

Middlesex Genealogical Society

Newsletter

Volume II, Number 1

March 1985

NEXT MEETING --- Wednesday, March 20, 1985 8:00 p.m. Darien Library

THE ANATOMY OF A GENEALOGY will be the subject of the evening's program. Mrs. Betty Doud Tolli, a retired Stamford teacher, will describe how, with no previous experience, she researched the Doud family history, carrying it back 10 generations to early 17th Century England, organized the material and had it published.

The March meeting will also be the Society's second Annual Meeting. Committee reports, including the Nominating Committee's slate of new officers, will be heard and voted upon.

Refreshments will be served. ALL ARE WELCOME!

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

Iast month, I was able to go along with my husband on one of his business trips to Washington, D.C. I had been to the capital before, but never just to do research (which was my objective this time) so this was a new experience for me. The forecast was for snow, which certainly did appear, but NOTHING was going to stop me, all excited and ready to go!

Washington is a researcher's dream and nightmare! It is a good idea to
arrive, armed with a schedule, map and
plenty of time, to do battle with bureaucracy. Many of the government facilities,
while very organized and helpful, also
required much time to be spent in signing
in and out of various rooms and of documents and waiting for materials to be
brought out. The staffs, however, were
always pleasant and helpful for the most
part.

Since I only had 1 whole day and 2 half days to do my research, I decided to divide the time between the National Archives and the D.A.R. Library. I was

not disappointed in my choices. first afternoon I spent at the D.A.R. which has a huge collection of materials, some of which, I am sure, exist only there. The library is free to members, while others pay \$1/day to use it. They are closed during April for the annual Convention. As I said, the collection is very impressive. Chapters have compiled local genealogical materials all over the country and sent them to the national library. Most of the materials have also been indexed for all surnames, which are in a huge card catalog file separate from other card catalogs dealing with author, subject, geographical and other catagories. The staff was extremely helpful and all the stacks were open. Photocopying was available for 15¢/page.

The National Archives was my objective on the second day and I did need the entire day there. Room 401 contained all the Federal Censuses on microfilm, along with Military and Pension Indexes. There were over 100 microfilm readers, but they all had to be hand-turned (very tiring if your information was at the end of the

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MIDDLESEX GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

OFFICERS:

President: Robert E. Fatherley Vice-President: Leo J. Dunphy Secretary: Ray H. Bartlett Treasurer: George T. Cushman

The 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 the Darien Library, provides research assistance on Saturday mornings (10-12) at the Library and publishes a quarterly Newsletter.

Annual memberships are \$10 Individual and \$15 Couple or Family.

The Newsletter is published in March, June, September and December. We welcome original articles and notices of genealogical interest. The Editor is Marianne W. Sheldon.

Address all correspondence to the Society and the Newsletter to:
Middlesex Genealogical Society
45 Old Kings Highway North
Darien, CT 06820

NEW MEMBERS

The Society would like to welcome its newest members. Please add their names to the list printed in preceeding issues of the Newsletter.

Freedman, Mary F.; 51 Schuyler Ave., Stamford, CT 06902.

Hauck, William; 129 Old Highway, Wilton, CT 06897.

Johnson, Mr. & Mrs. J. Myron; 62 Brookside Road, Darien, CT 06820.

Larsen, Carol; 525 Brookside Road, New Canaan, CT 06840.

NOTES cont.

reel!). The cabinets containing the microfilms were all open - the only wait was if you ordered pension files or the original census materials (1 hr. min.). The Soundex for the 1880, 1900 and 1910 Censuses were also available there. I met a woman who told me about the Library of Congress and some of the things available there (books, newspapers, etc.) which are often not found anywhere but a few select places. The National Archives also had some collections of genealogical printed materials but I did not have the time to visit the rooms where they were located.

My third day was spent first seeing a few items at the National Archives I had not had time to order the previous day and then back to the D.A.R. Library for more browsing there.

My one big complaint about my trip was that I did not have enough time to spend on my research! You should know exactly what you are looking for and have your battleplan and alternative plans defined to save wasted time. Write for brochures telling the addresses, hours, availability of collections, costs, etc. Many of these buildings do not have any area set aside for their visitors to eat in, so your lunch should also be planned for.

Next time - and it will be soon, I hope - I will know what to expect. For all of you, I urge you, too, to plan a trip to Washington in the near future to see the wealth and variety of genealogical sources available to everyone.

BOOKS AVAILABLE FOR USE

Carl Moses has the following books in his library and will allow interested members of MGS to use them.

-Descendants of John Knowles 1660-1978.
Virginia Knowles Hufbauer. Pub. 1979.
426 p.

-Brewster's Rambles About Portsmouth.
Charles W. Brewster. (A gold mine of information on early New England families.)

JANUARY MEETING

Dorothy Armistead, Curator of the Whitfield Museum in Guilford, CT and a founder and director of the Connecticut Society of Genealogists, spoke to members of the MGS at the January 16th meeting held at the Darien Historical Society. The topic was MIGRATION PATTERNS and their importance to genealogical research.

With a large map of the eastern half of the U.S. for us to refer to visually, Mrs. Armistead began her talk by reminding us that a wandering person always has a goal - a place to live. The need to go out and found a new town and then to move on when the area became too crowded seems to be inbred in many New Englanders. They always took something from the old town with them, however - usually the name and it is often easy to trace the early wanderers by looking for other towns with the same name.

New Englanders first settled the coastal areas, since they were the most accessible by boat, which was the easiest form of transportation for most of this country's history of migration. Within one generation people in CT had established eleven towns on long Island! In 1660 a large group of people in New Haven declared the town was too crowded and left for New Jersey.

When the coast became populated, people began to move northward and further inland, usually travelling along rivers - those in MA moved up to ME while the CT pioneers went to VT, NH and Orange Co., NY. After New York was taken over by the English, many of the Dutch moved south to the Carolinas, taking some of their CT neighbors with them. In the Royal Charter of 1662 a strip of land running west to the Pacific Ocean was given to CT, but some of this land overlapped land also given to PA. This caused a great deal of trouble between the people from both states who went to settle the area.

With the French and Indian War, men saw new lands in the west and began moving their families to the wilderness. In 1760 the Susquahanna Company was fromed and 200 people went to settle the Wyoming Valley in 1762. After numerous Indian massacres and additional attempts to settle in 1769 and 1770, the area was finally attached to Litchfield Co. by CT

in 1778 to give the settlers official status and protection. Many records for early settlers can thus be found in Litchfield instead of PA. In 1782 there were again Indian massacres and the area was disputed by CT and PA, with it finally being attached to PA. Now people were able to get clear deeds to their property. Others, who had become discouraged with the fighting and massacres, ended up in Orange Co., NY.

New Englanders can end up almost anywhere. Phineas Lyman felt men who had
served in the French and Indian War should
be rewarded so the King granted him and
his men land in the Yazoo River area of
Miss. When the group of several hundred
people finally arrived they found the
King had ordered the Governor of West
Florida not to issue any more grants.
They decided to stay anyway so many families with New England roots can be
found around Natchez.

As mentioned before, travel was easiest and cheapest by water. Overland trails were ones that had started as animal paths to the salt licks, which the Indians later used for their war parties and were finally adopted by the settlers. There were several major trails - the Great Indian Warpath, 800 mi. from Philadelphia to KY; the Wilderness Trail through the Cumberland Gap; Braddock's Road, which became the National Road, then U.S. Rt. 40, one of the longest and most popular trails going straight west; the Old Trading Trail, 190 mi. across PA; the Mohawk Trail through NY; the Natchez Trace or the Old Chicasaw Trace, 500 mi.; the Buffalo Trace; the Old Chicago Road from Indianapolis to Chicago; and the Old Sauk Trail.

The Revolutionary War spiked the frontier movement. People got to see and hear about more of the country, roads had been built for the movement of war equipment and soldiers received bounty lands from the federal government (much of which was bought up by land speculators). The Northwest Territory, claimed by many states, was taken over by the government (CT refused to relinquish her claim since she had lost the Wyoming Valley so the government granted her 3 million acres in present-day Ohio called the Western Reserve, which was eventually sold off to and settled by CT families).

With the opening of the 363 mi. long

January Meeting con't.

Erie Canal in 1825, the cost of moving supplies dropped tremendously. Westward settlement was affordable to just about everyone. More canals were built in Ohio and Ind. to accommodate the influx of people. The railroads were built almost immediately after the canals, making westward expansion even easier.

For New Englanders, the first bounty lands offered were in Onondaga Co., NY, VA, MD, OH and KY. Later the government advertised land in MI, WI and IL. They actually published a directory which described what was available, cost, where to register land claims, etc. to attract settlers. People moved in so quickly that problems arose with squatters. In 1830 and 1843, Preemption Acts were passed where people could claim not more than 160 acres of land and the government would come around to survey and register the claim. The Homestead Act was passed in 1862 in the last push across the Mississippi River. Now a claimant had to live on the land at least five years, be a U.S. citizen or a veteran and be of

Natural resources also influenced migration. With the discovery of precious metals and ore mines in IL about 1840 and then the Gold Rush of 1848, people thought nothing of just picking up and leaving at a moment's notice. The pine forests of the northern Midwest attracted Scandinavians and Germans recruited through newspaper ads in Europe and the railroads also advertised for cheap labor in Europe and the Orient. Certain areas of the country became heavily populated with immigrant groups joining fellow-countrymen already settled.

How can the genealogist use this information on migration patterns to find that elusive ancestor? First, look for him as a member of a church group. Many towns were settled as whole congregations, under the leadership of a minister, picked up everything (often including all the records) and moved to a new area. Also, look for towns with the same name. Use maps - especially look for natural trails and ways of easy transportation (rivers, mountain passes, etc.) which would make the decision for the pioneer as to which way to travel - even though to you it might look like a strange way

to go. County histories (most towns in the U.S. had them published in the late 1800's) often give valuable clues as to origins of the early settlers and perhaps the reason for the move.

It may take years to find that wandering ancestor and he may turn up in the most unlikely location but by understanding a bit about why and how people moved around this country should narrow your search and make it much easier.

THE KELLOGG-COMSTOCK CEMETERY

by George Cushman

There is a small cemetery in Norwalk, located at the junction of Ponus Ave. and Nursery St. It is called the Kellogg-Comstock Cemetery and is presently cared for by the West Norwalk Association, whose Secretary, Virginia Crawford, provided the following data on the partially illegible headstones:

Enos Kellogg, died May 20, 1832,

age 82 yrs.

Lydia Kellogg, widow of Enos, died
Dec. 14, 1832, age 86 yrs.

Aaron Comstock, died Dec. 17, 1827,
age 50 yrs.

Hannah Comstock -- (broken)

Rebecca K., wife of Henry H. Seymour,
23 yrs. old, Dec. 25, 1836.

Margaret, wife of Darius F. Todd, who
departed this life Nov. 8, 1840.
(Possibility that Todd is Mary Todd
Lincoln's brother).

W--- Mary, Thomas C., Ginna Kenneth,
who died Oct. 22, 182-, 19 yrs.

small stone 18" x 6".

small stone 8" x 6". AE (only).

Ed. note: Most people in the early history of our country were buried on small family farms, often in an area adjacent to several neighbor farms. With the years most of these farms no longer exist and the burial plots are often forgotton, unrecorded and even destroyed by vandals and developers. Societies such as ours can do much to preserve the information these cemeteries hold and to prevent them from disappearing altogether.

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE "FAMILY IMAGE" by Jane Cleveland Merchant

One of the most fascinating rewards in doing family research, I think, is that unexpected discovery of a well-kept family secret! Sometimes, for generations, oral history will perpetuate a carefully constructed myth - a version of the family's past, which seems very important to the perception of themselves. Often this has been confused with patriotism - or being on the "right side".

The two major wars fought on our soil seem to have contributed the most to these family legends. Down through the decades, no "red-blooded American" would ever acknowledge that anyone in the family had been other than a staunch patriot who hated the British, nor less than 100% for either the "Union Forever" or the "Boys in Gray" (depending on which side of Dixie's border you came from!). The idea that anything had been concealed, or just not mentioned to preserve an "image" would never have occurred to most descendants.

When I married into a Southern family (both of my hisband's parents having been born in South Carolina), my mother-in-law took care to impress on me that true Southern blood was in both families from "way back". In fact, hearing of all the dreadful things the Yankees did in the War Between the States, I felt my "damn-Ynakee" heritage was being excused to prevent embarrassing me! This was some forty-odd years ago - both parents now long gone.

But two years ago, a letter came to light which really amused us both. My husband's grandfather wrote a letter in 1886 to his children, in which he stated that he wanted to tell them about himself. "I was born in Newport, Rhode Island", he wrote, "And my parents were natives of that town." He went on to say he had struck out alone for the South and settled in Georgetown, South Carolina. His first wife, who died young, was also from Newport. After the War (he never admitted to his sympathies for either cause), he married a native of Georgetown - she was my husband's grandmother.

We can only imagine the consternation of the parents of the young woman he

courted in Charleston - her father had been a Captain in the Confederate Army and the family silver had been buried to hide it from "thieving Yankees"! And here was a young man courting their daughter whose father was from Rhode Island! The fact that this was hushed up immediately, and the Georgetown family never mentioned, was obviously the only way to bring up the future generations believing they were all 100% Southern. It may sound odd today, but it took my husband almost seventy years to learn the true story.

Since then, we have enjoyed tracing his Rhode Island roots, with a great deal of help from the Newport Historical Society.

GENEALOGY CONFERENCE

The National Genealogical Society's Fifth Annual National Conference will be held August 6-9, 1985 in Salt Lake City, Utah. This is an opportunity for beginning genealogists, as will as experienced professionals, to learn research skills and record sources. Program topics will include: the Americas, British and European, Family History, Computers and Genealogy, Genealogical Librarianship, Professional Genealogy and Special Presentations. There will be classes and lectures, a banquet with the Archivist of the U.S. as the speaker, local tours, opportunity to do research at the LDS Genealogical Library, exhibit booths with genealogical supplies and services and a special concert by the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. Registration is \$60 until May 31, then \$75. For more information write to:

1985 NGS Conference Host P.O. Box 1053 Salt Lake City, Utah 84110.

INDEXING HELP NEEDED

If there is anyone interested in helping to index the Ancestor Charts before they go out on the shelves for use, please contact the Editor.

MAINE VITAL RECORDS

by Carl Moses

For a long time now I have assumed that every one knew about the Family Records maintained in the Town Clerk's Office of some Maine towns. I think it was an established practice in all Maine towns but I am not sure and will try to find out when I go to Maine again.

I will cite two examples:

Corinna, Maine - From the time the town government was established around 1816, the Town Clerk kept a Ledger where he recorded marriages, births and deaths. In addition to these formal records a card file was eventually established with a card for each family on which each member of the family was listed with date and place of birth, if not Corinna. It also showed deaths.

Eastport, Maine - In the Town Clerk's Office, when I enquired about records of the Moses family, a helpful lady reached down to the bottom shelf of an open bookshelf and came up with a Ledger dated 1880. She dusted it off and turned to the family record of my great-grandfather!

For anyone with ancestry in Maine, the Town Clerk's Office might be a gold mine of information, saving endless hours of searching for all the family members.

In addition, there is MOCA (Maine Old Cemetery Association), Maine Archives Building, Augusta, ME 04330, which may be able to provide further family information.

The man who has nothing to boast of but his illustrious ancestry, is like the potato - the best part under ground. -Sir Thomas Overbury

ANCESTOR CHARTS NEEDED

Have you submitted your ancestor charts yet? If not, please attempt to do so. This will be another service the MGS is trying to offer its members and other researchers - an opportunity to utilize the work done by others to aid in establishing your own family lines. When the charts have been indexed, they will be placed on the library's genealogy shelves for use by interested persons.

STAMFORD GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY MEETING

The next meeting of the Stamford Genealogical Society will be Saturday, March 23rd at the New Canaan Historical Society Library, Oenoke Road, New Canaan at 2:00 p.m. The program will feature a talk by Dr. Newman A. Hall, Editor of the National Genealogical Society Quarterly, a member and past Registrar of the Founders and Patriots Society and a member of the Society of Mayflower Descendants.

Dr. Hall will give an illustrated talk, using many old maps, about the early settlements of Connecticut. This will be an excellent opportunity to learn about the movements of early settlers within the boundaries of our state, given by a man who is always in great demand for his lectures and seminars on genealogy.

The Stamford Genealogical Society extends a welcome to all of us with a "you-all come!" Discussion and refreshments will follow the program.

KINDRED SPIRITS

One of our members submitted this short story which had appeared in a magazine. Unfortunately the name of the magazine is now unknown so we cannot give credit to the original publisher.

Dad often corresponded with persons bearing our name, so he could plot them onto his genealogy master chart. One year he obtained the address of an attorney who had our surname. Dad wrote him, asking him to supply facts concerning his family's migration.

He received the following reply:
"Dear Sir, Your name may be the same as mine, but where I, or any of my family, come from is none of your blankety-blank business."

My dad responded: "Dear Sir, Yep, you are indeed a Darley."

After that they corresponded frequently, and Dad added him and his family to the master chart.

(Contributed by Howard B. Darley)

FROM THE LIBRARY...

THE SOURCE A GUIDEBOOK OF AMERICAN GENEALOGY, mentioned in the last Newsletter, can now be found on the genealogy shelf. Compiled by sixteen of the nation's leading genealogists, it is the most complete reference book available today. One of the most interesting sections explains how to effectively use business and employment records to trace family members. There is a listing of business archives and life insurance companies that were formed prior to 1876 and still in active operation in 1942.

Genealogists looking for New York state ancestors who served in the military during the Revolution can find help at the library. A copy of James A. Robert's NEW YORK IN THE REVOLUTION, first published in 1898, can be found in the library's Rare Book Collection. While the line and militia are listed by county and regiment, there is also a general index alphabetical by surname.

Just for fun read Trish Hall's THE NEW CONNECTICUT YANKEES. This slim book (34 pages) is a delightful essay that draws an absorbing picture of the New England character. The essays first appeared in Connecticut Magazine.

ANCESTORS IN JO DAVIESS CO., IL?

The Historical Collection of the Galena Public Library is starting an ancestor file as a public service to persons searching for ancestors who lived in Jo Daviess Co., Illinois. Others who are researching the same ancestors will then have access to your cards and you may each then correspond on your particular family.

You may submit as many cards as you like, using a separate card for each ancestor. These cards will be filed in alphabetical order, by last name of ancestor. For mor information on the format for information on the cards to be filed contact Marianne Sheldon, 3 Revere Rd., Darien, CT 06820.

Persons interested in receiving a copy of file cards on persons they are researching may send a SASE and enough information for the staff to identify the ancestor to: Historical Collection, Galena Public Library, Galena, IL 60136.

QUERIES

Periodically, requests are sent to either the MGS or the Darien Historical Society for information of a genealogical nature. We feel that by printing these inquiries in our Newsletter one of our members may have some help to give on a particular family. These queries are merely exerpts from the original letters so you might wish to contact the Editor before responding.

Our members are encouraged to submit queries to the Newsletter. The Editor reserves the right to edit queries when space necessitates. Remember - you never know who out there might have the answer to your particular problem. Try a query - it may help!

Seek info on the SCOFIELD family who lived in Darien area 1780's,1790's, specifically DAVID SCOFIELD, m. BETSEY SCOFIELD and AMOS SCOFIELD, m. AVILDA GRIFFITHS.

---Mrs. Denise Bond, 8090 Columbus St., San Diego, CA 92126.

Seek info WILLIAM SHILDKNECHT and wife, CATHERINE (). William was b. Essen, Germany 16 Feb. 1846; d. 1929, maybe in Darien, CT. He was a Justice in Darien ca. 1890-1902.

---Mary Hendt, P.O. Box 1198, Farney, TX 75126.

Am working on a genealogy of the PARMELEE family. They arrived in America 1639, settling in Guilford, CT. Would like anyone interested in this family to contact me.

---Phyllis Parmelee Cramer, 1006 Sarah In., Endicott, NY 13760.

IN MEMORIAM

The Society would like to take this time to mention the passing of two of our members and to offer our condolences to their families.

Charles E. VanVoorhis....January 1985 Edward L. Warren.....March 1985

DHS LIBRARY

The Darien Historical Society, 45 Old Kings Highway, North has a modest collection of genealogical materials which are not exclusively related to just Darien families. Some of you might want to stop by and browse through their library to see what you can find. Hours are Tues.-Fri., 9-1.

Here is a list of titles of some of the genealogical materials you can find there.

General:

In Search of Your British & Irish Roots Connecticut Researcher's Handbook Family History For Fun and Profit Our French-Canadian Ancestors Genealogies in the Ferguson Library Search & Research The Family Tree Detective How To Trace Your Family Tree

Biography & Genealogy:

Loyalists of the Revolution

Men of Mark in Connecticut

Genealogical & Personal Memoirs
Massachusetts (4 Vol.)

Genealogical & Family History of the

State of New Hampshire (4 Vol.)

Genealogical & Family History of Southern New York & the Hudson River

Valley (3 Vol.)

Genealogical & Family History of the

State of Connecticut (4 Vol.)

Stamford's Soldiers

History & Genealogy of the Families of
Old Fairfield

Genealogies:

The Ancestry of Blanche Butler Ames and Adelbert Ames Ackley-Bosworth Genealogy The Backus Families of Early New England Bates-Selleck and Allied Families of Stamford, Norwalk and Fairfield Co., CT Ancestry of William Sperry Beinecke Benedict's Genealogy Brown Genealogy Betts Family History Clarke-Clark Genealogy Colton - Related Family Histories The Early Daytons and Descendants of Henry, Jr. Everest Genealogy A James Baker Williams Family Album Ancestry of Elizabeth B. (Gillespie) Beinecke

Gillespie Descendants The Hoadley Genealogy Papers of the Lloyd Family of Lloyd's Neck, New York Mather Genealogy Newcomb Genealogy Peabody Genealogy The Peck Genealogy The Northrup-Northrop Genealogy Reed-Read Lineage Slason-Slauson-Slawson-Slosson Family Selleck Memorial With Collateral Connections Genealogy of the Stevens Family The Street Genealogy The Trowbridge Family Lathrop Family Memorial The Whitney Family of Connecticut Wood Genealogy The Delafields and Delafield Island Signers of the Mayflower Compact.

There are more materials available there, especially files, cemetery records, local histories, etc., dealing with area families. Visit and see what they have to offer.

The glory of ancestors sheds a light around posterity; it allows neither their good or bad qualities to remain in obscurity.

-Sallust

DID YOU KNOW...

The Washington Post publishes a classified Genealogy section in their Sunday edition, once a month. The deadline is usually about 1-2 weeks before the next edition. They have six classifications: Ancestral Queries, Organizations, Family Reunions, Services, Publishing (Companies & Materials), and Supplies, Etc.

With approximately 25 characters to a line, the cost to persons living outside the DC, MD, VA, DE, or WV area is \$11.30/line, 3 line minimum (\$5.30/line, 2 line min. if your telephone listing is within that area.).

For more information, write to: GENEALOGY, Classified Advirtising Dept., THE WASHINGTON POST, 1150 15th St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20071-6010.

MIDDLESEX GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY QUESTIONNAIRE

Please take time out to complete this questionnaire so the officers of the MGS can better learn more about the membership and what Society can offer to further aid genealogical research. Return these to either the March Annual Meeting or mail them in.

NAME	
ADDRESS	
How long have you been working on you	or genealogy?
What countries and ethnic backgrounds	s are you interested in?
What surnames are you working on?	
Do you belong to any other genealogic If so, which ones?	cal, historical, or hereditary societies?
Have you ever published any genealogi	cal meterial?
What types of programs, classes, acti MGS provide?	vities, etc. would you like to see the
	to see presented at an evening meeting?
	oing with MGS special projects (indexing, als, answering queries, working on the
	embership of the Middlesex Genealogical Society
NAME	
(last) ADDRESS	(first - both names for couple)
(street) CLASSIFICATION: Single (\$10./year) (circle one) Couple or Family (\$	PHONE
Yes, my company	will match my membership.

Mail form and check, made payable to Middlesex Genealogical Society, to:

I

Treasurer, Middlesex Genealogical Society 45 Old Kings Highway North Darien, CT 06820

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