



The Newsletter of
Middlesex Genealogical Society

Vol. XXXVI, No. 3

Darien, Fairfield County, CT

September, 2020

President's Message

Dear Fellow Genealogists,

In researching ancestors, I am often reminded of various people's lack of power and the lack of power often meant lack of records. While, in this country, the first example that comes to mind is American slavery, worldwide, women were considered secondary citizens.

This August marked the 100th Anniversary of Women's Suffrage or Right to Vote in the United States.

Throughout history women were essentially the property of their fathers, husbands, or brothers. You have only to read a Jane Austen novel to understand the pitiful predicament women were in when their father or husband died and their home passed to a male family member. This lack of property ownership kept women powerless and for us genealogists meant the absence of women in land and probate records.

Women had no claim to family property and just as sadly their own children. Often just a father's name is listed in Irish church records for marriages and deaths. Wealth did not protect a woman either. If a husband tired of his wife or she gave him too much of a hard time it was not unheard of for a husband to have her committed to get her out of the way. Faced with a life of hard work and appeasement with no outside agencies to turn to for help many young women didn't have much to lose and made them candidates for immigration.

The promise of America offered men and women new opportunities and a role in building a new society. Even when it comes to naturalization and citizenship records up until 1906 women were automatically naturalized with their husbands and no mention was made of them. The adventures that awaited many of these courageous immigrants required men and women to work side by side to survive. Women had the opportunity to take on roles that were traditionally reserved for men and make their own money. Eventually their economic power led them to demand political power and the right to vote.

Women's struggle to win the right to vote was a long and difficult one that not all women supported. But fortunately for future genealogists, from a recordkeeping perspective, women have become just as visible as men.

Pamela Shea

In this Issue

- President's Message pg. 1
- MGS Summer Workshops pg. 2
- Upcoming MGS meetings pg. 3
- Obituary Chick Scribner pg. 4
- Spotlight New Hartford Historical Society pg. 4
- Women's Hard Won Right pg. 4
- Member Suggested Books pg. 6
- Trivia Tree pg. 6
- Leave Them Smiling pg. 6
- FGS NGS Merger pg. 7
- Tips pg. 7
- Upcoming Virtual Presentations pg. 8

MIDDLESEX GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

2019-2020

OFFICERS & BOARD MEMBERS

Pamela Shea	President
Mary Lavins	Vice-Pres. Programs & Email Communications
John Driscoll	Treasurer & Newsletter Ed.
Steve Haywood	Secretary
Rob Martinelli	Membership Director
Robert E. "Pete" Kenyon	Past VP Programs
Sara Zagrodzky	

PAST DIRECTORS

Peter Biggins	Past President
Leonard Christie	Past VP Programs
Lloyd Sturges Jr.	Past President
Tara Finn Forschino	Social Director and Face- book Administrator

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 publishes a quarterly newsletter (ISSN 1936-3494) and co-sponsors, with Darien Library, at least four meetings with a program and speaker during the year. Annual membership dues vary from \$25 for 1 yr. or \$45 for 2 yrs. per individual and \$30 for 1 yr. or \$55 for 2 yrs. per couple or family, as well as a lifetime option at \$300. Original notices of genealogical interest and queries are welcomed for publication in the newsletter.

Middlesex Genealogical Society
P.O. Box 9
Darien, Fairfield County, CT 06820

Website: mgsdarienct.org

MGS Summer Workshops

The first of three MGS Summer Workshops was held at 10:00 am. on Wednesday July 22. Board member, Sara Zagrodzky led the 20 participants on a Zoom meeting, hosted by the Darien Library. The subject was breaking down a brick wall and Sara illustrated how to use a spreadsheet with the headings: YEAR –

EVENT – LOCATION – RECORD – LOOK FOR IT – THOUGHTS, to open avenues of discovery. Into this spreadsheet, she put all the information about her grandfather that she could find or remember. Being able to see all this information in one spreadsheet created thoughts on what was missing. Participants were asked to chime in with ideas.

On August 26 the second workshop was oversubscribed and focused on finding immigration records after the Revolution, (1796-1906 and 1906 – present) The subjects Sara covered were:

1. Naturalization is not required then or now.
2. The three documents Declaration of Intent, Petition, and Certificate.
3. These three documents changed slightly after 1906 - adding a certificate of arrival.
4. The websites shown were - NARA.gov, USCIS.gov, FamilySearch.org, Cyndi's List, American Ancestors, Fold3, and Ancestry.com
5. A book shared *The Researcher's Guide to American Genealogy 3rd Edition* by Val D. Greenwood is available at the library.
6. After the presentation in the Q/A session people brought up an interest in searching pre-Revolution. Mayflower Lineage books and The Great Migration Project were shared as sources - both of these have access points through American Ancestors site.

Our third workshop will be held on September 16 and is titled "Beyond Hints, How to Search a Repository." Again, Sara will use a spreadsheet to illustrate tips and tricks to be ready for success. Everyone will have an opportunity to contribute to the conversation.

Registration is limited to 20 participants. You do not need to be a Darien Library or Middlesex Genealogical Society member to participate. **Look for email from MGS to register.** If you need any assistance with registering, please email Sally Ijams at sijams@darienlibrary.org All participants will receive an email with the Zoom link.

Upcoming MGS Presentations

Our planned presentations are contingent on the availability of the Darien Library's Community Room during the pandemic. Please look for our emails for updates, changes, or cancellations.

Saturday, October 3, 2020, 2:00 pm Finding Ancestors in New York City Vital Records in the 1800s and Early 1900s Presented by Susan R. Miller, Director of Programs and Outreach.



Vital records—birth, marriage, and death records—are some of the most important documents that we can find on our ancestors and being able to find vital records is a foundational skill that the successful genealogist must develop. Researchers who are looking for ancestors and families in New York City need to be particularly well-versed in this skill, because where and how to look will differ greatly depending on the time period and exact location you're zeroing in on.

A NYG&B member since 1993, Sue is the Director of Programs; editor of the NYG&B's award-winning magazine the *New York Researcher*; and was a managing editor of the *New York Family History Research Guide and Gazetteer*. She has researched her New England and New York families for more than 25 years. She is the co-organizer for the New York State Family History Conference and has presented genealogical lectures on a regional and local basis. Beyond genealogy, Sue is a life-long sailor (racing and cruising); Past Commodore of the Manhasset Bay Yacht Club; and a US Sailing race officer.

A NYG&B member since 1993, Sue is the Director of Programs; editor of the NYG&B's award-winning magazine the *New York Researcher*; and was a managing editor of the *New York Family History Research Guide and Gazetteer*. She has researched her New England and New York families for more than 25 years. She is the co-organizer for the New York State Family History Conference and has presented genealogical lectures on a regional and local basis. Beyond genealogy, Sue is a life-long sailor (racing and cruising); Past Commodore of the Manhasset Bay Yacht Club; and a US Sailing race officer.

The MGS Annual Meeting will be held on Saturday, November 21, 2020 before the presentation.

Saturday, November 21, 2020, 2:00 pm.
"Mayflower Commemoration (400th Year)."

Presented by Carol Wilder-Tamme.

Carol will do a presentation in the character of Constance Hopkins, who was a Mayflower passenger at the age of 14. She will present her as a grandmother circa 1660. The presentation is about 45 minutes and includes:



- English Kings/Queens and their religions & politics leading up to Mayflower departure from England
- Constance's father, Stephen Hopkins adventures in Bermuda shipwreck, re-supply ship for Jamestown, Shakespeare's Tempest
- The Mayflower ship
- Separatists
- Why they wrote the Mayflower Compact
- First winter at Plymouth with chart of deaths
- Indian treaty
- Herbs, including samples

Carol's Mayflower ancestors include Francis Cooke (a Separatist that had lived in Leiden to escape persecution in England), and adventure sojourners Richard Warren, Stephen Hopkins and his daughter Constance who was about 13 during the crossing.

She has three male ancestors from the Mayflower, three from Revolutionary War, one from War of 1812 and one from Civil War.

Charles F. (Chick) Scribner

1924 – 2020

Chick, a lifelong resident of Darien, served in Burma during World War II and was the first veteran to be honored by the Wartime Veteran Street Sign Program, with street signs bearing his name erected on Fairfield Ave. As well as serving Darien with the Noroton Heights Fire Dept., Darien VFW, Boy Scouts of America, Senior Men's Association and Monuments and Ceremonies Commission, Chick was an active member of our Middlesex Genealogical Society. He was a Director and Librarian for the society, writing many articles for the newsletter. He will be missed.

Spotlight: New Hartford Historical Society, Connecticut

by Valerie Beaudrault, Assistant Editor

Reprinted with the permission of AmericanAncestors.org



The town of New Hartford is located in Litchfield County, in the northwestern part of the state. The New Hartford Historical Society has made [four burial records databases](#) available on its website.

Burial and Transit Permits:

The records in this database are for individuals who died elsewhere but were buried in New Hartford, from 1893 through 1975. The data fields are name, sex, age, race, date of death, cause of death, place of death, cemetery, transferred to/town of cemetery, marital status, burial date, father's name, mother's name, and permit holder.

Bureau of Vital Statistics Records and Consolidated Disinterment Records databases: These chronological databases index the disinterments from New Hartford cemeteries from 1893 through 1975. The data fields include name, date, cemetery, burial, removal/

disinterment, location where permit was issued, age, and location of record.

Statement of Undertakers: This database is drawn from documents produced by undertakers from 1895 through 1924. The data fields are name, town, date of death, cause of death, age, and transferred to (for burial).

Cremation Records: This chronological database covers 1938 through 1975. The data fields are name, sex, race, age, marital status, occupation, birthplace, last residence, place/date and cause of death, and date and place of cremation.

Women's Hard Won Right

By Pamela White Shea

“The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.”

On August 26, 2020 the nation commemorated



the 100th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment of the Constitution giving women the right to vote.

Woman's suffrage wasn't an easy road. Instead it was a back and forth process that had different U.S. states offer-

ing different rights at different times and for different classes of people.

In the early years of the founding of the country there were some areas where women could vote regarding local matters. But it wasn't long before the consensus (among men!) was that women should be barred from voting and holding office thereby “protecting them from the evils of politics.”- 1 This 1859 opinion statement in the New York Times sums it up - “We simply assert that women, *as they are*, are not fit to vote.”- 2

During the 1800s some states and territories

offered limited voting rights to some women creating a patchwork of influence for some and frustration for others. Individual states passed legislation that allowed women to vote with various restrictions and in certain types of elec-



Women voting in New York, circa 1920s

tions; some only allowed women to vote in school or municipal elections while others required that women own property to vote. In other cases, women were allowed to vote in state but not presidential elections and some territories extended full voting rights to women, only to take them away once they became states. The states passed legislation only as progressive as the men who passed it.

As more and more women chafed under partial suffrage or no suffrage at all, the women's suffrage movement began taking shape in the early 1800s. Leaders like Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton began calling for nationwide women's suffrage and in July 1848 in Seneca Falls, New York, Stanton's hometown, the Seneca Falls Convention launched the women's rights movement.

During the next three decades the nation became embroiled in the fight over the institution of slavery and the result was the Civil War. The societal unrest and upheaval created fertile ground for change and the fight for rights for blacks and women became intertwined.

When the Civil War resulted in the end of slavery, many women abolitionists put on hold their

desire for universal suffrage in favor of ensuring suffrage for newly freed male slaves. Although legally entitled to vote in 1920, with the passage of the 19th Amendment, black women were effectively denied voting rights in numerous Southern states until the 1960s.

In 1878 a constitutional amendment was introduced in Congress that would establish woman suffrage for all elections and would be reintroduced in every Congress thereafter. It took nearly fifty more years before Congress reached the 2/3 majority needed to ratify the amendment with Tennessee casting the deciding vote.

The 1920 passage of the 19th Amendment was a triumph however it took many more years before all women, especially women of color, were freely voting. And surprisingly it took almost another 50 years before women were voting in the same numbers as men. It is this long struggle that women honor each year when they vote and prove.... that women are fit to vote!



Elizabeth Cady Stanton (seated) with Susan B. Anthony (standing)

For more information on Centennial Events check out the National Archives website:

[CLICK HERE](#)

To read thoughts of the times regarding woman's suffrage check out sites such as Newspapers.com or Chronicling America:

[CLICK HERE](#)

1 Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc./Kenny Chmielewski

2 The New York Times, New York, New York, 18 Mar 1859, Fri • Page 4 [CLICK HERE](#)

Middlesex Genealogical Society

Members' Suggested Books

Please email your book recommendations to
newslettermgdsdarien@gmail.com



How the Other Half Lives

by Jacob Riis

"How the Other Half Lives" sheds fascinating light on how our immigrants in the 1800's lived in New York City. A must-read for Americans whose family has been in the U.S. for only a few generations, this book tells what it was really like in the slums. Whether Irish, Italian, Jewish, Chinese, Polish, German, or Russian, hordes of refugees ended up in New York on the promise of a better life. Entrepreneurs lured poor people from Eastern Europe and contracted out their labor in sweat shops in the US. The laborers lived in tenements, which were dark, unventilated cages in blocks of buildings that rented for a surprising high rent to people who died by the thousands in the unsanitary conditions. The conditions described by Jacob Riis in this classic are heart-rending, especially the part about foundling babies (abandoned newborns). A cradle was put outside a Catholic Church and instead of a baby each night, racks of babies appeared. The Church had to establish foundling hospitals run by nuns, who persuaded the unwed or impoverished mothers to nurse the baby they gave up, plus another baby. The child mortality rate, especially in the "back tenements" or buildings built on to the back of others (dark and airless) was incredible. Riis also provides interesting information about the gangs of New York in "How the Other Half Lived."

Centennial

by James Michener

Written to commemorate the Bicentennial in 1976, James A. Michener's magnificent saga of

the West is an enthralling celebration of the frontier. Brimming with the glory of America's past, the story of Colorado—the Centennial State—is manifested through its people: Lame Beaver, the Arapaho chieftain and warrior, and his Comanche and Pawnee enemies; Levi Zendt, fleeing with his child bride from the Amish country; the cowboy, Jim Lloyd, who falls in love with a wealthy and cultured Englishwoman, Charlotte Seccombe. In *Centennial*, trappers, traders, homesteaders, gold seekers, ranchers, and hunters are brought together in the dramatic conflicts that shape the destiny of the legendary West—and the entire country.

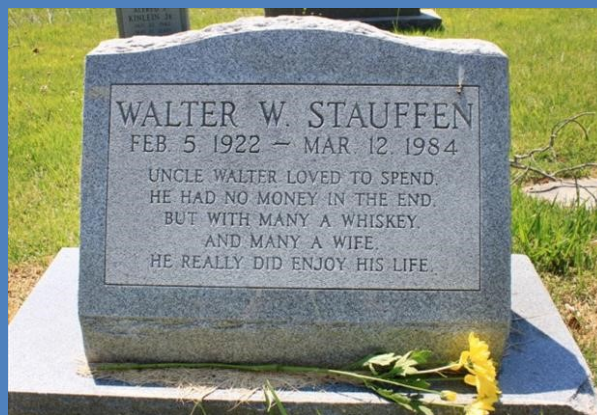
Trivia Tree

Can you identify these obsolete occupations?

- 1 Ostler (Hostler)
- 2 Tranqueter
- 3 Greensmith
- 4 Bluestocking
- 5 Hackney Man
- 6 Japanner

Answers on page 8

LEAVE THEM SMILING



Merger of the Federation of Genealogical Societies (FGS) and the National Genealogical Society (NGS)

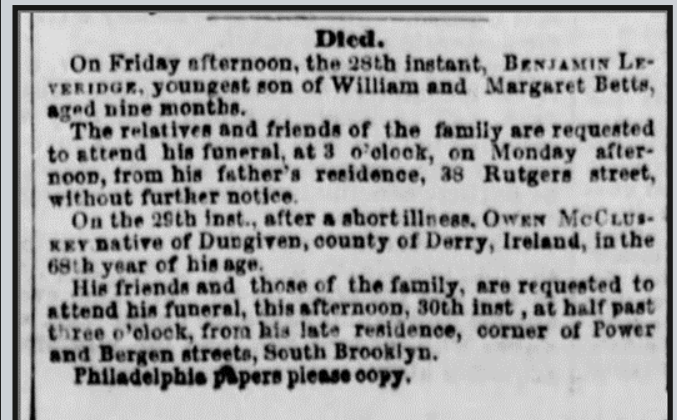
On July 14, 2020, the Boards of the Federation of Genealogical Societies (FGS) and the National Genealogical Society (NGS) approved an Agreement to Merge. Below is a summary of the key terms of the merger:

- The merger of FGS and NGS will be effective October 1, 2020.
- Members of FGS as of the effective date of the merger will become members of NGS for the remaining unexpired term of their membership.
- Each society or organization member shall have one vote and shall appoint a delegate who shall have the right to cast a vote on behalf of the society or organization.
- NGS shall establish a committee of the delegates for the purpose of providing advice to the NGS Board on genealogical society or organization-related matters and implementing any programs designed to strengthen genealogy societies or organizations delegated to it by the Board.
- NGS will support and further FGS' purpose and mission.
- At least three current members of the FGS Board will become members of the NGS Board as of the effective date.
- A Vice President of Society & Organization Management will be added to the NGS Executive Committee and Board.
- NGS will create a new position, assign existing staff, or contract to manage society services and activities, including evaluation of opportunities and products that will benefit members and overseeing the delivery of services to members.
- Future NGS conferences will include educational sessions on society management topics.
- NGS will continue the FGS Preserve the Pension Project (PTP) and continue the operation of the Malcolm H. Stern-NARA Gift Fund.

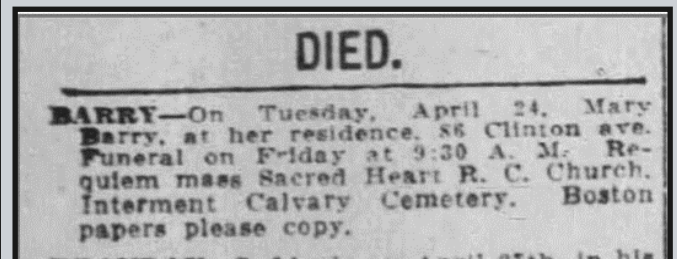
Tips

Some obituaries will give you a hint to look in a different place. If a person previously lived in a different city, or has relatives there, a newspaper may ask those local papers to reprint the obituary.

This obit from the New York Daily Herald 1/30/1848 sends you to Philadelphia to search



and this one from the Brooklyn Standard Union 4/25/1917 indicates a Boston link.



Do you have a genealogy tip to help our members?

Send them to:

newslettermgsdarien@gmail.com and have them printed in the newsletter.

Upcoming VIRTUAL Events

There are many virtual events online,

Here are a few:

Conference Keeper.org is a good place to look,
Click [HERE](#)

The Virtual Genealogical Association Click
[HERE](#)

National Genealogical Society Click [HERE](#)

Old Saybrook Chamber of Commerce Click
[HERE](#)

Familyhistoryfanatics.com Click [HERE](#)

Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter Click
[HERE](#)

Library of Virginia Click [HERE](#)

Trivia Tree Answers

- 1 Originally, a Hostler was the host of an Inn or Hostelry. Later became the man employed to look after the horses of the visitors.
- 2 Made metal barrel hoops.
- 3 The surname "Greensmith", similar to a blacksmith and redsmith, is an occupational surname used to define a worker in lead or copper according to the Dictionary of English and Welsh surnames. The name is one of the most common ones in vicinity of East mid-lands and Yorkshire. It has origins in early medieval English era.
- 4 A female intellectual / writer, or a member of the 18th century Blue Stocking Society which encouraged female education.
- 5 Horse drawn Cab/Taxi driver - Taxis were originally called Hackney Cabs.
- 6 Applied Japanese style black hard varnish - "Japanning."

**NEXT MEETING
OCTOBER 3,
2020**

Middlesex Genealogical Society
P.O. Box 9
Darien, CT 06820