



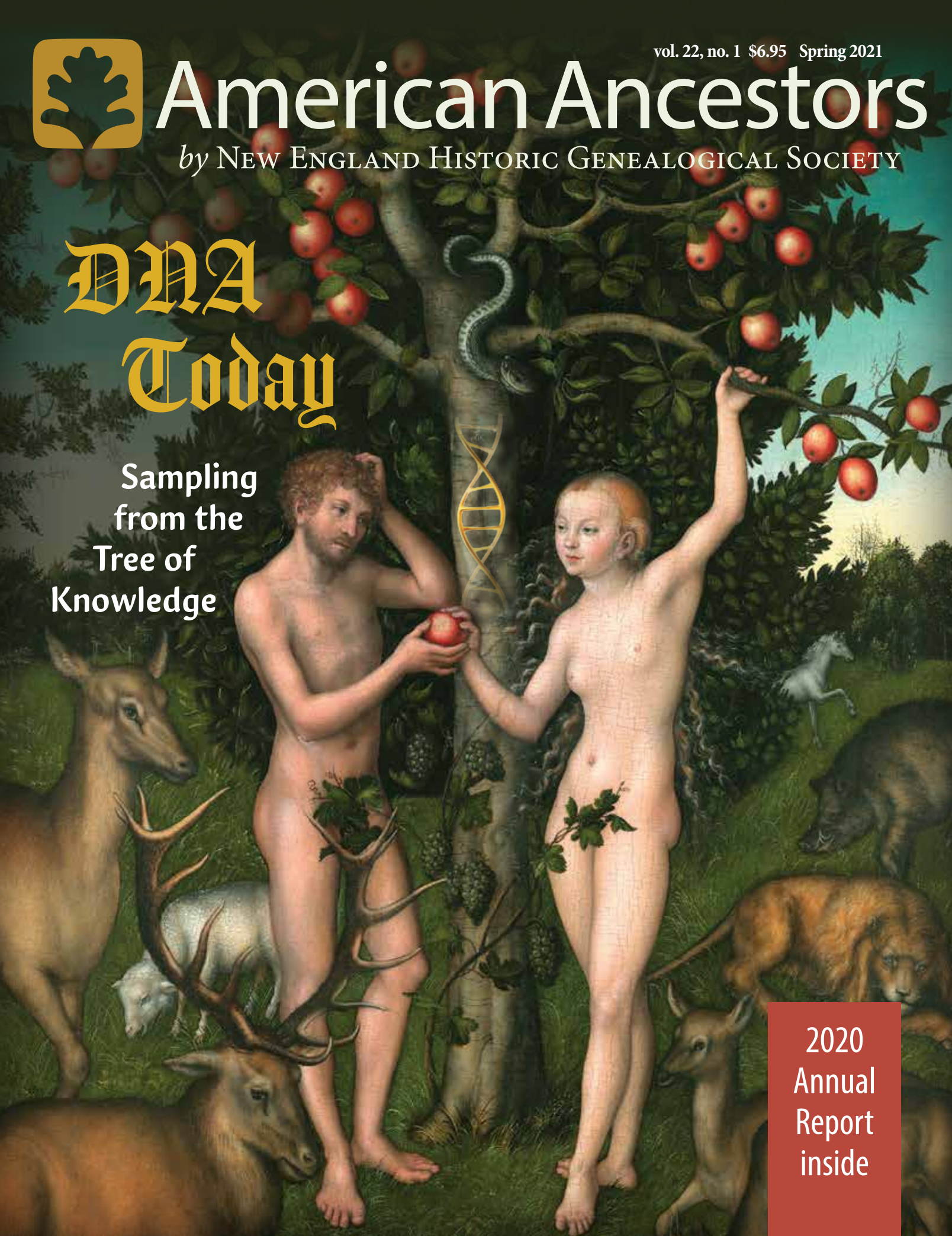
vol. 22, no. 1 \$6.95 Spring 2021

American Ancestors

by NEW ENGLAND HISTORIC GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

DNA Today

Sampling
from the
Tree of
Knowledge



2020
Annual
Report
inside

HOW TO FIND YOUR ACADIAN ANCESTORS

This July, join us online for a three-week deep dive into Acadian research

Tracing Acadian ancestry presents unique—but not insurmountable—challenges for family historians. Record loss, destroyed communities, and large-scale, disparate migration are just some of the hurdles.

This three-week online course will provide you with the historical context, records, and research strategies to take your Acadian ancestry back to Canada and beyond.

Learn how the Acadian population's resilience in reclaiming their heritage and community has led to a wealth of genealogical information.

Live Broadcasts: July 7, 14, and 21, 6:00–7:30 p.m. (EDT)
Access to materials until October 31, 2021
Presented by the Experts at American Ancestors

Cost: \$85

July 7, Class 1: A Brief Acadian History, Tricia Labbe

This first class provides the history of the French settlement of New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island between 1605 and 1765 and context for the Acadian deportation and subsequent migration across the world.

July 14, Class 2: Acadian Records & Research, Rhonda R. McClure

Explore sources—and strategies—for Acadian research. We'll discuss how to locate and utilize Acadian parish records, vital records, land deeds, notarial records, and sources related to deportation, and we'll highlight several key references and repositories.

July 21, Class 3: Researching the Acadian Diaspora, Ann G. Lawthers

Following their expulsion in the 18th century, many Acadians settled in New England, Louisiana, and beyond. This last class will examine some of the key record groups that detail your ancestor's life after resettlement and explore how to uncover their origins in Canada.



**American
Ancestors**
by NEW ENGLAND HISTORIC
GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

AmericanAncestors.org/education/online-classes



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Brenton Simons

A Message from the President and CEO

We've enhanced your membership!

The challenges of this past year have inspired our staff to think innovatively and work creatively to provide our members with more remote-access benefits than ever before. We are excited to announce some steps we've taken to enhance your access to our resources and expert staff:

Live online membership chat

Get real-time online membership assistance any time during our regular business hours, Monday–Saturday, 9 a.m.–5 p.m. (EST), by visiting AmericanAncestors.org, or by contacting us through Facebook Messenger.

One-stop service

In 2021 we launched a new customer service model to streamline your membership experience. Instead of trying to determine the appropriate department for your query, you are provided with a single point of contact for all questions about purchases, program registrations, membership, and research.

Expanded "Ask a Genealogist" Live Chat

This popular free service has expanded in response to member demand! Visit AmericanAncestors.org/chat, Monday–Saturday, 9 a.m.–5 p.m. (EST), to chat with our experts.

New members-only databases

Dozens of new major databases have been added to our extensive online resources, including our most-searched database, *The General Society of Mayflower Descendants Membership Applications, 1620–2020*. These exclusive databases are available only to members of American Ancestors/NEHGS.

Groundbreaking online programming

Our free webinars, Facebook Live events, live Twitter chats, author events, and online courses have brought our own experts as well as renowned authors and historians into more than 37,000 homes since March 2020. Through both independent and partnership events, we continue to offer exciting live online educational and enrichment opportunities.

More downloadable resources

Our downloadable and streaming resources are available at AmericanAncestors.org/education/learning-resources. These offerings include research guides, archived videos of past webinars and events, and genealogical templates including research logs and family charts.

Members-only *Weekly Genealogist* content

Subscribers to our free, popular family history newsletter now receive special offers, notices, and exclusive members-only content.

Social media outreach

Connect with us on social media! Learn the latest American Ancestors/NEHGS news on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram, and subscribe to our *Vita Brevis* blog for thoughtful research stories from our experts.

As more people access our services online, we continue to expand concierge-quality services to our members. I hope you will make good use of these membership enhancements and let us know of other ways we can support your research.

Warmest regards,
D. Brenton Simons, President and CEO

American Ancestrees

by NEW ENGLAND HISTORIC GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY



Your New Family Tree—for FREE

Discover American Ancestrees, our FREE family tree platform. Create a tree from scratch or import an existing family tree, get hints to grow your tree, and use social media features to share your tree with friends and family.

In addition to keeping your family history data safe and secure, American Ancestrees offers many original features designed to help you organize and advance your genealogical research, including:

- No one can edit the data in your tree, unless you invite them to via email
- Research logs keep track of your latest discoveries
- Access to free hints from a variety of online sources

While the standard version of American Ancestrees is always FREE for guests and Research-level members, higher level plans available at a low annual cost offer even more features, including cutting-edge DNA tools and completely private trees.

To access American Ancestrees, make sure you are **logged into AmericanAncestors.org** with your account. Once you create a tree, you will need to come back to this page to log into your tree.



Visit AmericanAncestors.org/Ancestrees

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From our readers

We want to hear from you!

Email magazine@nehgs.org or address letters to American Ancestors magazine, 99–101 Newbury Street, Boston, MA 02116. Letters will be edited for clarity and length. We regret that we cannot reply to every letter.

I was excited to see an article on the *Hector*'s passengers, as my Atwater ancestors were believed to have come over on the *Hector* ["Deconstructing the *Hector* 'Passenger List,'" *American Ancestors* (2021) 4:36–39]. They were not on the (falsely created) list, so I hoped this article would help clarify why they weren't. As Dr. Brockett makes clear, there never was a documented list.

It seems highly likely that the *Hector* did carry more than five documented passengers. In 1857, Charles J. Hoadly, Connecticut's state historian, published *Records of the Colony and Plantation of New Haven, from 1638 to 1649*. On June 4, 1639, 108 New Haven planters (including David Atwater, my ancestor) gathered at a meeting held by Reverend John Davenport. Some of these men and their families could have been passengers on the *Hector*.

Robert T. Atwater, Bolivia, North Carolina

Author Dr. Adrian Brockett responds: Indeed, David and Josua Atwater are in the list of subscribers to the New Haven Colony's "Fundamental Agreement" of June 4, 1639, which was transcribed by Hoadly in the above volume (pp. 11, 17–18); the original document is in the Connecticut State Library. However, while the *Hector* arrived in Boston on June 26, 1637, there is no contemporary record of the ship sailing to New Haven. Settlers would have had many different opportunities for travel to New Haven in 1637–1639, and not only from Boston.

Do you have a story you'd like to tell in *American Ancestors* magazine?

We welcome submissions from our readers. We feature a wide range of article topics, including coverage of a particular region or group of people; case studies; descriptions of particular record sets; "how-to" articles; compelling historic accounts that illuminate the past; research strategies and methodology; and accounts of migration and immigrant groups.



For submission guidelines, please visit AmericanAncestors.org/magazine-submissions

Questions? Email magazine@nehgs.org



CONNECT WITH US ONLINE!

Vita Brevis

Our *Vita Brevis* blog provides thought-provoking explorations of genealogical topics, and offers readers the opportunity to engage with scholars and professionals who share their unique perspectives and insights. Visit Vita-Brevis.org.

Weekly Genealogist

Subscribe to our *Weekly Genealogist* newsletter for information on new NEHGS databases, online content, events, and offers. Each issue includes a survey, reader responses, a spotlight on resources, stories of interest, and more. Visit AmericanAncestors.org/twg.

Facebook

Keep up-to-date on our latest news and connect with more than 45,000 fellow family history enthusiasts in our online community at facebook.com/nehgs.

Twitter

Follow [@ancestorexperts](https://twitter.com/ancestorexperts) for news, bookstore specials, publication announcements, and genealogy-related tweets from our staff.

Instagram

For visual updates on our Fine Art Collection treasures, events and tours, library recommendations, and more, follow american_ancestors.

In this issue

In March 2020, we asked readers of our *Weekly Genealogist* newsletter about their experiences with DNA testing. Of the more than four thousand survey respondents, a mere 4% had “no interest in or experience with DNA testing.” This acceptance of genetic genealogy, with 96% of survey takers having an interest in or some experience with the subject, was rather astonishing to me. As someone who began genealogical research when most people would have considered DNA testing a concept out of science fiction, I am amazed at how far and fast our knowledge and attitudes on this topic have shifted.

As individuals and as a society, we are still grappling with the information revealed by genetic testing. Our first two features discuss some of the personal impacts. Libby Copeland, author of *The Lost Family: How DNA Testing Is Upending Who We Are* (2020), details the experiences of several individuals in the aftermath of DNA revelations. Bill Griffith, author of *The Stranger in My Genes: A Memoir* (2016), reflects on how a DNA test upended his world and changed his own sense of identity. Bill also shares the stories of other people who discovered that their dads were not their biological fathers—a group he affectionately terms his “DNA Club.”

As genetic testing becomes more common, theoretically no one should be surprised when a DNA test leads to a shocking discovery. But, of course, few people anticipate that they will be so affected. Bill references a 2019 Pew Research survey that indicated 25 million Americans who took a DNA test learned about a close relative who was previously unknown to them. In our *Weekly Genealogist* survey, a mere 2% of respondents chose not to undergo DNA testing out of concern for unexpected consequences. But if you receive surprising results, you can't wish the information back into Pandora's box and somehow “unknow” what you've

learned. You might find yourself in the DNA Club, which Bill terms “The Club No One Asked to Join.”

As family historians, we typically use genetic genealogy to supplement traditional research, gain new information about earlier generations of ancestors, and resolve brick walls. Since the debut of our “Genetics & Genealogy” column in fall 2002, we've brought readers a variety of case studies and solutions to many genealogical puzzles. In this issue, Sheilagh Doerfler writes about her search for the origins of her paternal grandmother, who was adopted. We conclude our genetics theme with Pamela Guye Holland's helpful guide on the “Basics of DNA Research for Genealogy.”

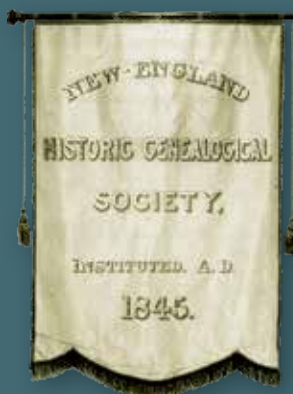
Other feature articles include several stories that capture our imagination. In “To America and Back: The Sojourns of Job Daouphars,” Olivier Le Dour relates the story of his Breton ancestors and other immigrants from Brittany to the U.S. Inspired to learn about women's clubs by reading her great-grandmother's correspondence, Violet Snow presents “A Clubwoman's Letters: Middle-Class Feminism in the Early 1900s.” Jean Powers interviews emeritus history professor Kerby Miller about the collection he amassed over several decades in “Alas that I ever came to this land': 250 Years of Irish Immigrant Letters.” Finally, Pilgrim historian Michael R. Paulick uses a 1597 inventory of the goods and chattels of Paul Reader to obtain “A Glimpse into the Early Life of Pilgrim Sara (Reader) Cushman from Lenham, Kent, 1585–1616.”

We look forward to learning about the topics that you are pursuing—through traditional research methods, DNA testing, or both!



Lynn Betlock
Managing Editor
magazine@nehgs.org

American Ancestors



To advance the study of family history in America and beyond, NEHGS educates, inspires, and connects people through our scholarship, collections, and expertise.

magazine@nehgs.org

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This publication is also funded in part by the Francis G. and Ruth (Wellington) Shaw Memorial Fund.



branches of our family



OLIVIA HOOD PARKER “My children keep me researching”

When my children were small and I was starting out as a photographer, I had no time to follow tantalizing family history clues. Only when my husband was in the very early stages of Alzheimer's and he flipped the TV channels continually every evening did I start to work on our genealogy using Ancestry.com.

In 2011, I met NEHGS President and CEO Brenton Simons at a friend's house and he offered to have NEHGS validate what I had found. As it turned out, most of my research back to my seventeenth-century immigrant ancestors was confirmed.

My most poignant discovery was learning that I am descended from Mary Esty, who was hung as a witch in Salem on September 22, 1692. She was in the last group of victims to be executed. The Salem witchcraft episode demonstrates how easily people can be perceived and labeled as different, beyond the pale, and dangerous. Once stories start to circulate, many people believe, or pretend to believe, rumors inspired by malice, mischief, or self-interest.

Another ancestor of interest to me is my great-great-great-grandfather, Jonathan Holmes Cobb. He was the first person to import silkworms to New England and manufacture silk. In 1837, he built a silk factory in Dedham, Massachusetts, and wrote a book on the mulberry tree and silk manufacture. Unfortunately, the factory burned in 1844 and he abandoned the business.

When I investigated my husband John's family, I found that his grandmother—whom I was lucky enough to know—was Pennsylvania Dutch, which led me to some Swiss and German research. After John's uncle died, we found many family photographs in his storage locker. I especially like the nineteenth-century images of stone Pennsylvania farmhouses with families sitting on porches.

John's other grandmother, Ivie Marr (Smith) Otis (1883–1957), has remained a mystery. The name Smith is challenging, but I'm going to try Canadian records, too, since I know she came from northern New Hampshire.

Both of my children are interested in the family history and that keeps me researching, even though I'm still very busy with my work as a photographer. My profession does come in handy for digital preservation and cleaning up family photographs!

Olivia Hood Parker, a Life Member of NEHGS, became a member in 2008, a Councilor in 2013, and a Trustee in 2018. For the last fifty years she has been a photographer, and four books of her work have been published. She has had more than 100 exhibitions in the United States and abroad, including a 2019 retrospective at the Peabody Essex Museum. In 2019 she was inducted into the International Photography Hall of Fame. A recent project, *Vanishing in Plain Sight*, concerns her late husband's gradual decline into Alzheimer's. She lives in Manchester-by-the-Sea, Massachusetts. For more about Ms. Parker's work, visit oliviaparker.com.



Our Member Services team is here to help you!



I'm having trouble logging into AmericanAncestors.org. What should I do?

On the AmericanAncestors.org homepage, click the "Log In" button in the top-right corner. Use the email address associated with your American Ancestors account. (If you need to change the email address for your account, contact the Member Services team at membership@nehgs.org or 1-888-296-3447, option 1).

If you do not remember your password, click "Forgot password?" on the log-in page or visit AmericanAncestors.org/locate. You will be prompted to enter the email address associated with your account and click "Email My Information." You will receive an email with a link to reset your password. Click the link in the email, and you will be directed to a page where you can enter a new password. Passwords must be at least six characters long and contain one uppercase letter, one number, and one special character (!, @, \$, %, ^, &, *). If you require assistance, contact our Member Services team.



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Orders typically ship within 1-3 business days. You will receive a confirmation email containing a link to track your shipment. Your order will be sent via U.S. Postal Service or UPS, depending on which shipping option you selected at checkout. After your order has shipped, you can contact USPS or UPS and reference the tracking number.



How do I view my membership status and update my account information?

From AmericanAncestors.org, click "My Account" in the upper-right-hand corner. Click "Membership Information" on the left-hand menu or update your email and mailing address by selecting "Account Info." Renew your membership online by clicking "join/renew" on the home page, or by calling our Member Services team at 1-888-296-3447 (choose option 1). You can also mail a check to Member Services, NEHGS, 99-101 Newbury Street, Boston, MA 02116.

If I register for a webinar or other online event, do I have to watch the program live, or will it be available to view afterwards?

All free online programs—including webinars, American Inspiration author events, Facebook live events, and more—are available on our website. To view an archived webinar, log into your account on AmericanAncestors.org, hover your cursor over "Learn" on our homepage menu, and select "Webinars, Lectures, and How-To Videos." From that page you can view all videos or filter by subject. If you registered for an online course or online conference, the recorded sessions, as well as the course materials, are available online for three months after the live broadcast and can be accessed from the course or conference page.

How do I view or search the *Register* or *American Ancestors* magazine online?

All issues of the *Register* and *American Ancestors* are available to browse or search on AmericanAncestors.org. Hover your cursor over "Search" in the top menu and select "Search All Databases." Then click the "Database" drop-down menu and select the journal or magazine you wish to search. You can narrow your search by volume, page number, name, location, and more. You can also browse *Register* and *American Ancestors* issues from 2010 to the present through AmericanAncestors.org/browse/publications/the-register or AmericanAncestors.org/browse/publications/american-ancestors-magazine.

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News



Above: Author and security expert Anthony M. Amore; Bottom right: *The Woman Who Stole Vermeer: The True Story of Rose Dugdale and the Russborough House Art Heist* (Pegasus Crime, 2020).

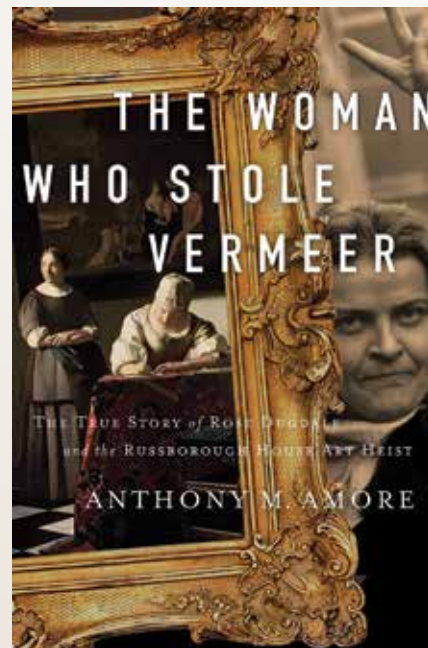
Art, intrigue, and true crime: Anthony M. Amore to speak at our Summer Family History Benefit

Join us at our Summer Family History Benefit on Thursday, July 29, 2021, for an evening of art, intrigue, and true crime with author and security expert Anthony M. Amore.

In conversation with American Ancestors/NEHGS President and CEO D. Brenton Simons and Curator of Special Collections and decorative arts expert Curt DiCamillo, Amore will discuss his most recent book, *The Woman Who Stole Vermeer: The True Story of Rose Dugdale and the Russborough House Art Heist*. In 1974, Rose Dugdale committed the largest art theft of the time, stealing nineteen works of art, including a priceless Vermeer, from Russborough House in Ireland. Learn about this unprecedented heist and the mastermind behind it from a renowned expert in security matters, particularly those related to art and homeland security. As Director of Security and Chief Investigator at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Amore oversees ongoing efforts to recover thirteen works of art stolen from the museum in 1990. He is the co-author of the *Wall Street Journal* bestseller *Stealing Rembrandts: The Untold Stories of Notorious Art Heists* (2011) and author of the *New York Times* crime bestseller *The Art of the Con: The Most Notorious Fakes, Frauds and Forgeries in the Art World* (2015).

Register for this event at
AmericanAncestors.org/summerbenefit.

Proceeds will support our mission to educate, inspire, and connect people through our scholarship, collections, and expertise.



Hosted by



D. BRENTON SIMONS is President & CEO of American Ancestors and New England Historic Genealogical Society.



RYAN J. WOODS is Executive Vice President & COO of American Ancestors and New England Historic Genealogical Society.

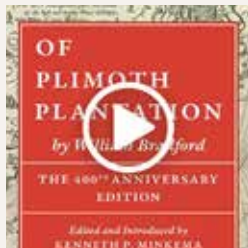
the ANTIQUARTO

*Conversations with D. Brenton Simons,
President and CEO of American Ancestors*



The Antiquarto—dynamic conversations, expert guests

Our new hit series, *The Antiquarto*, features dynamic interviews conducted by our President and CEO Brenton Simons with expert guests on topics relating to history, genealogy, collecting, and the arts. Upcoming episodes include:



EPISODE 4: Brenton Simons meets with Michele Pecoraro of Plymouth 400, Inc. to discuss the newly annotated edition of *Of Plimoth Plantation*, the personal journal of Governor William Bradford. (*Of Plimoth Plantation by William Bradford: The 400th Anniversary Edition* was published in 2020 by the Colonial Society of Massachusetts and NEHGS. To purchase this title, visit shop.AmericanAncestors.org.)



EPISODE 5: Brenton Simons and Curator of Special Collections Curt DiCamillo chat with Charles Courtenay, 19th Earl of Devon, about Powderham Castle, family treasures, and his role in the 400th anniversary of the *Mayflower* landing.

Catch up on past episodes of *The Antiquarto*, and view new episodes, at AmericanAncestors.org/watch, or on our YouTube channel, youtube.com/user/AmericanAncestors.

Watch for more episodes of *The Antiquarto* in the coming months!



We welcome our new Public Relations Manager

We are delighted to introduce Lisa Colli as our Public Relations Manager. As our primary media contact, Lisa will oversee efforts to guide and shape public perception of our organization and increase awareness of our projects and overall mission.

Lisa's more than 25 years of experience include recent stints as a consultant for the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston and the Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston. Her work at the MFA involved partnering with curatorial, education, programming, and development colleagues on a variety of major exhibitions and projects, including *Writing the Future: Basquiat and the Hip-Hop Generation* (2020–21); *Van Otterloo and Weatherbie Collections* (2017); and *Magna Carta: Cornerstone of Liberty* (2014). She was also part of the team that oversaw outreach efforts for the MFA's Art of the Americas Wing opening in 2010. Lisa will be integral to our efforts to promote the work we do. Welcome, Lisa!

Renowned African American history expert honored at our Winter Family History Benefit



On Thursday, January 28, 2021, more than 150 guests joined us over Zoom for our Winter Family History Benefit event featuring author Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, the Victor S. Thomas Professor of History and of African and African American Studies at Harvard University. President and CEO D. Brenton Simons honored Professor Higginbotham with our History and Preservation Award in Historical Research and Preservation.

Through family photographs, mementos, and personal recollections, Professor Higginbotham shared the story of several generations of her family in a presentation entitled “History in the Face of Slavery: A Family Portrait.” Professor Higginbotham was then joined in conversation by her colleague, collaborator, and good friend Professor Henry Louis Gates, Jr. (host of PBS’s

Clockwise from top: A slide from the presentation; Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham; Henry Louis Gates, Jr.; Higginbotham accepts our History and Preservation Award.

Finding Your Roots and NEHGS Honorary Trustee). This special event raised funds in support of our mission to educate, inspire, and connect people through our scholarship, collections, and expertise.

The event’s Gold Benefactors were David and Jean Kruger and Fiduciary Trust Company. Silver Benefactors were Nancy S. Maulsby, Helen E. R. and DuWayne Sayles, and Welch & Forbes LLC. Benefactors were Stephen H. and Margaret Case, Sherry Edwards, Gerry and MaryLee Halpin, Robert F. and Cynthia Hendrickson, Jo Anne C. Makely, Jonathan W. and Deanna Ho Montgomery, Jonathan Buck Treat and Leslie Aitken, and Albert J. Zdenek, Jr. Patrons were Margaret Aycinena, Sally Crawford and Peter Wells, Lea Sinclair Filson, Brenda L. Johnson, Marjorie Turrell Julian, Olivia Hood Parker, M. David and Mary Alice Sherrill, Toby and Stacie Webb, Nancy and John W. Webster, and Dale Ellen Yoe.

A milestone event for DiCamillo Companion Rendezvous

On Thursday, January 21, 2021, NEHGS members and friends gathered for our first virtual DiCamillo Companion Rendezvous and a special presentation, “New York and London in the Gilded Age,” by historian Carl Raymond and NEHGS Curator of Special Collections Curt DiCamillo. This year’s reunion of DiCamillo tour participants was especially significant as we celebrated the twentieth anniversary of DiCamillo Travel and the fifth anniversary of Curt’s tenure at American Ancestors/NEHGS.

President and CEO D. Brenton Simons welcomed the more than 280 attendees to this historic romp through one of history’s most intriguing epochs. Carl Raymond guided participants through Edith Wharton’s New York, then Curt led a virtual tour of Gilded Age England, where Wharton’s influence was keenly felt. The narrative included the collapse of an old world and the birth of a new one, as well as money, power, jealousy, grand houses, great art collections, and a clash of cultures. A lively Q&A session capped the evening.



Blenheim Palace, West Façade, ca. 1900; Curt DiCamillo, FRSA, Curator of Special Collections; historian Carl Raymond.



Former director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art receives our History & Preservation Award

On Thursday, February 11, 2021, more than 250 guests joined us virtually over Zoom for a special evening with distinguished curator, scholar, and arts administrator Philippe de Montebello, whom President and CEO D. Brenton Simons honored with a History and Preservation Award in Artistic and Historic Preservation.

Professor de Montebello's richly illustrated presentation, "Celebrating the American Tradition of Art Collecting," reviewed the history of the Hispanic Society Museum & Library (of which he is the Chairman of the Board of Trustees) and highlighted some Spanish and Latin American master paintings, sculpture, manuscripts, rare books, and other works of art in its permanent collection. Following his presentation, Professor de Montebello was joined by Executive Vice President and COO Ryan J. Woods for a conversation about art and the art of collecting.

This program was presented in partnership with the Hispanic Society Museum & Library. A recording of the presentation is available at AmericanAncestors.org/education/learning-resources/watch.

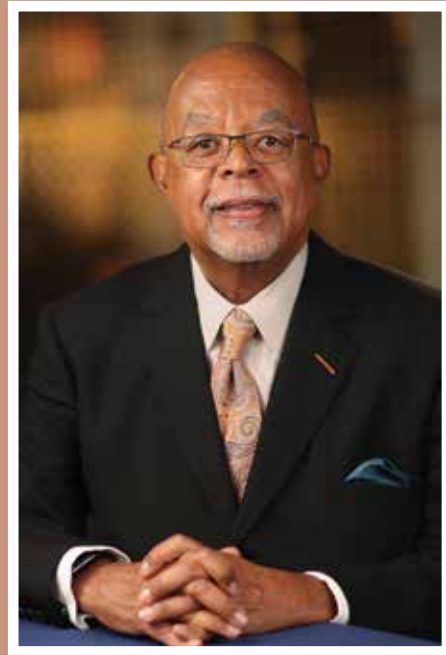


Clockwise from top left: Philippe de Montebello accepts our History and Preservation Award; Philippe de Montebello; Ryan J. Woods; Main Court, West View, The Hispanic Society of America.

Finding Your Roots returned to TV—and NEHGS—for a new season

The seventh season of *Finding Your Roots*—Harvard scholar and NEHGS Honorary Trustee Henry Louis Gates, Jr.'s PBS series exploring the family histories of notable Americans—began airing in January. American Ancestors/NEHGS is proud to continue as anchor location of the series, a capacity in which we have served since the inception of the program, in addition to our role as an independent genealogical consultant for the show. Over the last seven seasons, Gates has helped people discover important ancestral histories.

The new season features actress Glenn Close, NPR reporter Maria Hinojosa, actor and author John Lithgow, singer and actor Audra McDonald, recording artist Pharrell Williams, and many more. Our Treat Rotunda at 101 Newbury Street figures prominently in the series as the anchor location for each episode. Our staff experts also collaborate with the series in a verification process for all research and through a careful review of each episode's script. We are thrilled to play a role in bringing this award-winning series to millions of viewers.



Henry Louis Gates, Jr. Photo courtesy of WETA and PBS.

See history through a new lens with our American Inspiration series

Since its inception in 2019, American Inspiration has provided insight into and context for our ancestors' lives. This speaker series, hosted by our Director of Literary Programs Margaret M. Talcott, presents engaging discussions of newly published histories, biographies, and memoirs from renowned authors. This winter and early spring, our virtual audiences enjoyed illustrated presentations, conversations, and Q&A sessions that painted vivid portraits of American life from the colonial era to the present.

Author Eric Jay Dolin (*A Furious Sky*) looked at hurricanes and their impact on humanity throughout history. We surveyed centuries of fashion trends with author and Stanford Law professor Richard Ford (*Dress Codes*) and guest moderator and curator Petra Slinkard of the Peabody Essex Museum. Medical history and the first female doctors were discussed by authors Janice Nimura (*The Doctors Blackwell*) and Dr. Perri Klass (*A Good Time to Be Born*). Historian Russell Shorto (*The Island at the Center of the World: The Epic Story of Dutch Manhattan and the Forgotten Colony That Shaped America*), in dialogue with Alexander Stille of Columbia School of Journalism, took us to the factory town of Johnstown, Pennsylvania, and his Italian-American family's experience in his memoir *Smalltime*.

Authors Nadia Owusu (*Aftershocks*) and Jessica Shattuck examined the present-day experience of being multi-racial and multi-national. Anna Malaika Tubbs (*The Three Mothers*) presented stories of the forgotten mothers of Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X, and James Baldwin. Ms. Tubbs and guest moderator L'Merchie Frazier of Boston's Museum of African American History encouraged the audience to consider the impact of mothers as they conduct their own family history research.

In March and April we turned to the influence of war: Pulitzer Prize-winners John Matteson (*A Worse Place Than Hell*) and Debby Applegate discussed how the 1862 Battle of Fredericksburg changed our nation. Tobey Pearl (*Terror to the Wicked*) shared the story of America's first trial by jury and its link to the end of the Pequot War. Curt DiCamillo discussed "Jewels that Made History," with author Stellene Volandes, editor-in-chief of *Town & Country*.

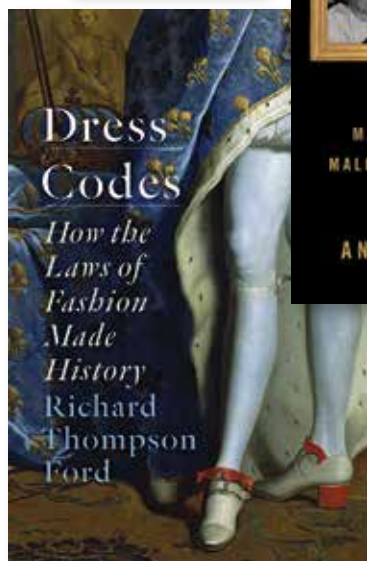
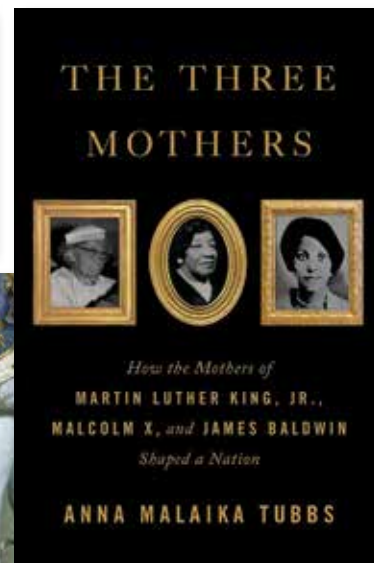
Several programs were presented with partner organizations, most often with the Boston Public Library, State Library of Massachusetts, Museum of African American History, and GBH Forum Network. Porter Square Books in Cambridge, Massachusetts, provided books. Look for videos of previous events on our series website, AmericanAncestors.org/Inspire.

Join us online for more thought-provoking speakers!

Visit AmericanAncestors.org/Inspire to see a schedule of upcoming events, register for talks, and view videos of past interviews with authors.

Become an American Inspiration insider!

Subscribe to our newsletter to be in-the-know about featured authors events, just-scheduled writers, and book-related programs. Sign up at AmericanAncestors.org/Inspire.



The conversation continues . . .

In November 2020, we launched a new online Conversation Series featuring American Inspiration authors alongside NEHGS genealogists and other experts. In March 2021, our audience was enlightened by a panel discussion and course materials for "Place: Uncovering, Interpreting, and Presenting the Past," featuring museum curator and former museum director Elliot Bostwick Davis, novelist Christina Schwarz, and Kyle Hurst, Senior Genealogist of the Newbury Street Press.

NEW Databases on AmericanAncestors.org

Genealogies, Biographies, Heraldry, and Local Histories

Early Vermont Settlers to 1784 (4 new sketches)

This study project presents genealogical sketches on heads of households who resided within the present-day borders of Vermont by 1784. A list of children, their spouses, and all known pertinent vital records accompanies each sketch. All of the new sketches feature members of the Field family of Brattleboro.

The Le Roy Family in America, 1753–2003

This genealogy of the Le Roy family gives a full account of the descendants of a colonial New York family. The authors, Scott Campbell Steward and Newbold Le Roy, 3rd (both descendants of Jacob Le Roy), have traced Jacob's descendants to the present. The new database contains 800 pages and 13,500 searchable names.

Worcester, MA: Scots-Irish Settlers, 1700–1850

This study project, researched by Shirley (Robinson) Pizziferri features over 20 families who lived in the Worcester area in the early 1700s. This new database contains nearly 200 pages of family histories and over 12,000 searchable names. These sketches are intended as comprehensive sources on which researchers can base further study of Scots-Irish settlers of Worcester, MA.

Journals

Essex Genealogist (1 new volume)

We recently added Volume 35, covering the year 2015, to *The Essex Genealogist* database. This update contains over 250 pages and 1,200 searchable names. The leading publication for genealogical research in Essex County, Massachusetts, this quarterly journal has been published since 1981 by The Essex Society of Genealogists.

Maine Genealogist (1 new volume)

Published since 1977, *The Maine Genealogist* is the quarterly journal of the Maine Genealogical Society. We have added Volume 37 (for the year 2015) to this database. This update adds over 230 pages and nearly 4,500 searchable names.

Mayflower Descendant (5 new volumes)

Volumes 64 through 68, for the years 2016 through 2020, have been added to our *Mayflower Descendant* database. This update adds approximately 1,100 new pages and 19,700 searchable names. *Mayflower Descendant* began in 1899; it is an essential source of information on many New England families, especially those of Plymouth County and Cape Cod.

Rhode Island Roots (1 new volume)

Volume 41 (published in 2015) has been added to our *Rhode Island Roots* database. This update adds over 270 pages and over 2,800 searchable names. This journal is published by the Rhode Island Genealogical Society.

Vital records

Massachusetts: Catholic Cemetery Association Records, 1833–1940

American Ancestors, the Archive Department of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston (RCAB), and the Catholic Cemetery Association of the Archdiocese of Boston (CCA) recently announced a new database of Catholic cemetery records spanning 1833 through 1940. Most of the volumes contain records of lot sales or interments, and include information about lot owners, and the date and location of burial. Some of the people represented in these records may not have purchased a marker or their marker may have disappeared or eroded, so this collection is essential for research into Catholic burials

in eastern Massachusetts. Maps of each cemetery are being made available to help with locating graves. Eight cemeteries were included in the initial release. More cemeteries will become available in this database throughout the year. (For further information on this collection, see the article on pages 54–55.)

Massachusetts: (Image Only) Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston Records, 1789–1920 (9 new parishes)

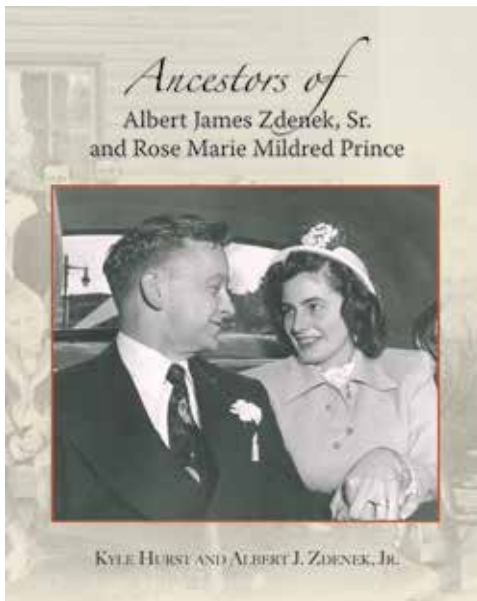
Guest members can view the Archdiocese of Boston sacramental records for free in our browsable collection. The 26 new volumes include records from the following parishes: Sacred Heart (Amesbury), St. Alphonsus (Beverly), St. Andrew (Billerica), St. Colman of Cloyne (Brockton), St. Francis de Sales (Roxbury), St. James the Apostle (Arlington), St. Joseph (Belmont), St. Joseph (Roxbury), and St. Margaret of Scotland (Beverly). We have also added post-1900 records to seven volumes from these parishes that were already posted on our site.

Massachusetts: Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston Records, 1789–1920 (12 new parishes)

American Ancestors and the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston are collaborating to create an online database of millions of sacramental records from over 100 parishes across eastern Massachusetts. The 67 new volumes include records from the following locations: Boston, Charlestown, Dorchester, East Boston, Lynn, Roslindale, Roxbury, and South Boston. We have also added post-1900 records to 16 volumes from these parishes that were already posted on our website.

New Publications

shop.AmericanAncestors.org



New from Newbury Street Press

Ancestors of Albert James Zdenek, Sr. and Rose Marie Mildred Prince

By Kyle Hurst and Albert J. Zdenek, Jr.

As the eldest grandchild on both sides, Albert J. Zdenek, Jr. has always been the collector of his family's stories and memorabilia. This thoroughly researched, beautifully designed and illustrated book explores how the branches of his family left Bohemia (today's Czech Republic), Germany, and Ireland to settle in the Mid-Atlantic, Midwest, and Virginia. Pennsylvania was the hub most of these families passed through before 1950, when Albert James Zdenek, Sr. wed Rose Marie Mildred Prince in Philadelphia. The book's three parts cover five ancestral lines of Albert James Zdenek, Sr. (Zdenek, Janoušek, Kennedy, Huber, and Bailey), seven ancestral lines of Rose Marie Mildred Prince (Prince, Molitor, Johnston-Grew, Fletcher, Wine, Hitt, and Hagerty-McGinnis), and includes a touching personal memoir about the couple and their children.

Descendants of David Melvill of Boston, Massachusetts, and Newport, Rhode Island

By Helen Schatvet Ullmann, CG, FASG

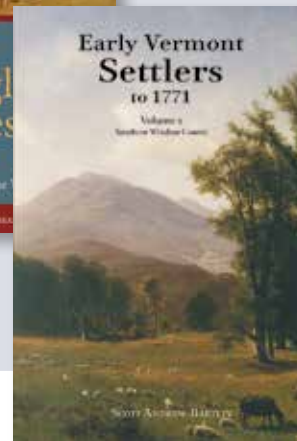
David Melvill, who came from Glasgow, Scotland, was living in Yarmouth on Cape Cod in the 1680s. He married Mary, daughter of Rev. Samuel Willard of the Second Church in Boston, and after several years in Eastham on the Cape, they moved to Boston, where he was a merchant and tavern keeper. His two sons, Thomas, a builder, and David, a peruke maker, went to Newport, Rhode Island, where they had many descendants, including Samuel Vinson's progeny. Other families treated for two or more generations are Yates, Weeden, Bissell, Swinburne, Munro, Bull, Townsend, Tilley, and Irish. The fourth generation began adding an *e*, so the name became *Melville*.

Staff book picks

Whether you're researching at home or hitting the road, these New England staff favorites will set you on the right course:

- *A Guide to Massachusetts Cemeteries, 3rd ed.*, by David Allen Lambert, print and e-book
- *Early New England Families, 1641–1700, vol. 2*, by Alicia Crane Williams, FASG
- *Western Massachusetts Families in 1790, vol. 4*, by Helen Schatvet Ullmann, CG, FASG
- *Early Vermont Settlers to 1771, vol. 2*, by Scott Andrew Bartley

Visit shop.AmericanAncestors.org for these and other essential resources!



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one family at a time.*



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For more information, please call 617-226-1217
or email development@nehgs.org



American Ancestors
by NEW ENGLAND HISTORIC GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY





BRICK WALLS submitted by our members

We want to hear from you! Send a brief narrative (200 words or less) about your “brick wall” to magazine@nehgs.org or to AMERICAN ANCESTORS magazine, 99–101 Newbury Street, Boston, MA 02116. Please include your member number. We regret that we cannot reply to every submission. Brick walls will be edited for clarity and length. Responses will be forwarded to submitters.

I am searching for information about **John (or Jonathan) Kinselagh** (sometimes written as Kingslaugh or Kinslow, or Quiselot in French documents, or Hinslow in Spanish documents). His origins are unknown. His first appearance in a record is for his marriage to Anne Luce, the niece of Boston merchant Peter Luce. The couple was married in Boston on August 1, 1734, by Rev. Andrew Le Mercier of the French Protestant church. I do not know if John and Anne had any children. Kinselagh was a merchant sea captain and adventurer; the capture in 1737 of his ship, the *Prince William*, by the Spanish was a cause célèbre. He raised and led a Massachusetts company for the 1745 Louisbourg expedition, stayed at Louisbourg, and served in several administrative positions. When Louisbourg was returned to the French in 1749, Kinselagh briefly worked for the Board of Trade and then became a merchant in the new settlement of Halifax, Nova Scotia. He died on August 8, 1754, in Halifax and was buried there on September 13, 1754.

Richard VandeWetering, Dept. of Politics,
University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario,
rvandewe@uwo.ca

On census records, my ancestor **Elnathan Davis** gave his birthplace as Rhode Island and birth years ranging from 1774 to 1778. His gravestone in Winnebago, Illinois, indicates he was born November 1778. He and his wife, Margaret (b. 1782 in England) had five sons born between 1803 and 1831 in Canada. An 1817 deed places him in Mersea, Essex County, Ontario. By 1840 he and his family had settled near Winnebago. An Elnathan Davis served as a private in Capt. Stephen Kearney’s 13th U.S. Infantry unit, enlisting on September 22, 1812; this man was captured in the battle of Fort Independence, returned to the U.S. in 1814, and deserted from the army in Detroit in March 1816. My Elnathan had no children during those years. After fifty years and a research trip to Ontario, I have not identified Elnathan’s parents, and I don’t know if he was the 1812 soldier.

Dennis Sonius, Twin Falls, Idaho
dsonius@cableone.net

After years of research, I am still looking for the origins, marriages, and death of my ancestor **Francis Elliot** of Essex County, Massachusetts. Francis appeared in Salem records in 1683 and 1686, when he purchased a house and married Anna Nichols. He moved to Boxford in the early 1700s, then Middleton, where he helped develop the ironworks. In 1695, Francis stated in probate court that he was the only brother of Thomas Eliot of Salem and Boston, and that, other than Thomas’s widow, Thomas was his sole relative in the land. Anna was the mother of Francis’s daughter Lydia but a second wife, Abigail (___), whom he married by 1690 (although I have found no marriage record), was the mother of his eight children baptized in Boxford in 1705. In 1716, he married Margaret Knight in Topsfield. I have not found Francis’s death record, nor those of his wives, nor any record of Francis or Margaret after their joint 1732/33 Middleton land conveyance; they may have left Massachusetts. The 1739 death date often given for Francis is that of his son, Francis, Jr., as is clear from the probate file.

Andy Ringgold, Palmyra, Virginia
hackr43@gmail.com

I am searching for information about my ancestor **Sybel Tanner**. She married Samuel Miller, Jr. in Adams, Berkshire Co., Massachusetts, on June 19, 1789. They lived in Adams until at least 1836, when they sold property there. They may have moved to Ohio with their son—apparently their only child—William Miller (b. abt. 1795), who was in Mayfield, Cuyahoga Co., in 1850 and Saybrook, Ashtabula Co., in 1860. William died June 3, 1874, in Wakeshma, Kalamazoo Co., Michigan. Sybel may have died in Massachusetts, Ohio, or Michigan. I cannot find Sybel’s parents, nor her places and dates of birth and death. The only potential father I have identified in the 1790 census in Adams is Francis Tanner, but I can find no documentation linking him to Sybel.

Jenifer Krieger Johnson, Newville, Pennsylvania
jjpackard56@gmail.com



I seek the parents of my ancestor **Rosetta (Worth) Plummer**, wife of Joseph French Plummer. Rosetta was born in 1822 in New Hampshire, and died May 11, 1870, in Moultonborough, Carroll County, N.H. Her death record listed her parents as Ayers Worth and Julia Balch, which seems incorrect. Ayers and Julia were married January 22, 1835, when Rosetta was about 13. I wonder if Rosetta was a cousin of Ayers Worth. I share DNA with descendants of the Hoyt family and Ayers's mother was Sally Hoyt (b. January 15, 1784, in New Hampshire, died March 31, 1875, in Moultonborough), who married Ayers Worth, Sr.

Toni Davidson Rome, Eagle, Idaho
rome.toni.j@gmail.com

I am seeking the origins of my ancestor **Philip Augustus Hoot**, who, according to his gravestone, was born May 10, 1795. Census records list his birthplace as Pennsylvania. The stories say he ran away from home and went to Niagara Falls, New York. After enlisting at Old Fort Niagara in 1813, he served in the War of 1812. He married Mary Blakely (b. 1798 in Butler Co., Penn.). I think it likely that the marriage occurred about 1820 in Butler County and that their first of eight children was born there in March 1821. Philip was enumerated in the 1830 and 1840 censuses in Medina County, Ohio. He died in Brown Twp., Paulding County, Ohio, in 1862. An article published by Philip's son, Philip, in a Rochester, Indiana, newspaper in 1900 claimed that Philip A. Hoot was a grandson of a Philip Hoot who served in Revolutionary War and put up the first liberty



pole in America. (Another Philip Hoot—son of Peter Hoot and grandson of a Philip Hoot who served in the Revolution—married Elizabeth Cassel in Montgomery Co., Pennsylvania, in 1822, but is not my ancestor.)

Beverly Wagner, Roanoke, Indiana
bdwagner911@hotmail.com

My ancestor **Clarissa C. Tripp** was born in 1814 in Bradford County, Pennsylvania. One county record listed her as an orphan; another claimed she was adopted by the John Lent family. I have found no connection to the Lent family, nor to any of the Tripp families in Bradford County, including a Joseph Tripp who appeared in a tax list there in 1813. Online sources incorrectly give Clarissa's parents as Edward Tripp and Lydia Cole, probably based on my research; that theory was disproved. Clarissa married Samuel Philip DeMoney in 1830 in Bradford County. The 1880 Scotland Co., Missouri, census reported that Clarissa's parents were born in Rhode Island, but I have found no information on a Clarissa or Joseph Tripp there. Clarissa died March 1, 1899, in Hope, Kansas. No death certificate exists, and her obituary offers no information on her parents or siblings.

Janet K. Pease, Northfield, Minnesota
jkpease2509@gmail.com

My ancestor, **Margaret Boyle Kelley**, was born in Newton, Massachusetts, about 1850 with the surname **Gildea**. (She later adopted the Kelley surname of her mother's second husband.) She married George Cogswell Smith, perhaps in St. Louis, where his family is well-documented. No proof of the marriage was found in St. Louis in civil or Catholic records (Margaret was Catholic). I have an old photograph of Margaret with "St. Louis" inscribed on the back. Research by NEHGS has shown that in May 1875, after her marriage, Margaret traveled from St. Louis to Fort Benton, Montana, by steamboat. Her son, William G. Smyth (my grandfather), was born there on March 21, 1876. Margaret brought William to Massachusetts, where she worked in textile mills in Lowell. She died of consumption in 1878 in Watertown, Mass. I am seeking some evidence of her marriage.

Robert G. Wilson, Santa Fe, New Mexico
gdoldrob@earthlink.net

Angelo Rizzuto, "Person Standing Against a Brick Wall."
New York City, 1955. Library of Congress.

2021 Online Learning Opportunities*

Explore family history—and social history—without leaving home! From free webinars to new multi-day virtual research programs, American Ancestors is providing more online programming than ever before. Not only are we nearly doubling our offerings, but we are also expanding our coverage of topics, including cultural history, decorative objects, and stories from our archives. Registration for our online programs typically open one month prior to the broadcast. Learn more at AmericanAncestors.org/education/online-classes.

JUNE

- 6/3/21 **AMERICAN INSPIRATION VIRTUAL AUTHOR EVENT:** Joseph M. Bagley with *Boston's Oldest Buildings and Where to Find Them*, FREE
- 6/5/21 **ONLINE CONFERENCE:** Getting the Lay of the Land: Using American Land Deeds in Your Family History Research, \$125 (Description on page 19)
- 6/10–6/12/21..... **VIRTUAL SPRING RESEARCH STAY-AT-HOME:** \$375 (Description on page 19)
- 6/10/21 **WEBINAR:** Researching the Deep South, FREE
- 6/15/21 **AMERICAN INSPIRATION VIRTUAL AUTHOR EVENT:** Gabrielle Glaser with *American Baby: A Mother, A Child, and the Shadow History of Adoption*, FREE
- Starting 6/16/21... **ONLINE COURSE:** Rodzina!: Researching Your Polish Ancestors, 3 weeks, \$85 (See description on following page.)
- 6/18/21 **WEBINAR:** The Country Houses of Shropshire, FREE
- 6/22–7/6/21 **VIRTUAL WORKSHOP:** Building Your Genealogical Skills, \$85 (Description on page 19)
- 6/28/21 **AMERICAN INSPIRATION VIRTUAL AUTHOR EVENT:** Stephen Bown with *The Company, The Rise and Fall of the Hudson's Bay Empire*, FREE

JULY

- Starting 7/7/21 ... **ONLINE COURSE:** Researching Acadian Ancestors, 3 weeks, \$85
- 7/8/21 **WEBINAR:** What's New at AmericanAncestors.org?, FREE
- 7/8/21 **AMERICAN INSPIRATION VIRTUAL AUTHOR EVENT:** Peter Canellos with *The Great Dissenter: The Story of John Marshall Harlan, America's Judicial Hero*, FREE
- 7/15–17/21..... **VIRTUAL RESEARCH PROGRAM:** Summer Institute for Advanced Researchers: Managing an Oral History Project, \$375 (Description on page 19)
- 7/20/21 **AMERICAN INSPIRATION VIRTUAL AUTHOR EVENT:** Menachem Kaiser with *Plunder: A Memoir of Family Property and Nazi Treasure*
- 7/22/21 **WEBINAR:** From Old England to New England: Conventicles to Companies to Congregations, FREE
- 7/24/21 **ONLINE CONFERENCE:** Researching 17th-Century Settlers to New England, \$125

AUGUST

- Starting 8/11/21... **ONLINE COURSE:** Researching Colonial War Ancestors, 3 weeks, \$85
- 8/19/21 **WEBINAR:** Stories from the Archives: Family Registers, FREE
- 8/21/21 **ONLINE CONFERENCE:** Researching German Ancestors, \$125
- 8/27/21 **WEBINAR:** Virtual Tour of Weston Park, Shropshire, \$15

* Schedule is subject to change.



THREE-WEEK ONLINE COURSE Rodzina!: Researching Your Polish Ancestors

June 16, 23, and 30 • Cost: \$85

Today there are an estimated 9 million Americans who have Polish ancestry. Connecting to your rodzina—family—in the old country, however, is not without its challenges. Language barriers, changing historical boundaries, and record access can forestall your success in tracing your Polish roots. This three-session course will set you up for success! Topics include how to locate your ancestral town or village using American sources, how to navigate shifting historical borders, review the types of records you are likely to find in each region, and provide case studies demonstrating various research strategies.

VIRTUAL RESEARCH PROGRAM Summer Institute for Advanced Researchers: Managing an Oral History Project

July 15–17, 2021 • Cost: \$375

Whether you are interested in collecting stories about an individual, a family, or a community, oral history projects require a methodical approach. This seminar will give you the tools to organize your oral history project, encourage meaningful and productive conversations, record interviews, and share your results with generations to come. Open to current American Ancestors members only.

This online seminar will offer four full days of presentations, hands-on demonstrations, and group activities; in-depth Q&A sessions with instructors; and extended access to recordings, handouts, slides, and more.

knowledge to continue your research online from home.

This program includes:

- 6 lectures and access to recordings
- Lecture handouts and materials
- 2 one-on-one consultations (scheduled by our staff ahead of time)
- Demo and activity sessions with our experts and other participants

VIRTUAL WORKSHOP Building Your Genealogical Skills

June 22, 29, and July 6 • Cost: \$85

“This course has been terrific—I only wish I could have taken it 10 years ago!”

Take your research skills to the next level! With the sheer number of online resources at your fingertips, it's easy to dive into 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.

This course includes three 90-minute classes; exclusive access to handouts and recordings of each presentation; hands-on demonstrations and activities; and in-depth Q&A sessions with the instructor.

Opposite page: Main Square in the Poznań Old Town, photo by Dennis Jarvis from Halifax, Canada, CC BY-SA 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons. *Above left:* Homestead National Monument, Nebraska. Wikimedia Commons.

ONLINE CONFERENCE Getting the Lay of the Land: Using American Land Deeds in Your Family History Research

Live Q&A June 5; Access to materials
May 28–August 31 • Cost: \$125

Land records are an essential resource for family historians. Often overlooked and misunderstood, these records can provide key genealogical information, confirm family connections, and provide a timeline of your ancestors' movements. This seminar will discuss the history of land records in America, how to leverage land deeds in your research, cover bounty land and homesteaders, and provide several case studies on how land records can be used to break down genealogical brick walls.

This conference includes access to five pre-recorded, 60-minute classes; exclusive access to handouts, templates, and other materials; and an in-depth Q&A session with the instructors.

VIRTUAL RESEARCH PROGRAM Spring Research Stay-at-Home

June 10–12, 2021 • Cost: \$375

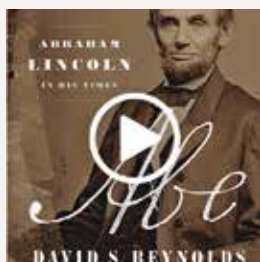
In this three-day online experience, you will learn about essential resources and gain new research strategies through lectures from our staff, real-time demonstrations, one-on-one consultations, and other activities. Whether you are an advanced researcher or someone just beginning the journey into family history research, this virtual program will give you the necessary skills and

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staff profile

MEET SARAH DERY

Manager of Research and Library Services

I joined the NEHGS staff in May 2017, when I was hired as the Research Services Coordinator. I had previously held positions in hotel management, technical support/customer service (at a call center), retail, and sales (at a local living history museum). As Research Services has grown and my expertise has allowed me to contribute further, my role at NEHGS has increased.

Initially, I assisted Lindsay Fulton, then Director of Research Services, with initial assessments of research projects and client communications, while working alongside a talented staff of researchers. In 2017, Research Services became “verifiers” for General Society of Colonial Wars membership applications. I worked side-by-side with GSCW leadership to help our members and other interested family historians gain acceptance to GSCW. This partnership continues today.

In 2019, after having gained an expanded knowledge of genealogy and the NEHGS mission, I was promoted to Research Services Manager. My responsibilities shifted to managing our Research Services team and collaborating with other teams, including Education and Marketing. In November 2019, I presented my first webinar, “How NEHGS Can Help,” which discussed all of our organization’s genealogical services.

Last August, I assumed a new position, Research & Library Services Manager. In this role, I manage our for-hire genealogical services and a growing team of twenty researchers—all while working from home. I have been able to apply the valuable experience I gained from working in hotel management, retail, and sales/

customer service to many aspects of my current job responsibilities.

Without a doubt, the most rewarding part of my job is being privy to our clients’ family history stories. My BA is in anthropology and English literature, so I am especially drawn to the correlation between our ancestors and the historic events that affected them. When people contact us, I discuss their genealogical needs and hear about their “brick wall” questions. I am the main point of contact between our clients and our Research & Library Services team, and I have learned from both groups. I find it fulfilling when a Researcher solves a long-standing mystery, and all of us on the team get to share in that news.

The genealogical research on my own family has flourished since I became a staff member. I successfully traced my ancestry to 1630s Quebec, 1650s Nova Scotia, and 1870s Ireland. My French-Canadian ancestors came from northern France. The men are among the earliest settlers to New France and a few of the women were part of the *Filles du Roi* (King’s Daughters) program, which brought approximately 800 women to New France between 1663 and 1673.

While navigating the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic, I have constantly been reminded that genealogy can be undertaken anywhere—and for that I am grateful. Our Research & Library Services team has continued to operate virtually throughout the pandemic, but we are looking forward to returning to the library and in-person visits with our members and clients. ♦



LOST FAMILY AND FOUND STRANGERS

An excerpt from *The Lost Family: How DNA Testing Is Upending Who We Are*

As home DNA testing for genealogical purposes has exploded in recent years, with 37 million test kits sold, so has the subset of people for whom a test reveals unexpected news. Perhaps a consumer learns that she has an older half-sister, or that her family hid its genetic ancestry generations back as an escape from discrimination. Or perhaps she learns something surprising about her own immediate genetic origins—that she was adopted or donor-conceived and never told, or that she isn't genetically related to the man she calls Dad. This last scenario is one of the most common kinds of DNA surprise, and lately the term NPE, which stands for “non-paternity event” or “not parent expected,”

has begun to trickle down from the scholarly confines of genetic genealogy to become an increasingly mainstream acronym. Mental health professionals have begun to specialize in the NPE experience, and advocacy organizations have emerged to bring awareness to the phenomenon.

In one of the reporting trips for my book, *The Lost Family: How DNA Testing Is Upending Who We Are*, I flew down to Houston, Texas, to interview Bennett Greenspan, the founder of FamilyTreeDNA, which became the first company to offer DNA testing for genealogical purposes in the United States 21 years ago. Greenspan is well-aware of the revelations that DNA can bring, and of the ways those

revelations can play out—sometimes in warm reunions, and sometimes in conflict, as when a consumer's desire for self-knowledge clashes with the privacy interests of her newfound genetic kin. When we spoke about the unintended consequences of the industry he started, Greenspan told me he tells people: “If you really don't want to know the answer to the question, don't ask the question.” But it struck me that this set-up wasn't entirely fair. Because many people—both serious genealogists looking to break through brick walls and casual consumers curious about their ethnicity estimates—don't realize when they spit into a tube that they're asking a question as profound as *Is my father really my father?*



Libby Copeland is an award-winning journalist who writes from New York about culture and science for such media outlets as the Washington Post, New York Times, Atlantic, and Smithsonian Magazine. Her book, *The Lost Family: How DNA Testing Is Upending Who We Are*, praised as “a fascinating account of lives dramatically altered by genetic sleuthing” by the Wall Street Journal, was recently named to the Guardian's list of *The Best Books of 2020*.

GOLDEN STANDARD OF FRAGMENT OF HUMAN DNA MOLECULE. IMAGE BY SHUTTERSTOCK.COM/IAREMENKO SERGIJ.



Yet even if you didn't mean to ask the question, once it's asked, it will be answered. And once it's answered—well, for many people, there's something pretty compelling about knowing there's a mystery man out there who gave you half your genetic material. How do you not open that box? How do you not want to see your face in his, or to hear the timbre of his voice? How do you not wonder: Would he like you? Would he be glad you came into his life? This is how seekers like Laurie Pratt are made: One question leads to another. For Laurie, as for so many others, following those questions to their ineluctable end becomes a thoroughly modern journey of self-discovery.

Laurie inherited the hobby of genealogy from her grandmother; as a child she used to go on excursions with her to look at headstones. As an adult, she spent many years tracing her own family's history, following her mother's colonial American ancestry and her father's French Canadian

roots, before the price of DNA testing dropped enough for her to test herself and her dad, whose tree she was working on. It was 2012, still early days for the industry, with consumer databases quite small and limited knowledge about unexpected results.

When Laurie's father's results came in, he did not show up as a genetic relative. Laurie called Ancestry and got a customer service representative who tried to reassure her. "I'm sure he'll show up," she remembers the rep saying. But he never appeared among Laurie's relative matches. So Laurie contacted a woman she found online named CeCe Moore—a now-prominent genetic genealogist who back then served as a kind of lifeline for early adopters of this technology who were stumbling over their results. Moore suggested Laurie try testing herself and her father again at 23andMe. Laurie made up a reason why she needed to test her dad again, and again, they did not match. Moore was gentle. She guided Laurie to 23andMe's chromosome browser, showing her how the company had come to this conclusion: Laurie and her father did not have any overlapping genetic segments.

Laurie is in her fifties. She lives in Orange County, California, and works as a ground operations supervisor for an airline. Both of her parents have since passed away, but her mother was "my best friend, hilarious, amazing, always owned her stuff," she says. She went to her mother, who at first said the DNA results were "impossible." But over time, her mom's accounting of whether she could have been with

another man changed to "not that I remember."

"Not that you remember?" Laurie repeated, gently teasing her mom. "You sound like Reagan at Iran-Contra."

The first time I spoke with Laurie, she told me she believed her mom honestly didn't remember something that had happened half a century earlier. Later, as she thought back on tiny clues as so many seekers have done, she would conclude that her mother probably did remember; she simply didn't want to have this reckoning with her daughter. But eventually, Laurie's mom recalled some bare facts about a short-lived relationship during a period when she and her husband were briefly separated. Her mother had two requests: "Don't tell your siblings until after I'm gone," and "Don't tell your father." That was fine by Laurie, who said she never would have told her father anyway. "This is the guy who did the job," she says. "I can't imagine calling anybody else 'Dad.'"

Still, the genealogist in her was deeply curious. She threw herself into figuring out who her genetic father was, and it took years. Using genetic genealogy techniques, she traced the family histories of cousins whose DNA she matched online. She combed obituaries for men who were likely candidates. Sometimes she texted her mom photographs of the men—*Is this the one? What about this guy?*—and Laurie's mother pointed out that the fellow she'd slept with hadn't looked like some old guy from an obituary. He'd been a young man.

At one point, Laurie's search became a kind of dark comedy of misattributed paternity. She enlisted the help of a third cousin she'd found on her relative match list, who agreed to test her own parents in hopes of helping Laurie—and in the process this cousin stumbled across the fact that her *own* father was not her genetic father. Even as Laurie searched, her own parents—who had divorced when Laurie was an adult, though they remained close—died within a year of each other and were buried next to each other.





genetic material in such a way as to make the job extremely difficult. She became one of the volunteer “search angels” in Moore’s large DNA Detectives Facebook group,

For cases of unknown parentage, much of the process of searching for relatives through DNA databases relies on the principle of triangulation. For years, the technique was premised on something called segment triangulation, which relies on specific segments of identical DNA shared among relatives; in more recent years, CeCe Moore and Laurie Pratt and others have come to rely on a technique called pedigree triangulation. The exact techniques vary depending on a number of factors, but these days, Laurie told me, the basic idea goes like this for a seeker—let’s say an adoptee trying to figure out the identity of her birth mother—using the biggest database, AncestryDNA. The adoptee looks at her closest relative matches and examines the amount of DNA she shares with them, as well as cousins they share in common and any family trees that might be available, to figure out how she might be related to them, attempting to isolate her maternal matches from her paternal ones. She might turn to the Internet to figure out the full names and geographic locations of these relatives, if she can.

Then, using genealogical records and tools available online at Ancestry, FamilySearch, and elsewhere, including obituary records, city directories, school yearbooks, and places like

ancestral hometowns, common surnames, and shared ethnicity, she builds family trees for her maternal DNA cousins and goes back through time looking for the ancestor she shares with those cousins. (In genetic genealogy forums, seekers refer to this as MRCA, which stands for “most recent common ancestor.”) Then, the adoptee builds the trees forward through time—something Moore calls “reverse genealogy”—figuring out what marriages took place, and who are the offspring of those marriages, to isolate which branch likely contains her maternal grandparents. If she’s right, the DNA and family trees of her other relative matches should line up with her theory. Once she knows her grandparents, she can very possibly divine her mother, or at least one of several sisters as a candidate for her mother. Then, it’s a matter of figuring out what to do with that knowledge, which can be its own kind of journey.

These days, Laurie told me, she thinks she could solve the question of her own paternity within a couple of months, because the databases are so much bigger. But for years, her matches were too distant for her to make headway, and many of her paternal DNA cousins hailed from a small town in Maine with families that had intermarried, sharing last names and

Newspapers. com, and drawing on existing trees, social media accounts,

and when her own search stalled, she solved other people’s cases.

Eventually, in early 2017, after researching and creating 118 family trees for DNA cousins in hopes of understanding where she fit into them, and building back in time to the late 1700s, Laurie traced her way to the man who appeared to be her genetic father. She scoped him out online, learned about his religious affiliation, his charity work, and his family’s backstory, and then sent him a letter. A few days later, by happenstance, the man showed up as her father at Ancestry, having just tested his saliva. Perhaps he’d been given the kit as a gift from his daughter for Christmas, Laurie thought, since the man’s daughter was listed as the administrator on his DNA account. If so, it would prove to be an ambiguous gift.

The man called Laurie at the number she’d provided in her letter, and it appeared he hadn’t seen his matches yet, because he suggested that perhaps his brother was Laurie’s father. “Your Ancestry results came in today and it came back that you’re my dad,” Laurie told him. “I didn’t test for that,” the man replied—because, after all, he hadn’t. He didn’t know he was asking *that* question. “Did you test in a tube recently?” Laurie asked him, trying to thread the gap for the man, to explain that he had, in fact, tested for his genetic relatives, even if all he’d wanted was one of those cool pie charts that show you how Irish you are.

They talked for a little while. The man did not remember Laurie's mother. "That's OK," Laurie told him, "she didn't remember you either." He was a religious Catholic and said he felt terribly guilty about the idea that he'd had a daughter he didn't know about, though she'd been conceived before he was married. That was OK, Laurie said again; she just wanted to thank him for his role in contributing to her existence. She told him she wanted to meet him. He said he'd be willing, but he needed a little time to process this news and tell his wife and daughter.

For two days, Laurie was walking on air. Then she logged on and discovered the man's test had been deleted.

Laurie sent the man another letter. She included a screenshot proving their genetic relationship, in case he hadn't seen it. She was not trying to push her way into his family, she wrote, nor to make a claim on his money, and she was willing to sign a legal document to that effect. "I certainly hope you harbor no feelings of guilt or remorse," she wrote. "Everything turned out in both our lives exactly as God planned." What she sought were stories about her biological father and his family, to help her build a sense of where she came from. She would fly to him; she would treat him to lunch. One meeting, a few hours, was all she asked—which, depending on your perspective, might not be asking for much, or might be asking for a great deal indeed.

I first spoke with Laurie a few days after she sent that second letter, when it was becoming clear that her biological father was not likely to write her back. She told me all the things she'd ask the man if he'd talk to her: What books did he like to read? What had his childhood been like? Had he played sports back then? Had he been close to his parents? Did he have photographs of them so that she could trace her own face and those of her children in theirs? Could he tell her stories about his family? Because his family was hers now, and she

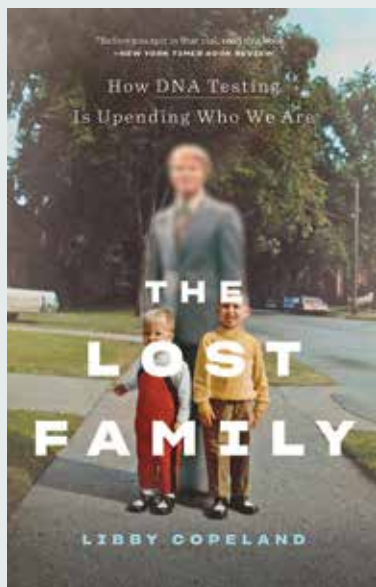
longed to know her own family, if only a little bit.

She did not feel embarrassed about how she'd come into the world, she told me, and she did not regret her own discovery. She had been "devastated that I wasn't who I thought, that I was made of a stranger," but she was nevertheless grateful to know the truth. Still, she found herself imagining how this man, this stranger in all but genetic material, must be feeling. "We all tell ourselves stories about who we are, and we pick and choose what fits into that story," she told me. "I feel like I don't fit the narrative that he's chosen."

Who decides what story we get to tell? Countless American men have by now been contacted and told they helped make a child once, and that those children would now like to introduce themselves. Some knew this day might come; others never imagined it. Many more will face this reckoning in years to come. And then there

are men who find out the children they raised are not their own. "Sometimes it's hard, 'cause she reminds me of what my ex did," one man told *The Atlantic*, referring to the girl he now knows is not his genetic daughter. The revelation led to his divorce. Genetic counselor Brianne Kirkpatrick, who runs private online support groups for people who've experienced DNA surprises, had a client who discovered at the age of seventy-eight that neither of his children were genetically his. "He was *pissed*," Kirkpatrick says. He wondered if he could sue his ex-wife.

But just as you can't anticipate what you'll discover when you test, you can't predict how the person on the other side of that test will react. I emailed with a man named Jeff Lester in Lebanon, Missouri, who told me the discovery of a daughter he'd unknowingly conceived at the age of sixteen was a miracle. She'd matched him on AncestryDNA during a period when



The Lost Family

"Copeland takes readers inside America's first DNA testing lab dedicated to genealogy, to Salt Lake City's Family History Library—the largest genealogical research facility in the world—and into the living rooms of dozens of people whose lives have been turned upside down due to the results of a recreational DNA test. It is at once a hard look at the forces behind a historical mass reckoning that is happening all across America, and an intimate portrait of the people living it."

— *Wired.com*

The Lost Family: How DNA Testing Is Upending Who We Are (Abrams Press, 2020) by Libby Copeland.

The book is available from Amazon in hardcover and paperback. Learn more about the book and the author, and sign up for Copeland's newsletter, at libbycopeland.com.

he'd put his genealogical work on hold, so he never saw her messages there; instead, she eventually messaged him on Facebook. Jeff told me he thought at first this was a scam. He was fifty years old, and he did not remember getting any girlfriends pregnant back in high school. But he logged onto Ancestry, and there she was, this girl—no, this woman, already thirty-two years old, already a mother herself—listed among his matches as his daughter.

Jeff told me he could not get over the unlikelihood of his daughter finding him. Outside of DNA testing, it almost certainly would not have happened. She had been given up for adoption when she was a baby and did not know the identity of either of her biological parents. When Jeff helped her uncover her mother's identity, she turned out to be someone with whom he'd had a brief relationship he didn't remember consummating. It "sounds like a bad after-school special," he wrote me.

The other piece of the miracle, Jeff said, was that he was not supposed to be alive. He'd been diagnosed in his twenties with ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease, and had been on a ventilator for two decades. With this sword of Damocles hanging over him, he'd built a life for himself, marrying and having three wonderful daughters. He was astonished that he'd not only outlived the odds but lived long enough to discover that, in fact, he had *four* daughters, plus a son-in-law and grandchildren; he felt the hand of God at work. He told me all this over email and Facebook Messenger, typing by way of a wireless head-controlled mouse attached to his glasses, because the ALS severely limited his ability to speak.

Jeff told me he was determined to live as fully as he could while he was still on this earth. He had forged a relationship with his oldest daughter,

and he and his wife even got to host the grandchildren for a sleepover. He did not feel guilty or ashamed about her existence; those were wasteful emotions, and his disease had taught him that none of us have time to waste. Under the shadow of imminent mortality, "you focus more on what is truly important in life," he wrote. For Jeff, the unexpected outcome of recreational DNA testing simply meant more love.



Laurie Pratt never did hear back from her biological father. "I want to see him in person," she told me one summer day. By then, it had been about a year and a half since she'd first contacted him and he'd deleted his test. She respected his boundaries and did not contact him after that single follow-up letter. She told me she could understand how her existence complicated his life and why he might not want to know her. But she continued to get to know cousins from that side of the family; they were her cousins, too. And, after hearing from another seeker who did something similar, she was mulling the idea that she might one day travel to her father's area and look for an opportunity to discreetly view him. After all, he lived in the world. He went to public events. "I just think it's weird to say I've never seen my father in real life," she told me.

In 2018, a group of Canadian third cousins on Laurie's father's side contacted Laurie after reading her blog, to ask if she wanted to come to a family reunion. So she and her husband flew up to their rural farming community, and a cousin showed her the house where Laurie's great-great-grandmother had once lived. She came back feeling empowered by the gift they'd given her—the gift of

knowing her roots. And she realized something: For years, she had walked around genealogical conferences with a name tag identifying herself by her maiden name, Laurie Pratt, which was how she was known in genealogical circles. She'd fielded questions about her last name—"Are you related to Enoch Pratt?" "What about the Pratts of Springfield?"—and felt like an imposter, because she wasn't actually a Pratt by biology. Now, she decided to legally change her name, hyphenating her husband's last name with her biological father's last name, in order to claim her identity as someone descended from his genetic line.

"I'm not out to anger him, and I certainly don't think he'd be like, 'Hooray!' but this is reality," Laurie Pratt McBriarty-Sisk told me. In interviews and correspondence with hundreds of consumers of home DNA testing over the last four years, I heard this refrain over and over: people told me that knowledge about their genetic origins was deeply important to their sense of self, even as it did not displace all the other forces that made them who they were.

In this era of genetic reckoning, countless Americans are confronting the things they weren't told about their roots, their families, and how they came into the world, and these revelations can be both painful and valuable. The truth has an intrinsic value, seeker after seeker told me—simply because it is the truth. Or, as Laurie put it, "I just want to deal with reality." ♦

View Libby Copeland's May 2020 discussion of *The Lost Family* with Wall Street Journal staff reporter Amy Dockser Marcus at forum-network.org/lectures/libby-copeland-how-dna-testing-upending-who-we-are. This talk was part of the virtual author event series *American Stories*, Inspiration Today.

Excerpted and adapted from pages 84–91 and 142–43 of *The Lost Family: How DNA Testing Is Upending Who We Are*, by Libby Copeland, ©2020. Published by Abrams Press. Reproduced with the permission of the publisher.

The Club No One Asked to Join

My book, *The Stranger in My Genes: A Memoir*, was published by NEHGS in the fall of 2016. It is about how I learned, through a DNA test, that the father who raised me was not, in fact, my biological father. I had never heard of this happening to anyone else, so I thought my story was unusual, if not unique.

I was wrong. Very wrong. A mere 48 hours after the book's release, I heard from a woman I did not know whose own DNA test revealed the same shocking information. She said she read my book in one sitting, astounded at how similar our experiences were and relieved to know that she was not alone.

She was only the first of a steady stream of strangers and friends who have reached out to me—I have lost count of the number—to tell me their troubling stories. Some were looking for comfort, and some for guidance. Five years later, I still hear from people who I affectionately refer to as members of my “DNA Club.”

There is no way of knowing how many people are in the same boat, but a Pew Research survey conducted in 2019 suggested that of the 25 million Americans who had taken a mail-in DNA test up to that point, 27% of them discovered a close relative they did not know about before. That's 6.75 million surprises. That's a lot.¹

I took my test in the summer of 2012, so I have had nine years to process the shock, assess the aftermath, and think about its meaning. Let me share some thoughts.

First, trust me when I tell you an experience like this changes you. Virtually all members of my DNA Club—me included—heard from well-intentioned friends and family who tried to be helpful and comfort us with phrases like, “Don't be upset! You're still the same person. Nothing has changed in your life.”

That's true to a point. Nothing in my life changed after my DNA test. I still had the same wife and children,



the same job, the same home. But I was not the same person. Learning that my father was not my father, that my mother strayed in her marriage, and that I was not actually related by blood to any of my Griffeth relatives—that, indeed, I am not actually a Griffeth—was traumatic. The best way to describe it is that I went into a state of shock. For several weeks after my DNA test result came back, I was numb emotionally. I periodically fell into a near-catatonic state, drained of all energy, unable to focus or hold a thought for very long. In the process, I experienced the various stages of grief: denial, depression, anger, and acceptance. All were necessary to help me right the ship again. But, ultimately, while I may look and act the same, I am a different person.

Bill Griffeth, his wife Cindy, and two of his newly acquainted biological relatives.



Bill Griffeth is the author of *The Stranger in My Genes: A Memoir* (NEHGS, 2016). During his long career as a respected financial journalist, Bill anchored a number of programs on CNBC, including Closing Bell from the New York Stock Exchange. A member since 2005, Bill has served as an NEHGS Trustee.

"I read your book last night in one sitting. Your story is my story. But I am not as far along with it all as you are as far as coping with it."

Read more about
Bill Griffeth's
story



In this best-selling memoir, longtime genealogy buff Bill Griffeth recounts his experience with the unexpected outcome of a DNA test: "If the results were correct, it meant that the family I had spent years documenting was not my own." Exploring the meaning of family and identity, Bill examines choices made by his ancestors, parents, and others—and his own difficult decisions as he confronts the past.

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In 2014, columnist Catherine Woodiwiss wrote an essay about trauma for *Sojourners Magazine* that resonated with me. Her conclusion: "This is the big, scary truth about trauma: there is no such thing as 'getting over it.' The stages of grief model marks universal stages in learning to accept loss, but the reality

is in fact much bigger: a major life disruption leaves a new normal in its wake. There is no 'back to the old me.' You are different now, full stop."²²

I couldn't agree more. And by the way, while I tell people that I am at the acceptance stage of the grief process, the truth is I don't actually *accept* my new reality. Rather, I am *resigned* to it. The wound has healed, but a scar remains. Even after almost a decade, there are still random moments when it hits me all over again, and I think to myself, "You have *got* to be kidding." As one member of my DNA Club likes to say, "Those of us who have gone through this never get over it. We get through it."

I am finishing work on a sequel to *The Stranger in My Genes*. It continues my journey of discovery where *Stranger* left off, and recounts some of the stories my fellow DNA Club members have told me.

A key figure in each of the stories, of course, is the mother. One mother had an affair with a local merchant who was a family friend. Another had an alcohol-fueled one-night stand with a complete stranger. And another was physically assaulted by a professional athlete. Those are just some of the stories I heard.

In all cases, our mothers closely guarded their secrets for decades, and I can pretty much guarantee they would have taken them to their graves. But then came the fateful day when each of us warily presented the results of our

DNA tests and asked, "What does this mean?"

A couple of mothers confessed on the spot. One made up a story about using a sperm bank. And one stonewalled until her daughter found her biological father and got the story from him.

After that first awkward conversation about the DNA test, the mother/child relationship became complicated. All of the mothers I heard about—all of them—were very reluctant to talk about it, which is understandable. They were embarrassed, distraught, and in some cases unable to forgive themselves for what happened. So, they refused to answer even the most basic questions. It was very frustrating for the children, but eventually all of us stopped asking.

All but one of the Club members I know view their mothers sympathetically. One is still very, very angry. But that may change. I went through an anger phase, too, and it passed.

It would be easy, I guess, to make our mothers the villains, but that would be ignoring the whole story. It does, after all, take two to tango. And don't forget about the mother who was physically coerced by the professional athlete. Clearly, she's a victim, not a villain.

Our mothers felt guilty enough as it is. Having to answer our many probing questions and relive a shameful or traumatic moment in their past would only make things worse. And so, since our love for them outweighed our desire to know the whole truth, we let sleeping dogs lie.

And let's not forget about the fathers. All of them.

First, there's the issue of how to refer to them. When I say "my father," who am I talking about? A few years ago, I was part of a panel discussion with two college professors. Our task was to explore the ethics of DNA testing.

"I'm just so hungry for information. I feel like even looking for information is betraying the family who raised me. I lost the father who raised me five years ago. We were very close. He never once treated me like I wasn't his daughter."

Before we began, one of the professors said to me, “You now have two families. There is the biological family you are related to genetically, and there is the biographical family you grew up with.”

Biological vs. biographical. I like that.

None of the biographical fathers of the DNA Club members I wrote about for my next book knew the truth about their child’s paternity; at least we don’t think they did. All but one of them has passed away, mine included. The one daughter whose biographical father is still alive has no intention of telling him. It would destroy his world, she believes, and he doesn’t deserve that. Her parents are divorced, so she finds

herself in the middle of an awkward family dynamic, dealing with a mother who doesn’t want to talk about it and a father who has no clue.

Then there are the biological fathers. Were they the real villains? Mine died several years ago, and because my

mother remained silent about him, I’m left to wonder about their relationship. Was she a willing participant or did he force himself on her? It is a question I must live with.

The biological fathers of two of the Club members are still alive. When they were contacted, each one was surprised to hear from a child he didn’t know he had fathered. Neither denied their paternity, and both sheepishly described what they remembered about their encounters with the mothers. Will father and child develop a close relationship? It is not likely. One father has stopped corresponding altogether, and the other is very frail. His wife communicates on his behalf.

Finally, there are the other members of our biological families, strangers we have a genetic connection with who might be willing to answer our questions. I have reached out to a member

of my biological family, but I will leave that story for my book. All but one of my Club members have also reached out, with mixed results. One man found a brother who wants nothing to do with him, another man has developed a cordial relationship with his half-brother, who willingly answered questions about their father.

One woman contacted her half-siblings and discovered a truly dysfunctional family, estranged individuals whose only connection is their surname. So, she is not hopeful about developing close ties. The one clear success story is the woman who has connected with her four half-siblings. They have a truly joyful relationship. She recently sent me an image of one of their weekly online Zoom sessions.

The college professor was right. I have two families, biographical and biological. But I also have a third family. Chosen family. The members of my DNA Club. We have become great friends because of the special bond we share, venting our frustrations, cheering when a successful connection is made, and picking each other up when there is a setback. And there is one more thing we share. As traumatized as we all were by our DNA test results, we are just grateful to have been born. ♦

NOTES

- ¹ Pew Research Center survey of U.S. adults conducted June 25 to July 8, 2019.
- ² Catherine Woodiwiss, “A New Normal: Ten Things I’ve Learned About Trauma,” *Sojourners Magazine*, January 13, 2014 (at sojo.net).

Strangers No More, Bill Griffeth’s sequel to *The Stranger in My Genes: A Memoir*, will be published by NEHGS in the spring of 2022.

“If you can believe this, my father doesn’t know. My mother kept it from him. How? I do not know. I do not even want him to know. It would be too confusing and upsetting to him.”

“I think there were things I chose to ignore, and signals not to ask. Their generation just didn’t talk about things. And at some point as a child, I truly did feel guilt for even considering it.”

Using DNA to Identify My Grandmother's Mother

My paternal grandmother, Pearl Bushen, was born Ruffina O'Donnell on May 10, 1915, at the St. Mary Infant Asylum and Lying-In Hospital in Dorchester, a neighborhood of Boston. A few weeks after her birth, her mother, Bella O'Donnell, gave her up for adoption. Two years later, she was adopted by Wilson Bushen and Mary McDougall, immigrants from Nova Scotia. Pearl always had access to her adoption records, which named her mother but did not provide any biographical information about Bella or name Pearl's father.

Although I never spoke in detail with my grandmother about her birth parents, I know she always wondered who they were. A year before her death, I gave her a framed photo that I had taken during my first trip to Ireland—a nod to her birth mother who had an Irish-sounding name and possible Irish roots. After my grandmother's death in 2003, I made it my mission to fully identify her mother. I gathered as much information as I could about Bella O'Donnell. From the Archdiocese of Boston, I received my grandmother's

baptismal record and learned that she was baptized May 15, 1915, at St. Mary's Infant Asylum. A Levina Mooney was the only sponsor and I hoped she was a relative. Then I learned that Levina had a child at St. Mary's at the same time as Bella, so was likely someone Bella met there.

The St. Mary's Center for Women and Children, which houses some records of the St. Mary Infant Asylum, holds a logbook that shows Bella O'Donnell arrived at the facility on May 10, 1915, when her labor began. She remained at St. Mary's for two weeks after she gave birth. Bella's residence was listed as Dorchester, but no other biographical information was given.

Searching census and vital records for women named Bella O'Donnell in Greater Boston revealed several candidates. I narrowed my suspects to two women—Bella O'Donnell of Rockland and Bella O'Donnell of Boston. Both women were Irish immigrants who arrived in Massachusetts before 1915, the year my grandmother was born. I learned that Bella O'Donnell of Rockland was from Dunfanaghy on

Mary (McDougall) Bushen with her adopted daughter, Pearl, circa 1918.

Donegal's northern coast, while Bella O'Donnell of Boston came from Lenan on Donegal's Inishowen Peninsula. Ultimately, I realized that DNA testing would be necessary to identify our family's Bella O'Donnell.

In December 2012, I submitted a sample of my DNA to 23andMe and then waited more than two years for an O'Donnell connection. In 2015, I matched with a woman named Mary with whom I shared 33cM of DNA. She was predicted to be my fourth cousin, which suggested that we



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shared a set of great-great-great-grandparents. Although this was a distant match, I was pleased to have a lead. I learned that Mary's family came from Dumfries, which lies in Buncrana parish on the Inishowen Peninsula of Donegal—the region Bella O'Donnell of Boston called home. But, despite my best efforts, I could not extend Mary's family line past the early twentieth century. Further complicating my search was the sheer number of O'Donnells in County Donegal; O'Donnell is one of the county's most common surnames.

To try to gain more DNA matches, I uploaded my autosomal raw DNA to FamilyTreeDNA, MyHeritage, and GEDmatch, and waited for closer O'Donnell matches. On FamilyTreeDNA, I matched with a man in Donegal. We shared 75cM of DNA and his profile listed the surnames Doherty and Harkin from the townlands of Urrismenagh and Lenan in Clonmany parish. I immediately recognized the townland of Lenan, birthplace of Bella O'Donnell of Boston. With two DNA matches to the Inishowen Peninsula, I clearly had ties to this region.

Before investigating this match further, I researched Bella O'Donnell of Boston. I learned that she was born September 27, 1878, at Lenan in Clonmany parish, daughter of Con O'Donnell and Ann McDade. Bella arrived in Boston in October 1908 and would have 36 when my grandmother was born in 1915. Alongside other Irish women, Bella worked as a chambermaid at the now-shuttered Quincy House Hotel in Boston's Scollay Square. In 1921, Bella married another Donegal native, Patrick Harkins, had a child with him, and remained in Boston for the remainder of her life, dying there in 1953.

With this additional information about Bella O'Donnell of Boston, I then investigated my connection to my Irish DNA match. Luckily, my match had an extensive online family tree, which I browsed for references to Lenan. I learned that his earliest

identified ancestors, Daniel Doherty and Ellen Harkin, were married at Clonmany parish. At the time of the marriage, Ellen Harkin lived in the townland of Urrismenagh, which lies adjacent to Lenan.

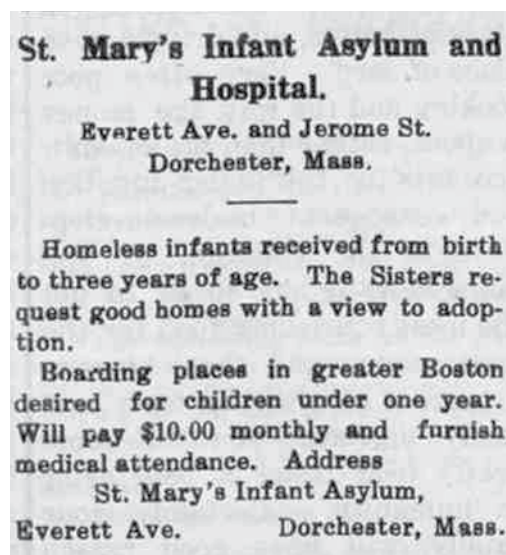
To learn more about Ellen, I searched Clonmany baptismal records and discovered that an Ellen Harkin, baptized September 13, 1857, was the daughter of Daniel Harkin and Mary O'Donnell of Urrismenagh. Knowing that Ellen's mother was an O'Donnell, I felt that I had identified the right Ellen Harkin.

Further research revealed that Daniel Harkin and Mary O'Donnell married at Clonmany on August 22, 1852; the record revealed that Mary O'Donnell hailed from Lenan. Baptismal records were not available for Clonmany before 1852, so I studied the those of Daniel Harkin and Mary O'Donnell's children. One of these records showed that a Con O'Donnell served as a baptismal sponsor for Catherine Harkin in 1866. This man was likely the

*Right: From *The Sacred Heart Review*, May 15, 1915, Boston College Newspapers, newspapers.bc.edu. Below: Postcard showing the Quincy House Hotel (in foreground, with lettering), where Bella worked.*

father of Bella O'Donnell of Boston, so perhaps Mary (O'Donnell) Harkin and Con O'Donnell were siblings or close relatives. Although this sponsorship was a key piece of evidence, I felt that I needed more confirmation that Bella O'Donnell of Boston was my great-grandmother.

Turning my attention to Bella's parents, I found that Con O'Donnell and Ann McDade married at Clonmany in 1870. I also discovered that the father of Con O'Donnell was listed as Edward O'Donnell. Baptismal records of the children of Con O'Donnell and Ann McDade revealed Daniel Harkin and Mary O'Donnell served as baptismal sponsors to Bella O'Donnell of Boston in 1878—a fact I had initially





Above: Pearl (Bushen) Doerfler and Sheilagh Doerfler, 1987.
 Right: Lenan, Clonmany, County Donegal.



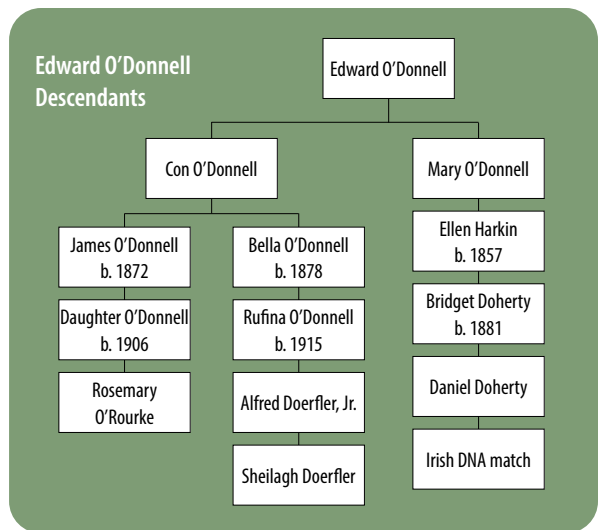
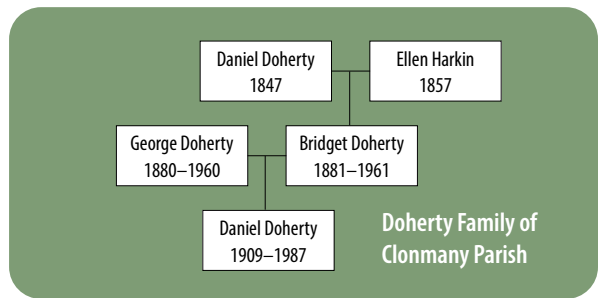
overlooked. That Con O'Donnell and Mary (O'Donnell) Harkin were sponsors to each other's children suggested a close relationship. As Con and Mary were rough contemporaries, I theorized that they were siblings, which would make my Irish DNA match and I fourth cousins. FamilyTreeDNA noted that we shared 75cM of DNA, an expected amount for fourth cousins.

The evidence linking me to Bella was compelling, but I still hoped for better matches. Not long afterwards, I received a very strong match on MyHeritage with a Rosemary O'Rourke, with whom I shared 174cM of DNA; Rosemary shared 357cM of DNA with my father. I quickly learned that Rosemary descended from Bella O'Donnell of Boston's older brother James O'Donnell, making Rosemary and I second cousins once removed. Like Bella, James O'Donnell also settled in Boston. Finally, after years of searching, I knew conclusively that my great-grandmother was Bella O'Donnell of Lenan, Clonmany, County Donegal, and Boston.

That winter, I had the opportunity to meet Rosemary O'Rourke and her sister Margaret Donohoe. Both were

warm and welcoming, and shared stories, old family photos, and details of their trip to Lenan. Though they had not known Bella O'Donnell, they shared priceless information about the O'Donnell family. Meeting both women has certainly been one of the highlights of this journey.

In the summer of 2019, I traveled to Lenan and visited the area where Bella's family had lived. Perched on the North Atlantic, Lenan is located in a beautiful and remote part of Donegal. Visiting the church that held the original parish registers I had pored over and walking over land that Bella's family had farmed seemed surreal, and a fitting end to my research. ♦



Basics of DNA Research for Genealogy



DNA is found in the chromosomes located in the nuclei of every cell of your body. Your 23 pairs of chromosomes define you. The first 22 pairs contain autosomal DNA that determines all your inherited characteristics. The 23rd pair of chromosomes determines your sex, either XY for a male or XX for a female. Another type of DNA is found in the mitochondria, in the cytoplasm of the cell. Mitochondrial DNA helps regulate your cellular metabolism.

To benefit from genetic genealogy, you need to understand how your DNA is inherited. You receive 50% of your DNA from each parent. You get 25% from your grandparents, about 12.5% from your great-grandparents, about 6.25% from your great-great-grandparents, and so on. You receive increasingly smaller amounts of DNA from each previous generation. Eventually, and potentially as recently as your fourth great-grandparents, you carry vanishingly small amounts of your earlier ancestors' DNA.

When you inherit DNA from your parents, you do not receive an exact

copy of half of their DNA—it is broken into segments and randomly re-combined. This random re-combination makes you unique—without it, you and a sibling could be identical (as happens with identical twins).

Genealogists use three types of DNA tests: autosomal, Y, and mitochondrial. The four most popular genetic genealogy testing companies are 23andMe, Ancestry, MyHeritage, and FamilyTreeDNA. You can test your autosomal DNA at any of these companies. However, FamilyTreeDNA is currently the only genetic genealogy company offering Y and mitochondrial tests.

Autosomal DNA testing

Autosomal testing looks at small pieces of your DNA called SNPs (single-nucleotide polymorphisms). These SNPs are taken from all 22 chromosomes pairs and your X chromosome. However, these SNP locations only represent a fraction of your DNA. Currently the testing companies look at around 700,000 locations they have determined will give the most genealogically relevant information. If you want to test your full genome you would need to look at over 3 billion locations. Whole genome sequencing is used mainly to provide health information; it is not a replacement for genealogical DNA tests.

A graphic representation of a genome sequencing map.
Image by Shutterstock.com/Tartila.

Once you submit a sample to a testing company, your DNA is analyzed and compared to samples from other testers in their database. Results are made available to you on the company's website, and you can see ethnicity estimates and view your matches in the company database. You will also see predictions on the relationship between you and your matches. These predictions are based on the number of centimorgans of DNA you and a match share. However, these results do not tell you which ancestor you and your match have in common. You need to examine your ancestry and your match's ancestry to determine how you are genetically related.

Autosomal testing does have limitations for genealogists. Because of the random way DNA is inherited, with fewer segments—and eventually no segments—from earlier generations, autosomal testing is most effectively used to identify relationships within the past five generations. This range includes matches to approximately the third cousin level with whom you share at least one set of great-great grandparents. At the next level out, fourth cousins inheriting the same segment of DNA is much less likely. The



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probability of matching more distant cousins decreases with each succeeding generation.

Both men and women can take autosomal tests. The test can be used to find new cousins or to compare your DNA to that of a known or suspected cousin who has been tested. Cousin matches can help you determine mutual ancestors. These new cousins may know more about an ancestor or have a family Bible or ancestral photographs.

The ethnicity percentages calculated from your autosomal test are only estimates and should not be considered 100% accurate. Each company predicts ethnicity by comparing your DNA to reference populations. These reference populations are generally small samples and do not represent the complete range of DNA possibilities. If you do not match a more specific population, the company may place you in a broader group—say, Eastern European rather than Polish. Because you do not inherit DNA from more remote ancestral generations, some ethnicities you expect in your ancestry may not appear in your results.

Any discussion of autosomal DNA testing requires a caveat. The popularity and widespread usage of this test has made discoveries of “non-paternity events” or previously unknown parentages much more likely. An autosomal test might provide unexpected results. You may discover close relatives or learn facts that contradict your traditional research.

Y-DNA testing

Y-DNA is found only in males because the Y chromosome is not present in females. Y-DNA follows your patrilineal descent through your father, his father, his father, and so on. If a woman wants to trace her patrilineal ancestry, she needs to test her father, brother, or other male relative in that family line.

Y-DNA can be passed down relatively unchanged, with no mutations, for hundreds to thousands of years. By comparing mutations—or the lack of mutations—you can determine how

closely you are related to a match. Y chromosome tests examine STR (short tandem repeat) segments, also called markers. The differences between your STR markers and a match's STR markers can be compared and tallied. The larger the number, called the genetic distance, the more distantly you are related.

Testing Y-DNA can involve using different numbers of markers. Entry level tests look at 37 markers. When you test more markers, the price will increase, and your results will be more precise. Higher level testing refines your results. For example, a 37-marker test may show multiple exact matches. If you upgrade to a 111-marker test, some of these matches will appear more genetically distant. When larger groups of markers are tested, your results will be more nuanced and show more differentiation.

Y-DNA testing is best for researching your paternal ancestry and tracing the history of a surname. The results can be used in One Name Study projects and in comparing your Y-DNA to men who might share the same paternal ancestors. Y-DNA testing will also reveal your paternal haplogroup and show this group's earliest historic migration patterns and ancient geographic origins.

Mitochondrial DNA testing

Both men and women inherit mitochondrial DNA from their mother. Also known as mtDNA, mitochondrial DNA follows your maternal ancestry through your mother, her mother, her mother, and so on. A father does not pass his mother's mitochondrial DNA to his children; his children receive their mother's mitochondrial DNA.

Mitochondrial DNA can be passed down unchanged (with no mutation) for thousands of years. Because mtDNA is so stable, it is not as useful in determining genetic distance between potential matches. Although all regions of mtDNA are tested, an exact match may indicate a common ancestor from over a thousand years ago.

Mitochondrial DNA testing is best used for determining whether

two people share the same maternal ancestor. MtDNA results can support or disprove your traditional genealogical research. Your maternal haplogroup can reveal information on historic migration routes and origins of your ancient matrilineal forebears. Mitochondrial DNA is also used for evaluating remains for military repatriation research because of the large amount of mtDNA that can be extracted and tested.

Using DNA in family history

DNA is an important tool in genealogical research. The results should be treated as any other genealogical evidence—analyzed carefully and correlated with other records. A DNA match alone cannot prove a precise genetic relationship. For example, if you share 3400 centimorgans of DNA in common with a match, the match can be either your parent or your child. The testing company cannot tell you which relationship is correct. Only when DNA evidence is combined with other genealogical information can the precise genetic relationship be determined.

Though DNA test results alone cannot resolve a genealogical brick wall or reveal an ancestor's exact origin, they may provide invaluable and essential information. Matches to somewhat distant cousins can suggest new avenues of research, and ethnicity estimates may prompt interest in a new geographic area. Exploring the full range of DNA testing options and combining results with traditional research offers great potential for genealogical discoveries. ♦



TO AMERICA AND BACK

The Sojourns of Job Daouphars

My family history includes stirring and poignant tales of ancestors emigrating from Brittany, the westernmost peninsula of France. Many Bretons know that the town of Gourin in the Montagnes Noires (Black Mountains) was at the heart of a migration that sent tens of thousands of Bretons to North America between 1890 and 1965.

The small village of Roudouallec, six miles west of Gourin, was home to three pioneers who unwittingly began this chain migration. Neighboring localities such as Langanonnet, Scaër, Leuhan, Coray, and Saint-Goazec were also affected. For most of the twentieth century, everybody in Roudouallec and many in the wider region had a brother, a cousin, or an aunt in America.

This wave of emigration was not organized. The success of the first three illiterate immigrants desperate enough to try their luck in America in 1881 was enough to spark a movement. The overpopulation and employment crisis in Central Brittany, combined with a favorable American economic climate, created a snowball effect.

The Breton immigrants primarily settled in only a few locations: Torrington, Connecticut, with jobs in the brass and metal industries; Milltown, New Jersey, with a large Michelin tire plant; Lenox, Massachusetts, in the Berkshires, where the Bretons worked in mansions; New York City, with a booming restaurant industry; Montreal, where many immigrants worked as day laborers; and Port Colborne, Ontario, which had cement factories.

All the books on Breton migration mention immigrant Nicolas Le Grand and his “two companions.” A street in Roudouallec was named after Le Grand, and it has always bothered me that Joseph Daouphars and Loeiz Bourhis, who shared this adventure, were not similarly honored. I am partial to Daouphars’ story; he was my grandfather’s grandfather.

The beginnings of this migration were not well-documented. The major printed sources are a 1927 interview with a very old Nicolas Le Grand;¹ two interviews with his daughter in the 1950s;² and the story of one of Job



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Daouphars' grandsons—my grandfather Yann Dour—in a parish bulletin in the early 1970s.³ Now the internet offers a wealth of information to complete and correct these accounts.

Joseph “Job” Daouphars (pronounced “Jop”) did not belong to a mobile family. The first Daouphars recorded in the archives lived in Roudouallec in 1542 and all of Job's immediate ancestors for four generations lived in Roudouallec and neighboring Gourin, Saint-Goazec, and Guiscriff. Job was born in November 1842. His father died when he was 13; his mother died when he was 22.⁴

In 1877, Job, a 34-year-old hired farmhand, married Marie-Yvonne “Maïvon” Cozic, a shopkeeper in Roudouallec who could read and write. One of their witnesses was her second cousin, Toussaint Le Grand, a tailor like his brother Nicolas, who had just returned from five years of military service in Tours. After the marriage, Job worked at Maïvon's business. Their first son, François, died at four months. Their second child, Joseph, was born in October 1880.⁵

In Roudouallec, however, Nicolas Le Grand could barely earn a living. In Tours, he had heard from a fellow tailor who had lived in the United States about his good life there. Nicolas then convinced Job and Loeiz Bourhis to accompany him overseas. The trip

cost them each a year's salary, which sent them all into debt. Job left Maïvon to run her business alone and care for their six-month-old son Joseph (who died shortly after Job's departure). In about April 1881, the three men walked 45 miles north on foot—supposedly barefoot so as not to wear out their clogs—to Morlaix and boarded a steamer to Le Havre, where, according to contradictory accounts, they embarked for either Canada or New York.

After a six-week journey, including eight days in England, the trio landed in North America and began their travels. They couldn't find work in New York. In Canada, logging jobs that required extremely hard physical labor paid little. In 1882, the three worked on farms and forests in Massachusetts and then moved on to Connecticut, where their labor earned thirty times more than the going rate in Roudouallec.⁶ The men also worked in steel mills and coal mines and at a railway yard in western Pennsylvania.

Since the three men were illiterate, they couldn't write to their families. Once Le Grand encountered a group of bowlers speaking French and persuaded one of them to write a letter for the trio. The letter and the arrival of the first money order reassured their families. The men had earned five year's wages in six months!⁷ After three

years, the Bretons had saved enough to return home.

Once back in Brittany, Loeiz Bourhis disappeared from the area. Nicolas Le Grand reopened his tailoring business and added a tavern, Le Cheval Blanc, which became a gathering place for others tempted to emigrate. Job also added a tavern to Maïvon's shop.

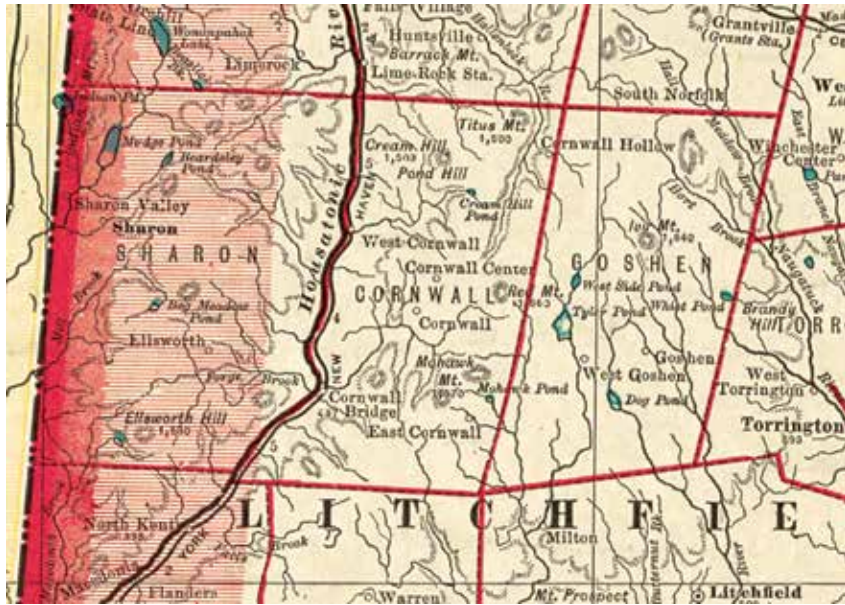
About 1889–90, the migratory avalanche began. Unemployment in the slate industry hit the Black Mountains area hard. Le Grand's tales of America encouraged adventurous young men from Roudouallec, Gourin, Guiscriff, Langonnet, and Leuhan to try their luck.

The impact of this out-migration was especially significant in Gourin and Roudouallec, where the towns lost a high percentage of their workforce in the twentieth century but gained substantial revenues from money sent home.

Job's tavern had proved to be less popular than Nicholas' and in 1889 Job decided to return to the United States. He boarded the *Rugia* for New York with nine companions, but parted company with them once he arrived in America. In 1890, Le Grand also returned to the United States with nine neighbors and worked for four years in Massachusetts as a lumberjack and gardener.



Previous page: Roudouallec postcard, 1900; and La Roche du Feu, a hill in a nature reserve of the same name in the Montagnes Noires south of Gouézec in Brittany, photo taken by Henri Moreau. Both images from Wikimedia Commons. Left: Detail of Brittany from Richard Andree, “France, general map,” *The Times Atlas* (London, 1895). David Rumsey Historical Map Collection.



Left: Detail of the towns of Sharon, Cornwall, and Goshen, in Litchfield County, Connecticut. National Map Company, *National Map of New England States*, 1915. Norman B. Leventhal Map & Education Center. Below left: Maïvon Daouphars, in Langonnet, Brittany, 1931. Below right: Job Daouphars in Ellsworth, circa 1905.

According to family lore, Job intended to stay for ten years, but by the end of this time had earned enough to buy a twenty-acre dairy farm in northwest Connecticut—in Ellsworth, part of Sharon. He then worked for two years in Canada to purchase farm equipment. In March 1898, both Maïvon, 50, and their daughter Marie-Rose, 13, arrived in New York, along with Maïvon's nephew, Pierre Morvan, who did not plan to settle in the United States permanently.⁸

The Breton immigrants generally sought work in urban environments and Job's farm in rural Litchfield County is a rare exception. Within a few years, Job realized that running the farm on his own was too hard for a man in his fifties. At some point, he wrote a letter to Gourin's village hall

asking for support. The first Breton to help on the farm was probably Jean Jappron, who had left his pregnant wife in Roudouallec in 1896 and by 1900 had settled forty miles north, in Lenox, Massachusetts. Eventually other Breton farm workers came to the Ellsworth area; almost every year new recruits appeared. But the only worker who stayed for the long term was Jean-Michel Le Dour, an acquaintance of Jappron who arrived in 1903.

Born in Gourin, Jean-Michel was the son and grandson of mayors of Roudouallec. He could read and write and, having served in Nantes with the

cavalry, knew how to care for horses. Jean-Michel first lived on 17th Street in New York before moving to Sharon. He married Job's daughter, Marie-Rose, February 15, 1904. The couple had two sons, Yann—my grandfather—born November 13, 1904, and Ernest, born May 27, 1906.⁹

By then a migratory pattern had emerged. Breton immigrants often crossed the Atlantic with an older person—never alone—even if they planned to part ways in America. Employment recruitment happened through family or local networks. In this way, by the first decade of the century, a small Breton community had settled around the Ellsworth farm. This group included Jean-Michel's brother, another of Maïvon's nephews, assorted cousins, and other connections and acquaintances.





Bottom left: Ernest and Yann Le Dour, circa 1913, Roudouallec (photographed by Isidore Le Goff).
Far left: Jean Michel Le Dour during his military service in Nantes, circa 1896.
Left: 1904 wedding photograph of Jean-Michel Le Dour and Marie-Rose Daouphars.



All the Ellsworth farm workers came from central Brittany and Breton was their mother tongue. The men could speak French, because they had completed their military service, but on the isolated farm Breton was the lingua franca. Maïvon spoke only Breton, neither French nor English

(and she wore the traditional headdress of Roudouallec throughout her years in America). She recalled that one Sunday an Irish bishop passing through Ellsworth noticed her and gave her a ride in his carriage to the church at Cornwall Bridge. The two did not exchange a word, as they could not understand one another.

Although he was far from Brittany, young Yann developed a good command of Breton in this environment. The linguist Gwenole Le Menn, who read some of the manuscripts Yann wrote as an adult, commented on the purity of his language. Yann was also taught by his mother, Marie-Rose, to speak English fluently. When she

had first arrived Marie-Rose had studied for four years at Ellsworth's small school.

As Catholics, the Bretons attended St. Bridget in Cornwall Bridge and St. Bernard in Sharon, and Maïvon and Marie-Rose took care of these Catholic churches and the closest Protestant one.

In his later years Yann recalled his childhood memories of Ellsworth. The two-story farmhouse was located at the top of a long apple orchard. To the west were sheds and a cellar. To the east, beyond a small road, lay out-buildings for cows, pigs, and horses, and a small wood. Further north were fields where wild strawberries grew. Yann remembered that in the winter he and his brother tobogganed.

Twice a day, the men milked the cows and every morning Jean-Michel, in a cart or sleigh, delivered milk to the cooperative in Cornwall Bridge. On Sunday afternoons, the men went out with baskets to pick loquats and hazelnuts. In the absence of a public works department, they also took care of the local roads.

The farm prospered but in 1906, after her second pregnancy, Marie-Rose was diagnosed with tuberculosis. When the weather was nice, she had to stay in the open air, in a tent erected under an apple tree. Her children could not approach her for fear of contagion. She died October 29, 1908, aged 23.¹⁰ The loss of their daughter undermined the health and spirits of Job and Maïvon.

The 1910 census presents a last snapshot of the family and their compatriots in Ellsworth. Jean-Michel, not his father-in-law, Job, was listed as head of the household.¹¹ Ten Bretons were recorded in Ellsworth. Some lived on the farm, while others boarded nearby. Everyone except Job and Jappron had been younger than 30 upon arrival. The Ellsworth farm was a world of young men. The community lacked women—Maïvon was the only one in 1910—and probably for this reason, the hired men never stayed for long.

By October 1910, the community had vanished. The farm and livestock were sold and, later that year, Job, Maïvon, Jean-Michel, Yann, and Ernest returned to Roudouallec. In March 1911, soon after their arrival in Brittany, Jean-Michel returned to America, leaving his sons with their grandparents. He indicated that his initial destination was the home of a former Ellsworth neighbor, Joshua Chaffee.¹² Jean-Michael moved to Lenox and worked as a gardener at millionaires' mansions.

Pioneering immigrant Job Daouphars died in Roudouallec in July 1913, at age 70.¹³ Despite twenty years in the United States, he never learned to speak English. Maïvon was left to raise her two grandsons in poverty.

In August 1914, Europe went to war. After the conflict began, more than fifty Bretons gathered near Lenox to travel together to New York and on to France to fight. Jean-Michel was among them. Upon arrival in Le Havre, the men were housed in a prison camp and received barely two days of leave to see their families. Some of the young men who had worked in Ellsworth were killed during the war, while others were wounded and taken prisoner by the Germans. One Breton immigrant who had been in Ellsworth, René Traouen, chose to stay in America with his wife and newborn child to avoid the draft.

Several years after the war ended, in 1920, Jean-Michel returned to Lenox.

He again worked on estates, including Blantyre, Highlawn, Shadowbrook, Springlawn, Erskine Park, Greenook Inn, and Belvoir Terrace. His son Ernest joined him in Lenox in 1923 and the two lived in the same boarding house. Jean-Michel eventually became a railway man for the New Haven Company in Lenox.

In 1936, a year after his mother-in-law, Maïvon, died, Jean-Michel returned to Brittany to live with his son Yann. After more than twenty years in the United States, Ernest returned to France for a visit only once, in March 1945, when he landed with the American troops. Having forgotten a lot of French and Breton, Ernest initially had trouble finding his family.

Jean-Michel died in 1949, age 76, having spent 33 years in America. Ernest died April 7, 1975, in Lenox, leaving no children. His brother Yann, one of the first children born to the Breton Montagnes Noires immigrants in America, never returned to the United States. He remained in Brittany, taught school, married, raised a daughter and two sons, and died in 1990.



Credit for the Breton emigration movement went to Nicolas Le Grand, with little attention paid to his “two companions.” Loeiz Bourhis had left the area. Job Daouphars spent much less of his later life in Brittany than Nicolas, and Job died much earlier. Nicholas had quickly realized that America was a topic that brought customers to his inn and he told

stories—sometimes exaggerated ones—to attract crowds. In 1928, he recalled that in 1884, two hours after they left a railroad construction site, a formidable mass of water broke the dams, flooding the tracks and drowning several hundred workers. He was referencing the Johnstown Flood, which did not occur until five years after his departure! Nicolas was also good at blowing his own trumpet, and when his daughter Corentine Roignard related his adventures, she implied he had emigrated alone.

I evaluated the reliability of my own family legends. When sharing his childhood memories, Job's grandson, Yann Dour, was rarely mistaken, but when he related incidents that occurred before he was born, I found many inaccuracies. Unlike in the stories, the family apparently never owned the Ellsworth farm: Job is listed as a tenant in the 1900 and 1910 censuses.¹⁴ And I had always been told



Ernest Le Dour (center right), his father Jean-Michel, and his brother Yann's three children. Brittany, 1945.

that Jean-Michel had worked for the Rockefellers in Lenox. However, the Rockefellers never owned a mansion there. These findings make me question other family lore. Should I believe that Nicolas and his friends traveled barefoot to Morlaix en route to Le Havre so as not to wear out their clogs?

I never learned why Job Daouphars chose to live in Sharon. Perhaps he remembered the good wages in Connecticut from his 1880s travels, but I now think another factor drew him back to the region. In the summer of 2019, I visited the area and saw places connected to my family, including Marie-Rose's grave in Cornwall Bridge. While Brittany has a much milder European climate, the landscape is very similar to that of Job's native Montagnes Noires. Although no longer focused on dairy production, the Ellsworth farm still exists today. Visitors can pick their own strawberries and apples, like my ancestors did one hundred years ago during their American sojourn. ♦

Note on sources: much of the information for this article came from family stories and the sources documented in the first three endnotes.

NOTES

- ¹ Charles Léger, "Trimardeurs modernes," *La dépêche de Brest*, January 24, 1927.
- ² *Les peaux-rouges n'ont pas mangé Nicolas Le Grand*, in *Le quotidien de Paris*, April 1950; *De toute la région de la Montagne Noire, nombreux sont les jeunes qui s'en vont aux Etats-Unis et surtout au Canada*, in *Ouest-France*, February 6, 1951.
- ³ Yann Dour, "Historique d'un exode," *Kleier ma Bro*, December 1971–March 1972, 263–66.
- ⁴ Roudouallec, décès de 1816 à 1852, éd. Centre généalogique et historique du Poher, p. 26; Gourin, décès de 1793 à 1899, éd. Centre généalogique et historique du Poher, p. 109.
- ⁵ Archives départementales du Morbihan, Roudouallec, marriage register for 1877; birth registers for 1878 and 1880; burial register for 1878. Viewed at cgh-poher.com.
- ⁶ Le Grand earned the equivalent of 20 francs a day in Connecticut; a farm laborer in Roudouallec earned 100 to 120 francs a

year; Charles Léger, "Trimardeurs modernes," *La dépêche de Brest*, January 24, 1927.

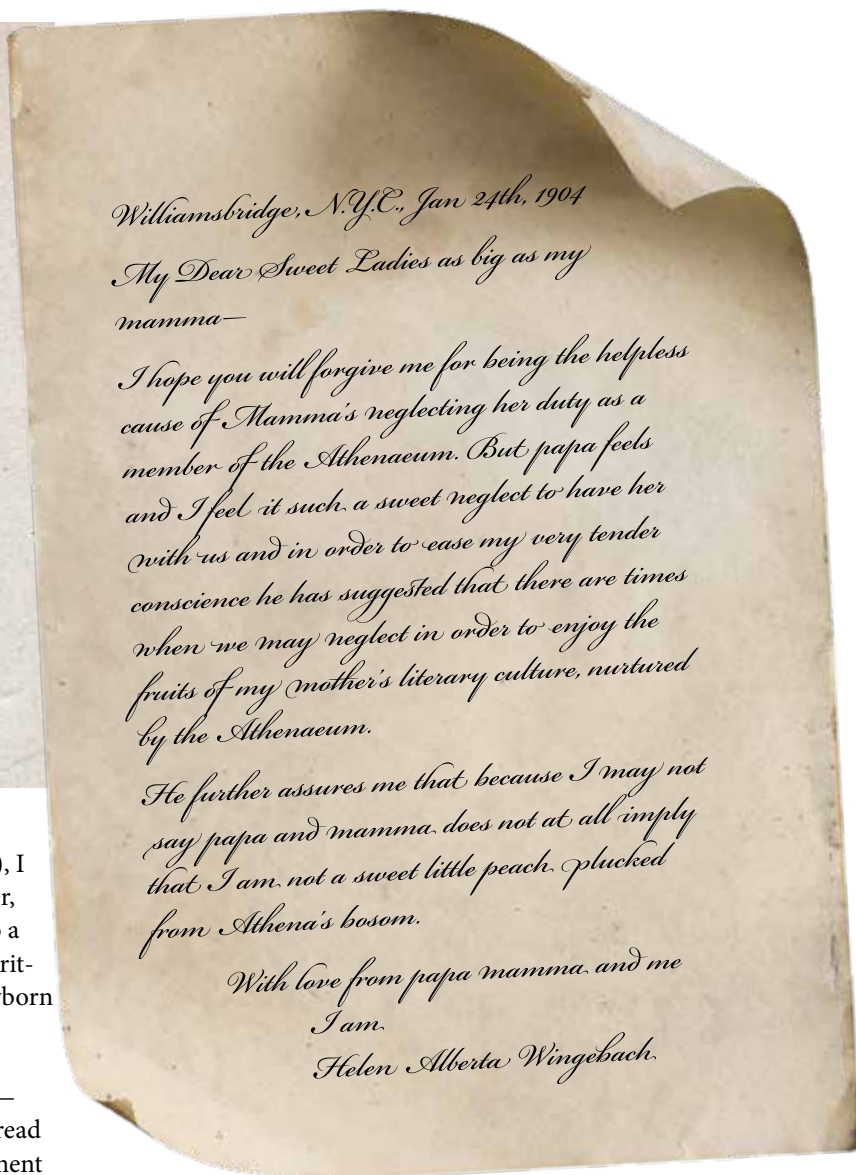
- ⁷ *De toute la région de la Montagne Noire* [note 2].
- ⁸ *La Navarre* passenger list (arrival date 21 March 1898). Viewed at heritage.statueofliberty.org [passenger ID 602628120094, frame 853, lines 10–12].
- ⁹ Handwritten account compiled by parish priest J. B. Smith listing the Le Dour family church records (marriage of Jean-Michel Le Dour and Marie-Rose Daouphars, baptisms of Yann and Ernest, and burial of Marie Rose) at Saint Bernard, Sharon, Conn., dated 14 September 1910.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*
- ¹¹ "John Ledow" household, 1910 U.S. Census, Sharon, Litchfield Co., Connecticut, p. 14B. Viewed at Ancestry.com.
- ¹² *La Bretagne* passengers list (arrival date 18 April 1912). Viewed at heritage.statueofliberty.org [passenger ID 100885050262, frame 348, line 22].
- ¹³ Archives départementales du Morbihan, Roudouallec, burial register for 1913. Viewed at cgh-poher.com.
- ¹⁴ "Joseph Dofer" household, 1900 U.S. Census, Sharon, Litchfield Co., Connecticut, p. 9. Viewed at Ancestry.com; "John Ledow" household, 1910 U.S. Census [note 11].



Above: The Ellsworth farm, 2019. Right: Morgane Le Dour with the gravestone of her great-great-grandmother Marie-Rose Le Dour. Cornwall Bridge, Connecticut, 2019. Photos by the author.

A Clubwoman's Letters

Middle-Class Feminism in the Early 1900s



While reading an old letter (recreated on the right), I received my first clue that my great-grandmother, Mary Davies Wingebach (1872–1951), had belonged to a women's club. Mary's husband, August, had playfully written to Mary's fellow club members on behalf of his newborn daughter (my grandmother).

By referring to "literary culture," this endearing note indicated to me that the Athenaeum—then unfamiliar—had been a part of Mary's intellectual life. When I first read the letter, I had never heard of the women's club movement and had not yet learned that as a "club woman," Mary was participating in a nationwide movement of middle-class feminists in the early twentieth century.

I realized that I had two photos labeled "Athenaeum Club," dated 1908 and 1914, both with Mary in the center, glowing with happiness and self-confidence. We have few family photographs from this period, so the existence of these images suggest that the club must have been important to her.



Violet Snow is a journalist and memoirist who has written extensively about her ancestors. Her great-grandmother's letters have inspired a character in Violet's historical novel about suffrage and women's clubs, entitled *To March or To Marry* (available from Amazon.com). Photo by Dion Ogust.

During an online search, my mother discovered a 1910 directory entitled *Club Women of New York*. Among over two hundred organizations enrolled in the New York City Federation of Women's Clubs was this one:

The Athenaeum Club of Wakefield [a section of the Bronx at the northern edge of New York City] was organized January 18, 1898. The object is the intellectual and social improvement of its members. Meetings are held every Tuesday at 2:30 pm from October through June, inclusive.

President, Mrs. August Wingeback

So, I learned Mary not only attended weekly club meetings but later became the club's leader. I was impressed.

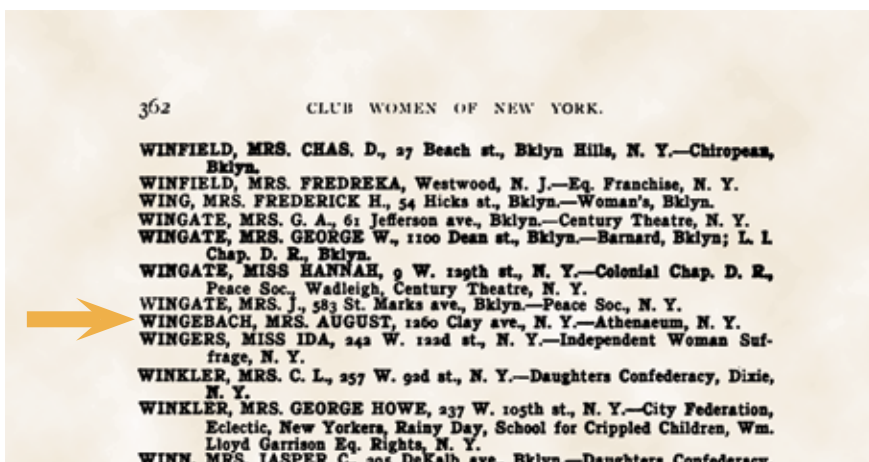
A typeset letter, printed in green ink, then surfaced among the many documents Mary had saved. Sent by the New York City Federation of Women's Clubs, it invited delegates to the 1910 autumn convention, to be held at the Hotel Astor. On the letterhead, Mary was listed as the Federation's Director for the Borough of the Bronx.

The Convention consisting of morning and afternoon sessions will be called to order at 10 A. M. and 2 P. M. in the large ball room with recess for

buffet-luncheon to be served at one o'clock. . .

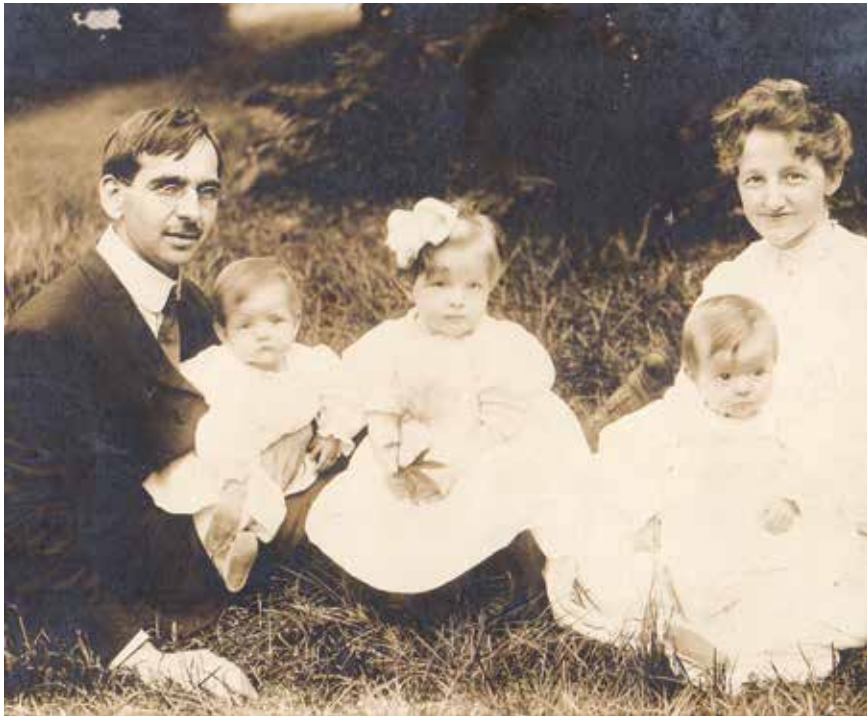
BUSINESS. Delegates will be asked to pledge their annual club subscription to the Scholarship Fund which is for the purpose of paying to a little girl under 14 years of age the wage she could earn and so allowing the child to attend school without depriving the mother of the money necessary for the support of the family.

I had tears in my eyes, picturing my conventional, solidly middle-class great-grandmother making a generous donation to a working-class girl, offering her an opportunity to rise in the world. I noted that the concern shown



Previous page: Mary Davies, circa 1900, prior to her marriage to August Wingeback. Paper image by Shutterstock.com/Valentin Agapov. Left: A directory listing in *Club Women of New York*, 1910-11, from HathiTrust.org. Below: The Athenaeum Club in 1914. Mary is shown above the "x."





August and Mary Wingeback with their children, Wilfrid, Helen, and Arthur, 1906.

by the Federation extended not only to girls in need but also to the women of the household, shown by the phrase “without depriving the mother.” The Federation letter also showed a level of organization and unity I had not expected.

I decided to research women’s clubs and ordered a copy of *The Clubwoman as Feminist: True Womanhood Redefined, 1868–1914*, Dr. Karen J. Blair’s 1980 study of the women’s club movement. Dr. Blair wrote that radical suffragists had considered women’s clubs conservative and inconsequential, but her research showed that these clubs had served as training grounds that helped homebound housewives transition into new roles that included public speaking, business management, and government service.

Jane Cunningham Croly founded Sorosis, a club for professional women (and one of the country’s first significant women’s clubs), in 1868, and later established the Federation of Women’s Clubs in 1889. In her writing, Croly articulated many of the principles that were expressed through women’s clubs. She wrote that the feminine devotion to home and childrearing made women morally superior to

men, whose focus on money-making and politics had warped society. Croly believed that women had to emerge from their homebound state to keep the beauty of art and literature alive and pass them on to the next generation. Furthermore, she thought that women’s domestic talents and interests enabled them to identify social problems that needed fixing, from child labor to public health issues. Many of the government services we now take for granted—such as citywide trash collection and mandatory meat inspection—were instituted with the help of women’s clubs, whose members lobbied for the relevant legislation in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Although some clubs were formed in support of women’s right to vote, many more not only disapproved of suffragettes’ “unladylike” marching and picketing but also banned discussion of the controversial topic at club meetings. Nevertheless, by gathering regularly to discuss subjects of both literary and social interest, women gained self-respect and self-confidence while forming sisterly bonds. Ultimately, the clubs revolutionized

society by changing Americans’ expectations of women.

A few years later, I found additional letters from Mary to her mother showing that the club continued to be an important presence in Mary’s life.

Tuesday, Nov 22, 1904

... August took care of Helen to-day while I went to Mrs. Hoag’s to the Club. We had a real nice time,—one good paper. Mrs. Hoag had rather a Thanksgiving looking table, nuts, grapes, coffee and cake to eat, while the table was trimmed with greens, apples and a pumpkin.

While some women’s clubs emphasized social reform efforts, the Athenaeum, like many other groups, was a literary “study club.” The “one good paper” Mary mentioned in her letter refers to the focus of the study club’s activities. Each spring, before the Athenaeum’s summer hiatus, the Program Committee set a list of topics for the fall, winter, and spring. Members were assigned subjects to research, usually a writer, artist, or historical figure, and papers on these topics were read aloud at the meetings. That season Mary heard a report on painter “Francis [sic] Millet,” and she herself wrote on Napoleon III. Most likely the Athenaeum had chosen a French theme for 1904–5.

While the above letter excerpt emphasized food and table decorations more than the content of the “one good paper,” Mary was writing to her mother and perhaps selecting topics that would be of the most interest to her. These domestic references also reveal the housewifely aspect of the clubs that made them so popular and accessible to their members (more than 1.5 million women by 1914).

I can imagine why Mary was inspired to join a women’s club. From

the age of fourteen until her marriage at thirty, she had worked as a secretary. She was part of the wave of female office workers who first became a force in the 1880s, their slim, nimble fingers ideal for operating the new typewriting machines. Mary surely enjoyed her independence as a working girl, as well as the opportunity to mingle with authors at Dodd, Mead Publishing in Manhattan. She saved a file of business correspondence from authors who are not well-known today but were renowned at the time.

Marrying August Wingeback meant that Mary quit her stimulating job to keep house for her husband, a violinist and music teacher whose income wasn't sufficient to allow for hired help. Mary must have been shocked to find herself stuck in the house day after day, cleaning, cooking, and performing the arduous task of washing laundry, which filled a whole day each week. ("I have just built a fire," she wrote on July 25, 1904, "for to-morro is wash-day, the day I hate above all others.")

But Mary was not prone to the radicalism of the suffragists. Instead, the Athenaeum Club gave her a life of the mind that was compatible with her duties as a wife and mother. On January 22, 1905, amidst accounts of her sewing projects and baby Helen's adorable antics, Mary's letter to her mother mentioned that she would be reading a lot in the next few days, since she had a paper due for her club the following week.

A month later Mary reported how she prioritized club duties and how club members relied on her participation.

Friday, Feb. 17, 1905

... I did not attempt to clean my house, as I had all I could do to get away to go to Mrs. Springer's for the Club meeting ... [T]he last business meeting Mrs. Varian sent over a report and told Mrs. Lappe to

get me to read it, as I seemed to be able to read anything off at sight. Mrs. Varian I know quite depends on me this year, she is President, and so many have been away, or failed to bring in their papers. I have been able to go steadily, and so far have had all my papers on time.

The clubwomen had also become her friends and Mary shared in their joys and sorrows.

More Club news. Mrs. E. Caterson gave birth to a daughter last Monday morning, and so far has gotten along all right. You will remember she was the one who lost a baby at seven months last November. We are all so glad she got through safely this time. The latest news is that Mrs. Lowitz is expecting. It is not supposed to be known, but has leaked out. I never suspected it until Mrs. Hoag told me. So the Athenaeum babies are increasing.

One club member's husband was an amateur musician and became friends with August, whose work included playing violin for services at Judson's Church in Greenwich Village.

Mrs. Hoag ... wants us to go to their house next Sunday. She wants us to come early and go to church while she takes

care of Helen, then we will have dinner there. Mr. Hoag wants August to help him get up something in the way of an entertainment to pay off balance on piano, \$55.00, and they want to talk it over.

Unlike many husbands, August was happy to take care of his daughter while Mary went off to her club meetings. One Tuesday afternoon in May 1905, however, August had to work, so Mary decided to take the eighteen-month-old to the meeting.

Mistress Helen was very, very good while the business went on. The only trouble came when I wanted to stand up and read my paper. She wouldn't go to any one, and finally they gave her a cracker. I had to sit down and hold her on my lap, and you remember she has a sing-song when she eats. Well, I had to read loud to drown her voice, but altogether it passed off all right, and I think they enjoyed my paper very much. . . . But I don't believe in taking the children to the regular meetings. They attract and distract the attention of the women, naturally, and it isn't fair to the person having a paper.

Mary's twin sons were born in 1906, and no letters have been found after



The Athenaeum Club in 1918.
Mary is below the "x."

that date. Although her household responsibilities must have increased dramatically, Mary seems to have been firmly committed to her participation in the club. As the 1910 *Club Women of New York* directory indicated, Mary Wingebach took on a leadership role and became the club's president. In the 1920–1921 directory, she is still listed as a member, showing that she remained in the club for at least sixteen years, despite raising three children. She must have found the club deeply nourishing.

In 1914, the General Federation of Women's Clubs at last endorsed the national suffrage amendment. Clubwomen lobbying for social reform had come to realize that legislators would take them more seriously if they had the vote. I like to think the Athenaeum gradually became more involved in reform efforts, as many study clubs did. By the time the Nineteenth Amendment passed in 1920, society's attitudes had changed, partly due to the clubwomen's activities. Clubs had not only extended women's social networks but also proved that women were suited to intellectual engagement. Reading papers aloud had trained women in public speaking and given them confidence. These developments contributed to the new academic, political, and business opportunities available to middle-class women, making the clubs themselves largely obsolete. The national Federation still exists, with about 100,000 women belonging to 3,000 clubs, most of them focused on public service.

While the suffrage movement changed women's legal status, women's clubs transformed a broad range of women into citizens who could fill professional and political roles on a large scale. As I look at modern society and reflect on all the opportunities I've had as a journalist, and the increasing number of women serving in Congress and running for president, I'm grateful to my great-grandmother for contributing to changes that have shaped my life and my society. ♦



Did your ancestor belong to a women's club?

After two prominent clubs sprang up in 1868—Sorosis in New York City and the New England Women's Club in Boston—the movement spread rapidly to cities and towns across the country. The clubs were primarily white and middle-class, but a few clubs were formed for black women, and some groups were organized by professionals or wealthy women. The following sources offer information on women's clubs. Historical societies may also hold books and papers related to local women's clubs.

PRINT BOOKS: These texts offer many examples of women's clubs from across the nation. The books are available from Amazon.com or through used book dealers such as Alibris.com.

Karen J. Blair, *The Clubwoman as Feminist: True Womanhood Redefined, 1868–1914* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1980).

Theodora Penny Martin, *The Sound of Our Own Voices: Women's Study Clubs, 1860–1910* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1987).

ONLINE RESOURCES: Search these books and others like them for the names of ancestors.

Caroline French Benton, *Woman's Club Work and Programs* (Boston: Dana Estes and Company, 1913). On Archive.org.

Jane Cunningham Croly, *The History of the Woman's Club Movement in America* (Rockford, Ill.: H. G. Allen & Company, 1898). On Google Books.

Biennial of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, Official Proceedings. Search Google Books for these fascinating accounts of conferences, with names of delegates.

Club Women of New York. For New York City residents. See Google Books for various editions of these annual directories.

The Register of Women's Clubs. Search Google Books for various editions of this directory listing clubs across the country and their officers.

Above: Southbridge Woman's Club Float in 1916 Centennial Parade. Photographic Collection of the Jacob Edwards Library, Southbridge, Massachusetts.



"Alas that I ever came to this land"

250 Years of Irish Immigrant Letters

For more than fifty years, Kerby Miller, Curators' Professor Emeritus of History at the University of Missouri, has collected letters, memoirs, journals, diaries, poems, and photos of Irish immigrants to the United States and Canada. This collection of more than 7,500 documents, along with supplemental research on some of the families, spans the late 1600s to the mid-1960s. Through a collaboration with the National University of Ireland at Galway, these documents are being digitized for a publicly available database. The database will be an invaluable benefit to those seeking to understand their Irish immigrant ancestors. Regardless of whether researchers find correspondence from their own ancestors, they will gain context for their family migration experience through the words of those who lived and struggled in the same times and places. Senior Editor Jean Powers spoke with Kerby about the history of this project and his plans for its future.

How did you become interested in this project?

In the early 1970s, as a graduate student at the University of California, Berkeley, I decided to write my doctoral dissertation on Irish immigrants' feelings about race relations in America. Others had written on this topic, but they relied on opinion pieces in Irish American newspapers for source material—nobody had tried to utilize contemporary letters, diaries, or memoirs written by Irish immigrants. I traveled to Ireland in 1972 to look at letters, diaries, memoirs, and so forth that had already been collected in libraries and archives. Unfortunately, I found almost nothing in those documents about race, apart from a few mentions of slavery from Irish Protestant immigrants who settled in the South. I gave up on the idea of writing my dissertation on Irish immigrant attitudes about race. But the letters were fascinating, so I changed my focus to the Irish immigrant experience in the United States as seen through letters and

first-hand accounts. I decided to try to locate more letters, memoirs, and related materials in other libraries and archives, and in private collections held by families whose ancestors had come to North America.

About 300 of the first letters I saw came from Dr. Arnold Schrier, who collected correspondence in Ireland in the early 1950s when he was pursuing his PhD at the University of Minnesota. Arnold heard of my work in 1972 and invited me to visit him at the University of Cincinnati, where he was then a professor. Arnold died in 2016, and his widow and children gave me those 300 letters, along with other research materials. I've asked NUI-Galway to process Arnold's letters first, in memory of many years of friendship and his generosity and kindness to a young scholar. After processing, the letters Arnold collected will be sent to Ireland House, the Irish studies program at New York University, and deposited at NYU's Bobst Library, as I promised his family.



Jean Powers is Senior Editor at AmericanAncestors/NEHGS. **Kerby Miller** is a Pulitzer Prize nominee and an internationally recognized authority on Irish immigration. He can be reached at MillerK@missouri.edu.

In 1977–78, I received a post-doctoral fellowship to research at the Queen’s University of Belfast in Northern Ireland. With help from the U.S. Ambassador at the time, William Shannon, I undertook an island-wide appeal in all available media—newspapers, magazines, radio, television—to ask for letters and other materials written to or by their ancestors. The story was picked up by news outlets in the U.S., U.K., and Canada. As a result, I received thousands of documents from all over the world. People were excited to contribute.

What did the process look like in those early days?

People mailed me their original letters, which I photocopied. I promised on the proverbial stack of Bibles to return all documents by registered mail. I never lost any documents that reached me. In 1977–78 I was so busy responding to correspondence and returning originals that I didn’t have much time to transcribe the letters. It wasn’t until I returned to the United States that I was able to sit down with the thousands of photocopies and begin to transcribe them. My revised and expanded dissertation, *Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish Exodus to North America*, published in 1985, was based on this new research. It won several academic prizes and was a runner-up for the Pulitzer Prize in History.

Did you trace any of the letter writers?

In the 1990s, I began work on a multi-volume collection of the most interesting letters, along with research on the writers and their families. It turned out to be an enormous project, and the first volume, *Irish Immigrants in the Land of Canaan*, wasn’t published until 2003. I did most of this work before the Internet, so I had to write to local historical societies or ask people

to look at local censuses and other records. It was particularly difficult to trace female letter writers, as they didn’t show up in many of the usual sources like city directories and usually changed their names at marriage.

What was the breakdown by gender in letter writers?

Until the mid-nineteenth century, the majority of single immigrants to the United States were men. Of the Irish women who came alone, few could read or write. By the end of the century, however, female literacy was equal to or higher than male literacy, single females were immigrating to the U.S. in numbers equal to males, and at least half of the letters I found were written by women.

What parts of Ireland are represented in the collection?

As a whole, the project encompasses most areas in Ireland, but the migration patterns change over time. Most of the early letters came from the province of Ulster, in the north of Ireland. The majority were written by Protestants, including the so-called “Scots Irish,” whose ancestors had been planted in Ireland by the British government and who therefore had higher social status and literacy rates. In the last half of the nineteenth century, more letters came from the south and west of Ireland, written by Catholics—including those of relatively poor backgrounds. This change in letters

reflects a shift in immigration patterns as well as in literacy rates. Most Irish Catholics who came to the United States in the early 1800s could not read or write. By the early twentieth century, the areas that produced the largest numbers of immigrants were in the south and west of Ireland—counties like Cork, Kerry, Galway, Mayo, and Donegal—and these immigrants were able to read and write well enough to exchange letters with their families.

Are any of the letters in Gaelic?

Very few letters were in Gaelic—or Irish, as the native language is called there. In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the great majority of Catholic people in Ireland spoke Gaelic but only a tiny percentage could read or write in Gaelic. Not until the late nineteenth century—thanks to the work of an organization called the Gaelic League—did significant numbers of people become literate in Gaelic.

I did collect a Gaelic poem written by Pádraig Cúndún (Patrick Condon), mailed from Utica, New York, to County Cork around 1830. It’s very dramatic. He expresses deep loathing



Opposite: “Letters from America.” County Monaghan, Ireland, 1903, American Stereoscopic Company. Library of Congress.

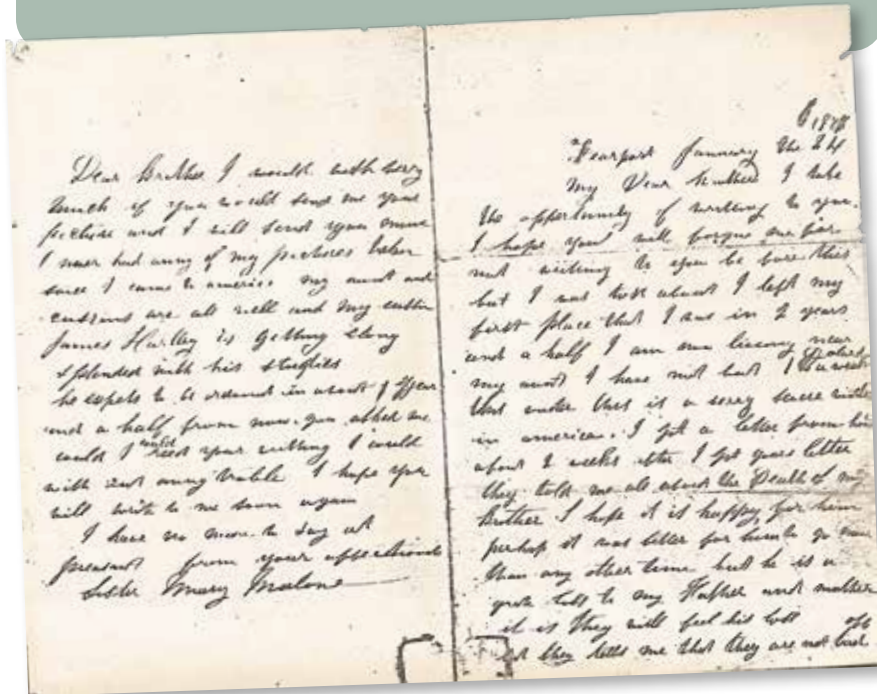
Right: G. W. Colton, *Ireland* (New York, 1856). David Rumsey Historical Map Collection.

More from Kerby Miller

- *Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish Exodus to North America*, Kerby A. Miller (Oxford University Press, 1985; paperback ed., 1988)
- *Out of Ireland: The Story of Irish Emigration to America* (1995), documentary film, available for rental on Amazon Prime; also an accompanying book, same title, by Kerby A. Miller and Paul Wagner (1997).
- *Journey of Hope: The Story of Irish Immigration to America*. Kerby A. Miller and Patricia Mulholland Miller (Chronicle Books, 2001).
- *Irish Immigrants in the Land of Canaan: Letters and Memoirs from Colonial and Revolutionary America, 1675–1815* (Oxford University Press, 2003), Kerby A. Miller, with Arnold Schrier, Bruce D. Boling, and David N. Doyle.
- *Ireland, Irish America, and Transatlantic Migration*, Kerby A. Miller (Dublin: Field Day Publications, 2008).

Irish immigration resources

- *Boston Pilot: Irish Immigrant Advertisements (Search for Missing Friends), 1831–1920*: an eight-volume book series published by NEHGS and available as a searchable database at AmericanAncestors.org/boston-pilot.
- *Genealogist's Handbook for Irish Research*. Marie E. Daly with Judith Lucey (NEHGS, 2016). Available for purchase at AmericanAncestors.org.
- *Ireland and the American Emigration, 1850–1900*. Arnold Schrier (University of Minnesota Press, 1958).



Mary Malone's letter to her brother in County Waterford, Ireland, 1877.

the food and drink they could want.” In his letters, Pádraig encouraged his family and friends to flee the poverty and oppression of Ireland and join him in America. He was a small farmer and schoolmaster in Ireland before he immigrated, and in America he was a laborer who helped dig the Erie Canal before purchasing a farm in New York. Pádraig clearly had mixed feelings about his experiences.

Do you have any favorite letters?

One letter that sticks with me was written in 1877 by a young woman named Mary Malone in upstate New York to her brother in Glenmore, County Waterford. Having just learned of the death of another brother, a homesick Mary writes, “I am verry lonseom and down harted I wish my Sister Margaret was here if ever I can bring here out if times will get better I will try and do my best for her. . . . Dear brother I would wish verry much if you would send me your picture and I will send you mine I never had anny of my pictures taken since I came to america[.]”

Young Irish immigrants in the U.S. were expected to help their families back home, and Mary clearly feels guilty and frustrated over her inability to send money to her family. She writes, “I have not but 1 Dolard a week this winter[.] . . . my wages is so little and I am not cap[a]ble of earning big wages like other girls who can cook and [do] the large washings and fine ironings I cannot do this you know I was not brought [up] to anny such thing I was sent away frum my Mother when young to the farmers to work out in the fields and I never got much in sight about house keeping or to be handy to sew but I dont have is anny one to blame for that but my Sellf I never tried to lerren[.]”

In the hierarchy of female servants in America, experience with the “domestic arts” was necessary for Irish women seeking work in better households. Mary had no skills at all, so her ability to earn decent wages was very limited. Women like Mary would also be considered a poor marriage

for the United States in the poem, calling its people “a malicious host / Treacherous, traitorous, vicious, lewd / Lying, fraudulent, cursed, very evil /

Wily, perverse in character and habits” but also noted that “They give full pay into the hands / Of the crews who dig in the fields for them / As well as all



Patricia and Kerby Miller in the Glens of Antrim, Ireland.

prospect by Irish men, having no family money, no skill in taking care of a household, and no ability to build a nest egg from saved wages. Some women in this situation ended up in the poor house later in life.

In contrast to poor Mary, the four Lough sisters were daughters of a farmer with a small holding or a farm laborer, in what was then called the Queen's County (now Co. Laoise). The sisters immigrated to New England in the 1870s–80s and found work as servants or seamstresses. Their correspondence with their family in Ireland was extensive, and they were able to send their mother a sizable sum, in very small amounts, over many years. The sisters all married and had families.

Some immigrants sent poems home along with their letters. Séamas Ó Muircheartaigh emigrated from the Dingle Peninsula in west County Kerry around 1900, and worked in the copper mines of Butte, Montana. Copper mining is dangerous and exhausting, and Séamas yearned for Ireland, writing “Alas that I ever came to this land / And that I left my beloved Ireland behind; / I’m thinking sadly of that time long ago / When I had cheer, sport, and play. . . . It’s far better to be in Ireland where there’s

cheer, / Listening to the melodious bird songs, / Than looking for work from a crooked little miser / Who thinks you’re only an ass to be beaten with a stick.” Seamus later moved to San Francisco, where he worked as a gardener in Golden Gate Park. Hopefully he found the climate and work there more pleasant.

Do you have Irish ancestry yourself? Did you find any of their correspondence?

My wife, Patricia, is Irish Catholic and was raised on a farm in south Co. Derry. We met in 1978 in Belfast when I was working on my postdoctoral fellowship and she was pursuing an MA degree in history. My own Irish ancestors likely came to America around 1760 and became farmers in Virginia and Kentucky. Unfortunately, there is almost no surviving correspondence by ordinary immigrants from that time—only public officials, merchants, clergymen, and other wealthy people wrote and sent letters across the ocean.

What is your connection to the University of Ireland at Galway?

The University has a very ambitious project to digitize all the correspondence I’ve collected and make it available to everyone in the world. I think that I will be able to have a workspace

there where I can continue my own research and writing, so I’m still actively involved in this project. This material is fascinating, but I’m not immortal, so I knew from the start that eventually I would need to turn it over to an organization. I’ve had extensive collaborations with some of the scholars there, the decision was easy.

What advice would you give to researchers seeking their own family correspondence?

Talk to the elderly people in your family before it’s too late. I have heard the same sad story so many times: “We used to have all these letters from my great-aunt in Massachusetts, but when my grandfather died, my grandmother took all this material and burned it.” There is an attitude among some older folks that there’s no use for old letters, especially if nobody in the younger generation has expressed an interest in them.

At what point did you stop collecting these letters?

I never stopped! The letters keep coming, and as I have time, I transcribe them. I’ve sent 45 boxes of materials to the University of Galway so far, plus five boxes of Arnold Schrier’s research. Any time I go to a library or archive I ask if it collects correspondence. A 1995 PBS documentary based on my research, *Out of Ireland*, resulted in a lot of interest—people wrote to me to offer correspondence or ask for help finding their ancestors. I’ve published five books and about thirty articles and essays on this topic, and I’ve been interviewed many times about my research. Whenever a story appears I am contacted by people with correspondence to contribute. I’ll keep collecting for as long as I can. ♦



A Glimpse into the Early Life of Pilgrim Sara (Reader) Cushman from Lenham, Kent, 1585–1616

Sara Reader and Robert Cushman were married in Canterbury, Kent, on July 31, 1606. Thomas Cushman, their first and only surviving child, was baptized in St. Andrew's Church, Canterbury, on February 7, 1607/8.¹ Thomas sailed to Plimoth Colony with his father onboard the *Fortune* in 1621.² Robert Cushman returned to England on the *Fortune*, leaving his son in the care of his friend William Bradford, governor of Plimoth Colony.³ Although Robert Cushman had intended to eventually return to Plimoth, he died in Benenden, Kent, in May 1625. In time, Thomas Cushman became Ruling Elder of the Church in Plimoth Colony. He and his wife, *Mayflower* passenger Mary Allerton, have tens of thousands of American descendants through their children Thomas, Mary, Sarah, Isaac, Elkanah, Fear, Eleazer, and Lydia, and their more than 49 grandchildren.⁴

Robert Cushman was the Pilgrims' agent in London, and his history is well known, but little information exists about his wife. Sara Reader, born in 1585, was the fourth child of Paul and Ellen (Larkin) Reader. Her baptism was recorded as "Baptizata fuit Sara filia Pauli Reader [was baptized Sara daughter Paul Reader]."⁵ Her siblings, listed in her father's 1597 will, were Patience, Thomas, Helkias (or Helchea), Margaret, Mary, and John Reader.⁶

Paul Reader was a wealthy yeoman from Lenham, Kent, which was located between Maidstone and Ashford. In 1562, St. Mary's Church in Lenham was a larger than average parish in the area, with 100 households and 400 church communicants.⁷ Paul Reader owned a house in Lenham and another in Boughton Aulph, a village about ten miles to the east southeast, near Ashford.⁸ At least fifteen Readers were recorded in the Lenham parish register between 1567 and 1600, all probably Sara Reader's aunts, uncles, or cousins. Hundreds



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of other Readers all had lived in and around Lenham for many years, especially in the five-mile radius which included the parishes of Ulcombe, Wormshill, Frinsted, Boughton Malherbe, and Bredgar.⁹

The household contents of the Reader family in 1597

This article reviews the Reader family inventory prepared shortly after Paul Reader's burial in St. Mary's Church, Lenham, in October 1597. Paul Reader was a churchwarden there in 1579/80 and his signature is in the register.¹⁰ The inventory listed items and rooms in the Reader home, which gives an idea of Sara's living conditions during her early years.¹¹ Sara was twelve when her father died.

An inventory of the goods and chattels of Paul Reader of Lenham, was taken on November 5, 1597, by Thomas Hemmand and Lybeus Coverlye, probably Lenham parishioners. Reader's house had a hall, a parlor with a chamber over each of those rooms and the entry, as well as a buttery, kitchen, milk house, bread house, barn, and barnyard.¹²

The hall furnishings included a cupboard, a long table, two benches, four chairs, five joined stools, twelve cushions, and painted cloths that served as wall decorations. The hall

was probably the family's entertaining and eating area. The parlor was more modestly furnished, with one long mat, one bench, a little cupboard, two tables, and seating furniture, but no decorative hangings. The chamber above the parlor may have served as the master bedroom; it contained a Bible with other books, two standing bedsteads, a trundle bed, three flock beds, three coverlets, four blankets, six bolsters, and painted cloths hanging on the walls. The book titles were not specified.

The chamber over the hall was furnished with a joined bed, a standing bed, a featherbed, a flock bed, two mats, two coverlets, two blankets, four bolsters, four pillows, and painted cloth wall hangings. The furnishings in the chamber over the entry included a bedstead, a trundle bed, one featherbed, a flock bed, four bolsters, two coverlets, two blankets, three chests, two chairs, a table, benches, and painted cloth wall decorations. Additional linens were noted: 23 pairs of sheets, three christening sheets, twelve pillowcases, ten table cloths, 30 table napkins, six towels, two cover cloths, and 30 [unknown] of canvas.

We can imagine how the family cooked and ate based on some of their utensils. In the buttery were twelve platters, ten pewter dishes, six fruit dishes, six porringers [small bowls

with a handle], four saltcellars, and eighteen spoons. Cooking utensils in the kitchen included two cobirons [supports for a spit], three spits, two dripping pans, a frying pan, a gridiron [a grate for broiling], two trivets, two pot hangers, a pair of pot hooks, a fire shovel, tongs, and a peeler.

The milk house contained nine firkins [small casks for liquids, fish, butter, or other foodstuffs], fourteen bowls, a milk tray, two bottles, a churn, two hanging shelves, four milk boards, some lumber, butter, and cheese. The bread house items were for grinding grain and baking, and included a malt stone, a breaking stone, a sling stone, six keelers [a small tub], five tubs, a kneading trough, a cheese press, four pails, and some lumber.

The barnyard contained a load of tile, twelve loads of wood, planks, boards, a bucket chain, rope with other necessities, a cog, two sheets, and a chair. The animals consisted of three cows, thirteen ewes, a ram, four lambs, six hens, and four chickens.

Inside the barn were a grain sieve, a fan [for grain?], two spades, six sacks, an oast cloth [for drying held grain, perhaps used in brewing], wheat, barley, oats, peas, and tares [a plant, perhaps used for animal fodder]. Nine acres of wheat were on the ground.

The total value of the inventory was £222 2s 10d. Inventory totals for



Opposite page: St Mary's Church, Lenham. Photo by Henny Shotter, Lenham Heritage Society. Left: ©The British Library Board. Shelfmark: Maps.C.3.bb.5. Detail of CANTII, Southsexiae, Surriae et Middlesexiae comitat [Sussex and Kent], sheet 11, from Christopher Saxton's *Atlas of England and Wales* (London, 1579). Lenham (Lenehm) is in the center, Canterbury in the upper right.

nearby parishes were researched by Michael Zell, a Kent historian, for his invaluable 1994 book, *Industry in the Countryside*.¹³ Zell showed that inventory values of over £100 in the period from 1565 to 1599 for thirteen Kent parishes represented only about 16% of total inventory values. The Reader family's value of more than £222 is estimated to be in the top 10% for household goods.

The inventory offers no indication of any major wealth producing activity or trade. If Paul Reader rented his second home in Boughton Aulph, that income may have contributed to his affluence. A document preserved in the Medway Archives offers an additional explanation. This record of the 1593 sale of the former estates of William Larkin of Chatham, Kent, by Francis Larkin and "Paul Reader of Lenham, Kent, yeoman," suggests the two were probably heirs, or representatives of heirs, of the William Larkin who died in 1589.¹⁴ A burial record from St. Mary the Virgin Church in Chatham shows "Willm Larken was burid the 18 day of April 1589."¹⁵

The land sale document named the deceased William Larkin's sons: John, the eldest; William; Thomas; Francis; and Roger. Approximately 72 acres in Chatham, Kent, were sold for £300.¹⁶ William Larkin was almost certainly the father of Ellen Larkin of Chatham who married Paul Reader in 1577/8 in Lenham.¹⁷ Francis Larkin, then, was Paul Reader's brother-in-law, as well as a witness to Reader's 1597 will.

We know that at least three of the seven Reader children had strong Puritan connections in Canterbury. In 1603, Thomas and Helkias Reader were prosecuted with Robert Cushman for distributing religious libels or notices of "God have mercy upon us" on Canterbury Church doors.¹⁸ Cushman probably met Sara because of his close association with her brothers. As a staunch Puritan, Cushman would probably not have married Sara Reader unless she had similar religious beliefs.

The Reader inventory is one of the few documents that offers a glimpse

of Sara's life in Lenham. Sara Reader's name has been found in only four original records: her baptism, her marriage, as a beneficiary in her father's will, and as the deceased wife of Robert Cushman when he married for a second time in Leiden in 1617. Sara died in 1616, about one week before her thirty-first birthday.

Sara was referred to only as "the wife of Robert Cushman" in her October 11, 1616, Leiden burial record: "Sint pieters, Huysvrou van Robrecht Kousman in Boisstraet." [Saint pieters, The wife of Robert Cushman in the Boisstreet.]¹⁹

Wills and inventories are useful to family historians, as they can offer details of how ancestors lived. Inventories are less common than wills; most have been lost over the years. Reader descendants are indeed fortunate that this document survives to offer insights into the family's everyday life more than 400 years ago. ♦

NOTES

¹ Archdeacons Transcripts, Canterbury, St Andrew's, 1561–1812, [FHL 1751624, item 2], DCa-BT/37, at Kent History & Library Centre, Maidstone, Kent.

² "A Genealogical Profile of Thomas Cushman," Plimoth Plantation and New England Historic Genealogical Society, undated [after 2004], accessed September 2020, plimoth.org/sites/default/files/media/pdf/cushman_thomas.pdf.

³ Ernest Bowman, ed., *Governor William Bradford's Letter Book* (Boston: Massachusetts Society of Mayflower Descendants, 1906), 11, in which Cushman implored his friend Bradford "to have a care of my son, as of your own."

⁴ "A Genealogical Profile of Thomas Cushman" [note 2].

⁵ Sara Reader, 17 October 1585, DCa-BT/112, at Kent History & Library Centre, Maidstone, Kent.

⁶ Will, Paul Reader, yeoman of Lenham, 1597, PRC/17/50/396, at Kent History & Library Centre, Maidstone, Kent.

⁷ John I. Daeley, *The Episcopal Administration of Matthew Parker, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1559–1575*, PhD thesis, University of London, 1967, 204.

⁸ Will, Paul Reader, 1597 [note 6].

⁹ Findmypast.co.uk, search for "Reader" in Lenham and within its five-mile radius.

¹⁰ Burial DCa/BT/112/34, as a churchwarden with Reader's signature DCa/BT/112/16, FHL film #1751918, item 3, at Kent History & Library Centre, Maidstone, Kent.

¹¹ The pages of the inventory were in a volume that was extremely tightly bound, which obscured parts of the text and made it impossible to copy without causing damage. Helen Wicker, an experienced Kent archivist, transcribed the inventory and defined many of the words. The details have been described in modern terms whenever possible, as an aid to readers. I am most grateful for her expertise and diligence.

¹² Inventory, Paul Reader, 1597, PRC/10/25/220, Kent History & Library Centre, Maidstone, Kent.

¹³ Michael Zell, *Industry in the Countryside: Wealden Society in the Sixteenth Century* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge, 1994), Table 5.12, 147.

¹⁴ Bargain and sale of former estates of William Larkin of Chatham, deceased, U980/T1, 7 April 1593, at Medway Council Heritage Services, cityark.medway.gov.uk/Details/archive/110044309.

¹⁵ Chatham, Kent, St. Mary parish register, P85/1/1, Medway Archives & Local Studies Centre, Medway, Kent.

¹⁶ U980/T1, [note 14].

¹⁷ Paul Redar and Ellen Larkyn, 20 Jan 1577/8. Joseph Meadows Cowper, ed., *Canterbury Marriages Licenses, First Series, 1568–1618* (Canterbury: Cross & Jackman, 1892), 346.

¹⁸ Canterbury Cathedral Archives, DCb/PRC/44/3, *Book Containing Minutes of the Diocesan Court of High Commission for Canterbury Diocese, 1584–1603*, folios 125–132. At Kent History & Library Centre, Maidstone, Kent.

¹⁹ Pilgrim Archives, Erfgoed Leiden in Leiden [Netherlands], Church records burials, Begraven, Part: 1315, Period: 1609–1617, Leiden, archive 0501A, inventory number 1315, October 11, 1616, with thanks to the Pilgrim Archives for the English transcription and translation. The record is under Robert Cushman.

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Unique Massachusetts Catholic Cemetery Records Debut on AmericanAncestors.org

Locating eastern Massachusetts Catholic burial records is now much easier, thanks to a new online database made possible through American Ancestors's ongoing partnership with the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston, in cooperation with the Catholic Cemetery Association of the Archdiocese of Boston, Inc. (CCA).

The new database, which debuted on AmericanAncestors.org in February, allows members to search hundreds of thousands of records. The database, spanning 1833 through 1940, contains burial records for cemeteries administered by the CCA throughout eastern Massachusetts. It will include an estimated one million names by December 2021.

Researchers can use the database to quickly locate and view detailed information about lot sales and interments, including burial dates and locations, and names of lot owners. Since some burial sites lack grave markers (because markers weren't ever purchased, or had

eroded or disappeared), this collection holds much more information than can be obtained by walking through the actual cemeteries.

From paper to pixels

Scanning and indexing the books was a multistep process. Together, Thomas Lester, Director of the Archives at the Archdiocese of Boston, and Molly Rogers, American Ancestors Database Manager for Digital Projects, visited the CCA office in Beverly and the office of the Holy Cross Cemetery in Malden to inventory their record books and determine which fit into the scope of the project.

Several of these delicate tomes—especially those from St. Paul's Cemetery in Arlington—were so large they barely fit on a state-of-the-art book scanner. Rogers and other members of the database team trained a special set of volunteers in the art of handling old, fragile pages

and obtaining the best images while protecting the paper, spine, and cover. Many of these volunteers previously scanned older volumes of sacramental records from the Boston Archdiocese, and were well prepared for the challenges of this project.

Scanning was completed in early 2020, just before the Covid-19 pandemic required all American Ancestors/NEHGS employees—and website database volunteers—to work from home. Indexing those scans—normally undertaken at least partly in the NEHGS office at 97 Newbury Street—was completed entirely off-site.

Seventy-five dedicated volunteer family historians spent 11,114 hours indexing this material. Some



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volunteers reported that the work was a way to stay focused and busy during a challenging time. According to Rogers, some of those volunteers had ancestors buried in these Catholic cemeteries, which made the work personally meaningful.

Who is represented in the records, and where are they buried?

The records represent a significant segment of the Catholic population in eastern Massachusetts and include Italian, French Canadian, Polish, and Lithuanian immigrants.

Massachusetts vital records often list a cemetery in death records. Researchers can now cross-reference that cemetery with these records.

The Catholic Cemetery Association database currently covers thirteen cemeteries: Sacred Heart (Andover), St. Paul (Arlington), St. Mary (Beverly), St. George (Framingham), St. James (Haverhill), St. Joseph (Haverhill), St. Jean Baptiste (Lynn), Holy Cross (Malden) [not yet complete], St. Mary (Malden), St. Patrick (Stoneham), Calvary (Waltham), Catholic Mount Auburn (Watertown), and Calvary (Winchester).

Records for seven more cemeteries will be added in 2021: St. Francis de Sales (Charlestown), North Cambridge Catholic (Cambridge), St. Joseph (Lynn), St. Mary (Lynn), Immaculate Conception (Marlborough), St. Mary (Salem), and St. Patrick (Watertown). Additional volumes from Holy Cross (Malden) will also be included.

A map of the dead

To make searching for graves in person even easier, the Archdiocese of Boston has created online cemetery maps that include sections, ranges, and, in some cases, narrative descriptions of how headstones are arranged by row and lot number. Also shown are points of interest such as entrances, exits, flag poles, monuments, offices, and spigots. Special sections for the burials of

infants, priests, and religious officials are also noted.

Links to the cemetery maps can be found on AmericanAncestors.org, on the database description page for *Massachusetts: Catholic Cemetery Association Records, 1833–1940* (AmericanAncestors.org/search/databasesearch/2782/m). More maps will be added in 2021.

The CCA plans to eventually install cemetery signs containing QR codes (scannable images that connect to an app containing information on the subject). These signs will make cemetery maps accessible to in-person visitors.

A warm reception

A number of members have sent enthusiastic feedback since the launch of the collection in February 2021.

Bruce Earnley, Andover, Massachusetts: “Thanks for your leadership and efforts in making these records more accessible.”

Gavin O’Brien, Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts: “How fantastic that you’ve put the Catholic Cemetery Association records online. I’ve already broken through some brick

walls. The database is a great source for Boston-area research and having the records online is so much easier than trying to contact the Catholic Cemetery Association each time I’m looking for information.”

Sue Richart, Chewalah, Washington: “The Catholic Cemetery Association of the Archdiocese of Boston is important to me. Those records are the only source that stated where my Kenny ancestors originated in Ireland. Every other document just listed Ireland.”

No doubt many other members will continue to make discoveries in this unique collection. ♦

The Catholic records databases, including the cemetery and sacramental records collections, are made possible through the work of American Ancestors volunteers and philanthropic support. In 2017, American Ancestors launched the Historic Catholic Records Fund to support the project. Information about contributing to this fund can be found at AmericanAncestors.org/catholic-records-fund.

Opposite and below: Holy Cross Cemetery in Malden, Massachusetts. Photos by Claire Vail.



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Stephanie Call is Associate Director of Archives and Education at the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center at NEHGS.

Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center Spotlight

The Two Worlds of Leopold Morse

On August 15, 1831, Leopold Morse was born to Jacob and Charlotte Morse in Wachenheim, Bavaria. In 1849, at age 18, he immigrated to the United States. An older brother, Moses, was living in Somersworth, New Hampshire, and the two brothers moved to New Bedford, Massachusetts, where they worked in a retail store.¹ Leopold soon settled in Boston, where he was later joined by his mother, Charlotte; three sisters; his younger brother, Godfrey² and three other brothers. Leopold established Leopold Morse & Company, a clothier and department store, at the corner of Washington and Brattle Streets.³

At the time, Boston's Jewish community was in its infancy.⁴ During the period of German Jewish immigration (1820–1880),⁵ large numbers of Jewish immigrants settled in New York, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and smaller cities in the Midwest, but Boston was not initially a popular destination for Jews. Not until 1842, when Congregation Ohabei Shalom was founded, did Boston's Jewish community begin to flourish.

This smaller Jewish community may have affected Leopold's marriage prospects and provided him with fewer opportunities to marry within the faith. However, the increasingly successful Leopold might also have desired a well-connected marriage partner to match his own elevated status within the community.⁶

On February 4, 1864, Leopold married Georgia Louisa Ray, the only child of Peter Woodbury Ray and Amanda (Peart) Ray of Beverly, Massachusetts.⁷ Georgia's background was quite different from Leopold's; she was later characterized as "an estimable lady descended from the old Puritan stock of Essex County."⁸ One of her immigrant ancestors, John Woodbury (c. 1583–by 1641/2), arrived in New England in 1624 with the Dorchester Company.

How the couple met is unknown, but they likely courted for several years before their marriage, as an 1860 note to Georgia from Leopold indicates. Leopold and Georgia were married in an Episcopalian ceremony by Bishop Manton Eastburn,⁹ suggesting that the interfaith marriage was not an issue for either family or the Episcopal Church. The couple had six children, but only the two youngest reached adulthood: Lottie Ray (1864–1865); Leopold Woodbury (1865–1869); George (1868–1873); Bardwell (March–May 1870); Isidore (1873–1932); and Tyler (1875–1933).¹⁰

Leopold's marriage to Georgia may have provided opportunities that otherwise would have been unavailable to him. In 1870 and 1872, Leopold unsuccessfully ran for a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives, but a win in 1876 made him the first Jewish congressman elected from Massachusetts. He served five terms, from 1877 to 1885 and from 1887 to 1889.

Regardless of his interfaith marriage, Leopold was openly Jewish. In

Undated image of Leopold Morse.
From Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center archives.



Top: Georgia Morse, 1894. From the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center archives. Bottom: Leopold Morse & Co. Clothiers on the corner of Washington and Brattle Streets, Boston, circa 1900–10. Courtesy of the City of Boston Archives.

one anti-Semitic account of Leopold's congressional service—doubtless meant to be complimentary—the tension between Leopold's Boston Brahmin and Jewish worlds is highlighted: "He has served ten or twelve years in Congress, and though an uncompromising Democrat, has a remarkable facility for carrying impregnable Republican districts. He was the first man of his party who attempted to get into Congress from the old Fourth Boston District . . . which was supposed to contain the *crème de la creams* [sic] of cultured blue blood respectability. It was a shock to the education nerves of that rich constituency to find that Leopold Morse, a full-blooded Hebrew, actually engaged in trade—and the clothing trade at that—should aspire to be a member of Congress from that district. . . . He is a man of short figure, with no evidence of his racial origin in his countenance . . . and one of the best liked members of Congress in Washington."¹¹

Leopold stayed connected to his Jewish roots in part through philanthropy. During his tenure in Congress, Boston began to see larger numbers of Jewish immigrants, primarily from Eastern Europe. The Jewish population of Boston increased rapidly to 40,000, and the demand for welfare services threatened to overwhelm the existing community. Boston's Jewish community, unlike many Jewish communities in other cities, had not previously built an institutional framework to assist newcomers.¹²

The United Hebrew Benevolent Association (UHBA), overburdened by the needs of the new arrivals, delayed funding for other essential services. Frustrated by these delays, some members of the UHBA, in partnership with others outside the organization, formed the Montefiore Home and Aid Society to assist Jewish widows, orphans, and the elderly.¹³ In 1889, recognizing that

the Home needed to be under the purview of the UHBA, Leopold purchased a large house in Mattapan (now in Milton, near Mattapan Square), and selected members of the oversight committee, which squarely put the Home—renamed the Boston Home for Infirm Hebrews and Orphanage—back under control of the UHBA.

Over time, Leopold's store flourished, and he gained an enviable reputation. An obituary would note that "He had by his own exertions attained a position as one of the leading merchants of Boston, his house (Leopold Morse and Co.) being among the most prominent and wealthy in the clothing trade."¹⁴

On December 15, 1892, Leopold Morse attended the Merchants' Association Banquet at the Vendome Hotel, where he suffered "a paralytic shock"¹⁵ and died at home soon afterwards. He was remembered for his generous, kind, and honest spirit. Recalling Leopold, one journalist wrote, "Mr. Morse was a positive man, though so open-handed. The odd swing with which he walked down the street, both coat-lapels flung back and a red carnation in his light



overcoat, made him a picture in the city thoroughfares."¹⁶

The two worlds Leopold seemed to easily traverse throughout his life came together at his Episcopal funeral.

Among his pallbearers was fellow German Jewish immigrant and philanthropist Jacob Hecht. The Young Men's Hebrew Association and UHBA sent broken columns, which recognized Leopold's Masonic status. Leopold had become a Master Mason in 1858 and was a member of the Great Lodge of Massachusetts. In freemasonry, a broken column symbolizes the fall of a great Mason and may harken back to the First Temple in Jerusalem, where columns symbolized princes or nobles.

Leopold is buried with his wife, his son Tyler, at least two of his children who died young, and his wife's parents at Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge, Massachusetts.¹⁷

On February 6, 1884, Leopold Morse had been elected member of New England Historic Genealogical Society.¹⁸ In 1945, over fifty years

after Leopold's death, a *New England Historical and Genealogical Register* article listed 26 men who clearly demonstrated "the growth and continuing prestige of the New England Historic Genealogical Society" in its second quarter-century. Among these notable men—including Charles Francis Adams, Alexander Graham Bell, Henry Cabot Lodge, and Robert Gould Shaw—was Leopold Morse.¹⁹

Leopold's legacy continues. After his death, the Boston Home for Infirm Hebrews and Orphanage was renamed the Leopold Morse Home for Infirm Hebrews and Orphanage by an act of the Massachusetts State Legislature. This institution later became a founding organization of the Federated Jewish Charities, widely known today as the Combined Jewish Philanthropies. ♦

The Leopold Morse Papers (JHCP-013) is comprised of scrapbook pages and includes a smallpox vaccination record, Mason certificates, U.S. House of Representatives certificates, correspondence, newspaper clippings, and photographs. This collection was purchased by the JHC in 2020. The identity of the Morse family member who created the scrapbook is unknown. The creator was not Leopold, as many of the clippings cover events that occurred after his death. The JHC is actively seeking more materials pertaining to Leopold Morse and his family; please email us at jhcreference@nehgs.org if you have any information.

With thanks to Danielle Cournoyer, NEHGS Researcher, and Marta Crilly at the Boston City Archives for their assistance with this article.

NOTES

- 1 Cyrus Adler, "Morse, Leopold," in Isidore Singer, et al. (eds.), *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, vol. 9 (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1906), p. 31, viewed at jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/11026-morse-leopold; Moses Morse, 1850 U.S. Census, Somersworth, Strafford, Co., N.H., viewed at Ancestry.com; *New Bedford, Massachusetts, City Directory*, 1852, in *U.S., City Directories, 1822–1995*, viewed at Ancestry.com.
- 2 Godfrey immigrated in 1854. Cyrus Adler, "Morse, Godfrey," in Isidore Singer, et al. (eds.), *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, vol. 9 (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1906), p. 30, viewed at jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/11025-morse-godfrey.
- 3 Brattle Street no longer exists; the area is now part of Government Center.
- 4 In 1840, about 40 Jews lived in Boston. In 1861, the population had grown to only 1,000. In contrast, the Jewish population of New York City grew from 7,000 to 40,000 in the same period. Jonathan D. Sarna and Ellen Smith, eds., *The Jews of Boston* (Boston: Combined Jewish Philanthropies, 1995), 5.
- 5 The German Jewish immigration period also included Jews from Alsace, Lithuania, Poland, parts of Russia, Galicia, Moravia, Bohemia, and Hungary. Hasia R. Diner, "German Immigrant Period in the United States," *Jewish Women: A Comprehensive Historical Encyclopedia*, February 27, 2009. Jewish Women's

Archive; jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/german-immigrant-period-in-united-states.

- 6 In his essay, "Intermarriage in America: the Jewish Experience in Context," Jonathan Sarna quotes sociologist David M. Heer's central factors to understanding intermarriage, (which include the availability and attractiveness of suitable marriage partners and a lack of barriers). From Stuart Cohen and Bernard Susser, *Ambivalent Jew: Charles Liebman in Memoriam* (New York: The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 2007), 128.
- 7 Peter Woodbury Ray and Amanda Peart were married December 21, 1840, in Manchester, Mass. (They were both living in Boston.) *Massachusetts: Vital Records, 1620–1850*, AmericanAncestors.org/DB190/i/7740/205/142397103.
- 8 Charles Levi Woodbury, "Hon. Leopold Morse" entry in "Necrology of the New-England Historic Genealogical Society," *The New England Historical and Genealogical Register* 48 (1894):85–86. Viewed at AmericanAncestors.org.
- 9 Massachusetts: Vital Records, 1841–1910. From original records held by the Massachusetts Archives. AmericanAncestors.org/DB191/i/10507/14/127963248.
- 10 Tyler Morse graduated from Harvard in 1898. He became a lawyer, and practiced law with his uncle Godfrey Morse. In January 1906, he married Allon (Fuller) Black, and moved to New York City. From Backbayhouses.org/203-commonwealth. The couple had no children.
- 11 From an undated and unsourced newspaper article in the Morse scrapbook, in the Leopold Morse Papers at the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center.
- 12 Barbara Solomon Miller, *Pioneers in Service: The History of the Associated Jewish Philanthropies of Boston* (Boston: Associated Jewish Philanthropies, 1956), 16.
- 13 *Ibid.*
- 14 Woodbury, "Hon. Leopold Morse" [note 8], 85.
- 15 This attack was Morse's second incident of paralytic shock in two years; based on other symptoms described, he likely suffered a stroke.
- 16 From an undated and unsourced newspaper article in the Morse scrapbook [note 11].
- 17 Findagrave.com: Leopold Morse, 7499873, Mount Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge, Middlesex Co., Massachusetts. Son Isidore moved to England in 1895. He died in 1932 in Lisbon, Portugal, aged 59, and was buried in England. Isidore was survived by his wife, Nina. They apparently did not have children. *England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1858–1995*. Viewed at Ancestry.com.
- 18 Woodbury, "Hon. Leopold Morse" [note 8], 85.
- 19 William Carroll Hill, "A Century of Genealogical Progress," *Register* 99 (1945):92. Viewed at AmericanAncestors.org.



from our collections

Gerald W. R. Ward is the Katharine Lane Weems Senior Curator of American Decorative Arts and Sculpture Emeritus, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. A visiting lecturer at the Massachusetts College of Art and Design, he also serves as a New Hampshire State Representative.

The Appleton Qur'an

In 1864, William Joseph Warren Appleton, Jr., donated a small, mid-nineteenth-century Syrian Qur'an (Koran) to NEHGS. Appleton's gift was aptly described as "an elegant Arabic Koran, written in an elegant hand, with an Introduction in illuminated letters."

The NEHGS librarian noted that Appleton acquired it in Damascus, Syria, during his travels in 1854–55 (the book contains Appleton's note to that effect). At the same time, Appleton also gave "an old Hebrew manuscript of the Book of Esther, written on a parchment roll and enclosed in a gilt case" and "a handsome copy of the *Preces Nersatis*, the Patriarch of the Armenians, ed. 1837, polyglot volume in 24 languages."

In nineteenth-century New England, copies of the Qur'an were not unknown, but this volume was, nevertheless, a significant addition to the Society's library. By 1790, Harvard owned three copies

of an English translation of the "Koran of Mahommed" published in London in 1734. John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, among others, also owned copies. In June 1806, Isaiah Thomas, the famous early printer, published the first American edition in Springfield, Massachusetts, printed by Henry Brewer. Appleton's gift strengthened NEHGS's holdings

of important texts in their original languages.

William J. W. Appleton, Jr. (1825–77) was the son of the very wealthy Boston merchant William Appleton (1786–1862) and his wife, Mary Ann Cutler (1794–1860). He married Emily Warren (1818–1905) in 1845, and was a life member of NEHGS, admitted in 1863. When he died in Boston on February 10, 1877, he was "kindly remembered by his companions who were his fellow travelers during a long and eventful journey in the East," probably the trip during which he acquired this book. "He was of a retiring disposition, and distrustful of himself. This, with a delicate constitution, prevented him from engaging in active business." Nevertheless, he was remembered for his "benevolence to the poor, and for his interest in and benefactions to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Dumb Animals."

He was noted for a map of early Boston that he re-created from documents, and for his publication in 1875 of the *Narrative of Le Moyne, An Artist Who Accompanied the French Expedition to Florida under Laudonnière, 1564: with Heliotypes of the Engravings Taken from the Artist's Original Drawings, Translated from the Latin of De Bry*, a handsome volume also in the NEHGS collection. Appleton died at the age of 52 and is buried in Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge. ♦



PHOTO ©GAVIN ASHWORTH



OBITUARY

Peter Benes, 1934–2021

Influential New England historian and author Peter Benes died in Susan, Virginia, on March 12, 2021, aged 86. He was born Bohus Matej Benes in Geneva, Switzerland, on August 14, 1934, to Bohus Antonin and Emilie (Zadna) Benes. His great-uncle, Eduard Benes, was president of Czechoslovakia from 1935 to 1938, before the Nazi occupation. Peter's family followed Eduard Benes into exile in England. In 1942, the family sailed to the United States on a British troop liner transporting two other diplomatic families. Peter recalled that their fifty-vessel convoy was attacked three or four times during the journey and that their ship was hit twice.

Peter attended high school in Berkeley, California, and received an AB from Harvard College in 1955. He earned a Master of Arts in Teaching from the Harvard University Graduate School of Education in 1965 and an MA from Boston University's American and New England Studies Program in 1980.

On August 10, 1968, Peter married Jane Montague in Concord, Massachusetts, where they would live for thirty-eight years. Peter and Jane frequently worked together on historic research, writing, and other projects.

Peter was the cofounder (1976), director, and editor of The Dublin Seminar for New England Folklife, a continuing series of conferences, exhibitions, and publications exploring everyday life, work, and culture in New England's past. He was also instrumental in founding the Association for Gravestone Studies in 1977. Peter was the author of a number of books, including *Meetinghouses of Early New England* (2012), and *For a Short Time Only: Itinerants and the Resurgence of Popular Culture in Early America* (2016), and numerous articles on New England history, art, and culture.

In 2011, Peter and Jane received the Bay State Legacy Award for their contributions to Massachusetts history.

Peter was a longtime NEHGS collaborator, and we sponsored several Dublin Seminars. In 2002, he and Brenton Simons, now our President and CEO, coauthored *The Art of Family: Genealogical Artifacts in New England*. Peter's final book, *Fruits of the Tree of Life: New Discoveries*, on the art of decorated watercolor and embroidered family registers made in New England between 1785 and 1825, will be published this summer by NEHGS.

He is survived by his wife Jane Montague Benes; their two daughters, Tuska Benes and Mina Benes-Rosecan; and five grandchildren.



OBITUARY

J. Phillip London, 1937–2021

Dr. J. Phillip "Jack" London died January 18, 2021, aged 83. He was born in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, on April 30, 1937 to Harry R. and Evalyn (Phillips) London.

Jack attended the U.S. Naval Academy. After graduating in 1959, he became an antisubmarine warfare helicopter pilot. His active duty service spanned twelve years, including stints on the naval blockade during the Cuban Missile Crisis and as part of the USS *Randolph* aircraft carrier recovery team for John Glenn's Freedom 7 space flight.

Jack went on to earn a master's degree from the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California, in 1967. In 1971, having achieved the rank of Captain, he joined the Navy Reserve. He received a doctorate in business administration from George Washington University in 1971, and in 1972 he became an IT program manager at CACI—then a small northern Virginia company with only 35 employees. In his nearly 50 years with CACI, he rose through its ranks to President and Chief Executive Officer, a role he held for more than twenty years. In 2007 he became Executive Chairman and Chairman of the Board. Today, CACI is a \$5.7 billion company with 23,000 employees and 155 offices worldwide. It has been named one of the World's Most Admired Companies by *Fortune* magazine ten times.

Jack's numerous honors included an award for Most Influential People in Business Ethics from the Ethisphere Institute, the Distinguished Graduate Award from the U.S. Naval Academy, and the Lone Sailor Award from the Navy Memorial Foundation. The CACI veteran's program Jack founded received recognition from the White House.

Jack was a longtime NEHGS Councilor and a friend to our organization. He and his wife, Dr. Jennifer Burkhart London, worked frequently with our Research Services team, and published *The Royal and Noble Ancestry of Edward III King of England (1327–1377): A London Family Lineage* with us in 2012. He was also a speaker at our educational programs on his renowned book, *Character*.

Jack married Dr. Jennifer Burkhart on July 7, 2007. He is survived by his wife and their sons, Jackson, Jayson, and Jonathon London; his son J. Phillip London, Jr. and daughter Laura McLain London; and five grandsons and one granddaughter.



OBITUARY

William Marsh, 1948–2021

Dr. William Robert “Bill” Marsh died March 12, 2021, aged 72. He was born April 24, 1948, in Grand Island, Nebraska, to William Warren and Virginia Maude (Peters) Marsh.

Bill grew up on a farm outside Archer, Nebraska. He graduated from Central City High School in 1966 and then attended an accelerated BS program at University of Nebraska Medical Center. In 1968 he met Annabelle Brodbeck, who was enrolled in the nursing program at Clarkson Hospital. They married in North Platte, Nebraska, on July 8, 1972. In 1973, Bill earned an MD from the University of Nebraska College of Medicine. Following an internship at Harvard General Hospital in Torrance, California, he performed his radiology residency at the University of Nebraska Medical Center from 1974 to 1977. Bill began working at what is now Grand Island Radiology Associates in Nebraska in 1985 and retired May 2015.

Bill was a Fellow of the American College of Radiology; a trustee of the Nebraska State Historical Society; a board member of the Edith Abbot Memorial Library; a member of the GenTech Steering Committee; and a life member of the Mayflower Society. Having developed a serious interest in genealogy, Bill published *The Ancestors and Descendants of F.A. Marsh and Ivy Crites: Containing Ancestors in America from 1620 to the Present* in 1990.

An active and dedicated member of NEHGS since 1984, Bill was a frequent attendee of NEHGS events, tours, and programs; a Life Member; and a past Trustee and Councilor. He served on the Development, Executive, and Human Resources Committees and as chair of the Nominating Committee. He was a member of the Charles Ewer Society for Lifetime Giving, the Cornerstone Society for Giving, and the Henry Bond Society for Legacy Philanthropy. In 2020 he was named an Honorary Trustee of NEHGS.

The NEHGS staff will miss Bill very much. He had a quick wit and a talent for succinct and clever stories. He put new Councilors at ease and spoke to everyone he met as an equal. He was an enthusiastic follower of our *Vita Brevis* blog, often tracking down staff members on his visits to discuss their posts. He was a truly kind man, and his thoughtfulness and generosity of spirit was evident from the first meeting.

Bill is survived by his wife, Annabelle Marsh; his son, William Alexander Marsh; his daughter, Sarahbelle Alison Marsh; and four grandchildren.

OBITUARY

Emily Wharton, 1934–2020

Emily Nichols Wharton died August 12, 2020, aged 86. She was born in New York City on March 19, 1934, to Frederick H. and Emily (Logan) Nichols.

Emily was raised in Darien, Connecticut. After graduating from Westover School and Bradford Junior College, she continued her education at the Sorbonne, living in Paris for three years while employed by the American Embassy. Returning to the United States in 1958, Emily settled in New York City, where she worked at the United Nations in the office of the World Veterans Federation, and later at the Farfield Foundation and the African American Labor Center.

Looking for a place to spend weekends, she discovered Stonington, Connecticut. She eventually moved to the town and married Charles William Wharton there on February 15, 1975. For a number of years, she worked for Connecticut College in the office of Development for Corporate and Foundation Support and then in the Center for International Studies and the Liberal Arts.

Emily joined NEHGS in 1995 and was a member of the Advisory Council from 1999 to 2001. She served as a Trustee from 2003 to 2008 and then as a Councilor from 2008 to 2011. Emily was an active and enthusiastic participant in many of our events and programs. She was a generous benefactor who joined the Henry Bond Society after establishing a life-income gift.

Emily was also active in her community, serving as a Burgess for the Borough of Stonington, a board member of both the Village Improvement Society and the historical society, a chairman of the Stonington Antique Show, and a member of Mystic Aquarium’s Advisory Board. She was also actively involved in the Herb Society of America and the Southeast Connecticut Committee on Foreign Policy Association.

Her husband, C. William Wharton, Jr., died in 1997. Emily moved to Mystic, Connecticut, in 2012. Emily is survived by two stepsons, Charles W. Wharton III and Leverett B. Wharton; her brother, Humphrey T. Nichols; her sister-in-law, Carol; and three nephews.

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DNA studies

Stilwell/Stillwell A Stilwell/Stillwell DNA project is underway. Questions may be directed to Barbara Garrison at bjg@psu.edu.

Family association

Stilwell Descendants of John Stilwell, United Empire Loyalist of Grand Lake, New Brunswick, hope to meet for a first-ever reunion in October 2021 if Covid restrictions are eased in the province. Questions may be directed to Ross W. McCurdy at rwmccurdy@comcast.net or Derek Hennecke at derek.hennecke@gmail.com.

Genealogies in progress

Bahr A genealogy is in progress for *The Descendants of Thomas Bahr, who Immigrated from the Kingdom of Baden in 1847*. The book will include photos of the Bahr home in Germany and details of the Bahr family's immigration and their homes in Ohio, Nebraska, and Oklahoma Territory. Descendants of the eleven children of Thomas and his wife, Klara, are documented. Contact CarolynLeonard@me.com; CarolynBLeonard.com.

Stilwell A 3rd edition of *Descendants of John Stilwell, United Empire Loyalist of Grand Lake, New Brunswick*, is underway. Questions may be directed to the compiler, Ross W. McCurdy, at rwmccurdy@comcast.net.

Genealogies

Hayward *The Descendants of William Hayward of Easton, Massachusetts, by His Two Wives, Lydia Manley and Ann Holland*, Edward Wallace Phillips (Amherst, Mass.: Genealogy Publishing Group, 2020). Hardcover, \$74.95, 944 pp. Index of people & places. This five-generation genealogy of the descendants of William Hayward documents his children's journeys through Western Mass., Vermont, and Maine, by extensive use of land and probate records. Includes previously unknown lines through his second wife, Ann. Available from phillipsedwardw@gmail.com, Amazon, and Barnes & Noble.

Submit your book notice

Members may submit details of their relevant books published within the last year. Please provide: surname (genealogies) or subject (other books); title; author(s)/editor(s)/compiler(s); place of publication; publisher/self-published; year of publication; hardcover/softcover/other; price; page count; specify if index, illustrations, or appendixes are included; description in 25 words or less; contact/ordering information.

Genealogies in Progress, Family Associations, and DNA Studies

Members may submit notices of 75 words or fewer. Submit Family Association notices at least six months in advance.

To place your listing, email magazine@nehgs.org.

Howell *Edward Howell (1584–1655) of Westbury Manor, Marsh Gibbon, Buckinghamshire and Southampton, Long Island, New York and his Descendants*, Cynthia Ward "Cindy" Clark & The Edward Howell Family Association (Baltimore, Md.: Otter Bay Books, 2021). Hardcover, 3 vols., \$165, 2,139 pp., footnotes, illustrations, name index, sources. Detailed lineage of over 38,000 descendants of Edward Howell who migrated to Southampton, N.Y., by way of Lynn, Mass. Available from EdwardHowellFamily.org.

Russell *The Descendants of Robert Russell and Mary Marshall of Andover Through Six Generations: Including Male and Female Lines of Descent from Generation One to Generation Six*, Patricia A. Abbott (the author: 2020). Softcover, \$40, 688 pp., name index, footnotes, references. This first comprehensive compilation of the descendants of Robert Russell of Andover covers 983 complete families, including sixth-generation children and their spouses. Available on Amazon. For more information, see abbottgenealogy.com or patricia_abbott@outlook.com.

Other books

U.S. History *The First Hundred Years: The US Presidents, the Federal Census, and Current Events That Influenced the Lives of Your Ancestors, 1790–1890*, Carolyn B. Leonard (Oklahoma City, Okla.: Buffalo Industries, 2020). Hardcover, \$28; Softcover, \$18; Ebook, \$5. 336 pp. index, illustrations, appendixes. A guidebook for genealogists, family historians, and anyone who wants to learn more about the early years of the United States. Available from Amazon.com.

The NEHGS cartoon



"Make sure they have your name spelled correctly so I can find you in 200 years!"

Submitted by Alison Arnold via Facebook
Drawing by Jean Powers

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A photograph of a person sitting on a grassy field, wearing brown shoes and a green patterned skirt. They are holding a spiral notebook and a pen, appearing to be writing. The background is a soft-focus green field.

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