearly, many of the individuals named on their site did not come through Castle Garden. In fact, what I've discovered, is that not all of the individuals even came through New York! I had

found a record for Anthony Dooley arriving in Boston on 9 May of 1850 on the ship *Plymouth Rock*. That record appeared both in Ancestry and in the Massachusetts Archives Passenger List database at <http://www.sec.state.ma.us/arc/arcsrch/PassengerManifestSearchContents.html> When Anthony Dooley then appeared in the Castle Garden database arriving on the same date, same ship, I was stumped. I e-mailed Marian Smith of the Department of Homeland Security (new department for Citizenship and Immigration Services), and she responded that CastleGarden.org indexed from the microfilm and originals of New York Customs lists, and this set has always included a number of lists from other ports, including Boston and even New Orleans.

It's always important to understand the contents of whatever database you're using because sometimes you can get surprising results!

Happy hunting!

Donna Moughty



Happy Thanksgiving!

2006 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Membership renewal is due 1 January 2006. *Please consider this to be your renewal notice.* You may use the application form on page 7 of this newsletter if you wish, or a plain piece of paper, marked renewal, with your name and address. Please note that current members need *not* provide us with any information that we already have, but we would like to be informed of any significant changes, e.g., new e-mail address. You may bring your renewal to our 19 November meeting, or drop it in the mail addressed to Middlesex Genealogical Society, P.O. Box 1111, Darien, CT 06820. Annual dues are \$20 per individual, \$25 per couple or family.

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 \$20 per individual and \$25 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://mgs.darien.org>
E-mail: mgs3@optonline.net

UPCOMING MGS MEETINGS

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

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

19 NOVEMBER 2005. TAX AND LAND RECORDS: WHAT THEY CAN TELL YOU will be presented by **VIRGINIA BANERJEE**. Analysis of tax and land records can provide insight into the lives of our ancestors not available elsewhere. Tax records are a valuable substitute for censuses, and examination of land records may expose a chain of relationships. This program will focus on the variety that may be extant within these record types and how to locate and use these records in genealogical research. These records locate our ancestors in *time* and *place* and offer us an opportunity to see our ancestors within the context of their community and neighbors.

Virginia is a member of the MGS board with over 25 years of research experience. She has presented programs and taught courses in genealogy for a number of years and has been published by several genealogical organizations. She has also completed research and private publication of a book on Indian history, genealogy of her husband's family, and memoirs of their life in India in the early 1950s.

28 JANUARY 2005. CONNECTICUT'S BARBOUR COLLECTION OF VITAL RECORDS: MORE (AND LESS) THAN MEETS THE EYE will be presented by **HARLAN JESSUP**. Connecticut statutes have required vital records to be kept since 1640, and these records to about 1850 have been compiled in the Barbour Collection. Understanding and using this collection depends on understanding the history of record-keeping statutes in the colony and state and on understanding how the collection was created by Lucius B. Barbour, the sponsor, and James N. Arnold, the remarkable compiler of these records. Groups of records from several towns were missed, and sources for these will be disclosed.

Harlan Jessup is a professional genealogist whose research focuses on Connecticut, western Massachusetts, and the lower Hudson Valley. He is editor of *Connecticut Ancestry* and past president of that Society. He is also an accredited researcher at the Connecticut State Library, and he has published the Civil War letters and diaries of his Virginia ancestors.

25 MARCH 2006. To be announced.

13 MAY 2006. HIDDEN IN VAULTS: LESSER KNOWN TREASURES FOUND IN TOWN HALLS will be presented by **THOMAS V. HOWARD**. Local governments have for years collected and stored many diverse and valuable genealogical gems. We know about vital records and land records, but towns have touched citizens in many other

(Continued on page 8)

*The lobby of the Program Room has been designated by the library as a "Teen Center." As a consequence, all MGS activities, including refreshments and socializing, must take place within the Program Room.

SOCIAL HISTORY PROVIDES CONTEXT FOR ANCESTORS

by Virginia Banerjee

Good genealogy is done against the backdrop of well-researched social history. Genealogy is about names, dates, events and relationships. Social history is about how individuals lived their lives and the environments that framed their actions.

History and genealogy are related disciplines and they should walk together throughout our research. History is generally focused on the big events and important individuals, some of whom may have been our ancestors. Social history includes the little folks whose lives were greatly impacted by the big events, although they themselves may have had little impact on history. Social history is about what makes people tick. It is what turns names and dates into *real* people.

As I assemble family names, dates and events, I think about the social history of the times and places. I have been rewarded with many hours of interesting searching and reading, much armchair travel and some real travel. I have also found clues to additional source materials and records that I might otherwise have missed.

Fortunately most of our ancestors were average—typical and normal—meaning that they did very much what everyone else did in their time and place. Of course some *did* deviate from the norm but we need to understand what the norm was before we can decide whether and why our person was atypical.

You may be fortunate enough to have that precious letter, journal, notes or keepsakes that offer a window on your ancestor. No matter how hard we search, we may not find the letter, diary or book by or about our ancestor that brings her or him to life, but all is not lost. We can utilize materials about other folks and their times to enrich our understanding of what our ancestors might have been, and probably were, like.

Perhaps one of the most readily available resources is newspapers contemporary with our ancestors. Newspapers offer more than birth, marriage and death notices. Court actions and land transfers were sometimes reported in local papers. Many early papers carried local social columns which told of the “*comins*” and “*goins*” of local folk. We can get an idea of the events that occupied the leisure time of the day. The advertisements are fascinating, too. I recently saw an ad for medicinal marijuana (trial size 50¢) in a local Fairfield County paper dated 1878! The headline stories were what people were reading and talking about. Newspapers from all over the country are available in libraries on microfilm. Many are available

on the Internet, and many are easily searchable.

Historical documents and publications offer wonderful background information and may even deal specifically with someone in our long line of ancestors. These include papers of the founding fathers or of selected leaders of the country or of the geographic area of interest. Documentary histories of organizations, such as churches, lodges, military units, etc., are other valuable sources of social history. Reading on historical subjects, such as wars, emancipation, suffrage, the labor movement or other political issues, expands our understanding of the world of our ancestors.

A visit to the library and the historical society (either in reality or in cyberspace) in any geographic area of your interest should be a must. Always look for special collections—those unique materials found nowhere else. Materials by or about local folks also make good reading as do well-researched historical novels. A recent search in the North American History section of a local library turned up several books about colonial times in New England that I have enjoyed. They have given me a real feel for the times and how some of my Connecticut Yankee ancestors probably lived. Similar materials would no doubt be found in libraries everywhere. Access, through the Internet, to the catalogs of libraries all over the world will identify materials, at least some of which may be secured through interlibrary loan.

Manuscript collections held by libraries and other repositories will yield journals, diaries, correspondence and personal items. The *National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections* (NUCMC), maintained by the Library of Congress and accessible on the Internet, will lead you to these sorts of materials. A search of state libraries and archives in areas of interest should not be missed. I recently searched the Connecticut State Library catalog for “diary Connecticut” and got 213 hits with leads to an array of items, many held in a single location suggesting that they were originals.

These are certainly not the only sources of social history but they are a start, ones that I have used and appreciate. Knowing about how people lived and what they thought about and read about surely gives a better feel for what made folks tick than just names and dates on a pedigree chart.

Happy reading and searching! ■

NEED HELP WITH RESEARCH? Make an appointment through the Information Desk at Darien Library for a personalized consultation with an MGS volunteer.

UPCOMING SEMINARS

National Archives and Records Administration Northeast Region is offering free programs at two locations:

New York City, 12th Floor Conference Room, 201 Varick St. All programs run from 12:30 PM to 1:15 PM.

- Using NARA's Archival Research Catalog (ARC) for Genealogical Research, Tues., 8 Nov. 2005.
- Using NARA's Access to Archival Databases (AAD) for Genealogical Research, Tues., 13 Dec. 2005.

Space is limited. To register call 866-840-1752, fax 212-401-1638, or e-mail newyork.archives@nara.gov

Waltham, Mass., 380 Trapelo Rd.

- Military Census Records, Tues., 15 Nov., 2 PM.
- Beyond the Census, Tues., 6 Dec., 2 PM.

Space is limited. For more information and to register call 866-406-2379.

New York Genealogical & Biographical Society, 122-126 E. 58 St., New York, NY 10022; telephone 212-755-8532.

New Yorkers and the Military will take place in Saratoga Springs, NY, 10-12 Nov. (Thurs. evening, Fri. & Sat.). Top genealogists, historians, and archivists will share their expertise about the armed conflicts that have been part of American history since colonial times. Conflicts from the French & Indian War and American Revolution through World War I, as well as the draft in World War II, will be covered. Some speakers will explain how to find and use records of military service at the national, state, and local levels, while others will focus on the historical context in which these records should be viewed. There will be presentations on the experience of the ordinary soldier or sailor in the different wars, as well as on specialized topics such as the role of the Iroquois of New York in the Civil War, the experience of pacifists in World War I, and medical records from the Civil War. Allen Weinstein, Archivist of the United States (head of the National Archives) will be the speaker at the conference banquet.

For more information visit the NYG&B Website at <http://www.newyorkfamilyhistory.org/> or call 212-755-8532, ext. 36, or e-mail Education@nygbs.org ■

Brigham Young University, Conferences and Workshops, 136 Harman Continuing Education Building, Provo, UT 84602, telephone 801-422-4853. BYU has announced that their ninth annual **Computerized Genealogy Conference** is scheduled for Friday and Saturday 10-11 March 2006. This conference is designed to be a how-to guide for everyone, including beginning, inter-

mediate, and advanced researchers. The focus of the conference is to learn how new computer programs and advancements in existing programs can help you to be more effective in genealogy and family history work. For more information visit their Website at:

<http://genealogyconferences.byu.edu>
or send an e-mail to cw136@byu.edu ■

FGS 2006 CONFERENCE

by Donna Moughty

It's not all that often that we get a national genealogical conference close to home. Next year, 30 August to 2 September, the Federation of Genealogical Societies and New England Historic Genealogical Society are sponsoring the national FGS Conference in Boston, the birthplace of American genealogy. This will be one of the largest conferences ever held—four days of lectures, as well as opportunities to research at some of the wonderful repositories around Boston.

Don't miss out; mark your calendars now. You can also save some money by registering before 31 December. Go to the Federation of Genealogical Societies Website <http://www.FGS.org> and click on Conference. ■

MGS COMPUTER AT DARIEN LIBRARY

The computer on the desk in the MGS area of the Glanville Room at Darien Library has been out of service for several months. When it crashed there were no funds available for replacement, so it has been rebuilt by library technicians. The software has been reloaded, but it is still necessary to "lock down" the computer in order to prevent its use for unauthorized Internet searching. The computer should be back in service soon. ■

LINKPENDIUM

Linkpendium is a compendium of links to U.S. genealogical information, which at present contains 2,284,559 links. The site is being developed by Karen Isaacson and Brian Leverich who created RootsWeb.

Linkpendium differs from Cyndi's List in that it focuses on state, county, and local U.S. sources, as well as on surnames. The site can be accessed at <http://www.linkpendium.com> ■

SCRIBNER HISTORY AND GENEALOGY THE SPRING FLEET OF 1783

by C. Scribner

During the Revolutionary War many families were divided between the Loyalists (Tories) and Patriots (Rebels). My family was no exception. History tells us that the Tories were loyal to the Crown and the Church of England. Indeed, many believed that the actions of the Crown were deplorable; nevertheless, they were of the opinion that the dispute could be settled within the framework of the laws laid down by the British Government. Because of the activities of some, however, many Loyalist families were forced to leave this area for a settlement in Canada called Kingston. A little-known book entitled *Kingston and the Loyalists of the Spring Fleet of 1783* tells the story of the Spring Fleet and the settlement of Kingston.

Loyalists who could not or would not stay in their homes after the war were embarked on a fleet of 20 British ships for Kingston in the Province of New Brunswick, Canada. Here the Loyalists were granted land on which to settle. The fleet gathered on the north shore of Long Island in Huntington Bay between Lloyd's Neck on the west and Eaton's Neck on the east. The lead ship was named the *Union Transport* with Master Consett Wilson at the helm. The manifest of this ship listed 209 passengers, including 10 Scribners: Elias Jr., his wife and five children; Hezekiah and his wife and son Thaddeus. A map in the beginning of the book shows that Elias Jr. and three other Scribners were named on the "Original Kingston Land Grants."

It was a land of beginning again because the area chosen for the settlement was nothing but wilderness. Clearing had to be done and logs cut for building log houses. The new settlers worked hard and had enough homes completed to house every family by the month of November. The Indians in the area were from the Micmac Tribe and turned out to be quite friendly, supplying the settlement with plenty of moose meat.

Sunday church services were held in the home of Elias Scribner. In July 1787 the Reverend James Scovil came from Connecticut to conduct the religious services in Elias's home until a suitable church was constructed. One acre of land from the adjoining corners of their respective lots was given by Silas Raymond, Elias Scribner, and John London to build this church. It was built under the direction of the vestrymen and was dedicated 5 November 1789 by the Reverend Scovil and named Trinity Church.

The book's author, Walter Bates, was a native of Middlesex Parish, Stamford, Connecticut, which later became Darien. When the Town of Kingston was estab-

lished, he became its first High Sheriff. He tells of returning home in the 1790s and remarking as to how the place had changed in a matter of 10 or more years. I wonder what he would say if he could see Darien today! ■

I have ever had pleasure in obtaining any little anecdotes of my ancestors.

Benjamin Franklin

GERMAN GENEALOGY 1 October 2005

Bob Law presented a talk on German Genealogy to members of the Middlesex Genealogical Society and other attendees at the Darien Library on 1 October. He opened his talk with a discussion about who is a German and where is Germany. Many people claim German ancestry, but their ancestors may have been from Luxembourg, today's northern Poland (Prussia), or even Russia, as the borders of Germany have changed many times over the last 300 years. Germans settled in many parts of Eastern Europe during that same time period.

Bob discussed and illustrated German history and geography, immigration and emigration of ethnic Germans, given and family names, religion, language, gothic script, and church and civil records. He explained the need to use maps and gazetteers to help locate the original village.

The talk was completed with a brief overview of the ethnic German countries surrounding Germany—Luxembourg, Alsace, Switzerland and Austria. Bob then answered questions and swapped family stories with the audience. ■

TOM KEMP JOINS NEWSBANK

MGS Trustee Tom Kemp has left Godfrey Memorial Library, of which he was the Director, and has joined NewsBank, Inc. in the newly created position of Director of Genealogy Products. NewsBank is a Web-based information provider, which holds materials of great interest to genealogical researchers, such as:

- Early American Newspaper Collection;
- America's Obituaries;
- U.S. and World Newspaper Collection;
- American State Papers;
- Early American Imprints (1639-1819); and
- U.S. Congressional Serial Set.

MGS wishes Tom great success in his new position. ■

GUIDELINES FOR GENEALOGICAL SELF-IMPROVEMENT AND GROWTH

Recommended by the National Genealogical Society

Faced with ever-growing expectations for genealogical accuracy and reliability, family historians concerned with improving their abilities will on a regular basis:

- Study comprehensive texts and narrower-focus articles and recordings covering genealogical methods in general and the historical background and sources available for areas of particular research interest, or to which their research findings have led them.
- Interact with other genealogists and historians in person or electronically, mentoring or learning as appropriate to their relative experience levels, and through the shared experience contributing to the genealogical growth of all concerned.
- Subscribe to and read regularly at least two genealogical journals that list a number of contributing or consulting editors, or editorial board or committee members, and that require their authors to respond to a critical review of each article before it is published.
- Participate in workshops, discussion groups, institutes, conferences and other structured learning opportunities whenever possible.
- Recognize their limitations, undertaking research in new areas or using new technology only after they master any additional knowledge and skill needed and understand how to apply it to the new subject matter or technology.
- Analyze critically at least quarterly the reported research findings of another family historian, for whatever lessons may be gleaned through the process.
- Join and participate actively in genealogical societies covering countries, localities and topics where they have research interests, as well as the localities where they reside, increasing the resources available both to themselves and to future researchers.
- Review recently published basic texts to renew their understanding of genealogical fundamentals as currently expressed and applied.
- Examine and revise their own earlier research in the light of what they have learned through self-improvement activities, as a means for applying their new-found knowledge and for improving the quality of their work-product.

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BCG CONSOLIDATES GENEALOGIST QUALIFICATION CATEGORIES

In a press release dated 17 October, the Board for Certification of Genealogists announced that, effective immediately, it has consolidated three research categories into one category that will be called Certified Genealogist. All those holding a current credential as Certified Genealogical Record Specialist (CGRS), Certified Lineage Specialist (CLS), or Certified Genealogist (CG) will henceforth hold the designation of Certified Genealogist (CG). The board also established application requirements for the single credential and voted to continue the existing renewal requirements for those already certified.

Board president Connie Miller Lenzen explained that the change has been made for two reasons. "First, regardless of the type of work they do, all genealogists have the same skills. Second, having three research categories was confusing to both the genealogical community and the general public. The categories were different, but the differences were not well understood. We expect that the public can now more easily hire a certified person without being concerned about the differences. The one thing that will not change is the board's commitment to excellence in genealogical work."

The new requirements have been designed to test the four skill areas used by all genealogists. The requirements are:

1. Acceptance of the Genealogist's Code.
2. Background resume.
3. Document work with a BCG-supplied document: transcribe, abstract, and evaluate the document, prepare a research plan.
4. Document work with an applicant-supplied document: transcribe, abstract, and evaluate the document; prepare a research plan.
5. Research report prepared for a client.
6. Case study of conflicting or indirect evidence.
7. Kinship determination project. The project is to include at least three couples in successive ancestral generations. The project may be in the form of a narrative genealogy, narrative lineage, or narrative pedigree.

Complete details for each requirement will be posted on the BCG Website www.bgc certification.org by 1 December.

BCG's teaching categories, Certified Genealogical Lecturer (CGL) and Certified Genealogical Instructor (CGI), are not affected by the change to a single research credential. ■

MIDDLESEX GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

Post Office Box 1111

Darien, CT 06820

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Annual dues: \$20/individual, \$25/couple or family. Photo I.D. (e.g., driver's license), required. If joining/renewing in person, show photo I.D.; if via mail, send copy of photo I.D. Please consider adding a contribution to support our genealogical resource expansion.

Code of Ethics: In consideration of being accepted as a member(s) of the above society and in order to protect the integrity of Public Records and Library Books, I/we am/are ethically bound and hereby agree that I/we will research Vital Records for Genealogical or Historical purposes only. I/we also agree:

1. That I/we will treat with the greatest care and respect all Public Records and Library Books that may be made available for my/our use;
2. I/we will respect the privacy of the individuals whose information I/we may encounter in my/our research;
3. I/we will respect the custodians of the records.

This pledge is freely made by me under penalty of forfeiting my membership in the society.

_____ Signature of applicant	_____ Date	Previous Member Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
_____ Signature of co-applicant	_____ Date	Previous Member Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
(Mr., Mrs., Miss, Ms.) Full Name of Applicant	_____ Full Name of Applicant	(Mr., Mrs., Miss, Ms.) Full Name of Co-applicant

Street Address (mandatory): _____

Mailing Address: _____

Town: _____ State: _____ 9-digit Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Date and Place of Applicant's Birth: _____

Date and Place of Co-applicant's Birth: _____

Occupation of Applicant: _____

Occupation of Co-applicant: _____

I/we belong to the following Historical Societies: _____

I/we belong to the following Genealogical Societies: _____

I/we belong to the following Lineage Societies: _____

I/we belong to the following Lineage Societies: _____

I/we belong to the following Lineage Societies: _____

Reason for interest in genealogy: _____

Dues enclosed: _____

Contribution enclosed: _____

MGS use only. Photo I.D. <input type="checkbox"/>
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MGS CALENDAR

(Continued from page 2)

ways leading to significant and sometimes illuminating paper trails.

A retired high school teacher, Tom is now a full time professional genealogist. He has taught genealogy classes, lectured at social studies regional and national conferences and most recently at the NERGC regional conference in North Falmouth. He has lectured on several genealogical topics to the MGS, DAR, Westchester County Genealogical Society, Descendants of the Founders of Ancient Windsor, the Connecticut Society of Genealogists, Southington Genealogical Society and the Naugatuck Valley Genealogical Club and others. He is Chairman of the Connecticut Genealogical Coalition, a founding member of the Town Clerks and Genealogists Action Group, President of the Connecticut Professional Genealogists Council, and is on the board of directors of NERGC and the Connecticut Society of Genealogists. He will co-chair NERGC's 2007 Hartford conference. He is a member of

APG, NEHGS, Connecticut Ancestry and numerous other genealogical or historical organizations. He is a former president of the East Granby Historical Society and currently is president of the East Granby Land Trust. He and fellow genealogist wife Virginia have two adopted children and four grandchildren. ■

WANTED!
Your story to appear in these pages.
All contributions gratefully received.

Deadline for next newsletter
3 January 2006

MEETING
2 PM, 19 NOV. 2005
DARIEN LIBRARY

Middlesex Genealogical Society
PO Box 1111
Darien CT 06820-1111

