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Darien, Fairfield County, CT

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MIDDLESEX GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

2017

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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 (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/>

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The Middlesex Genealogical Society offers members a free page on its website to display information about their families. It's called a Member Page. There is no set format. Your page can be as simple as a list of surnames you are researching. One of the advantages of Member Pages is that distant relatives may find you and provide you with new genealogical information. John Driscoll found a third cousin who googled her great-grandfather's name and found John's Member Page.

Some of the things you might consider are surnames, geographical areas, family histories, and photographs.

You don't have to construct your page. The webmaster does that for you. Just give him some content. If you don't like what he does, he

is more than happy to make any changes. Then, any time you want to make a update, just let him know.

You don't have to include your email address. The webmaster will let you know if someone is trying to get hold of you.

We have 15 Member Pages to date. If you would like a page constructed for your family, contact MGS webmaster Peter Biggins at: pabiggin@optonline.net.

On another subject, I mentioned in the March Newsletter that we were wondering what to do with two free editions of Family Tree Maker. One is now gone. We offered it as a door prize at our May 13 Meeting and one attendee was very happy to have the lucky number. We also had an excellent presentation from Marian Wood on deciding when it makes sense to pay for genealogical resources.

Peter Biggins

Middlesex Genealogical Society

Volunteer Story

By John Driscoll

I have always considered myself a sleuth when it came to uncovering family details. By concentrating on neighbors, baptism and marriage witnesses and such, I have been able to uncover quite a few things. Alas, fifteen of my sixteen great grandparents were Irish leaving very little to go on. The sixteenth great grandparent was Anton Deren from Germany. Other than the basic censuses, directories and church records I could find here easily, I was stuck in a rut with him also. The only clue was a letter from my aunt to her daughter saying he was from Bremen. In the



same letter however, she also said his wife was from Queensland, Ireland. Both of these cities were main departure points for emigrants. He probably left from Bremen and did not originate from there.

We have, at the Middlesex Genealogy Society, volunteers that help us with our brick walls. One of these volunteers, Mary, can interpret German handwriting, as well as being very knowledgeable in German geography and history. I asked her if she would take a look at the data I had to see if I could move forward with my quest.

The first thing she did was to look at his death certificate, which stated his age in years and months. She was able to locate an Anton Dueren born in the same month and year, May 1826, in Godesberg, Germany, a small town outside of Bonn. Because my Anton's given name was also recorded as Anthony, Andrew, Andy, Antone, Anthon and Antony and his surname was recorded as Deering, Derin, Dearing, Dearn, Derring and Duran, I had no problem accepting a Dueren into the mix.

According to the family's census records, Anton was born in Germany, Prussia, Bavaria and in one case, after World War I, Alsace Lorraine. We thought it possible that his daughter did not want her father to be associated with Germany and claimed that he was from Alsace Lorraine, whose borders shifted quite a bit and, Godesberg, with a bit of stretching of the imagination, was near enough to Alsace Lorraine to be included.

We began to get information on this Anton in Godesberg. We started with Family History Library films which I was able to view at the Darien Library. We first found his birth certificate. Then, in the next town over, Konigswinter, we found his marriage certificate in 1855 to Rosalina Cecelia Spindler. Since I knew he was living in New York and married with one child in

1860. I thought we had hit the end of the road. My volunteer suggested that his bride may have died and he emigrated before 1860. A search of a book she located, *Nineteenth-century emigration from the Siegkreis, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany*, did not find him.

From the index of FHL's website, we knew they had four children, Anna Maria in 1857, twins Catherina and Wilhelm in 1859 and a second Wilhelm in 1860. We found the children's birth certificates. At each step in the search I was becoming more convinced that we had the wrong Anton as the window of possibilities was narrowing. Mary can think "outside the box" and proposed plausible ideas that I would not have thought of. If one or both of the twins died, as well as Rosalina in 1860, it was still possible for Anton to come to the states and remarry. One idea proposed by my volunteer was that the first child, Anna Maria, was actually my great grandmother Maryanne and Wilhelm was actually Maryanne's brother William. The names and birth dates were close enough to be possible. As it was, the twins did pass away in 1859 and 1860, but his wife did not. It was the birth certificate of the second Wilhelm that finally put the end to our theory. He was born in Godesberg, July 1860, one month *after* the June 1860 United States census where my Anton Deren was living in New Lots Brooklyn. His signature, the same that was on the earlier birth certificates, was on Wilhelm's. This made it certain Anton Dueren was in Germany at the time. There is still the slimmest possibility that the 1860 Federal Census that I have is wrong and Anton migrated later, but I doubt it.

It has been a fun exercise and I am sure I will be asking again for help in my research. I tend to get blinders on when faced with a wall and to get a new angle on searching is rewarding. I suggest anyone who needs help ask the MGS volunteers. mgsvolunteer@gmail.com

The Names Ahab and Ishmael in Early Massachusetts

Notes and Queries, Oxford University Press, 62 (3): 417-418, September 2015
Robert J. O'Hara

Fitchburg, Massachusetts

Date Written: September 1, 2015

Summary reprinted with the permission of the author.

This paper corrects an error in the comprehensive Explanatory Notes to Luther Mansfield and Howard Vincent's scholarly centennial edition of Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick* (1851). In their discussion of the novel's opening lines and the narrator's name Ishmael, Mansfield and Vincent write, "There is no instance of the name [Ishmael] in the *Nantucket Vital records* to 1850, just as, also understandably, there is no instance of Ahab" (1952: 587). A review of the early vital records of Massachusetts in fact turns up two Ishmaels on Nantucket, along with at least 30 others across the state prior to 1850. And while Mansfield and Vincent are correct that the name Ahab does not appear in the early Nantucket vital records, elsewhere in Massachusetts we can find seven men named Ahab, all of them in the southeastern part of the state near the Rhode Island border. These distinctive names Melville chose for his nineteenth-century Massachusetts characters were thus not pure fictions — as modern readers might expect — but rather were borne in fact by actual people of that time and place. As Melville's Ahab did glory in his genealogy, so may we likewise take delight in the genealogical authenticity that Melville wove into the text of *Moby-Dick*.

The full text of this paper is available at: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2519287>

Save The Date

The next presentation of the Middlesex Genealogical Society will be on Using Ancestry.com presented by Toni McKeen on Saturday Oct. 14th. Details in the September newsletter.

Overview of INS History

A Four Part Report from the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

Part Two

Continued from Mar. 2017 M.G.S. newsletter

Origins of the Federal Naturalization Service

At the beginning of the 20th century, federal attention next turned to standardizing naturalization procedures nationwide. Congress previously



Citizen education class 1919

delegated its constitutional authority to establish "an uniform Rule of Naturalization" to the judiciary for over a century. Under the decentralized system established by the Naturalization Act of 1802, "any court of record" – Federal, state, county, or municipal – could naturalize a new American citizen. In 1905, a commission charged with investigating naturalization practice reported an alarming lack of uniformity among the nation's more than 5,000 naturalization courts. Individual courts exercised naturalization authority without central supervision and with little guidance from Congress concerning the proper interpretation of its naturalization laws. Each court determined its own naturalization requirements, set its own fees, followed its own naturalization procedures, and issued its own naturalization certificate. This absence of uniformity made confirming a person's citizenship status very difficult, resulting in widespread naturalization fraud. The naturalization of large groups of aliens before elections caused particular concern.

Standardizing Naturalization Nationwide

Congress enacted the Basic Naturalization Act of 1906 to restore dignity and uniformity to the naturalization process. The 1906 law framed

the fundamental rules that governed naturalization for most of the 20th century. That legislation also created the Federal Naturalization Service to oversee the nation's naturalization courts. Congress placed this new agency in the Bureau of Immigration, expanding it into the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization.

To normalize naturalization procedures, the Basic Naturalization Act of 1906 required standard naturalization forms and encouraged state and local courts to give up their naturalization jurisdiction to federal courts. To prevent fraud, the new federal Naturalization Service collected copies of every naturalization record issued by every naturalization court across the country. Bureau officials also checked immigration records to verify each applicant's legal admission into the United States.

The Independent Bureau of Naturalization

In 1913, the Naturalization Service began its two decades as an independent Bureau. That year saw the Department of Commerce and Labor divided into separate cabinet departments and the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization split into the Bureau of Immigration and the Bureau of Naturalization. The two bureaus co-existed separately within the new Department of Labor until reunited as the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) in 1933.

Encouraging Citizenship

A grassroots Americanization movement popular before World War I influenced developments in the Naturalization Bureau during the 1920s. The Bureau published its first Federal Textbook on Citizenship in 1918 to prepare naturalization applicants. Its Education for Citizenship program distributed the textbooks to public schools offering citizenship education classes and notified eligible aliens of available education opportunities.

Increasing Oversight of Naturalization Courts

Legislation of 1926 established the designated examiner system which assigned a Naturalization Examiner to each federal naturalization court. The Naturalization Examiners interviewed

applicants, made recommendations to judges, and monitored proceedings. This direct interaction with the courts further advanced the fairness and uniformity of the naturalization process nationwide.

Mass Immigration and WWI

The Immigration Service continued evolving as the United States experienced rising immigration during the early years of the 20th century.



Newly naturalized soldiers

Between 1900 and 1920 the nation admitted over 14.5 million immigrants.

Concerns over mass immigration and its impact on the country began to change

Americans' historically open attitude toward immigration. Congress strengthened national immigration law with new legislation in 1903 and 1907. Meanwhile, a Presidential Commission investigated the causes of massive emigration out of Southern and Eastern Europe and the Congressional Dillingham Commission studied conditions among immigrants in the United States. These commissions' reports influenced the writing and passage of the Immigration Act of 1917.

Among its other provisions, the 1917 Act required that immigrants be able to read and write in their native language, obligating the Immigration Service to begin administering literacy tests. Another change, the introduction of pre-inspection and more-rigorous medical examinations at the point of departure saved time for people passing through some American ports of entry and reduced the number of excluded immigrants.

Wartime Challenges

The outbreak of World War I greatly reduced immigration from Europe but also imposed new duties on the Immigration Service. Internment of enemy aliens (primarily seamen who worked on

captured enemy ships) became a Service responsibility. Passport requirements imposed by a 1918 Presidential Proclamation increased agency paperwork during immigrant inspection and deportation activities. The passport requirement also disrupted routine traffic across United States' land borders with Canada and Mexico. Consequently, the Immigration Service began to issue Border Crossing Cards.

Part three in the Sept. M.G.S. newsletter

The New York Public Library has Released a Maps by Decade Tool

The following article is from *Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter* and is copyright 2017 by Richard W. Eastman. It is re-published here with the permission of the author. Information about the newsletter is available at <http://www.eogn.com/>.

The New York Public Library has been creating some amazing digital tools in the past couple of years. The library wants more of its collection to be available to anyone with a computer or hand-held device, so it's been digitizing its old maps and photos and presenting them in ways that make it easy for people ac-



customed to Google Maps and Streetview. In fact, its eventual goal is to allow people to travel back in time as if Google Maps had existed since the 19th century.

Last month, the library unveiled a [Maps By Decade tool](#) that lets people place old maps over the current street grid, and search by decade and neighborhood. They had made similar tools available before but never with this kind of handy decade-by-decade design.

The *Maps by Decade Tool* may be found at:

<http://spacetime.nypl.org/maps-by-decade>.

My thanks to newsletter reader Jim Henderson for telling me about this great resource.

Upcoming Regional Events

Wednesday, June 7 and Saturday, June 24, NEHGS, 99-101 Newbury Street, Boston- New Visitor Tour

10:00 AM–11:00 AM Cost: FREE

This free orientation and tour introduces you to the resources available at the NEHGS research facility. Founded in 1845, NEHGS is the country's oldest and largest nonprofit genealogy library and archive. With more than 15 million artifacts, books, manuscripts, microfilms, journals, photographs, and records—and expert staff to help you navigate it all—NEHGS provides the access you need to research your family history. You do not have to be a member to participate. Tour attendees are welcome to use our resources following the tour. No registration necessary.

Saturday, June 10, NEHGS, 99-101 Newbury Street, Boston- Irish Study Group

9:30 AM-12:00 PM Cost: FREE

This Irish Genealogy Study Group gathers each month to talk about research problems and share solutions. Everyone is welcome and attendees are invited to stay and use the library resources afterwards. Contact Mary Ellen Grogan at megrogan@ix.netcom.com for more information. No registration necessary.

Saturday, June 10, 17, and 24, NEHGS 99-101 Newbury Street, Boston - Building Your Genealogical Skills - Three-Session Course presented by Ann Lawthers, Genealogist

2:00 PM-4:00 PM Cost: \$50

Take your research skills to the next level! With the sheer number of online resources at your fingertips, it's easy to dive in to your family history research without any formal training as a genealogist. Certainly you'll learn along the way, and devise your own methods, but it's also easy to become overwhelmed and form bad habits. Whether you are new to genealogy, want to refresh your skills, or learn best practices, this course will set you on the right path to getting the most out of your family history research. Topics include: how to record your findings, strategies for analyzing records, online research, and more. Each class includes skill-building exercises to help students apply their

new found knowledge. [Register today!](#)

Thursday, June 15, , July 20, and August 17, Bridgeport Library/ Bridgeport Historical Society, Burroughs-Saden Library, History Center, 925 Broad St. Bridgeport CT. 12:30 PM - 1:30 PM

Genealogy Roundtable Monthly Programming - Third Thursday of every month. Join us for our monthly Genealogy Roundtable led by Genealogist Bill Stansfield. Library patrons interested in researching their own family histories get together to discuss problems in their research and share tips on sources and methodology. Both beginners and longtime researchers welcome. Contact: 203-576-7400, #7

Saturday, June 17, Rhode Island Historical Society, 121 Hope St. Providence, RI – Diggin' Your Roots – Mastering Manuscript Research. Instructor, Phoebe Bean RIHS Librarian 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM Cost: FREE Max 20 people.

Have you always wondered how to access genealogical information in manuscript collections? This workshop will teach you to delve into data beyond published books. Manuscripts include all sorts of unpublished materials from personal diaries to town tax lists that can help trace ancestors and larger family branches.

Register online via RIHS here: <https://goo.gl/forms/mTd5hhwSAXobaVOt2>

Saturday, June 24, NEHGS, 99-101 Newbury Street, Boston- NEHGS Art & Architecture Tour

2:00 PM–3:00 PM Cost: FREE

NEHGS has been collecting unique items of Americana and fine art since its founding in 1845. Learn the story behind items that illustrate life in early America. Tour attendees are welcome to use our resources following the tour. No registration necessary

Tuesday, June 27, 2017, July 25, 2017 and August 22, 2017 Bridgeport Library/ Bridgeport Historical Society, Burroughs-Saden Library, 925 Broad St. Bridgeport CT. 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Genealogy Basics: How to Get Started, Monthly Programming – Experienced family history researcher Elizabeth Anderson will cover the

basic “how tos” for getting started on researching your family roots.

Contact: 203-576-7400, #7

Tuesday, June 27, NYPL – Genealogy Essentials: African-American Genealogy: Resources and Research Methods (Special Events) NYPL Stephen A. Schwarzman Building, 42nd Street, 5th Ave, 1st floor, South Court Classroom A, 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm

First come, First served.

From 1565 to 1790, Africans surpassed Europeans among the roughly one million newcomers to what would become the United States. A majority of these nearly 360,000 men and women crossed in bondage. Centuries of local and federal laws related to the livelihood of black Americans have created a complex paper trail of genealogical resources. This class aims to provide introductory historical context and recommend basic research methods in the pursuit of African-American family history.

Welcome New Members!

Peter E. Berg

Arlene M. Clanny

Lisa B. D’Alton

Diane Smith Drugge

John F. Murray

Carol Wilder-Tamme

Some Massachusetts Genealogical Repositories from Family Search Wiki

New England Historic Genealogical Society

Best overall collection for New England vital records and probates, and excellent collection for Canada, Great Britain, Ireland, and Europe. The manuscript collection for members only has diaries, letters, account books, business papers, church and town records, sermons, maps, wills, deeds, unpublished town and family genealogies, photos, and papers of the region's best genealogists since 1850.

See *Repositories* pg. 8

HAVE A STORY TO TELL, OR TIP TO SHARE?

SEND IT TO US AT:

mgsnewsletterdarien@gmail.com

Tips

- Upgrade your genealogy software often. At the current rate of technological advancement, software becomes obsolete quickly. If you are still working on an early version of Family Tree Maker, version 11 for instance, it is incompatible with the later versions. GEDCOM files can only transfer certain info. It will not transfer photos and notes. It's a lot easier in the long run to upgrade often.
- If you haven't found a ship manifest by normal search methods and you know about when your relative immigrated, try searching newspapers for “ARRIVALS SHIP”. Many papers listed ships arriving and departing their port as well as news such as their latitude and longitude when passing other ships at sea. Once you find a prospective ship, find the manifest on Ancestry or the National Archives and look for your relative. Many transcriptions are incorrect so you may not find them by a name search. You will recognize a name better than a transcriber.
- When a family is found on the census, check a few pages on either side. Families and friends tended to stay near each other and very possibly lived on the same block. Even when they moved, which in some cases were year to year, they remained close.

Repositories from pg. 7

101 Newbury Street, Boston, Massachusetts
02116-3007

Telephone: 617-536-5740; Library 617-226-1231

Fax: 617-536-7307

E-mail: info@nehgs.org

Website: AmericanAncestors.org

Massachusetts Historical Society Library

Excellent historical materials, original town records, newspapers and genealogies. This collection does **not** repeat the New England Historic Genealogical Society collection. Massachusetts Historical Soc Library in Boston, 1154 Boylston Street Boston, MA 02215-3695

Telephone: 617-536-1608

Fax: 617-859-0074

E-mail: [Contact Us](#)

Website: Massachusetts Historical Society

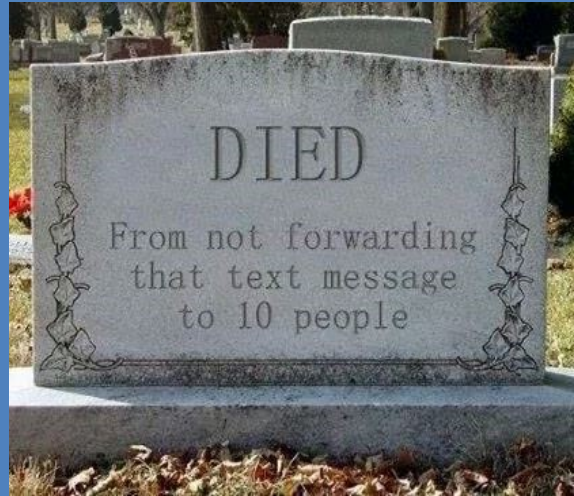
Massachusetts State Archives

Government records, censuses, military records, land records, naturalizations, divorces, probate, name changes, and adoptions. Only 18 of the 328 volumes of the excellent *Massa-*

chusetts Archives Collection, aka Felt Collection, of 1629-1799 history are indexed online. 220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, MA 02125
Phone: (617) 727-2816

E-mail: archives@sec.state.ma.us

Website: Massachusetts Archives Division

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**2017
OCTOBER 14,
NEXT MEETING**

**Middlesex Genealogical Society
P.O. Box 1111
Darien, CT 06820-1111**