Tracing Female Ancestors in America
Class 3: Researching Women in the Archives
February 2022

Meet today's presenter

Senior Archivist
Judy Lucey

OVERVIEW

• Presentation (60 mins.)
  - Types of materials
  - Using manuscripts at NEHGS
  - Locating archival collections

• Q&A (30 mins.)
Define your Research Goal

What are your objectives?

- Looking for birth, marriage or death information?
- Determine a maiden name?
- Identify parents or other female relatives?
- Add context to your female ancestor's life?

Think Outside the Box

- Think about the types of records you'll need
- Who would have created such a record?
- How do I go about finding it?
- Look for material created by others
Gather Information on Your Ancestor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Places Associated</th>
<th>Surnames Associated</th>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Societies</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seabrook/Pittsfield, NH</td>
<td>Chase</td>
<td>English</td>
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<td>Salem, MA</td>
<td>Locke</td>
<td>English</td>
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<tr>
<td>NH, Salem, MA</td>
<td>Bousley</td>
<td>English</td>
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Gathering information on your ancestor will help to identify potential archives that could help you find more information.

Archives

- Unpublished
- One of a kind, unique
- Lack bibliographic features
- Organized by person, organization or govt. body
- Closed stacks, staff retrieves
- High security

Unpublished Materials in Archives

- Diaries/Letters/Personal Papers
- Photographs/Postcards/Scrapbooks
- Material Culture (samplers, quilts, clothing, etc.)
- Business/Society/Organizational papers
- Social Club Records/ School Yearbooks, etc.
- Video and Audio files
- Oral histories
- Genealogical Research Papers
Where to Find Archives

Cultural Institutions
- Libraries
- Museums
- Historic Houses
- Historical Societies
- Genealogical Societies

Other Locations to Consider
- Colleges
- Government Facilities
- Corporations
- Religious Institutions
- Social Clubs
- Personal Collections

Manuscripts at NEHGS

Most popular
- Bible and family records
- Cemetery transcriptions
- Church records
- Town records
- Unpublished genealogies

Collections
- Genealogical research
  - Client research
  - Surname
  - Geographic
  - Ethnic
- Personal and Family papers
  - Letters
  - Diaries
  - Photos
  - School and business records
  - Genealogical research

Seeking names and dates
Bible and Family Records

Bible records

- Can record place of birth
  - Trace migration patterns of the family
- Identifies other family members
  - Widen focus of research
- Other information
  - Obituaries
Town Records

Book of Records by David Livermore (1769-1827) of Watertown, Mass., Mss A 8100

Orderly Book with deaths for Brimfield, Mass. 1817-1821, 1827-1834

Deacon Samuel Tidd’s wife, age 31, “by a fall from wagon”

Sgt. Charles Barrows Orderly Book, 1800-1835, Mss A 1932

Marriage Intentions

Cornish, New Hampshire

Joshua Wyman Wellman Papers 1720-1918, Mss 381
Unpublished Genealogies

• No published book on your family history?
• At NEHGS:
  – New England core strength
  – Northeast and Midwest research
  – Atlantic Canada

Using unpublished genealogies: Who is Sarah (Chubbuck) Parker’s father?

“Seeking Sarah Chubbuck, the Ultimate Brick Wall”

• Sarah Chubbuck born circa 1793
• “Born in Mass.” from 1850 census La Salle County, Illinois
• Marries Abraham Parker in 1811 at New Bedford, Mass.
• Researcher has identified several candidates for Sarah’s father
Samuel Chubbuck of Abington, Mass. and Vermont

Ensign Chubbuck, father of Samuel

- Family origins in Abington, MA
- Settler in Hillsborough Co., NH
- Tavern keeper in NH
- Some Hillsborough Co. settlers remove to Landgrove, VT

What have we learned
- Provides clues not necessarily the answers!
  - The compiled research assists in identifying potential candidates for Sarah's father
    - Learn migration patterns of Samuel Chubbuck and family
      - Abington, MA to Vermont via NH and onto NY
  - Identifies additional resources for further research
    - Land records
- Weakness – No key to abbreviated sources
QUESTIONS?

Genealogical Research Collections

- Types of Collections
  - Surname
  - Place
  - Client research
  - Ethnic groups

- Strengths and weaknesses
  - Original documents/letters
  - Extensive research of families
  - Transcription errors
  - Personal recollection may contain errors

Image from Inman Collection
SG INM 1 [228]

Tip

Trace Surnames and Place names
Surnames

• Follow the men!
• Search for collections with associated surnames
• Use our library catalog – Use keyword search feature

Surname Collections


Genealogical correspondence
Letter dated 18 Dec 1890

“Mrs. Lemuel Wheeler [Anna Ames], dying as she did in the Hardwick [Mass.] poor-house, had no grave-stone to mark the place of her burial…”

Anna (Ames) Wheeler, c.1773-1846
Geographic Locations

- Look for materials specific to a locality
- Collections of note at NEHGS:
  - Josiah Paine - Harwich, MA families
  - Gilbert Doane - Families of Fairfield, VT
  - Wayne Charles Hart - Farmington, CT

Moses Davis Family of Harwich, MA

Sarah Davis…was bound apprentice to Joseph Nye for four years from Dec 9, 1772

Albert Dunham Papers

- Descendants of John Dunham of Plymouth
- Genealogies, correspondence
- Albert Dunham's personal papers
  - Descriptions by female relatives documenting early life in Brattleboro, VT
Albert Dunham Papers

“Dear Cousin,… I inform you I am in good health.”

Letter to Esther (Barrows) Dunham of Hillsborough from Lydia Carpenter, Brattleboro, VT (late 18th century)

Women Record Keepers

• Winifred Lovering Holman, 1899-1989
  – Focused on Early New England and mostly traced male line

Example: What happened to Huldah (Peaslee) Chase?
Simon Chase and Huldah Peaslee

Prior to marriage, Simon loses most of property due to “dishonest man”

Huldah loses all possessions “taken by Sheriff”

“Suffered disgrace and want”
Analysis

**Strengths**
- Knowledge of family history by researcher
- Knowledge of archivist of the collection
- Information in letters directly from family members

**Weaknesses**
- Description in catalog record
- Not able to use Chase family letters for early descendants of Aquila Chase (17th and 18th)
- Not every family wrote letters

Tip
Chat up the archivist!
Tip
Identify records of Clergy, Justices of the Peace, or Physicians

Physician's records
- Account book of Rev. Samuel Wigglesworth, 1710-1768 (Mss A 1044)
- Practiced medicine in Ipswich, MA 1710-1712
- Accounts mention treatment of females in household

Almond Gushee (1773-1859), Justice of the Peace
- Resided Hope, Maine
  - Heard cases in his home
- Court cases 1800-1815
- Four bastardy cases among papers
  - All women residents of Hope, Maine
  - All name the fathers of the children
  - Court order for the accused to appear before judge
- “Clarissa Sawyer of Hope is now with a child… and that Shubael Pease of...”
Tip
Don’t overlook Overseers of the Poor Records

*Overseers of the Poor for the city of Boston, Mass.*

Nellie Ford, age 18 yrs., admission record, 3 December 1877 and gave birth to a child, Mary, Records of the Temporary Home for Women and Children, available at the City of Boston Archives, West Roxbury, Massachusetts.

Questions?

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Using Personal and Family Papers

• Types of materials
  – Original records
  – Bible and family records
  – Correspondence
  – Diaries/scrapbooks/photos
  – School and business records
  – Genealogical research

• Strengths and weaknesses
  – Everyday life and work
  – Insight into women’s lives
  – Eyewitness accounts to historical events
  – Records related to only that family

Photo of Elenore Filmore from the Marjorie Stewart Papers

Life in the Maine wilderness

• 1781 letter to ‘Honnored Father and Mother’ from Olive (Hovey) Pope (1746-1829)
• Arrival in Wells, ME struggles with farm
• Husband away serving in Revolutionary War

Ivory Hovey Family Papers, 1732-1798, Ms 68
Phyllis Gillingham Hansen Papers

- Descendants of Yeamos Gillingham (d. 1722) Frankford, PA
- Correspondence, genealogies, charts
- Recollections by female relatives

Hardinge Family Papers

- Sarah Ann Lillie (Bumstead) (Hardinge) Daniels (1824-1913)
- Abandoned by first husband, later divorced
- Takes odd jobs, moves frequently
- Becomes artist and patent holder to Pearletta Pictures process
“My Three Little Texans”  
(taken about 1862)

Hardinge Family Collection, 1787-1999, Mss 1050

Family Papers - Photographs

Wideman family reunion, St. John, Michigan

Joyce Grubaugh Holbrook Collection, Mss 1230
Women at Work

“Aunt Susie in the middle, Ann Arbor, MI” Betty Lou Morris Papers

Smith College Class of 1895 Basketball Team

Hinckley Family Papers, 1796-1956, Mss 1063

What was life like...?
Diaries

“Why was he permitted to return in safety, and behold his friends again in health and prosperity? While so many around us which left their homes never to return…”

Diary of Deidamia (Bourne) Swift, (1812-1888) Mss 658

General Store, Cherryfield, Maine for the Year 1845

- Account under male names (William Flynn)
- Purchasing household items such as flour, ginger, 3 yds. of flannel, etc.
- Only widows listed separately
- Places ancestor in specific place at specific time

Account book for William Burnham & Sons, 1844-1849, Mss 465

Katie McDonald from Boston Police 1896 Mug book, Mss A 764
Materials made by women

Scrapbooks, Autograph, and Friendship Books
Friendship book of hair weavings given to Helen Marion Adams of Fair Haven, VT, Mss A 130

Samplers
Lucy J Wheeler
Aged 9 yrs
1834

Wheeler family sampler
QUESTIONS?

Accessing manuscript materials at NEHGS

NEHGS Library Catalog

- Information about all books & collections of the 3 NEHGS repositories:
  - Our Research Library
  - R. Stanton Avery Special Collections (NEHGS)
  - Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center
- Searchable by title, author, subject, call number, and keyword
- Keyword search only searches the catalog & not the full text of an item
http://library.nehgs.org/

Example of Mss catalog record for a collection

http://library.nehgs.org/search/X
Digital Library and Archive

- An online "virtual" library & archives for any type of researcher
- Browsable materials & some with searchable transcriptions
- Materials not indexed like a genealogical database

Unidentified young girl from Garret L. Bergen Papers, Mss C 1537

http://digitalcollections.americanancestors.org/

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Tip
Start your search with the NEHGS library catalog

Searching beyond NEHGS
Published sources

- Examine sources used by authors
- Research for *Farm to Factory*
  - New Hampshire Historical Society
  - Merrimack Valley Textile Museum
  - University of Massachusetts [Lowell, Mass.]
  - Haverhill [Mass.] Public Library

Female worker at textile mills

“Dear Cousin, …I will tell you all I can of the folks that work in the Mills…we eat our breakfast at six and work till half past twelve…”

Letter by Charlotte ?, 1841 Oct 24, Lowell, Mass. to Ellen Chapman, NH
Focus on geographic area where ancestor last lived

- Local historical or genealogical society
- Local Libraries or Museums
- Colleges nearby
- Local newspapers or Society newsletters

Schenectady County Historical Society

Local Library Archives (ex: http://schenectadyhistorical.org/)
Class 3: Tracing Female Ancestors in America

Library Research Guide for Finding Manuscripts and Archival Collections

Contents:
- Introduction
- Searching Strategies
- Ancestral Archival Collections

Introduction

Library research is an important skill for family historians, and finding archival collections can be challenging. This guide will help you navigate the process.

Searching Strategies

- Use the Library of Congress Subject Headings to find relevant collections.
- Search by keywords related to your ancestors.
- Explore online databases and digitized collections.

Ancestral Archival Collections

- Manuscripts
- Photographs
- Oral histories
- Newspapers

Worldcat.org

View “Subjects”
Tip
Search for Women-Focused, Ethnic, or Religious Archives

Museum Archives (ex: heard.org/library/archives/)

Women’s organizations (ex: www.gfwc.org)
Putting it all Together

Identify
Identify Archives that may have records that could reveal more about your ancestor’s life.

Consider
Consider a variety of different types of archival material (letters, oral histories, photographs, material culture, etc.)

Utilize
Utilize records of others whose lives may have been similar to learn more about the world of your ancestor.

QUESTIONS?
Hire Research Services
research@nehgs.org
Chat with a Genealogist
AmericanAncestors.org/chat

Tracing Female Ancestors in America 2022

Thank you for registering for the online course, Tracing Female Ancestors in America.

Women make up 50% of your ancestry, yet often their lives, experiences, and even contributory names are left out of other records by society. In this course, you will learn strategies for finding women’s names, educating yourself through scholarship on the period, and developing resources and strategies for finding archival records documenting the lives and contributions of women and girls.

This course includes four 90-minute lectures and access to the audio and video recordings of each presentation and in-depth video activities with the instructor.

JOIN LIVE SESSIONS
Check here to join the webinars: https://www.americanancestors.org.webcastify.com.Class3TracingFemaleAncestors

If you are unable to attend a live webinar you will be able to watch a recording posted below.

COURSE SCHEDULE

AmericanAncestors.org/tracing-female-ancestors-america-2022
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