



Middlesex Genealogical Society

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Darien, Fairfield County, CT

May 2010

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the exciting world of genealogy. We have given the citizens of our community many programs on how and where to look for information on their ancestors. In the past years we have had programs for the public on:

- Town halls and their archives of births, deaths and marriages;
- Censuses and the many clues that we can glean from their proper analysis;
- Ship's manifests and what to look for;
- Military records and how to find information on our veterans; and
- Immigration strategies for finding where our family members went and how.

We have also looked at history and what effect it had on the people of the world.

But did you know that there are many other places to look when we hit that brick wall? I have had some recent experiences in finding golden information from some of these other sources. Cemeteries have given us some great clues. On the headstones you will find dates and sometimes parents' or children's names. Even the absence of a date can give you a clue. Maybe that person is still alive as my wife found out. After much searching of town death records, she made a phone call to a Mead listed in the phone book, and her cousin whose death date was missing on the stone answered the phone. In Shamokin Penn., I found that the town records had not survived a fire. The only cemetery in town was owned by the Masonic organization, however, and

their records were so complete (with birth and marriage information, as well as the death records) that I was able to build a great picture of my mother's family from them.

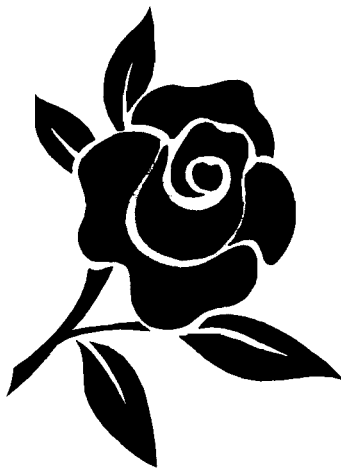
Let's look at newspapers. Yes, I know that most of us have looked at the obituaries and maybe also the pages that show marriages, But much more information can be found by looking at the articles.

Look for articles about anniversaries or birthdays. Usually, these will give you names of relatives that were present at the celebrations. Look for articles where someone is being recognized for some outstanding contribution to the community. Look for announcements of a speaker, which may list that he or she is the son or daughter of a prominent family in town. Then there are the city directories. You can find many clues there. Look at who else lived on the street or on adjacent streets. Families often lived close together in the same

neighborhoods. Also look for churches in the area, since families tended to be members of the same religion, you can look for the records of that local church. Another place to look is fraternal organizations in the area where your ancestors lived. Were your ancestors members of the Masonic fraternity, or the Knights of Columbus—perhaps a Moose or an ELK or an Eagle. These organizations keep very good records of their members, and these records are available by writing or even telephoning their state organization headquarters.

Well, folks, I guess you can see that there are many, many ways of looking for the information you need to find out about your family history.

Lloyd Sturges Jr. ■



MIDDLESEX GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

2009-2010 OFFICERS

Lloyd Sturges Jr.	President
Robert E. Kenyon III	Vice President
Dale Pollart	Treasurer
Joan Rinaldi	Secretary

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Donna Moughty	Past President
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Dorothy Shillinglaw	Newsletter Editor

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 (ISSN 1936-3494). Annual membership dues are \$25 per individual and \$30 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

Website: <http://mgs.darien.org>

UPCOMING MGS MEETINGS

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

ALL MEETINGS SATURDAY, 2 PM, CONFERENCE ROOM (on the mezzanine, above the 2nd floor, elevator button "M"), DARIEN LIBRARY, 1441 POST ROAD. COME, AND BRING A FRIEND.

15 MAY 2010. THE STORY OF DARIEN will be presented by **KENNETH M. REISS**, long-time volunteer, board member, and former president of the Darien Historical Society. Ken spent six years doing research for his book, *The Story of Darien Connecticut*, which was published recently by the Darien Historical Society. He will talk about the people and families of Darien that left their imprint on the town in the post-colonial period.

FALL MEETINGS. Program subjects and dates will be announced when available. ■

2010 NGS ANNUAL MEETING

The National Genealogical Society's Annual Meeting ended 1 May in Salt Lake City. Few of us were able to attend, but that does not mean that we cannot hear the presentations. They were once again recorded by JAMB, Inc. on both CDs and cassette tapes, which will soon be available on their Website at <http://www.jamb-inc/>. You can determine which presentations are of interest to you by reading or printing out the entire schedule at http://www.ngsgenealogy.org/galleries/new-gallery/Registration_brochure.pdf. ■

BELGIAN RED STAR LINE WANTS EMIGRANT STORIES

Between 1873 and 1939 more than two million people traveled to the U.S. and Canada from the port of Antwerp, Belgium. Two years from now the Red Star Line Museum of Migration is expected to open in Antwerp. It will be located in the original departure halls in the old harbor district. The main exhibition of the museum will feature the shipping line and its place in the history of emigration from the old world to the new. If you had any ancestors that used this shipping line and have any stories or records to share, please get in touch with the Red Star Line via e-mail at:

redstarline@stad.antwerpen.be ■

MAXIMIZING USE OF THE CENSUS

by Joan K. Rinaldi

On March 20th, the first day of Spring, twenty enthusiastic family researchers gave up a warm and balmy afternoon in the sun to hear Virginia Banerjee, a Middlesex Genealogical Society board member, talk about maximizing use of the census. Her talk came at a particularly appropriate time as the 2010 census forms were just arriving in the mail at everyone's house. These forms, however, requested so little information (the name and age of everyone living in the household, and whether the house/apartment was owned or rented) that it might be a great disappointment to family researchers 72 years from now. Perhaps by then the amount of information available by other means will offset that lack.

Virginia started with an explanation of the census. She explained how everyone gets counted—well, sometimes people were missed. If the weather was bad or a small group of people were clustered well away from everyone else, the census taker of the past occasionally stopped working and went home early. The next morning there was no guarantee he would start where he left off. In this way small groups of people were often left out.

The purpose of the federal census is to apportion legislators based on the size of population, and they are usually organized by locality, city and state. They are taken every ten years and the information they contain varies. For example:

- 1790-1840 censuses listed by name only the head of the household. All others within the household were counted by age group. The ages in each group varied year to year.
- 1850: The names of all persons living in a household were listed, but not their relationship to the head of the household. Virginia cautioned us not to *assume* the first male and female listed were married to each other just because their ages were similar.
- 1860: An increasing amount of detail was requested from this year on.
- 1890: Little of this census has survived.
- 1900: For the first time the relationship of each of those living in the household to the head of that household was listed.
- 1920: By now much more information was

gathered: name, relation to head of household, home owned or rented, personal description, citizenship, education, place of birth, mother tongue, place of birth and mother tongue of each person's father and mother, occupation by trade and industry.

- 1930: The most recent census available to us (a census must be 72 years old before it is made public).

Of course, we don't know who gave the information to the census taker or what instructions, if any, were given to the census taker to verify such information. The information is handwritten and surname misspellings or inaccurate reporting can make the locating of your family more difficult.

Virginia offered the following tips:

- Once you have found the family you are looking for, don't stop. Continue to look at previous and succeeding pages because information was not necessarily recorded in continuous sequence. If using microfilm, be sure to record the roll number, page number, line number, volume and sheet numbers to make subsequent searches easier. Researchers often have to return to a document such as the census time and time again. The information contained in the census often offers clues which can lead you to other records—military, land, immigration and naturalization. Federal population censuses are not the only ones available. There are mortality schedules, vital records, manufacturing and agricultural schedules. States often conducted a census in intermediate years and big cities conducted local and police censuses.
- Use extraction forms to record the information, thereby making it easier to analyze. Extraction forms can be downloaded from the internet and copied. Google "free genealogy forms."
- Create a census checklist by starting with a Pedigree Chart. Start from the known (you if born in 1930 or earlier) to the unknown (ancestors). The numbering system used is universal: men are even numbered, women odd numbered. Be consistent in your numbering and also use the same number for each person. Your objective in searching the census is to find every person on your pedigree chart.

The first rule in using documents such as the census is to **GET ALL THE INFORMATION THE FIRST TIME!** ■

The following article is from Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter and is copyright 2010 by Richard W. Eastman. It is republished here with the permission of the author. Information about the newsletter is available at <http://www.eogn.com>

FAMILY HISTORY LIBRARY CLASSES NOW AVAILABLE ON INTERNET

FREE CLASSES MAKE GENEALOGY EXPERTISE ACCESSIBLE ANYWHERE

SALT LAKE CITY—It is rare that Marcia Covington can make the trip from her home in State College, Pennsylvania, to the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, Utah. Now, however, people like Covington can take classes from the world-famous library without ever leaving home.

The FamilySearch Family History Library is now making its popular classes available at FamilySearch.org where anyone anywhere in the world can access them for free at a time that is convenient for them. The classes have been offered on-site in Salt Lake City for years. Until now, attendance has been limited to those patrons who are fortunate to live in the surrounding community or happen to be visiting the library as part of a research trip. Making the classes available online allows access to many more patrons.

“Most people do family history whenever they can fit it in their busy lives, on evenings, holidays, weekends, and so forth. Whether you are a beginner or experienced researcher, you can choose subjects of interest to you from the available classes and watch them anytime and anywhere,” said FamilySearch Community Services Manager Diane Loosle.

The online classes are a great complement to the free personal research assistance the Family History Library offers to its patrons in Utah and through its family history centers worldwide. According to Loosle, the free online classes are one part of the growing number of tools FamilySearch is building for its online patrons. That is great news to people like Covington.

“Very few people have the opportunity to come to Salt Lake City, but these classes give me the same access at home as I can get in Utah,” Covington said. “Our distances here are pretty long, and for some people it is a 40-minute drive to the nearest family history center. These classes make

it possible to get training in your home whenever you want, and it is so nice that it is free.”

There are currently 23 Family History Library classes available online, with subjects ranging from European research to United States military records. The most popular offerings are the Beginning Research Series for Ireland and England and a class on descendancy research.

The classes vary in length from 6 to 58 minutes, with most lasting about 25 minutes. The format of the class varies, depending on the content being presented. One type of class shows a video that alternates between the teacher and the PowerPoint slides. Another kind of class integrates video of the presenter, the accompanying PowerPoint slides, and links to supplemental materials all in one screen.

Several of the classes are interactive, such as a course on reading German handwriting. In these classes, the teacher is represented with still photographs and audio narration, and the student can actively participate in learning activities, such as matching English and German characters or transcribing selected words from a document. As a student types, the correct text appears in green and incorrect answers appear in red, providing immediate feedback.

FamilySearch is continually adding new online offerings; classes on how to read English handwritten records are currently in development. All of the classes can be accessed at www.familysearch.org by clicking on **Free Online Classes** on the home page. ■

LIBRARY REPORT

by C. Scribner

As the librarian of the Middlesex Genealogical Society I received the following request from the Office of the Commissioner of the State of Connecticut Department of Veterans' Affairs. They were requesting an update of the records of the State Veterans' Cemetery at Spring Grove in Darien. They wanted all grave stones counted and the information thereon recorded. They suggested we give the task to local Boy Scouts to be used as an Eagle Scout project. Local Troop 35 was glad to get the project, and an Eagle candidate was assigned.

With the hard work and dedication of many scouts and volunteers and many hours of work the

project was completed in book form. It turned out to be an excellent record and a fine tribute to the veterans. The book was done in two sections. The first is a listing of the graves by location as outlined on a grid. The second is a listing in alphabetical order by last name. It was complete with an introductory page and two aerial photos of the cemetery.

I was so impressed by the workmanship that I asked for and received a book for the MGS section at Darien Library. In the past MGS had put out five publications with two listing these veterans' graves. At that time, completed lists were sent to the state. This new, updated book with one section done in alphabetical order is a better system for locating relatives or friends who are interred there. I will be turning the book over to the library staff to be catalogued and placed on our shelves. ■

NATIONAL ARCHIVES NORTHEAST REGION, NEW YORK CITY, IS MOVING!

The National Archives made a recent announcement on this subject:

The National Archives at New York City is pleased to announce that within the next two years we will move our office to the Alexander Hamilton U.S. Custom House at One Bowling Green in New York City. Our new home will be located in the same building as the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of the American Indian. The building is currently known as the Custom House building, designed by Cass Gilbert in the Beaux Arts style and listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

After extensive renovation, our new space will be ready in the fall of 2011. We will announce the exact dates of the move as soon as possible.

At One Bowling Green our patrons will continue to receive the same great service they have come to expect from the experienced National Archives staff. We will continue to provide access to all of our holdings. An increase in our public and outreach programs, and our new proximity to other im-

portant New York cultural institutions, including the Museum of the American Indian and Ellis Island, will enable us to reach a wider audience.

At One Bowling Green we will:

- Occupy space on the 3rd and 4th floors of this historic building.
- Store our most used original records and most popular microfilm holdings.
- Provide access to all of our records (including records stored offsite).
- Continue to provide certified copies of National Archives holdings.
- Increase the number of public access computers so that patrons can access online resources.
- Continue to make available online subscription services, including Ancestry, Footnote, HeritageQuest, ProQuest, free of charge.
- Provide additional outreach programs to increase awareness of National Archives resources in New York, the Northeast Region, and nationwide.

(*Note:* In an effort to consolidate all customs activities in one building, the Customs Service moved to 6 World Trade Center in August 1973. Since destruction of the World Trade Center, Customs offices and staff have been scattered throughout Manhattan, JFK Airport, and Newark.)

NEW £12 MILLION WELSH VISITOR CENTER

Although the Visitor Center at The General Offices at The Works: Ebbw Vale center will not be officially opened until 2011, a sneak preview of this cutting edge facility will soon be available. The center will link genealogy searches with geographically represented data, which will include digitized newspapers from the past, photos, maps, recordings, records and films. (The Works was formerly the largest steelworks site in Europe and is currently undergoing a £350 million regeneration, which includes the genealogy center.)

When the whole attraction opens, it will include a "Names" room, a "Map" room, a "Home"

room and an "Are You Belonging" room. It will have a partnership with FindMyPast.com which has access to to the 1911 census. It will also house the Gwent Records Office, which has one of the largest archives in Wales.

Councillor Des Hillman, Leader of Blaenau Gwent Council, said: "We are calling on all those whose families originate from the South Wales Valleys to return and experience where their relatives came from and see the Valleys in their modern attractive setting." ■

NEED HELP WITH RESEARCH?
Visit the MGS section at Darien Library on Tuesday mornings (10-12) and discuss your concerns with MGS board member Leonard Christie.

UPCOMING SEMINARS

Connecticut Ancestry, co-sponsored by the **Weston Historical Society**, at the Weston Library, 56 Norfield Rd., Weston: On **8 May**, from **10 AM to 2 PM**, **Jean Nudd** of NARA and **Nora Galvin** of Connecticut Ancestry will present "**Pre-1850 U.S. Censuses, 1940 U.S. Census, and U.S. Nonpopulation Census Schedules**." Jean will demonstrate relationship techniques with pre-1850 Population Schedules. Nora will describe the Nonpopulation Special Schedules and how to use them to understand your ancestor's life. A tour of the Weston Historical Society, 104 Weston Rd., Weston, will follow at 2 PM. The lecture and light refreshments are free, but you are asked to inform Robert Locke of the number of attendees by leaving a message at 203-778-4794 or info@connecticutancestry.org

National Archives and Records Administration, Northeast Region:

New York City, 201 Varick St., 12th fl. (entrance on Houston St, between Varick and Hudson). Programs are free, but space is limited. Register by calling toll-free: 1-866-840-1752, or 212-401-1620; fax: 212-401-1638; e-mail: newyork.archives@nara.gov.

- **Tues., 11 May**, 12:30 PM to 1:30 PM,

"Preserving Family Records."

- **Tues., 8 June**, 12:30 PM to 1:30 PM, "Memories, Memoirs, and Family History."
- Feel free to bring lunch.

Waltham, Mass., 380 Trapelo Rd. Lectures are free, but space is limited. Register by calling 866-406-2379 or e-mailing waltham.archives@nara.gov

- **Tues., 1 June**, 2 PM, "Finding Your Ancestors in Maritime Records."
- **Tues., 6 July**, 2 PM, "Census, Passenger Lists and Naturalization Records."
- **Tues., 3 Aug.**, 2 PM, "Introduction to Genealogy."

New York Genealogical & Biographical Society, 36 W. 44th Street, 7th fl., New York, NY 10036-8105; telephone 212-755-8532; FAX 212-754-4218

- "**The Armorial Bearings of the St George's and St. Andrew's Societies**," **Mon., 12 May at 6:00 PM**, at NYG&B's new headquarters (address above). Cost: \$20 per person, includes refreshments. Space is limited. To reserve, please e-mail John Shannon at: John.Shannon@stgeorgessociety.org
- "**Non-Jewish Research in Jewish Resources**": **Thurs., 13 May at 5:30 PM** presented by David Kleiman, President of Heritage Muse at NYG&B's headquarters.
- "**Jersey Boys, Jersey Girls: Finding Your Jersey Folk in the New Jersey Room**," **Tues., 22 June 5:30 PM**, at NYG&B's headquarters. Cynthia Harris, MLS, is the manager of the New Jersey Room at the Jersey City Free Public Library. The NJ Room has a wealth of genealogical and historical resources pertaining to New Jersey in general and Hudson County in particular, that are often overlooked. Registration is \$25 members/\$40 non-members and is limited. Please visit NYG&B's online store or call Lauren Maehrlein at 212-755-8532, ext. 211, to sign up.
- **Walking Tour of Woodlawn Cemetery, Sat., 26 June, 10 AM to Noon or 1 PM to 3 PM** at the cemetery, Webster Ave. & E. 233rd St., Bronx, NY 10470. Phone: (718) 920-0500. Susan Olsen, Director of Historic Services of Woodlawn Cemetery, will conduct two genealogical tours and orientations on how to use the records of this beautiful cemetery located in the Bronx. Added bonus: If

you are looking for a specific plot please e-mail Susan in advance at solsen@thewoodlawncemetery.org for extra assistance. Registration is \$15 members/\$25 nonmembers and is limited. To register visit the NYG&B online store or call Lauren Maehrlein at 212-755-8532, ext. 211, to sign up. Be sure to specify morning or afternoon tour.

New England Historic Genealogical Society, 101 Newbury St., Boston, MA 02116:

- **Irish Genealogy Research Tour, Sun., 23 May to Sun., 30 May.** This week-long guided research tour will give you access to records in Dublin and the benefit of consultations with some of the foremost experts in Irish genealogy. The tour features guided research at various repositories in central Dublin, including the General Register Office, National Library, National Archives, and Registry of Deeds, among others. Daily programming includes tutorials, research tips and techniques lectures, personalized consultations and group dining events.
- **Come Home to New England I, Mon., 14 June to Sat., 19 June.** During a week of guided research, you'll have access to personalized one-on-one consultations, morning lectures, and special participant-only admission hours. The week's lectures include an orientation to the NEHGS collections, methodology seminars, and daily topical discussions of understanding record sources. The program includes group social events to meet other members, discuss research, and share stories.
- **Summer Research Getaway, Thurs., 15 July to Sat., 17 July,** a guided program with one-on-one consultations and expert reviews of your research.
- **Come Home to New England II, Mon., 9 Aug., to Sat., 14 Aug.** See description above.
- **Quebec Family History Tour, Sun., 26 Sept. to Sun., 3 Oct.** Researchers will explore the Société Généalogique Canadienne-Française (SGCF) and the Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec (BANQ). Daily consultations with expert genealogists, lectures, and group meals.
- **Salt Lake City Research Tour, Sun., 31 Oct. to Sun., 7 Nov.,** NEHGS's 32nd annual research tour to the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, Utah. This is an intensive week

of guided research aided by the expert staff of NEHGS. Daily programming includes computer tutorials for accessing the library card catalog, research tips and techniques, lectures, personalized consultations and group dining events.

For more information visit the NEHGS Website at: www.newenglandancestors.org

Westchester County Genealogical Society, P.O. Box 518, White Plains, NY 10601, presents speakers on genealogical subjects on the **second Saturday of each month** at 10 AM. (Premeeting networking starts at 9:30 AM.) Meetings are at Aldersgate Memorial United Methodist Church, 600 Broadway, Dobbs Ferry, NY (across from Mercy College on Route 9). A \$3 donation is asked of nonmembers. You can visit the society's website at: <http://www.rootsweb.com/~nywcgs>

- **12 June, "Writing the Family Narrative"** by Tony Lauriano.

Genealogical Society of Bergen County, P.O. box 432, Midland Park, NJ 07432. Meetings are on Mondays at 7 PM, and are held in the auditorium of the Ridgewood Public Library, 125 North Maple Ave., Ridgewood, N.J. 07450.

- **24 May, "Genealogy-Related Records in the Brooklyn Diocesan Archives"** will be presented by Joseph Coen, archivist for the Diocese of Brooklyn for the last 15 years. Information on what is available and how to request it will be covered.
- **28 June, "Introduction to Genealogy Research in Germany"** will be presented by Thilo C. Agthe who was born in Germany, lives in New Jersey, and practices intellectual property law in New York. The class will include common and useful sources, helpful hints, and discussions of the challenges of researching in Germany and at LDS.
- **26 July, "Benefits of Building Your Family Tree Online,"** will be presented by Brandy Sacco, president and founder of ourFamilyology, an online program with tools to help users grow a reliable family tree.
- **23 Aug., "Using City Directories"** will be presented by Sydney Robertson, who will explain how and why city directories were created and what genealogists can learn from them.
- **27 Sept., "Migration Routes in America—How Did Your Family Get There and Why"**

Did They Go?" will be presented by Sharon Hodges. Understanding why your ancestors may have left their homes and moved to a new location and the routes taken to get there (up to 1850) may lead to new information about them.

National Genealogical Society, 3108 Columbia Pike, Suite 300, Arlington, VA 22204-4304; telephone 800-473-0060. The **2010 NGS Fall Research Trip to Salt Lake City** will take place **Sun., 17 Oct. to Sun, 24 Oct.** Space is limited so register early. For more information visit the NGS Website at: <http://www.ngsgenealogy.org>

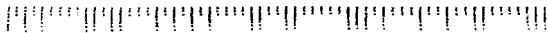
Palatines to America, PO Box 141260, Columbus, Ohio 43214, telephone 614-267-4700, will hold its national conference and annual meeting **Thurs., 17 June to Sat., 19 June** in Fishkill, NY. Sponsored by the New York Chapter of Palatines to America, the meeting will celebrate the 300th anniversary of Palatine immigration to America. For more information see the Palatines to America Website at: <http://www.palam.org/index.php>

Massachusetts Genealogical Council, P.O. Box 5393, Cochranton, MA 01778. Their 2010 Annual

Seminar will take place **26 June** at Bentley University in Waltham, Mass. Entitled "Records and Repositories: Exploring the Treasures of Massachusetts," this all-day event will highlight collections useful for genealogists in a variety of Massachusetts repositories including the National Archives and Records Administration at Waltham, the Massachusetts Historical Society, the New England Historic Genealogical Society, and other locations. ■

**NEEDED
NEW EDITOR FOR MGS NEWSLETTER**

**Deadline for next newsletter
Sept. 2010**



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Peter Biggins
230 Old King's Highway North
Darien, CT 06820

**MEETING
15 MAY 2010, 2 PM
DARIEN LIBRARY**

*Middlesex Genealogical Society
PO Box 1111
Darien CT 06820-1111*

