



Inside Genealogy Today: How Family History Became a Growth Industry

Frederick C. Hart Jr., CG, FASG
Senior Men's Club of New Canaan
21 November 2014



Recognize any of these names?

Benedict

Hanford

Seeley

Bouton

Hoyt

Seymour

Carter

Keeler

Slason

Davenport

Lockwood

Smith

Eells

Marvin

Stevens

Finch

Parkinton

Talmadge

Fitch

Prindle

Tuttle

Green

Reed

Waterbury

Gregory

Ruscoe

Weed

--- Mary Louise King, *Portrait of New Canaan* (New Canaan: New Canaan Historical Society, 1981), 26

All of these original New Canaan family names in **red** are my own ancestors

Benedict

Hanford

Seeley

Bouton

Hoyt

Seymour

Carter

Keeler

Slason

Davenport

Lockwood

Smith

Eells

Marvin

Stevens

Finch

Parkinton

Talmadge

Fitch

Prindle

Tuttle

Green

Reed

Waterbury

Gregory

Ruscoe

Weed

War Story Alert: “Go over and see Mrs. King....”



“Since the 1970s interest in genealogy has increased exponentially in the United States.”

--- François Weil, *Family Trees / A History of Genealogy in America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013), 207, 198.

MEMBERSHIP (CONSTITUENT) GROWTH: NEW ENGLAND HISTORIC GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

--- NEHGS Annual Report, 6 [*American Ancestors* magazine, 15:2, Spring 2014]

NEHGS constituent growth, 1993–2013



NEW PROFESSIONALS ARE RAPIDLY ENTERING THE FIELD

APG MEMBERSHIP IS GROWING BY ALMOST 700 PER YEAR

--- Association of Professional Genealogists
Quarterly, 29:2(June 2014): 104

Welcome New APG Members

NAME	CITY, ST/CNTY	NAME	CITY, ST/CNTY	NAME	CITY, ST/CNTY
Dannell Altman-Newell	Shawnee, KS	Mark Fearer	Longmont, CO	Carolyn Morgan	Orlando, FL
Lesley Anderson	Ottawa, ON, Canada	Vicee Ficklin	Grand Junction, CO	Nancy Most	Villa Park, IL
Todd Armstrong	San Francisco, CA	Noreen Finneran	Hanover, MA	Maeve Mullin	Dublin, Ireland
Stephen Arnold	Morgantown, WV	Debra A. Fischer	Mt. Solon, VA	Jacqueline Murray-Bonno	Columbia, SC
Autumn Baccellia	Sacramento, CA	Monika Fleming	Tarboro, NC	Anne Myers	Hamden, CT
Sandy Barnett	Springfield, IL	Muriele Gadaut	Morsang sur Orge, France	Brian O'Hara	Sparks, NV
Nichelle Barra	Mishawaka, IN	Marianne Lee Gaertner	Lahaina, HI	Liz Palmer	Birmingham, England
Karen Bauer	Sebastian, FL	Emily Garber	Phoenix, AZ	Sally Parfitt	London, United Kingdom
Jill Baumeister	Chicago, IL	Amber Genett	Kaukauna, WI	Linda L. Parker	Omaha, NE
Valarie Beadle	Valley Springs, CA	Margaret K. Gibson	Henderson, NV	Phyllis A. Paster	Wellesley, MA
Jane Beal	Bates City, MO	Patti Gillespie	Decatur, TX	Andrea Musgrove Perisho	Cape Coral, FL
Smadar Belkind Gerson	Newton, MA	Lisa Giorgio	Lantana, TX	Laura Pernice	Champion, MI
Anthony Bengston	Independence, IA	Bill Gladstone	Toronto, ON, Canada	Rebecca Poertner	Eldon, MO
J. Ronald Bogart	Bloomington, IL	Barbara Granato	Whitesboro, NY	Terrence W. Reigel	Boone, NC
Tanya Boggs	Deltona, FL	Kelly Grayson	Bakersfield, CA	Andres Rodenstein	Buenos Aires, Argentina
Jonathan Bosse	Shapleigh, ME	Maurice Grillon	Forked River, NJ	Ruth Rosentrater	Ozark, AL
Erin Brecka	Eau Claire, WI	Karin Taylor Hadden	West Bloomfield, MI	Katie Ross	Spicer, MN
Sharon Brevoort	Ann Arbor, MI	Gwen Harrison	Navarre, FL	Marilyn Rousseau	Mooresville, NC
David Brinkworth	Rapid City, SD	Phyllis Haynen	Kent, WA	Patty Roy	Venice, FL
Laura Brown	Brooklyn, NY	Debra Hendricks	Dripping Springs, TX	Lauri Russell	Fernandina Beach, FL
Kevin Brown	Barnsley, United Kingdom	Eileen Melanson Hennessey	Fall River, MA	Kimberly Samar	Wayne, PA
Renee Brown-Bryant	Tucker, GA	Laurie Hermance-Moore	Columbus, OH	Daniel Sample	Meadows Place, TX
Pilar Burton	Berlin, MD	Nikki Herr	Lebanon, PA	Cynthia Schultz	Sioux Falls, SD
Lorri Busch	Whitby, ON, Canada	Deborah L Holden	Clemmons, NC	Ethel Lee "Pepper" Scotto	Jefferson, MD
Brenda Campbell	Raleigh, NC	Dianne Louise Holley	Austin, TX	Kristi L. Sexton	Cypress, CA
Dawn Carson	Cherry Hill, NJ	Matthew T Hout-Reilly	Lakewood, OH	Emily Sickenger	Albuquerque, NM
Stephen Chanko	Houston, TX	Lisa Howison	Norco, CA	Beverly Sloane	Pilling, Preston, Lancashire
Liv Birgit Christensen	Baerums Verk, Norway	Cheri Hudson Passey	Myrtle Beach, SC		United Kingdom
Chenel Christophe	Paris, France	Linda M. Hunter	Severn, MD	Steven D. Smith	Indianapolis, IN
Amanda K. Clark	New Castle, IN	Kathy Huxley	Charlotte, NC	Gail E. Smith	Denver, CO
Myko Clelland	London, United Kingdom	Megan Isely	La Crosse, WI	Arlene Stafford-Wilson	Ottawa, ON, Canada
Joanne Clements	Greensboro, NC	Pamela Jacobsmeyer	Lansdowne, VA	Karen S. Stewart	East Liverpool, OH
Vonda Coffman	Cuyahoga Falls, OH	Mark Johnson	Alpharetta, GA	Dave Strausfeld	Durham, NC
Stuart Cohn	Silver Spring, MD	Laura Kelsey	Warrenton, VA	Kelly R Summers	Provo, UT
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Lisa Concoff Kronbeck	Hawthorne, CA	Marco Lamberti	Barcelona, Spain	Victoria Thomas	Yarmouth, ME
Brian Conley	Brooklyn, NY	Meredith Anne Lane	Reston, VA	Alexa Tigre	Bellevue, WA
Jay Cornish	Valrico, FL	John F Laurent	Bartow, FL	Leanne Tonge	Pilling, Preston, United Kingdom
Frank J Cunningham	Nantucket, MA	Barbara Lee	Midlothian, TX	Jean Van Horn	Clearwater, FL
Christina Dahlstroem	Langley, WA	Lana Leggett-Kealey	Norwich, VT	Janell Vasquez	Blue Springs, MO
Sue Davies	Stoke-on-Trent, England	Cynthia Lewis	Howard City, MI	Thea Walden Baker	Rose Bud, AR
M.Lynnette Dawe	Cincinnati, OH	Jennifer Lilienthal	Stockbridge, MA	Ian Walker	Edinburgh, Scotland
Cynthia Marie De Bock	Mount Prospect, IL	Melisa Limanowski	Chicago, IL	Ameya Warde	Pittsburgh, PA
Janet DeLucien	Reston, VA	Kimberly Macdonald	Canton, OH	Christopher Washler	Pensacola, FL
James Derheim	Sarasota, FL	Debra MacLaughlan Dumes	Los Angeles, CA	Keith J. Westman	San Diego, CA
Laurie Desmarais	Mesa, AZ	Cynthia Maharrey	Lexington, KY	Robin Whitney	Trabuco Canyon, CA
Donna Eberling	Postville, IA	Elizabeth Marcheschi	Aurora, CO	Michael Whitton	Astoria, NY
Barbara Eilman	Secaucus, NJ	Deanna Martin-Osuagwu	Chicago, IL	Scott Wilds	Philadelphia, PA
Michael Embrey	Daleville, VA	Yvonne Mashburn Schmidt	Cartersville, GA	Mara Wilson	Houston, TX
Amy Mays Emert	Powell, TN	Nancy Bronte Matheny	Houston, TX	Christine Woodcock	Brantford, ON, Canada
Kory England	San Antonio, TX	Teri McClung	Salem, OR	Pamela Crosby Yeager	Toquerville, UT
Joseph Esposito	Carmel, NY	Martie McNamara	Dallas, TX	Marguerite Zajdel	Krakow, Poland
Nicole Eveland-Logotaeao	Longview, WA	Marilyn Mills	McLean, VA		
Patty Fagan	Allston, MA	Melinda Mitchell	Monroe, LA		



I see Five Major Factors:

- Democratization
- Technology
- Commercial Interests
- Professionalism
- Leadership

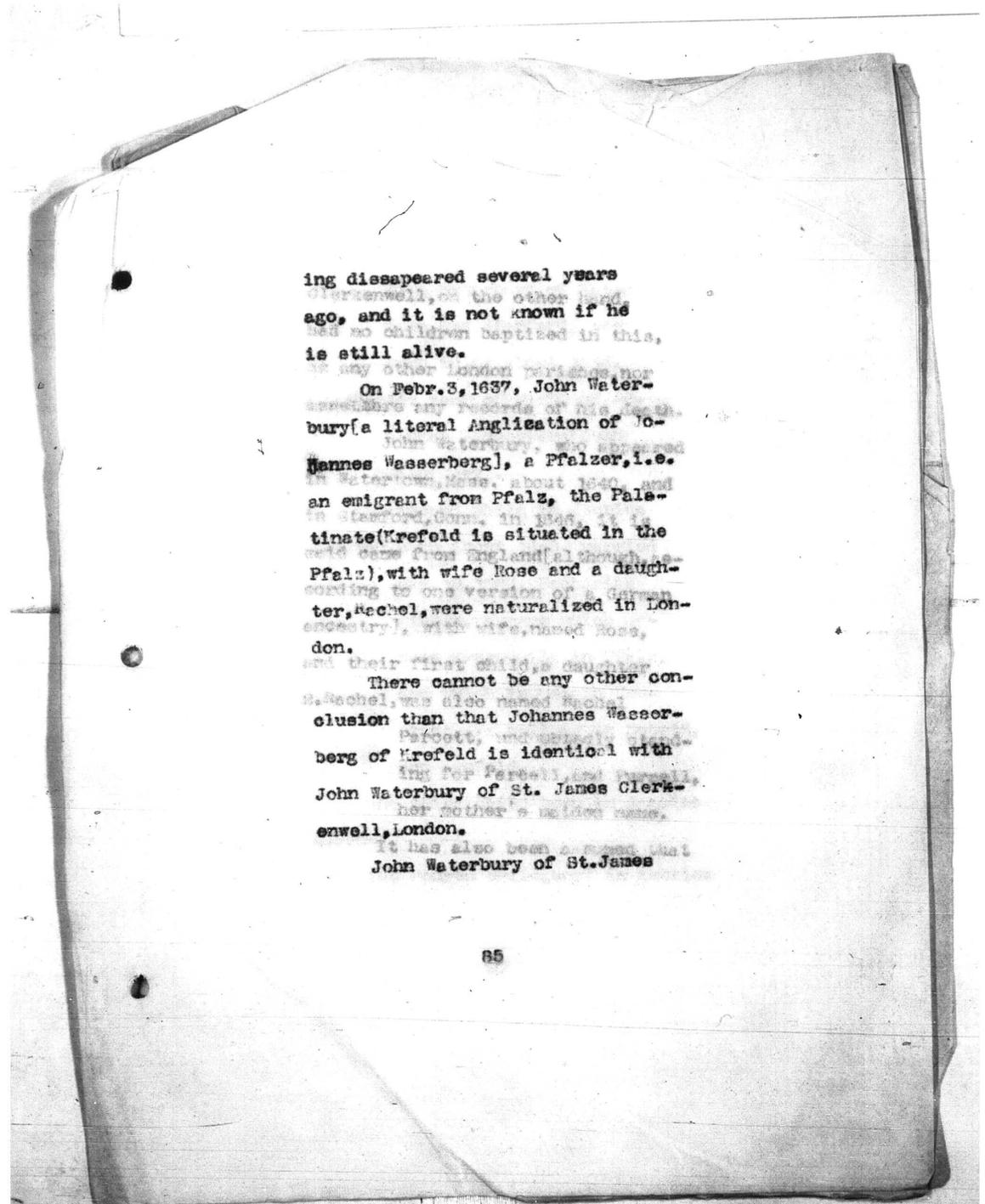


But first: When genealogy had a bad rep ...

- Fake genealogists: The “poster boy” is Gustave Anjou (1863-1942)
 - Born in Sweden under another name
 - Served a prison term for forgery in 1886
 - Charged top dollar
 - Over 100 published genealogies of such family names as: Andrews, Carter, Church, DuPont, Johnson, Lincoln ---- etc.
 - Many still to be detected (Ogden example)

A sample of Gustave Anjou's work – in this case a final product giving John Waterbury of Stamford an origin in German nobility.

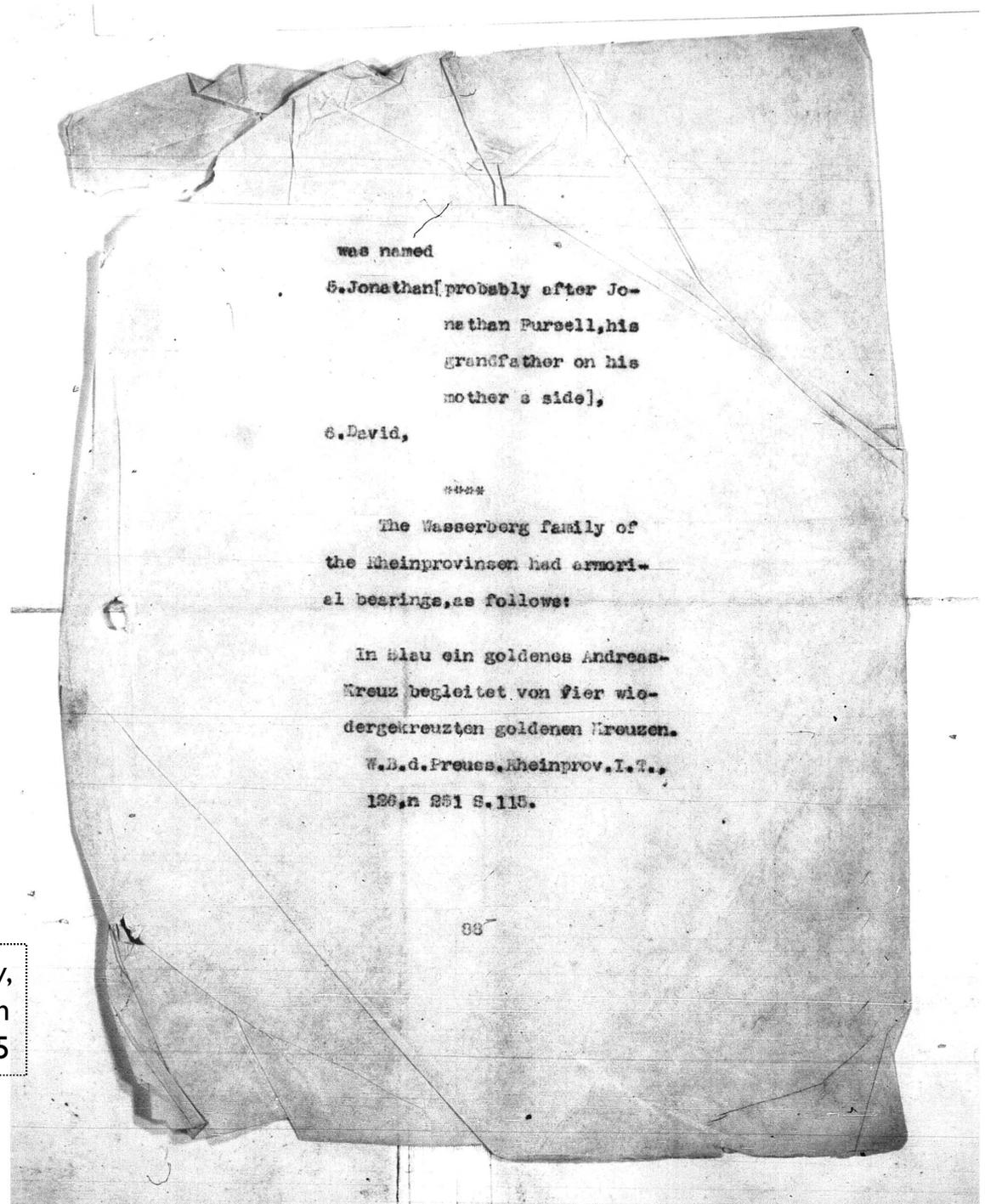
Note the lack of documentation, and also the claim of “naturalization” in London in 1637 to make it all come out right.



The final page of Anjou's
Wasserburg /
Waterbury "genealogy"

At last,, a claim of
nobility and the
"armorial bearings,"
described in High
School German, that
were somehow never
seen used in America.

G. Anjou, *Waterbury Family*,
Family History Library film
#908504, Item 5



From a page 1 *New York Times* story about Anjou's business and his current catalog in 1927

New York Times, 12
Dec 1927, 1.

No Guarantee Goes With Them.

"These family records," Mr. Anjou states in the foreword of his catalogue, "have been compiled by and from material gathered by custodians of public and private records during the past thirty-eight years. Many of these records have been destroyed, and while the greatest care has been taken to prevent errors, we give no guarantee, expressed or implied, against mistakes, wrong statements or conclusions. Nor can we engage in any controversy or correspondence on the subject."

By comparison, a page from a recent genealogical journal illustrating the level of documentation and analysis that is commonplace today

The New England Historical and Genealogical Register, 167(April, 2013):96.

THE ORIGINS OF THOMAS¹ HARRIS AND WILLIAM¹ HARRIS OF PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND

*Helen Schatvet Ullmann and L. Randall Harris**

While there are several accounts of Thomas Harris of Providence, Rhode Island and some of his descendants in print, none is thoroughly documented and most contain questionable "facts" that link him with other early Thomas Harrises in New England.^[1] The origins of Thomas and his brother, the controversial William Harris, also of Rhode Island and their known sisters Parnell and Ann Harris were unknown until recently. Some longstanding accounts claimed they came from Kent in Old England, from the town or parish of Deal.^[2] In fact, Roger Williams described William Harris as "an impudent morris-dancer in Kent."^[3]

Knowing that Thomas, William, Parnell, and Ann Harris were siblings, a recent search of records of parishes near Deal yielded results in Northbourne, Kent. They were children of Andrew and Jane (Bagley) Harris.^[4] Northbourne is about three miles inland from Deal.

I. ANDREW^A HARRIS, a wheelwright of Northbourne, died between 24 May 1616, when he made his will, and 2 November 1616, when it was proved. He married in Northbourne 2 February 1603[4], **JANE BAGLEY**.^[5] She married second in Northbourne 29 October 1618, James Grigges, who was buried 7 March 1618/9. Jane married third in Northbourne 29 September 1619, James Sayer.

*L. Randall Harris has done extensive research of the Harris family in Kent; the authors combined their New England research.

¹ Several Thomas Harrises lived as adults in New England prior to 1650. See the Addendum.

² Mary Shaw Atwood, *Some of the Maine Descendants of Thomas Harris of Providence, R. I.* (Abington, Mass.: the author, 1917), 14; Mrs. Thomas H. Ham, *A Genealogy of the Descendants of Nicholas Harris* (Albany, N.Y.: C.I.F. Ham, 1904), 3, 49. This book follows the line of Nicholas⁵ Harris (Jedediah⁴, Nicholas³, Thomas²⁻¹), but Mrs. Ham was not aware of all of Thomas's children and of information in other compilations. However, her source of the information that the Harrises came from Deal is the "written record of Nicholas Harris⁵, M.D.," whose father Jedediah probably heard about the family origins from his grandfather, Thomas⁷.

³ John Garrett, *Roger Williams: Witness Beyond Christendom, 1603-1683* (London: Macmillan, 1970), 88, quoted from Perry Miller, ed., 7 vols., *The Complete Writings of Roger Williams*, (New York: Russell and Russell, 1963), 6:397-98.

⁴ Northbourne Composite Parish Register, 1586-1718, at Canterbury Cathedral Archives, Canterbury, Kent. U3/74/1/1: Archdeacons' Transcripts, 1563-1812, DCa/BT/136; and Bishops' Transcripts, 1603-1812, DCb/BTa/173, all read by Diane Thomas of Acis Genealogical Research in Tunbridge Wells, Kent. Microfilms are available from the Family History Library, as follows: composite parish register [FHL 2,354,573 Items 8-14], Archdeacons' Transcripts [FHL 1,752,058 Item 5], and Bishop's Transcripts [FHL 1,736,929 Item 1]. A transcription of the parish register and Archdeacons' Transcripts for 1563-1664 is on FHL 1,544,553 Item 8.

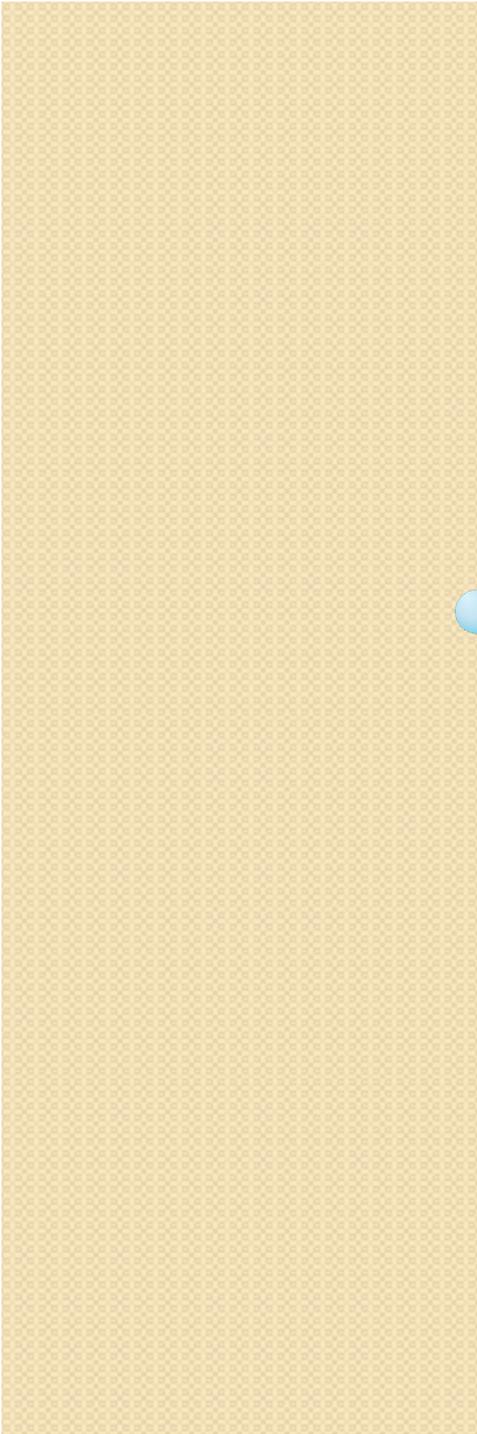
⁵ Her name was at first read as "Bayley," but several readers agreed it was "Bagley."



Now ---

Back to the Five Major Factors:

- Democratization
- Technology
- Commercial Interests
- Professionalism
- Leadership



Factor #1:



DEMOCRATIZATION



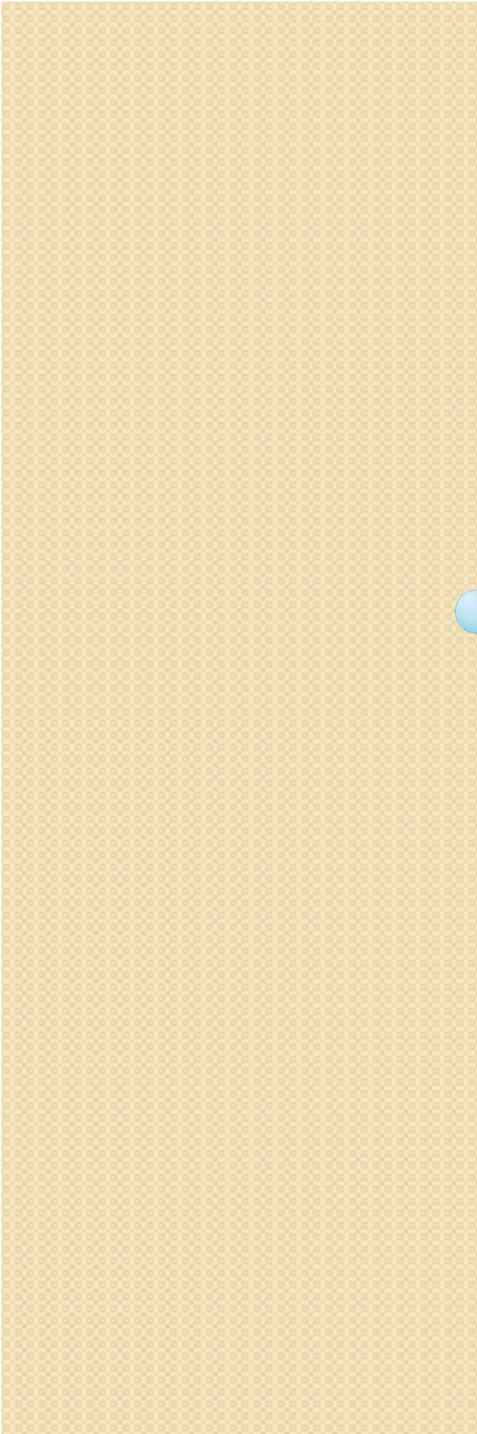
Democratization

- Alex Haley's book, *Roots* (1976), gave “ordinary people” incentive to look into their ancestry
- People no longer needed to have a “purpose” (e.g. joining a hereditary society or having royalty or wealth or fame) – just curiosity was enough
- Much of the necessary information was already public information



Democratization (continued)

- Haley's book *Roots* had wide popularity, amplified by a TV series
- It has been recently echoed by more TV shows: *Who Do You Think You Are?* and *Finding Your Roots*
- **War story alert:** (Haley's *Roots* was later proven to be based on [unintentional] faulty research, but the impact had already been made)



Factor #2



TECHNOLOGY



Technology

- The personal computer
- The Internet
- DNA



Technology: The personal computer

- Invented in 1960's but available to the public beginning in the late 1970's
 - Jobs' and Wosniak's Apple I (1976)
 - Commodore PET (1977)
 - Radio Shack TRS-80 (1977)
- Software for genealogists in the 1980's
 - Personal Ancestral File (PAF) 1983-2013
 - Interchange standard for Genealogy Data Communication (GEDCOM)
 - CD-ROM databases



Technology: The Internet (1990s)

- The good (Sources)
 - Source data available at home or local library
 - Powerful Indexes and search engines
 - Historical and geographical background materials
 - Ready networking (email) and collaborating on projects (e.g. DNA, articles, etc.)
- And the bad (Trees)
 - Unable to trust most “Trees” (no independent trust filter)
 - Repetition of faulty data from the past
 - Emphasis on numbers rather than quality
 - Most personal “Trees” do not have (or even understand) reliable sourcing



Technology: DNA (2000s)

- Three types now in use for genealogy
 - Y-chromosome (Y-cs or Y-dna)
 - Follows in an essentially unbroken male line and therefore parallels the surname (in our culture)
 - Mitochondrial DNA (MtDNA)
 - Follows in an essentially unbroken female line and therefore can help identify female line ancestors
 - Autosomal DNA
 - Identifies shared components, finding cousins of either sex, ethnicity and/or places of origin



Importantly:

- These technological developments have sparked the interest of persons who had no previous interest in genealogy
- Each of these developments has therefore inspired an entirely new group of persons who were eager to use the technology

Factor #3:



COMMERCIAL INTERESTS



Commercial interests

- Publishers began gathering and selling data on CD-ROMs in the 1980s
- Existing non-profit genealogical organizations began by adding content to their web sites for members only
- That online content then reached critical mass as a reason for membership
- For-profit data aggregators (e.g., Ancestry.com) use free data or trial subscriptions to encourage paid subscription



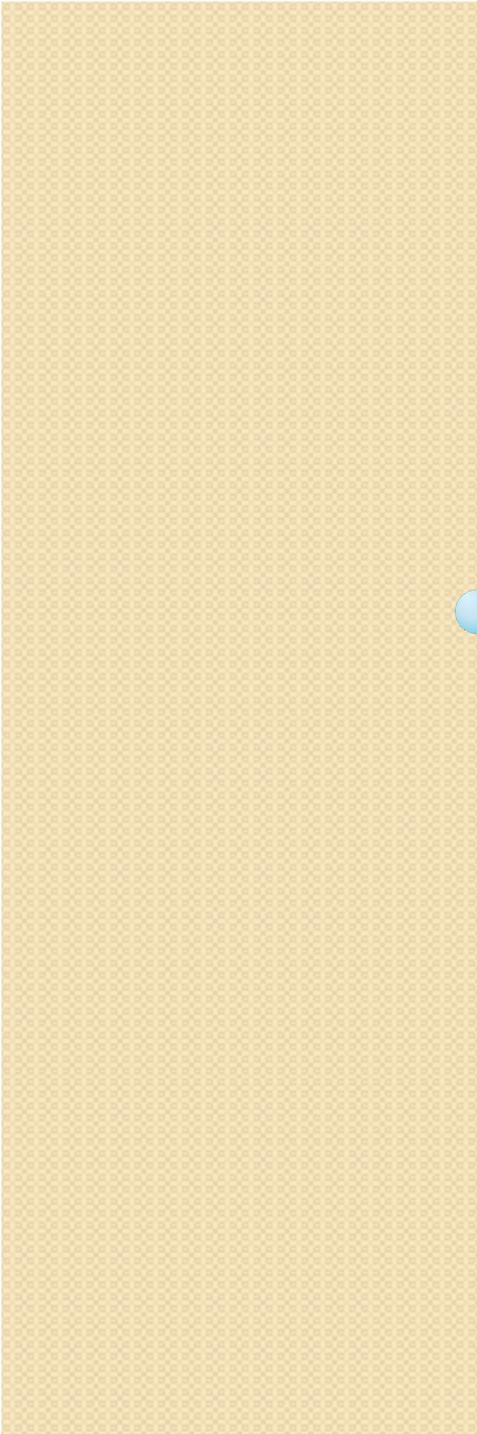
Commercial interests (continued)

- Many archives provide free online searching but charge for paper or electronic copies of actual documents
 - Examples: NSDAR Library, UK National Archives, Ellis Island, etc.
- Software sales for personal computers
 - Becoming increasingly media- and web-oriented
 - Capable of sophisticated charts and multimedia reports
 - Capable of handling source citations and other documentation



Commercial Interests (continued)

- Ancestry.com claims to be “the world’s largest online resource for family history”
 - Founded in 1983 as a publisher of genealogy books
 - First web site launched in 1996
 - Revenues of \$562 million in 2013
 - (up from \$166 million in 2007)
 - 2.7 million subscribers
 - 1,400 employees



Factor #4



PROFESSIONALISM



Professionalism

- Scholarly journals
- Certification
- Standards
- Educational opportunities



Professionalism: Scholarly journals

- The major national societies and their journals have led the way since long before the recent growth began
 - New England Historic Genealogical Society (1845)
 - New York Genealogical and Biographical Society (1869)
 - National Genealogical Society (1903)
 - American Society of Genealogists (1940)
- **Plus**
 - *The American Genealogist* (independent, 1922)

THE MAJOR NATIONAL PEER-REVIEWED JOURNALS

The American Genealogist

Whole Number 339 July 2011 Vol. 85, No. 3
(published November 2012)

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The New England Historical and Genealogical Register



Whole Number 670 April 2014
AmericanAncestors.org

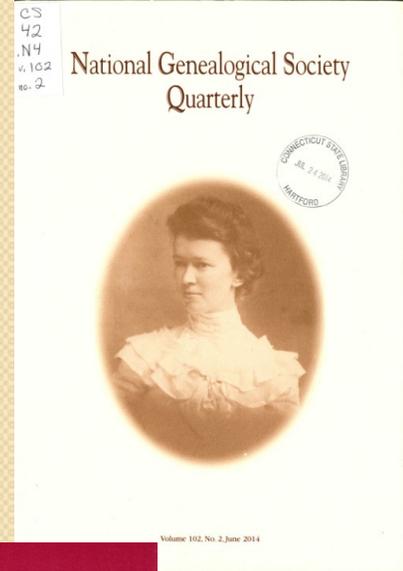
THE NEW YORK GENEALOGICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL RECORD



VOLUME 145 NUMBER 2

APRIL 2014

- Was Louisa, Daughter of Aaron and Lucy ([-?-]) Beard, the Second Wife of Thomas Streeter of Steuben County, New York?
- Civil War Diary of George M. Holmes of Albany County, New York
- John and Mary (Lyon) (Studwell) Wilson of Greenwich, Connecticut, and Bedford and Rye, New York
- William H. Mackey (1786-1864) of Rensselaerville, Albany County, New York *(concluded)*
- The Ancestry of Elder Henry Hait, Primitive Baptist Preacher of Connecticut and New York *(continued)*



THE GENEALIST



Published by
The American Society of Genealogists

Volume 28, No. 1

Spring 2014



Professionalism: Certification

- Stricter documentation requirements had developed in the 1920's and 1930's in response to fraudulent and/or incompetent practices
- First US certification established in 1964 by the Board for Certification of Genealogists (BCG)
- ICAP Accredited Genealogists, also 1964 (Mostly GSU, Mormon church, BYU)



Professionalism: Standards

- Proof standards “borrowed” from other disciplines were found to be inadequate--
- Including the “preponderance of the evidence” standard used until the development and publication of the first ever--
- “Genealogical Proof Standard” (GPS), finally adopted in 2010, only 4 years ago



Professionalism: Standards (continued)

- The Genealogical Proof Standard (2010) has 5 components:
 - A reasonably exhaustive search for all pertinent information
 - Complete and accurate source citations given for all information
 - Thorough analysis and correlation
 - Resolution of any contradictions or discrepancies
 - A soundly reasoned, coherently written conclusion



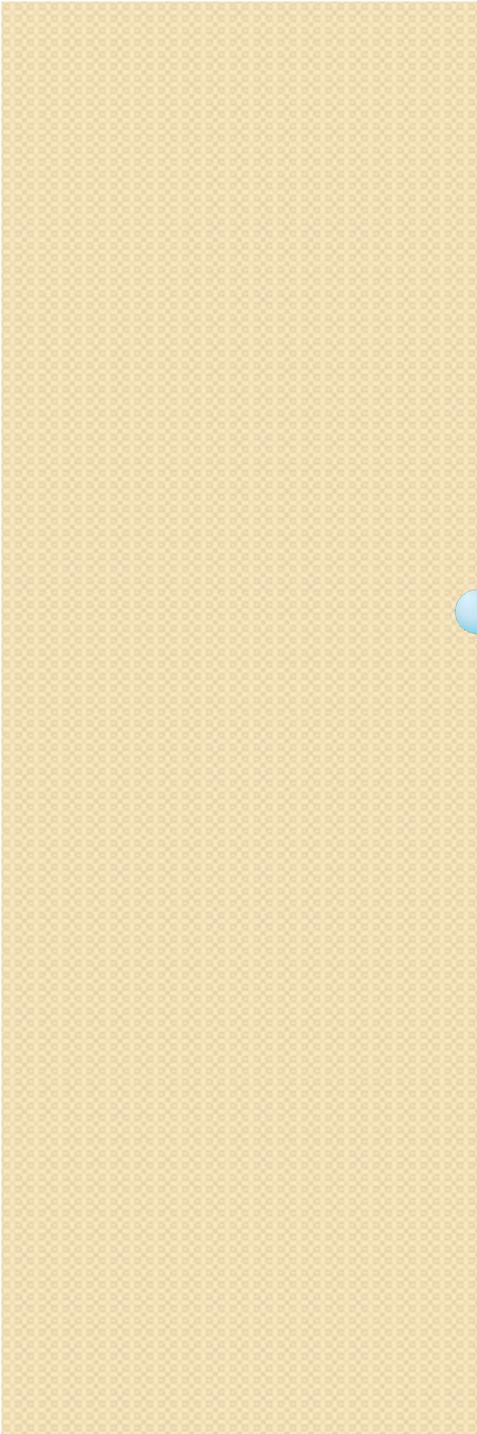
Professionalism: Standards (continued)

- Additional published guidelines
 - Work practices and final products
 - Professional development
 - Sharing of Information
 - Etc.
- Codes of conduct



Professionalism: Educational opportunities

- National Institute for Genealogical Research (1950) by National Archives
- Multiple national, regional and local seminars and workshops
- APG - Association of Professional Genealogists (1979) - now has 2,000 members in professional development
- Boston University Genealogical Research Programs – classroom and online (very successful and growing)



Factor #5:



LEADERSHIP



Leadership

- Already mentioned
 - Board for Certification of Genealogists
 - Association of Professional Genealogists
 - National Institute for Genealogical Research
 - American Society of Genealogists
 - The Major Societies (NEHGS, NGS, NYG&B, NSDAR)
- The Mormon Church

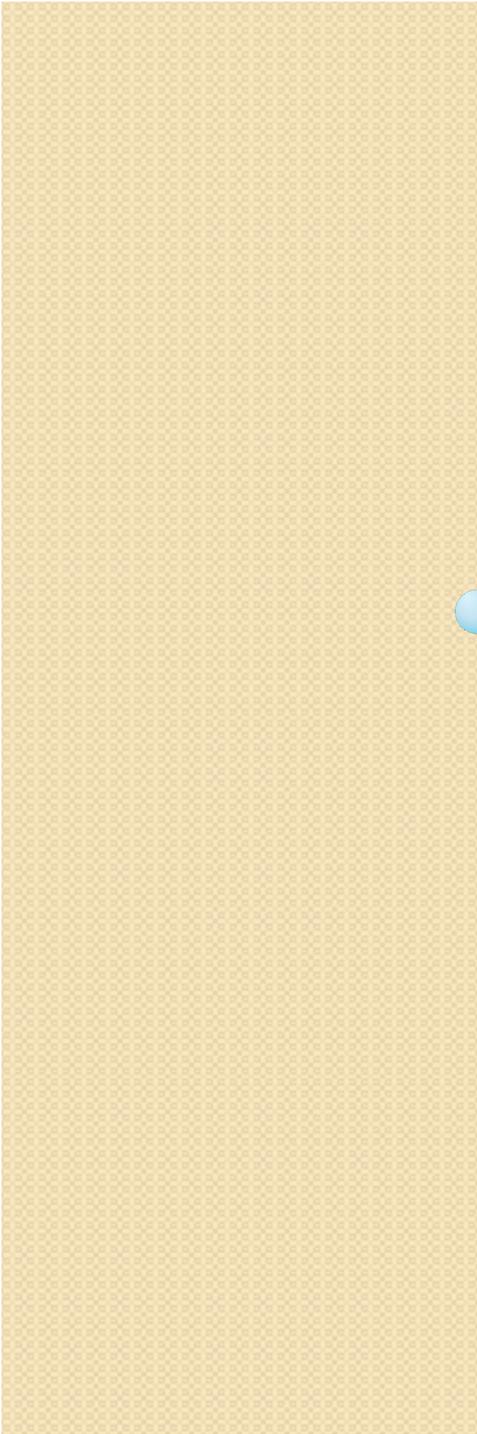


Leadership (continued)

- The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormon) outreach has had (and continues to have) a major influence on all aspects of genealogical research
 - Collection and preservation of copies of original records from all over the World
 - Making that information readily available free to all, including original source material online
 - Developing the first personal computer genealogy software (PAF)
 - Developing the first (and only) standard for exchanging genealogical data between computers (GEDCOM)
 - Completely free and unconditional searching via www.familysearch.org
 - Five floors of public genealogical library on Temple Square in Salt Lake City

THE FIVE-STORY FAMILY HISTORY LIBRARY IN SALT LAKE CITY





 **IN CONCLUSION --**



Summary of changes: Democratization

- Then (1960s)
 - Genealogy was done for membership or prestige
- Now (2010s)
 - Genealogy is done to know more about one's roots



Summary of changes: Technology

- Then (1960s)
 - All research was done by hand, visiting repositories in person or using regular mail
 - DNA testing was unheard of
- Now (2010s)
 - The Internet allows a vast amount of research to be done remotely
 - DNA is solving many previously unanswered questions

War Story Alert: I had to go to Bayonne, NJ in 1984 for records now available online free at home.



Summary of changes: Commercial interests

- Then (1960s)
 - Small cottage industry of a few private researchers
 - Book publishing by conventional means
- Now (2010s)
 - Multiple online free and subscription databases and services
 - Self-publishing web sites and software
 - DNA testing and analysis
 - Commercial research services

War Story Alert: I had to print a minimum 150 copies in 1986 – now the minimum number is = 1.



Summary of changes: Professionalism

- Then (1960s)
 - No formal education
 - No standards
 - No certification
 - No academic recognition
- Now (2010s)
 - Certification
 - College-level courses, including on-line offerings
 - Standards for work product and personal conduct

War Story Alert: I never had to reapply for PE registration in CT – now I have to reapply as a CG every 5 years.



Summary of changes: Leadership

- Then (1960s)

- Only the major national journals

- Now (2010s)

- National journals still lead the pack
- Major national societies growing in size and influence
- Certification organizations
- Professional associations



The growth is continuing

- More resources are becoming available every day – many of them free and/or available at home
- The DNA projects (most of them online) are extremely well managed and attracting increasing numbers of participants
- Self-publishing (hard-copy and Internet) is providing better and more economical ways to share with family members

Questions?





Thanks for your
attention !