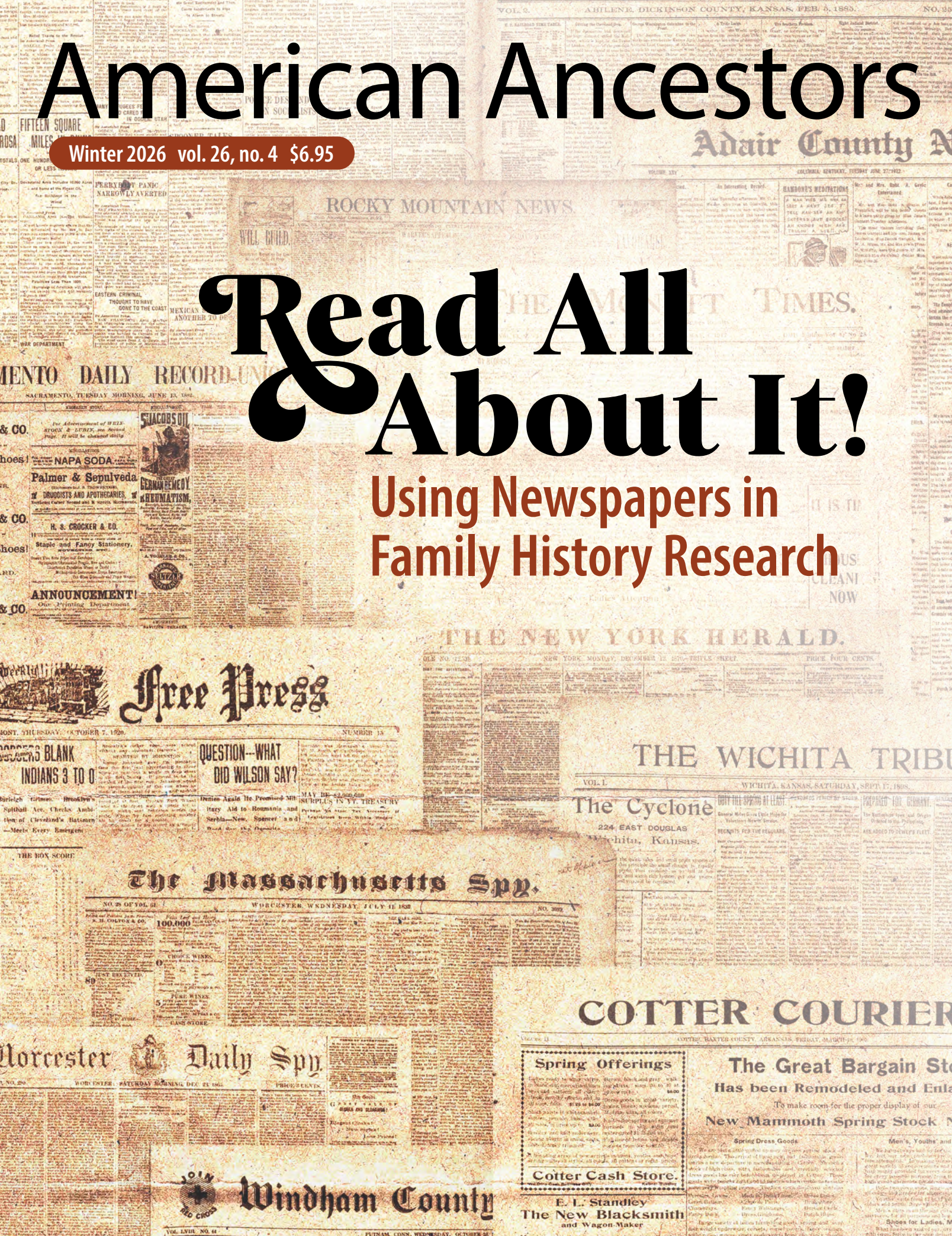


American Ancestors

Winter 2026 vol. 26, no. 4 \$6.95

Read All About It!

Using Newspapers in Family History Research



Adair County News

ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS

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THE WICHITA TRIBUNE

The Cyclone
224 EAST DOUGLAS
Wichita, Kansas

The Massachusetts Spy

COTTER COURIER

Worcester Daily Spy

Windham County

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E. L. Standley
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Vital records have been kept by Massachusetts towns since the early seventeenth century. The colony's first successful newspaper began publication in 1704. Thousands of published genealogies, local histories, study projects, and other references exist for Massachusetts research. This online course will provide a century-by-century look at the records, resources, repositories, and research strategies essential to exploring your Bay State roots. We will also look at historical context as well as migration and settlement patterns.

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Class 5: Planning Your Personal Research Tour to Massachusetts with Senior Genealogist of the Newbury Street Press Christopher C. Child

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THE BRUE FAMILY LEARNING CENTER



Winter 2026

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On the cover: A montage of historic newspapers from the Chronicling America collection (loc.gov/collections/chronicling-america).

Above: "A Characteristic sidewalk newsstand," New York City, ca. 1903. Library of Congress.

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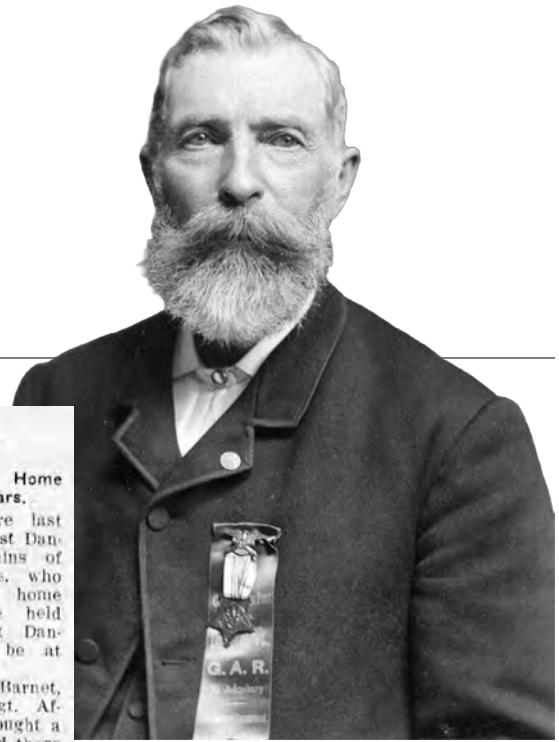
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A Message from the President and CEO

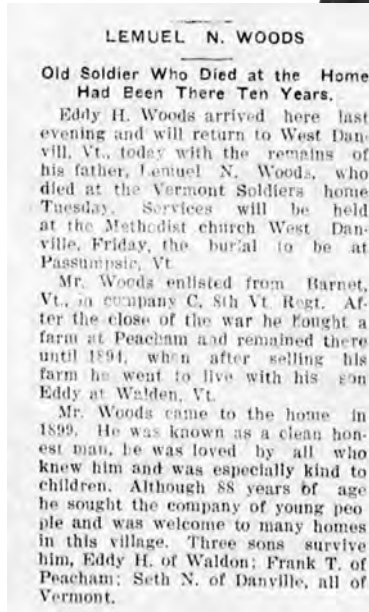


Through newspapers, I can trace the timeline of my great-great-grandfather Lemuel Newell Woods (1822–1910), a Union soldier in the 8th Vermont Volunteers. From the *Caledonian-Record* and the *Bennington Banner*, bits of his life come into focus: a pension increase, a visit to “old friends,” an obituary describing him as “a clean, honest man ... loved by all who knew him,” and noting he was “especially kind to children.”

Other newspaper accounts report on notable occurrences. An 1878 clipping states that “Charles Greenbanks and Lemuel Woods have recently exchanged farms. This gives Mr. Woods one of the best dairy farms in this section.” Another, written a few years earlier, recounts that “Mr. Woods met with a serious accident ... his horse ran away, kicked his buggy into pieces, breaking both bones of his leg.” The rhythm of Lemuel’s life, its small triumphs and sudden turns, is preserved in these local newspapers. The portrait I have of him, a bearded veteran wearing his Grand Army of the Republic ribbon, now conveys more than just an image. It carries a full-blown personality.

For family history researchers, newspapers are among the most valuable and revealing records available. They provide context and capture the human side that official documents often leave out. While a birth certificate lists a date, a birth announcement may show the pride of the parents. Where a census names someone, a newspaper tells a story.

Newspapers serve as a reminder of the depth and dignity of every life story. As our collections continue to grow, so do the opportunities to uncover these glimpses of your ancestors’ lives, to connect names with experiences, and to shed light on the communities that shaped them.



At American Ancestors, we offer access to an incredible collection of historic newspapers that make such discoveries possible. Through our website, members can search billions of pages that bring past generations vividly to life. These resources include

NewspaperArchive, 19th Century U.S. Newspapers, Early American Newspapers, Series 1: From Colonies to Nation, and *The New York Times* (full text from 1985, indexed from 1965).

All these collections can be accessed through AmericanAncestors.org, alongside our other digital collections and archival databases that together form one of the country’s richest resources for family discovery.

I invite you to visit us on Newbury Street in Boston or explore our online collections at AmericanAncestors.org. Search for the stories that fill the space between birth and death—the work, the setbacks, and the celebrations. These stories are the dash between the dates, the measure of a life fully lived. And when you find them, you may discover, as I did, the humanity behind the names in your own family history.

Warmest regards,

Ryan J. Woods, President & CEO

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From our readers

We want to hear from you! Email magazine@americanancestors.org or address letters to American Ancestors magazine, 97 Newbury Street, Boston, MA 02116. Letters will be edited for clarity and length. We regret that we cannot reply to every letter.

The fall issue [AMERICAN ANCESTORS (2025) 3] reported how the American Revolution split family loyalties. My ancestor John Acorn from Waldoborough, Maine, was a Loyalist who fought with the King's Rangers and then settled on Prince Edward Island. His first cousin, also named John Acorn, fought with the Patriots as a member of the Penobscot Expedition. Waldoborough is a small town, and the two families must have lived close together, if not actually on adjoining farms. I wonder how long that animosity continued after the war ended.

John Guthrie, Wellesley, Massachusetts

I enjoyed the "The Revolutionary War's Hard Winter" by Judith E. Harper [AMERICAN ANCESTORS (2025) 3:34–39]. During that winter, my 5th great-grandfather Ebenezer George Rogers traveled with his family on a sled pulled by oxen from the Syracuse, New York, area to Orleans County, where Ebenezer had purchased land from the Holland Land Company. The family thrived in Albion, New York, for the next 100 years.

Carol Lee Hannan, Brockport, New York

The article on the hard winter gave me real insight into what some of my "great-grands" faced as soldiers that winter. When I was thirteen, I once had to walk home (only six tenths of a mile) from our one-room schoolhouse into the start of a blizzard. We weren't expecting the storm, and I remember how the snow caked the front of my legs, up my knee socks over bare knees, and up the front of my not warm enough jacket. When I think of people forced to be out in severe winter conditions, I always think of that cold walk home and wonder how they managed.

Carol Hanson Pollnac, Saunderstown, Rhode Island

An article in the fall issue by Kyle Hurst, "Researching Independent Texans" [AMERICAN ANCESTORS (2025) 3:52–54], led me to the Texas Digital Archive (tsl.access.preservica.com), which was new to me. In it, I found a handwritten record, signed on December 31, 1837, by Thomas J. Rusk, first Secretary of War of the Republic of Texas and later a United States Senator, stating that my great-great-grandfather A. E. C. Johnson was part of the Army of the Republic of Texas company that guarded Santa Anna, the Mexican President captured at the Battle of San Jacinto. My thanks to the author and this magazine for opening new avenues of understanding for me.

Rob Drake, Granville, Ohio

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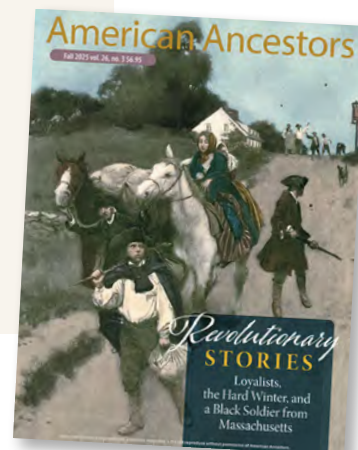
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In this issue

Welcome to our newspaper-themed issue! Within these pages, you will find guidance, resources, tips, and stories about conducting family history research in historic newspapers.

Senior Genealogist Rhonda McClure begins our coverage with her comprehensive research article, “Mining for Treasure in Newspapers.” In her State Spotlight column, Senior Genealogist of the Newbury Street Press Kyle Hurst looks at “Digitally Accessing Newspapers State by State.”

We also examine the context behind two fascinating types of “missing persons” ads. An excerpt from Judith Giesberg’s recent book, *Last Seen: The Enduring Search by Formerly Enslaved People to Find Their Lost Families*, describes how people separated by enslavement and war used newspapers to search for their loved ones. Gavin Beinart-Smollan and Senior Editor Jean Powers report on the work of the National Desertion Bureau. Photos and descriptions from the Bureau’s cases appeared in the *Jewish Daily Forward’s* “Gallery of Missing Husbands.”

Assistant Editor Valerie Beaudrault shares how newspapers brought a scandal in her family to light. Rounding out our theme, *Weekly Genealogist* readers present brief accounts of their unexpected discoveries in newspapers.

Working on this issue gave me a new appreciation for the valuable genealogical information I’ve gained from historic newspapers. My most surprising discovery was learning that an ancestor’s 1867 death was not due to a construction accident at the state capitol in Madison,



Wisconsin—as family lore claimed—but instead occurred under mysterious circumstances at a Madison brewery.

While reviewing this issue’s articles, I occasionally searched for my own ancestors and relatives in the databases mentioned. I was pleasantly surprised by how much I found. I realized that since I last undertook systematic newspaper research, many

more papers have become accessible online and search capabilities have greatly improved. Newly encouraged, I have resolved to undertake some methodical newspaper searches.

We wish you happy newspaper hunting! If you have feedback about this issue—or if you’d like to briefly share a newspaper discovery of your own—please email us at magazine@AmericanAncestors.org.

ABOVE: “CONNECTICUT NEWGIRLS (HARTFORD?),” ABOUT 1912–13, BY LEWIS HINE. DIGITAL IMAGE COURTESY OF GETTY’S OPEN CONTENT PROGRAM.



Lynn Betlock
Managing Editor
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AMERICAN ANCESTORS invites the submission of articles. Submissions should be directed to AMERICAN ANCESTORS, 97 Newbury Street, Boston, MA 02116, or to magazine@americanancestors.org.



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

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New searchable databases on AmericanAncestors.org

The Great Migration Study Project

We completed a major update to *The Great Migration: Immigrants to New England 1634–1635*. All the names in the vital records in these seven volumes have now been indexed and are searchable. This update allows users to search for immigrants by name, location, and year. Spouses and parents can now be searched in the relationship field. With this update, the Great Migration databases contain 60,911 records, 94,971 names, and 4,550 pages.

We also finished indexing the first volume of *Great Migration: Immigrants to New England, 1636–1638*, Volume I, A–Be, including the names in the vital records. This volume adds 9,307 records, 13,231 names, and 721 pages to the Great Migration collection.

Kentucky: Enslaved Church Members Project

10 Million Names has partnered with the nonprofit Reckoning, Inc., which has digitized, transcribed, and indexed church records naming enslaved people for twenty-eight Catholic parishes in Kentucky. This database includes 11,645 searchable records and 26,456 names. The database contains both antebellum and post-slavery baptismal records (including names of enslaved sponsors/godparents), marriage records, and death/burial records. This database will continue to grow as Reckoning, Inc., collects additional records from churches across Kentucky.

Massachusetts: Biographical Entries of People of African Descent in New Bedford and Coastal Towns Also Once Part of Dartmouth—1 new volume

Drawn from a research study by historian Kathryn Grover, this database consists of biographical entries for every person of color in New Bedford and historic Dartmouth (present day Westport, Dartmouth, and Fairhaven) through 1860. Volume 3: Surnames K–R adds 10,662 names, 338 pages, and 5,259 records.

ABOVE, RIGHT: GIBSON, JACKSON, NICKERSON AND TINKHAM FAMILY RECORDS, FAMILY REGISTER, 1827–1938. R. STANTON AVERY SPECIAL COLLECTIONS.

Portsmouth, NH: School Records, 1846–1958

This database contains 587,983 records and 671,975 names. Ninety-seven volumes were recently added for the following schools: Atlantic Heights, Bartlett, Cabot, Farragut, Franklin, Haven, Jones, Manning, Peabody, and Woodbury. Included are attendance lists, information on pupil residences, names of parents, some student vital records, names of staff members, curriculums, and notes on a variety of topics, such as runaways and punishments. This database is the result of our collaboration with the Portsmouth Athenæum.



R. Stanton Avery Special Collections: Family Registers and Bible Records

We are pleased to announce a new database, *R. Stanton Avery Special Collections: Family Registers and Bible Records*. This database, compiled from family registers and Bible records in our archives, currently contains 685 volumes, 63,127 names, and 31,990 records. More volumes will be added.

Family Bibles are a significant primary source for genealogists. In addition to often documenting vital records for multiple generations of a family, Bibles sometimes include notes on military service, occupations, and other interesting life details. Some Bibles contain additional material, such as newspaper clippings (especially obituaries). This supplementary material is included in the database.

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Brick walls

Send a brief narrative (under 175 words) about your “brick wall” to magazine@americanancestors.org or to **AMERICAN ANCESTORS** magazine, 97 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.

Despite many decades of avid research, the origins of my great-great-grandfather **Russell R. Plummer** remain a mystery. He consistently listed his birth date as June 1814 and his birthplace as Vermont. He married Sarah A. “Sally” Perry, who was probably of Elizabethtown, New York. The couple had eleven children: Caroline, Sarah, Heny, George, Franklin, Samuel, Edwin, Darius, William, Emma, and Charlotte “Lotte.” Sarah, Russell’s wife, died in 1885 in Champlain, New York. Russell died December 21, 1886, in Mooers, New York.

Paul Taylor, Hingham, Massachusetts; pjtaylor7x@gmail.com

My thirty-year brick wall is the parentage and origin of **Pierre Damas**. He was born about 1762 and married Marie Louise Fontaine about 1792. Their children included Marie Françoise, Adélaïde (my ancestor), Michel Forton, and Louis. Pierre died in Quebec City, age 42, on July 13, 1804; his death record is available in the Drouin Collection. Two further documents created after his death are available at the Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec. On August 29, 1804, his widow filed a request to “renounce, on behalf of her minor children, the inheritance of the late Pierre Damas, bailiff of the Court of King’s Bench of the District of Quebec.” On October 16, 1804, his son Michel Forton requested the court to allow him to appoint a “Curator to the said vacant estate.” [The “Damas” spelling is confirmed in multiple original records and is engraved on the silver birth spoon of his daughter Adélaïde Damas, born 1800.]

Michael Wood, Munich, Germany; mmwood@gmail.com

I am searching for the parents of **Francis Holmes**, who was born about 1676, birthplace unknown. He married Rebecca Wharfe on February 15, 1693, in Boston, Massachusetts. Francis and Rebecca were the proprietors of the Bunch of Grapes Tavern located at the

corner of King Street and Mackerel Lane in Boston. The couple had four sons and two daughters. Daughters Anne and Rebecca married into the William Coffin and Jonathan Amory families of Boston. Francis died on May 4, 1726, in Charleston, South Carolina.

Doris M. Davies, Thomasville, Georgia; ddavies1772@gmail.com

I am seeking the parents of **Zebulon Sutton** (1752–1840), who was born in New Jersey and died in Knox County, Ohio. He is one of my Revolutionary War Patriots. He served in the New Jersey militia and saw action in many battles, including the Battle of Long Island. I just finished installing a memorial for him in Martinsburg, Ohio, next to his wife, Sarah Hull (1762–1830), as I could not find his burial location. I am a descendant of his son Zebulon (1801–1891). The name Zebulon was used for several generations of family members. I have been told that the grandfather of the older Zebulon is probably Daniel Sutton (1681–1761), who was married to Patience Martin (1682–1722). If this is true, I would be able to prove a *Mayflower* connection.

Teresa Anderson, Plymouth, Minnesota; tmanderson4427@gmail.com

My brick wall is my great-grandfather **Joseph Sylvester Murray**, who claimed he was born in Pennsylvania in 1853. Supposedly, Joseph’s father, who was Irish or Scottish, died when Joseph was a baby, and his mother, who was possibly Italian, died when Joseph was nine. Joseph then lived with the Samuel Lamb family in Ridott, Illinois. Lamb was born in 1814 in Centre County, Pennsylvania, but I’ve found no connection to Joseph. With DNA testing, I’ve identified over forty cousins unknown to me who have a common ancestor, **Paul Wasser**, who died in McElhattan, Pennsylvania, in 1855. But I have not been able to identify a link between Joseph and Paul Wasser.

Alan Hintermeister, Minneapolis, Minnesota; abhwolf@gmail.com

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Charles McAlpin Pyle, Jr., age five, with his pet goat in Morris County, New Jersey, in 1929. Unfortunately, the next year the goat died in a barn fire caused by a lightning strike. This event was one of Charles's few early childhood memories.

Elizabeth Handler, Needham, Massachusetts, Charles's daughter

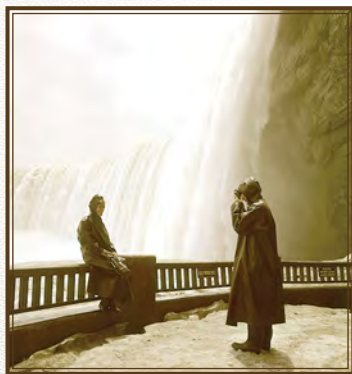
Pet photos

Thank you to the many members who submitted their great photos! We wish we had room for more.



Angeline (Bowles) (Clifford) Howland (1827–1917) sitting with her cat in a field in Landaff, New Hampshire, where she was a lifelong resident.

David Martin, Sharon, Massachusetts,
Angeline's great-great-grandson



WANTED Photos of famous places!

Send us your high-resolution photos of ancestors or relatives at well-known landmarks or attractions (along with captions of no more than 50 words). We'll feature a few of the most striking images in our spring issue. Email magazine@americanancestors.org.

"TOURISTS IN FRONT OF THE FALLS, NIAGARA FALLS," 1959, ARCHIVES OF ONTARIO.



Elsa Wood with her pet crow in the 1930s. Elsa, a nursery schoolteacher in Milton, Massachusetts, would put him in a hat box and take him to school on the subway.

Serena Hayes Caperonis,
North Andover, Massachusetts,
Elsa's daughter



This photo of **Charles Bennett**, a native of Vermont, and his dog, **Jake**, was taken in the late 1800s in the the Eastern Townships of Quebec.

Wendy Barnes, Essex, Connecticut, Charles's great-great-granddaughter



Ten-year-old **Clarence Smith** posed with his beloved American bulldogs in 1916. He had just moved from his hometown of West Branch, Iowa, to Brownsville, Texas.

Clarence Smith, Minneapolis, Minnesota, Clarence's grandson



Young **William Kribble Sr.** is pictured about 1919 in Moline, Illinois, with a big canine friend whose name is sadly lost to history.

Meg Kribble, Boston, Massachusetts, William's granddaughter



Frank Richmond with his pet raccoon, **Jimmy**, about 1930, in Smyrna, Michigan.

Dorotha Piechocki, Wyoming, Michigan, Frank's granddaughter

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2/7 | Tour Brim-DeForest Library Tour Free

2/7 | Hybrid Lecture Revolution in the Records: Tracing Black Patriots and Loyalists in the American Revolution Free

2/10 | Online Lecture Faith and Family: Tracing the Religious Roots of Ireland's Past Free

2/13 | Online Lecture All My Worldly Goods: English Royal Weddings \$

2/14 | Hands-On History Introduction to Calligraphy, Boston, MA \$

2/17 | Online Lecture Imagining Early American Jews Free

2/18 | Online American Inspiration Author Event *Desi Arnaz: The Man Who Invented Television* with Todd S. Purdum \$

2/21 | Lecture Getting Started in Family History, Boston, MA \$

2/21 | Group Roots & Branches: A Research Club for American Ancestors Members, Boston, MA Free

2/24 | Online American Inspiration Author Event *Belonging: An Intimate History of Slavery and Family in New England* with Gloria McCahon Whiting Free

2/27 | Online Lecture La Foce: Paradise in Tuscany Free

March 2026

Starting 3/3 | Online Seminar Finding Irish Ancestors: A Guide to Civil and Church Records, 5 classes \$

3/11 | Online American Inspiration Author Event *Claire McCardell: The Designer Who Set Women Free* with Elizabeth Evitts Dickinson Free

3/12 | Online Lecture The Basics of Massachusetts Family History Research Free

3/13 | Online Lecture Slain, Beheaded & Imprisoned: How the Howard Family Survived the Tudors Free

3/14 | Tour Brim-DeForest Library Tour Free

3/14 | Hands-On History Dear Diary, Make Your Own Journal, Boston, MA \$

3/19 | Online Lecture In Concert: How Jewish Women Built Community Through Music Free

3/21 | Hybrid Lecture Revolution in the Records: Beyond the Battlefield: Women and the American Revolution \$

3/27 | Online Lecture The Houses of Guinness Free

3/28 | Lecture Getting Started in Family History, Boston, MA \$



3/28 | Group Roots & Branches: A Research Club for American Ancestors Members, Boston, MA Free

3/31 | Online American Inspiration Author Event *Leaving Home: A Memoir in Full Colour* with Mark Haddon \$

April 2026

Starting 4/1 | Online Seminar Massachusetts Research: Four Centuries of History and Genealogy, 5 classes \$

4/2–4 | Research Tour Midwest Genealogy Center, Independence, MO \$ (see page 12)

4/9 | Online Lecture The Battle of Dunbar: Researching the Scottish Prisoners of War Free

4/11 | Tour Brim-DeForest Library Tour Free

4/11 | Hands-On History Digitizing Family Papers and Photographs, Boston, MA \$

4/13 | Online American Inspiration Author Event *The Black Family Who Built America: The McKissacks, Two Centuries of Daring Pioneers* with Cheryl McKissack Daniel Free

4/14 | Online Lecture Finding the Elusive Maiden Name \$

4/17 | Online Lecture Neoclassical Decorative Arts and Architecture in the English Country House \$

4/18 | Hybrid Lecture From Tyranny to Freedom: Irish Contributions to the American Revolution \$

4/21 | Open House Tracing Revolutionary Roots at American Ancestors, Boston, MA Free

4/25 | Lecture Getting Started in Family History, Boston, MA \$

4/25 | Group Roots & Branches: A Research Club for American Ancestors Members, Boston, MA Free

May 2026

Starting 5/5 | Online Seminar Tracing Scottish Ancestry: Records, Resources, and Research Strategies, 5 classes \$

5/7 | Online Lecture Breaking New Ground: How Land Records Can Help in Family History Research Free

5/8 | Online Lecture Forged in Revolution: The Story of Paul Revere's Sons of Liberty Bowl Free

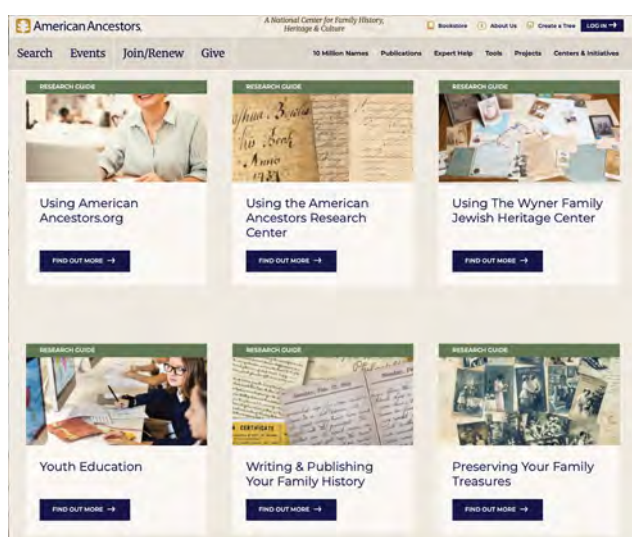
5/9 | Tour Brim-DeForest Library Tour Free

5/9 | Hands-On History Creating a Family History Slideshow, Boston, MA \$

5/12–16 | Research Tour Upstate New York Research Tour, Albany, NY \$ (see page 12)

5/16 | Hybrid Lecture Revolution in the Records: Germans in the Revolution: Hessians and Patriots \$

5/20 | Lecture & Tea Murder Mysteries & the English Country House, Boston, MA \$



Archived Webinars, Subject Guides, Downloads, and More

Missed a past webinar? Want to learn more about a particular subject at your own pace? Looking for easy-to-use templates to help keep your research organized? Discover the hundreds of resources waiting for you at our Online Learning Center. (You will need to log in with your member account to access the content.)

- ▶ Watch instructional videos and archived webinars at our video library: AmericanAncestors.org/video-library
- ▶ Read research guides on a variety of topics: AmericanAncestors.org/tools/research-guides
- ▶ Download charts, family group sheets, and other organizing templates: AmericanAncestors.org/tools/research-templates

5/23 | Lecture Getting Started in Family History, Boston, MA \$

5/23 | Group Roots & Branches: A Research Club for American Ancestors Members, Boston, MA Free

June 2026

Starting 6/3 | Online Seminar Land Records Unlocked: A Genealogist's Guide to Deeds and Other Records, 5 classes \$

6/4–6 | Research Tour Research Getaway, Boston, MA \$ (see page 12)

6/9 | Online American Inspiration Author Event *Combee: Harriet Tubman, the Combahee River Raid, and Black Freedom during the Civil War* with Edda L. Fields-Black Free

6/11 | Online Lecture Understanding Plimoth Colony Through Bradford's Writings Free

6/12 | Online Lecture Avery, Gottlieb & Rothko: By the Sea Free

6/13 | Tour Brim-DeForest Library Tour Free

6/20 | Hands-On History Photography Identification, Boston, MA \$

6/20 | Concert Revolution in the Records: From Plimoth to Yorktown Concert \$

6/26 | Online Lecture Murder Mysteries & the English Country House \$

6/27 | Lecture Getting Started in Family History, Boston, MA \$

6/27 | Group Roots & Branches: A Research Club for American Ancestors Members, Boston, MA Free

July 2026

Starting 7/2 | Online Seminar Beyond the *Mayflower*: History, Culture, and Encounter in Plimoth Colony, 5 weeks \$

7/11 | Tour Brim-DeForest Library Tour Free

7/11 | Hands-On History An Introduction to Hand Sewing, Boston, MA \$

7/14 | Online Lecture Top Resources for Atlantic Canadian Research Free

7/18 | Hybrid Lecture Revolution in the Records: Drums, Diaries, and Duty: The Roles of Children in Revolutionary America \$

7/21 | Online Lecture Confirming Parentage \$

7/25 | Lecture Getting Started in Family History, Boston, MA \$

7/25 | Group Roots & Branches: A Research Club for American Ancestors Members, Boston, MA Free

August 2026

Starting 8/3 | Online Seminar Tides of History: Tracing Family History in Atlantic Canada, 5 classes \$

8/7 | Online Lecture A Room with a View: A Tour of Merchant Ivory's English Movie Locations \$

8/8 | Tour Brim-DeForest Library Tour Free

8/8 | Hands-On History Preservation Show & Tell, Boston, MA \$

8/11–15 | Research Tour Come Home to New England, Boston, MA \$ (see page 12)

8/15 | Hybrid Lecture Revolution in the Records: Conscience and Conflict: The Quaker Experience in the American Revolution \$

8/22 | Lecture Getting Started in Family History, Boston, MA \$

8/22 | Group Roots & Branches: A Research Club for American Ancestors Members, Boston, MA Free

*Schedule is subject to change. \$ indicates a paid program.

Programs & tours

AmericanAncestors.org/events



SCAN ME

Upcoming Research Tours & Programs*

Not all records for family history research are online! A goldmine of resources awaits you at archives, libraries, and other repositories across the country. Whether you are just starting your genealogical journey or have been researching for years, let American Ancestors be your guide. Benefit from special orientations and tutorials, one-on-one consultations, informative lectures, and more. Register at AmericanAncestors.org/events.

Research Tour to the Midwest Genealogy Center, Independence, MO

April 2–4, 2026

Join experts from American Ancestors for a series of lectures, one-on-one consultations, and assisted research at the Midwest Genealogy Center—one of America's preeminent family history research centers. Access published resources that span all fifty states, including published genealogies, local histories, compiled county records, and more.

Members: \$975; **Non-Members:** Add \$150.

Upstate New York Research Tour, Albany, NY

May 12–16, 2026

Explore the New York State Library and the New York State Archives with experts from American Ancestors by your side. This popular tour includes individual consultations, lectures from experts, and group meals.

Members: Single \$1,850; Double \$1,600/each; Double with Guest \$2,095; Commuter \$1,200. **Non-Members:** Add \$150 to the above prices.

Research Getaway at American Ancestors, Boston, MA

June 4–6, 2026

Escape to Boston for three days of research, one-on-one consultations, orientations, lectures, and social events. You will explore the rich offerings at American Ancestors and benefit from the knowledge and assistance of our expert genealogists.

Early bird pricing before February 28, 2026!

Members: \$600; **Non-Members:** \$750.

Add \$100 if registering after the early bird deadline.

Come Home to New England, Boston, MA

August 11–15, 2026

American Ancestors has been collecting information about families in America for more than 180 years. Our collections span the globe and cover the United States, especially New England and New York. Devote almost a full week to leveraging the resources and expertise at American Ancestors. In addition to daily lectures, one-on-one consultations, and orientations, this special “Come Home” program will include a walking tour of Revolutionary Boston.

Early bird pricing before April 1, 2026!

Members: \$1,200; **Non-Members:** \$1,350.

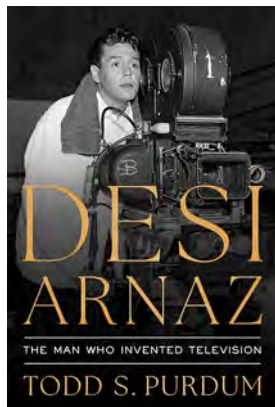
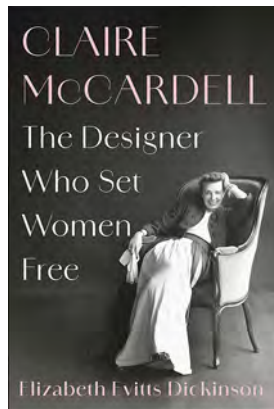
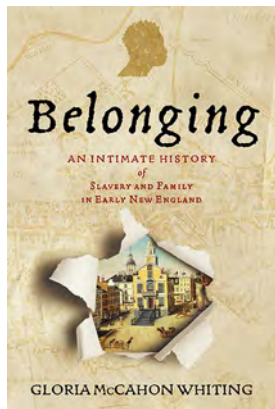
Add \$100 if registering after the early bird deadline.

*Schedule is subject to change.



AMERICAN INSPIRATION

A BEST-SELLING AUTHOR SERIES
BY AMERICAN ANCESTORS®



See American Inspiration events in our calendar listings on page 10.

Our literary programs are often presented in partnership with other anchor cultural organizations and museums, including the Boston Public Library, GBH Forum Network, Massachusetts Historical Society, and Peabody Essex Museum. Thanks also to series sponsors Susan K. and John D. Thompson.

Hosted by Director of Literary Programs Margaret M. Talcott, our American Inspiration speaker series presents engaging discussions on newly published histories, biographies, and memoirs from renowned authors.

This winter and spring will sparkle with a great range of books and authors focused on America's history, memoir-writing, and families.

On February 18, we will gain insight on American media—particularly broadcast entertainment—when Todd S. Purdum, author of *Desi Arnaz: The Man Who Invented Television*, is joined by moderators Harry Castleman and Walter J. Podrazik, coauthors of *Watching TV: American Television Season by Season*. In a virtual event on February 24, we'll explore Black history through *Belonging: An Intimate History of Slavery and Family in Early New England* with author Gloria McCaHon Whiting, on screen with Kyera Singleton of Tufts University and The Royall House and Slave Quarters. This event is presented in partnership with 10 Million Names.

On March 11 we'll learn about American women's fashion and *Claire McCardell: The Designer Who Set Women Free* when biographer Elizabeth Evitts Dickinson talks with fashion curator Petra Slinkard of the Peabody Essex Museum.

Writer Mark Haddon (author of *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*) will headline our March 31 exploration of autobiography. With prize-winning author Claire Messud, Haddon will discuss *Leaving Home: A Memoir in Full Colour*. And, on April 12, we'll focus on family businesses and Black history when construction executive Cheryl McKissack Daniel speaks about her book *The Black Family Who Built America: The McKissacks, Two Centuries of Daring Pioneers* with Brennan Gilbane Koch of Gilbane Building Company.

Catch up with American Inspiration!

- *Angelica: For Love and Country in a Time of Revolution* with author Molly Beer and moderator Julie Flavell
- *Native Nations: A Millennium in North America* with author Kathleen DuVal and moderator Nicole Eustace
- *The Road That Made America: A Modern Pilgrim's Journey on the Great Wagon Road* with author James Dodson and moderator Ann G. Lawthers



Visit AmericanAncestors.org/inspire to learn about upcoming events and view a selection of recent book talks.

News

American
STORIES

Register today!

American Stories, American Lives Gala
Honoring Actress Glenn Close and
Historian Dr. Jane Kamensky
April 23, 2026

American
LIVES



Glenn Close



Dr. Jane Kamensky

Join us on Thursday, April 23, at the Boston Harbor Hotel for our annual **American Stories, American Lives Gala**. This year we will present two American Ancestors Lifetime Achievement Awards: to actress Glenn Close for contributions to the field of American arts and culture and to Dr. Jane Kamensky for contributions to the field of history. Throughout the evening, we will commemorate the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution and the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

Following a lively reception and dinner, Dr. Kamensky, president and CEO of Thomas Jefferson's Monticello and professor emerita of history at Harvard, will be in conversation with American Ancestors President and CEO Ryan J. Woods about Kamensky's contributions to American history and scholarship. We will then hear from Ms. Close on her career spanning more than five decades on stage and screen and on her dedication to ending the stigma and discrimination around mental illness through Bring Change to Mind, a nonprofit organization she cofounded in 2010.

For each honoree, we will share stories of their ancestors and heritage as researched by the expert genealogists at American Ancestors. This will be a one-of-a-kind evening not to be missed!

Thank you to Gala Patrons Brady and Jessica Brim-DeForest of Balvaird and Blairlogie.



Scan Me

Visit AmericanAncestors.org/2026Gala to purchase tickets, learn about benefactor and sponsor opportunities, and more. For more information about the American Stories, American Lives Gala, contact Special Events Manager Lauren Vitacco at signatureevents@americanancestors.org.

Proceeds of the American Stories, American Lives Gala help fund our groundbreaking work, including educational programs, youth outreach, original research and scholarship, diversity programming, publications, online services, and content development.



Family History Month 2025

In celebration of Family History Month, our Family Heritage Experience was free to visitors on Fridays in October. In total, 397 visitors explored our interactive exhibits and family heirloom displays. Our Brim-DeForest Library was also free for nonmembers throughout October. We welcomed 259 visitors to the library who availed themselves of our extensive collection of books, manuscripts, maps, and digital resources. Our expert staff was on site to offer guidance and assistance throughout both buildings.

Lisa and Weston Foley of Plymouth, Massachusetts, visited our Family Heritage Experience in October.

August Adventures on Newbury Street

On Friday, August 29, American Ancestors held an open house as part of August Adventures, a Massachusetts-wide program sponsored by the Highland Street Foundation. August Adventures supports thirty-one open houses—each on a different day in August at a different Massachusetts cultural institution. This program was our largest event since our April 2025 reopening. We welcomed 237 individuals and families into our building and communicated with many more walking by. Costumed greeters welcomed visitors outside the building while other staff members engaged passersby with a special cemetery scavenger hunt in the garden. Inside, our staff provided brief lectures on getting started in family history, conservation demonstrations, and hands-on activities for kids. Visitors were granted full access to our Family Heritage Experience and our Brim-DeForest Library. We also provided forty-one free twenty-minute genealogical consultations. Many guests spent several hours with us. We look forward to participating again next August.





We welcome Dorothy Kauffman as our new Chief Advancement Officer

We are pleased to announce that Dorothy Kauffman has joined our staff as Chief Advancement Officer (CAO). Dorothy served as CAO at the Center for Jewish History, where she led the organization's first comprehensive advancement plan. As CAO at DOROT, she supported strengthening intergenerational connections for older adults. As Vice President of Development at the National Minority Supplier Development Council, she promoted business opportunities in communities of color. Dorothy served as Executive Director at the Royal Academy of Arts and The Jerusalem Foundation. Before moving into the nonprofit sector, she worked in media, publishing, and classical music, including as a producer and on-air personality at WQXR. As a key member of the American Ancestors senior leadership team, she will serve as the principal architect of our multi-year advancement strategy—working closely with our President & CEO, trustees, and the Advancement team to drive revenue growth, expand and deepen donor engagement, and secure the philanthropic support necessary to achieve our ambitious strategic goals.

Home Movie Day at American Ancestors

On Saturday, October 11, American Ancestors, in partnership with experts from Harvard Library Preservation Services, hosted a Home Movie Day in our historic rotunda in Boston. Approximately thirty attendees viewed 8mm, Super 8, and VHS home movies provided by participants. The films spanned the early 1960s to the early 2000s and included scenes from the 1964 World's Fair, a family Christmas, birthdays at home, a family vacation on Cape Cod, weddings, and other family moments. Harvard's Senior Time-Based Media Conservator Melanie Meents helped prepare the films for viewing and provided general guidance on film preservation and digitization vendors. Harvard Film Conservator Adrienne Jorge was our expert projectionist.

Home Movie Day is an international phenomenon started in 2002 by a group of film archivists concerned about the survival and continued enjoyment of home movies shot on film during the twentieth century. We plan to host Home Movie Day again this October!



Scan Me

The 2026 Young Family Historians Essay Contest is now open!

Students in grades 4 through 12 are invited to share a story of an ancestor who was “revolutionary” and explain how their actions were new or impactful for their time. Entries are due April 1, 2026. Visit AmericanAncestors.org/essay-contest-2026 for rules and judging criteria.

Staff news

We are happy to welcome the following new staff members! **MADLINE BIRNBAUM** is Assistant Archivist. **MAREN CLARK** is Philanthropic Research and Portfolio Advisor. **TERA ELLEFSON** is Collection Services Librarian. **KATHERINE GARDNER** and **LAINA MEAGHER** are Member Services Associates. **KATIE HENDRICK** and **GABRIELLE ORR** are Researchers. **PATRICIA OLSHAN** is Manager of Member Services. **LAUREN VITACCO** is Special Events Manager.



Jewish Heritage Center Programming and Outreach Manager Sarah Quiat welcomes visitors to the JHC open house on August 7, 2025.

Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center open house

On Thursday, August 7, the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center (JHC) at American Ancestors welcomed visitors to its new space for a lively and engaging open house. Guests enjoyed learning about the JHC’s mission to preserve and share the history of Jewish life in New England, viewing special highlights from the archives, and meeting the expert staff behind the work. Tours of the new Family Heritage Experience and JHC office offered an inside look at how history, heritage, and genealogical research come together to inspire connections across generations.

The JHC thanks everyone who joined in celebrating this new chapter. If you missed the event, stay tuned! There will be more opportunities ahead to visit, explore, and connect with Jewish history and community at future programs and open houses.



JHC welcomes Madeline DeDe-Panken as Historian in Residence

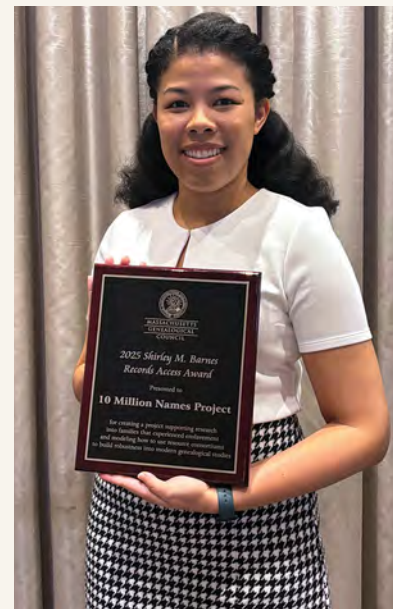
The Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center (JHC) at American Ancestors is delighted to welcome Madeline DeDe-Panken as our 2025–2026 Historian in Residence. Madeline is collaborating with JHC staff to create engaging content, programs, and resources

for audiences of all kinds. Drawing on the JHC’s rich archival collections that document the history of Jewish individuals, families, organizations, and communities across New England, Madeline is developing public programming, articles, and research guides that illuminate and contextualize American Jewish history.

A historian with broad interests in culture, gender, and public knowledge, Madeline brings extensive experience from fellowships at The Center for Women’s History at New York Historical, New York Botanical Garden, Schlesinger Library, and Massachusetts Historical Society. She holds BA and MA degrees from Clark University and is completing her PhD at the Graduate Center, CUNY. Madeline’s current academic research explores the rise of popular mycology at the turn of the twentieth century, emphasizing women’s roles in science and foraging.

10 Million Names receives the Shirley M. Barnes Records Access Award

We are delighted to announce that in October our 10 Million Names project received the Shirley M. Barnes Records Access Award from the Massachusetts Genealogical Council. This award recognizes organizations that have made outstanding contributions to improving access to historical records. For 10 Million Names, this award honors not only our work, but also the generations whose names and stories we seek to restore. Every name recovered brings us closer to truth, healing, and connection.



10 Million Names Volunteer Manager Danielle Rose accepted the Shirley M. Barnes award.

Revolutionary Roots

As part of our efforts to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution and the signing of the Declaration of Independence, American Ancestors recently launched our “Revolutionary Roots” website. The site brings together guides, articles, how-to videos, databases, blog posts, and other resources for researching Patriot and Loyalist ancestors, applying to lineage societies, and delving more deeply into the stories of the Revolution through the holdings of the R. Stanton Avery Special Collections. The website also contains a dedicated calendar that highlights upcoming events and programs, and a catalog of past Revolutionary War-themed events. We will continue to add to this site over the next several years, through the anniversary of the Revolution.



Sign up to receive updates at revolutionaryroots.AmericanAncestors.org.



Patriots of Color: Reclaiming Stories of Courage, Resistance, and Legacy

April–December 31, 2026

A new temporary exhibit, *Patriots of Color: Reclaiming Stories of Courage, Resistance, and Legacy*, will debut in the Family Heritage Experience at American Ancestors in April 2026 and remain on display through the end of the year. The exhibit sheds light on the overlooked histories of Black, Native, and mixed-descent men and women who fought, labored, and led in the struggle for American independence across all thirteen colonies. Through documents, family history artifacts, personal narratives, and digital interactives, the exhibition uncovers the courage and resilience of Patriots whose contributions helped shape a new nation, even as they continued to confront inequality and enslavement.

Bridging past and present, *Patriots of Color* also highlights the voices of descendants who are reclaiming these stories today—connecting revolutionary ideals of freedom and justice to contemporary America. This exhibit is just one outcome of a groundbreaking initiative undertaken by 10 Million Names in partnership with National Society Daughters of the American Revolution and FamilySearch to build descendency trees for seventy-five Patriots of Color who served during the Revolutionary War.



Elizabeth Freeman (“Mumbet”) by Susan Anne Livingston Ridley Sedgwick, 1811. In 1781, Elizabeth Freeman (1744?–1829) successfully sued for her freedom in a pivotal Massachusetts case. Collection of the Massachusetts Historical Society.



Drew Bartley elected to American Society of Genealogists

On October 4, 2025, Scott Andrew “Drew” Bartley was elected as a Fellow of the American Society of Genealogists (FASG). Drew started his professional genealogical career in 1984 as a genealogist on the recently formed Research Services team at the New England Historic Genealogical Society (NEHGS, now American Ancestors). He then managed our Book Loan Service and the Sales Department. Drew received his MA in Library Science from Simmons University and his final position at NEHGS before his departure in 1999 was Manuscripts Curator.

Drew worked at Massachusetts Society of Mayflower Descendants (MSMD) and FamilySearch and served as editor of *Mayflower Descendant* and *Vermont Genealogy* for over twenty years. In 2015, he was named project leader for Early Vermont Settlers to 1784 at American Ancestors and continues in that role today. More than 760 project sketches are available online, and those for Windsor County were published in two volumes. Drew is the editor of eleven books and the author of more than forty articles and twelve books and pamphlets.



Massachusetts teachers attend Family History Curriculum workshop

American Ancestors opened the 2025–2026 school year with a three-day teacher workshop at our newly renovated headquarters in Boston. A cohort of social studies and English Language Arts teachers for grades four through eight received the training and resources needed to implement our Family History Curriculum.

The workshop emphasized using case studies of local historical figures to help students gain genealogical skills before conducting independent research. School



Finding Your Roots returns to TV for a twelfth season

The twelfth season of the critically acclaimed PBS series *Finding Your Roots with Henry Louis Gates, Jr.* premiered in January on PBS. Our headquarters on Newbury Street has figured prominently in the series as the anchor location for each episode. Our Research Services experts collaborate with the series producers by completing a verification process for all the show’s research and carefully reviewing each episode’s script. We are delighted to play a role in bringing this award-winning series to millions of viewers.

In *Finding Your Roots*, Harvard scholar and American Ancestors Honorary Trustee Henry Louis Gates, Jr. helps people discover their ancestral histories. The series reveals family stories, delves into the history of countries of origin, and uncovers secrets, surprises, and, occasionally, life-altering discoveries. Season twelve guests include Brittney Griner, Kristin Chenoweth, Spike Lee, Darren Criss, America Ferrera, and Lizzo.

Programs & Curriculum Manager Dustin Axe helped teachers develop a pedagogical framework for navigating the unique challenges and opportunities of doing genealogy with students. Senior Genealogist Melanie McComb and Chief Genealogist David Allen Lambert led sessions focused on building genealogical skills, exploring sources, understanding the research process, and constructing a well-documented family history. Teachers also visited our new Family Heritage Experience and learned how a field trip to American Ancestors can support a classroom unit on genealogy.

The workshop has the potential to impact 800 students from Boston and Eastern Massachusetts. The American Ancestors Youth Education Program has now presented in-person workshops in five states and territories—Maine, Massachusetts, Texas, Virginia, and the US Virgin Islands.

Shining a Spotlight on Family History: American Ancestors Partners with Company One Theatre

This past summer American Ancestors partnered with Company One Theatre in Boston for their production of *The Meeting Tree* by B. Elle Borders. This original play follows Sofia, who travels to the Alabama farm where her family was once enslaved in order to reclaim the rights to the land. The play shifts between past and present as Sofia uncovers details of her complicated family history.

As part of this partnership, American Ancestors experts participated in two outreach events for the play's audience. Researcher Abe Laxague took part in a post-show panel discussion focused on history, community, and building connections. Assistant Archivist Shalley Marshall consulted with attendees of a workshop hosted by Company One, *Branch Out with C1: Preserving the Past, Imagining the Future*. Participants were encouraged to bring significant objects related to their family history. Among the items brought for the event were photographs, a handwritten poem, and a tambourine. Shalley offered advice on preserving these objects. Other local experts provided information on recording oral histories, photographing family history objects, and more.

Company One also created a gallery in the theater lobby with prints from American Ancestors' collection, including a family tree for Henry Louis Gates, Jr. painted by artist Tania Crossingham and the painting *Familial Bridges* by artist Yuko Okabe. Company One incorporated activities from our Family Heritage Experience into the gallery space.

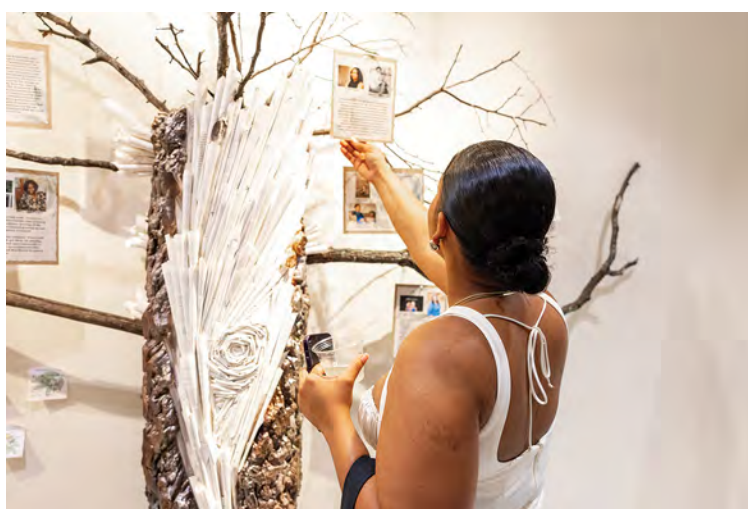
The Meeting Tree offered us an exciting new avenue for connecting people with family history. American Ancestors will continue our partnership with Company One for their upcoming season, collaborating on new outreach initiatives related to the family history themes in their plays. Visit CompanyOne.org for more information.



Beyoncé Martinez and Rachel Hall in *The Meeting Tree*. Photo by Annielly Camargo.



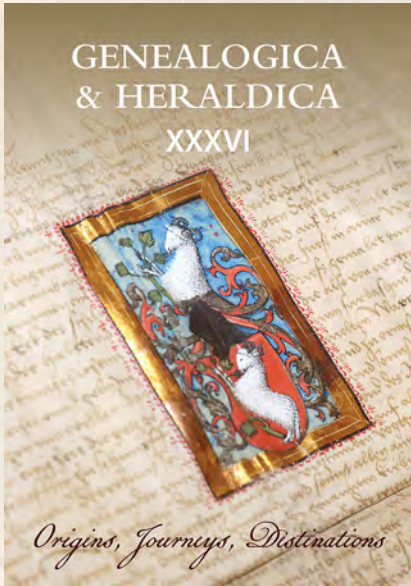
Participants at an outreach event, *Branch Out with C1: Preserving the Past, Imagining the Future*, presented in partnership with American Ancestors. Photo by Lauren Miller.



Audience member viewing *The Meeting Tree* lobby gallery space, created in partnership with American Ancestors. Photo by Lauren Miller.



New Publications

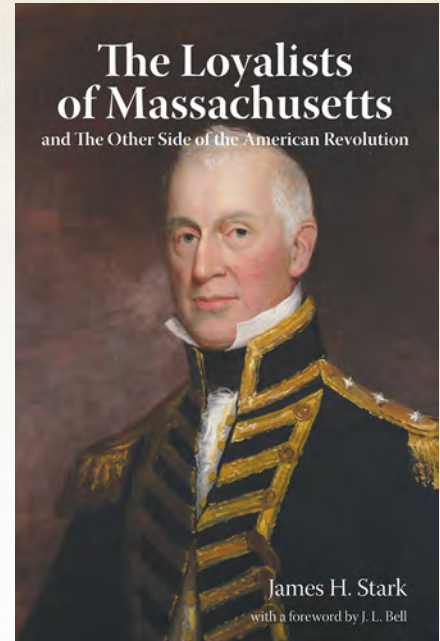


Genealogica & Heraldica XXXVI: Origins, Journeys, Destinations

By various authors

7 x 10 hcvr, 546 pp., illus., 2025; \$69.95, member \$62.95

The 36th Congress of Genealogical and Heraldic Sciences, hosted by American Ancestors in Boston in 2024, was the first held in the US. This beautiful hardcover volume includes the forty-nine papers presented at the congress with full-color illustrations, as well as the text of the opening remarks, photos from the five-day event, a list of delegates, contributor biographies, and an illustrated guide to the *Heraldic Treasures at American Ancestors* exhibit on view during the congress.



The Loyalists of Massachusetts and The Other Side of the American Revolution

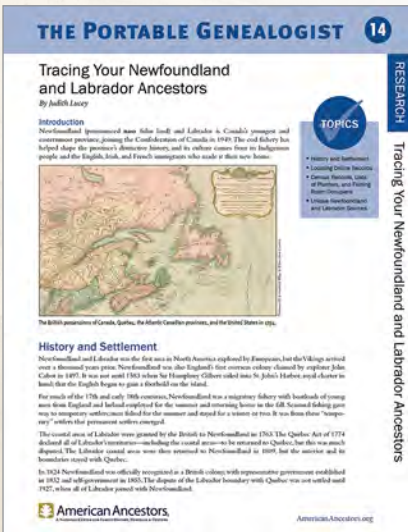
and The Other Side of the American Revolution

James H. Stark
with a foreword by J. L. Bell

The Loyalists of Massachusetts and The Other Side of the American Revolution

By James H. Stark, foreword by J. L. Bell
6 x 9 pbk, 618 pp., 2025; \$44.95, member \$40.46

Originally published in early 1910, this volume of detailed biographies of Loyalists living in Massachusetts is organized by social standing, beginning with royal governor Thomas Hutchinson. English-born yachtsman and author James H. Stark used real-estate records to produce this compelling and controversial work. While Stark liked to “stir the pot,” contemporary journalists admitted that the fervor of his critiques was matched by the depth of his research.



THE PORTABLE GENEALOGIST 14

Tracing Your Newfoundland and Labrador Ancestors

By Judith Lucey

Introduction

Newfoundland (renamed from the Irish and Labrador & Canada's youngest and easternmost province, joining the Confederation of Canada in 1949). The cod fishery has helped shape the province's distinctive history, and its culture comes from its Indigenous people and the English, Irish, and French immigrants who made it their new home.



History and Settlement

Newfoundland and Labrador was the first area in North America explored by Europeans, but didn't long attract over a thousand years ago. Newfoundland was also England's first overseas colony, claimed by explorer John Cabot in 1497. It was not until 1610 when Sir Humphrey Gilbert called it his St. John's Harbor and started to build the first English colony on a Newfoundland island.

For much of the 17th and early 18th centuries, Newfoundland was a migratory fishery with thousands of young men from England and Ireland employed for the summer and returning home to the UK. Seasonal fishing gave way to temporary settlements for the summer and stayed for a winter or two. It was from these “temporary” settlements that permanent settlers emerged.

The coastal area of Labrador was granted by the British to Newfoundland in 1763. The Quebec Act of 1774 declared all of Labrador's territory—excluding the coastal areas—to be returned to Quebec, but this was mostly ignored. The Labrador coast was then returned to Newfoundland in 1809, but the territory and its boundaries stayed with Quebec.

In 1929 Newfoundland was officially recognized as a British colony with representative government established in 1933 and self-government in 1953. The dispute of the Labrador boundary with Quebec was not settled until 1927, when all of Labrador joined with Newfoundland.

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RESEARCH

Tracing Your Newfoundland and Labrador Ancestors

- History and Settlement
- Locating Online Records
- Census Records, Maps, and Directories, and Finding Resources
- Using Newfoundland and Labrador Sources

Portable Genealogist: Tracing Your Newfoundland and Labrador Ancestors

By Judith Lucey

8½ x 11 laminated, 4 pp., 2025; \$10.95, member \$9.85

Newfoundland and Labrador is Canada's youngest and easternmost province, having joined the country in 1949. The Irish called it “land of the fish” for the cod that brought Europeans to its coastal

waters for centuries. The cod fishery helped shape the province's distinctive history, and its culture is a unique blend of its Indigenous people and those of English, Irish, and French heritage. This Portable Genealogist will introduce you to relevant records and resources available online, highlight some of the province's unique sources, and provide tips for finding Newfoundland and Labrador ancestors.



SCAN ME

Order online at
shop.AmericanAncestors.org



Mining the Treasures in Newspapers

Newspapers recorded the fine print of our ancestors' lives. Today, these historic resources can offer researchers a wealth of detail about ancestors and relatives, and the dramatic and mundane occurrences that filled their days. This research can produce any number of unexpected discoveries about long forgotten events and purposely buried scandals. Newspapers also provide a look at history as it was happening, without the historian's hindsight knowledge of what was around the corner.

A wide variety of newspapers have been published over the years and the format and style of newspapers evolved over time. Early newspapers were not sanitized or meant to be neutral; they showed specific slants. In the 1830s, newspaper bias was clearly evident in editorials and political news—and often even in the newspaper title. Many papers from this time period were funded by political parties.

As immigration to the United States increased over the nineteenth century, ethnic newspapers appeared, usually in native languages. In addition to featuring local news and community members, the coverage frequently extended to the “old country.” These newspapers not only preserved language, connections, and traditions, but also educated newcomers and helped them

acclimatize to the United States. Newspapers were often the only possible means of communication between people who had lost touch with one another. A great example of how a newspaper facilitated connections between immigrants and family members is the “Missing Friends” column in *The Boston Pilot*, the Archdiocesan newspaper. From 1831 to 1920, concerned individuals in Ireland, the United States, and Canada placed ads seeking relatives and friends who had emigrated.

As the nineteenth century slid into the twentieth, newspapers devoted to socialism and labor unions emerged. These papers championed workers' rights and exposed terrible conditions in many different industries. A newspaper published by a labor union can offer a better understanding of the difficulties of an ancestor's working life—such as limited wages, dangerous conditions, and the number of hours in a work week—than a mainstream paper. Other specialty newspapers devoted to politics, religion, an occupation, and an array of different subjects can also provide a different view of a time and place.



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For family historians, all these types of newspapers offer a view into the world of our ancestors. Articles and columns may afford a glimpse into why a great-great-grandfather moved west, or when a great-granduncle enlisted in the military. Most crucially, newspapers reported on the people in their communities. Much like we check Facebook or X or Instagram for updates on our family members and friends, people of the past depended on newspapers for similar updates.

What can you find?

If a newspaper exists for a place and period of interest—and you are willing to review issue after issue and immerse yourself in the locality and era—you can discover an almost limitless array of details about your ancestors and relatives. Although early newspapers and smaller community newspapers of a later period may have relied on a set number of pages of preprinted ads and national news, the remaining pages were often filled with a wide range of local information.

This valuable content can generally be divided into the following categories.

Vital record alternatives

Many family historians turn to newspapers when they can't obtain birth, marriage, and death records from official sources. Until early in the twentieth century, many states and counties, particularly in the West, did not require birth and death registration. However, births, marriages, and deaths were often announced in local papers. In addition, researchers may find a lot more information in a newspaper account of a milestone birthday or anniversary than in the original birth or marriage announcement.

Funeral notices sometimes offer details beyond the scope of the death record, such as the name, relationship, and address of the person who lived at the property where the funeral procession began. Many funeral announcements also mention the name of the funeral home, another possible source of information. A reference to a funeral Mass or a service in a specific church can supply the ancestor's religious affiliation and a potential repository of additional records.

Among other information, obituaries often include places of origin and names of parents, plus a listing of surviving family members. Certainly not all families could afford a detailed obituary—newspapers usually

charged by the word—but perhaps your ancestor or relative belonged to an organization that published a notice at the time of the death or on an anniversary.

During epidemics and wartime, newspapers sometimes published lists of individuals who died of disease or were killed in battle. Such lists may provide the first clue about a family member's military involvement, especially for service in lesser-known conflicts.

Legal notices

Legal notices and news can offer new insight into ancestors' lives. You might learn that a family fell on hard times and that their land was listed in a sheriff's sale, or you might be alerted to a criminal case involving a relative by reading a summary of county court proceedings. (Over time, you might notice that the longer a case—such as a divorce—continues, the more likely it was contentious and acrimonious.) Legal notices also include probate announcements and police blotters. From all these sources, we learn more about the trials, tribulations, and perhaps even the luck of our ancestors. In some situations, when courthouse record loss is a factor, newspaper reports may be the only surviving records of a case.

Gossip, society news, and social events

Community or society news columns may report any number of interesting details about your ancestors,



Right: "Chisago City, Minnesota. A Swedish-American reading his Swedish newspaper." Photo by Jack Delano, April 1942. Library of Congress.
Opposite: A prospector at sunset. Darkroom Graphic/Shutterstock.

including their visits to family members and details about relatives who visited them. Learning where your ancestors' relatives lived opens another avenue of research—perhaps in a place where the records are better, or a relative shared more with his or her family than your ancestor did. Social news was not limited to the rich in the town and the smaller the town or city, the more likely such information was shared, regardless of race or ethnicity.

News of institutions and organizations

Newspapers often covered local high schools and colleges, including student sports teams, clubs, achievements, graduations, and graduates' post-school plans. Depending on the size of the community, you may find references to local churches, including activities, leaders, and even events honoring early church founders. Fraternal and veterans' organizations, as well as women's organizations and ladies' auxiliaries, were given space to announce meetings, initiatives (often connected to fundraising for a cause), events such as banquets and luncheons, and the election of officers. A priority for these announcements was listing the names of the individuals present and involved.

Letters to the editor and classified ads

Letters to the editor offer a look at the community temperament on issues of the day. You might find that your relative wrote in to express an opinion about a particular topic. Classified ads can indicate a relative's occupation or an ancestor's interest in buying or selling goods and services. Classified ads could also be used to seek information on missing relatives and friends, as with the "Missing Friends" ads published in *The Boston Pilot*.

"Commissioners Proceedings," *Free Press* (Hays, Kansas), October 21, 1899, p. 4. Chronidling America, Library of Congress.

Seeking information

Familiarize yourself with the newspaper coverage in the area where your ancestors lived. Remember that some towns had more than one newspaper and that larger cities may have published news about smaller surrounding communities. Knowing precisely where your ancestor lived will help you identify columns about the relevant township, suburb, or community.

Effective newspaper searching usually means developing a strategy that goes beyond locating vital record substitutes. Understanding the layout of a specific newspaper—where certain items are most likely to appear—will make your searches more efficient. With this greater familiarity, you will begin to anticipate where to find the material you seek. For instance, when reading court notices, you will know to always look at subsequent court columns to follow the next entry in your case of interest.

Reviewing special anniversary-related newspaper issues can be worthwhile. A major event such as the founding of a town or a local disaster will likely be revisited on milestone anniversaries ten, twenty-five, fifty, and 100 years later. Your relatives may be included in the reporting of the initial event, which might have been republished, and in later articles, interviews, or letters about the historic occurrence. For instance, survivors of a cataclysmic fire might have been interviewed about their memories of the tragedy.

Although family historians may always hope to find juicy major articles about ancestors, don't discount columns, news, and notices. Newspapers publish a great deal of useful information; in addition to the material described in the section above, researchers might find ship or passenger arrivals, naturalization notices, and lists of hotel guests and unclaimed letters at the post office. (For people who arrived in the United States before 1820—the year

Commissioners Proceedings.	
Office of the County Clerk, Ellis county, Kansas, Hays city, Kan. Oct. 2, 1899.	
The Board of county Commissioners of Ellis county, Kan. met this day in regular session all the members being present	
The following bills were allowed and scrip ordered drawn for same,	
Fees & Salaries	
J W Downer, Justice fees	6.60
Eli Fox ditto 53.10	W C Sly " 1.40
Sheriff Loreditsch fees	683.62
Henry Knoche fees 70.43	B T Miller 29.25
A O Robinson balance assessing	10.00
W E Johnson examining teachers	24.00
S Motz, A Goetchies each " treasury	2.00
H C Freese salary as county printer less 2.50 for old oil stove	10.00
E A Rea transcribing testimony	11.45
J Middlekauff health officer	12.50
ditto county physician	25.00
Dr. Kidd ditto ditto	25.00
Philip Jacobs, treasurer, Jacob Bissing county clerk and Alex Meier salary each	250.00
Perer Staab janitor 3 months	75.00
Fred Miller constable fees 30.30	J Wageman ditto 8.22
L D Kirkman ditto 3.80	D Rathbone atty fees 25.00
J T Nolan, salary as Co. atty 200.00	A O Robinson, bailiff 19.50
George Loreditsch ditto 21.00	R Mulroy ditto 24.00
L Judd commissioner 43.50	J H Gerken ditto 46.10
Jos Griese ditto 45.70	
Miscellaneous bills.	
F Hevemann chairs for court house	7.00
L Judd mdse ditto	10.50
Justus Bissing labor on court house	2.75
M H Mulroy, job printing	16.00
Hall Lithograph co. stationery	17.70
Crane & Co " "	108.25
Free Press printing delinquent tax list	156.50
Philip Jacobs freight etc	19.30
C Russell, M J Dawler, Elias Hoffman road viewers each	2.00
Mrs Wm King, boarding jurors	23.40
George Philip & Son hardware	21.10
J H Gestner labor on bridge \$9	Hughes & Joslin ditto 298.15
W T Mack ditto \$9	Joe Linenberger ditto 125.00
F Kuhn hardware bridge	5.67
C Schwaller & Co brick for sidewalk	\$200
Jacob Snyder labor on court house sidewalk \$36	W D Butts ditto 31.50
Chas Snyder hauling sand ditto 20.50	E J Mullen ditto \$32
A N Horn ditto 19.75	EW Decker repairing plank sidewalks 19.70
C Schwaller & Co lumber ditto	19.60
Hertline & Wolfe hardware ditto	8.60
Coyote scalps.	
Peter Leiker Ign Pappas Adam Wagner	J M Smith Ed Krans George Flatt Frank Flatt J Gerken And Riedel H C George L R Moore
Wm Moore G Flatt C Krueger each \$1	Henry Hoff 2.00 Joe Denning and Caleb Thayer each 3.00
M Lemunyan and John Klaus & Phil Mock each	4.00
Alex Staab, Fred Johnson C Krueger Wm Wagner each 5.00	A Leahy, Rudolph Thausser and John Legge each 6.00
Alex Staab 15.00	Cornel Staab 9.00
Ambrose Staab 10.00	J B Eitworth 15.00
James Byers 16.00	Andrew Jensen 13.00
John Hall 14.00	John McCarthy 12.00
W F Haddock 10.00	Joe Cerny Ernest Grippen and Andrew each 9.00
Wm Griffin and G G Sackman each	8.00
Total for Coyote scalps \$229	

passenger manifests were introduced—early newspaper arrival announcements will likely be the only source to document an ancestor’s travels and moves.) At the very least, these newspaper mentions can put your ancestor in a given place at a given time. This information can add to your knowledge of your relatives and help to augment coverage of their lives, particularly in the gaps between census years and vital record events.

Finally, keep in mind that newspapers, a source compiled from people sharing their knowledge and thoughts, may be biased—or simply wrong. Information from witnesses can be incorrect. Obituaries are only as good as the information supplied by the survivor of the deceased. Historical accounts might not be accurate, especially if the events being reported occurred in the distant past. However, newspapers were likely to be the first source to record and report on events of long ago.

Identifying newspapers

A title, location, and dates of publication are the key elements in determining whether a particular newspaper may be useful in your family history research. Two aids that can help identify what exists for your time and place of interest are union lists and bibliographies.

Union lists — alphabetical catalogs of periodicals or other serials, such as newspapers

- Winifred Gregory’s *American Newspapers 1821–1936, A Union List of Files Available in the United States and Canada* (New York: The H. W. Wilson Company, 1937) lists newspapers in geographical order by title and frequency, with information on where to locate them. Available online at catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/001178201.
- H. G. Jones and Julius H. Avant, eds., *Union List of North Carolina Newspapers, 1751–1900* (Raleigh: State Department of Archives & History, 1963) contains information on North Carolina newspapers, many not identified in the above compilation. Includes title, place and dates of publication, and frequency. Available online at digital.ncdcr.gov/Documents/Detail/union-list-of-north-carolina-newspapers-1751-1900/2421767.

Bibliographies—alphabetical lists of newspapers that frequently include additional publication data for each title

- Clarence S. Brigham’s two-volume *History and Bibliography of American Newspapers, 1690–1820* (Worcester, Mass.: American Antiquarian Society, 1947) provides a history of early American newspapers and lists of titles with information

The history of newspapers

Here are two excellent reference books on the history of newspapers:

- Christopher B. Daly, *Covering America, A Narrative History of a Nation’s Journalism*, revised and expanded edition (Amherst, Mass.: University of Massachusetts Press, 2012)
- Michael Schudson, *Discovering the News, A Social History of American Newspapers* (New York: Basic Books, 1981)

The resources used by these authors could also lead to additional research avenues.

on frequency of publication, title changes, and more. Available online at archive.org/details/historybibliogra0002clar.

- *Newspapers in Microform* (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1984) identifies newspapers available on microfilm/microfiche/microcard and their locations in university, public, and private libraries. There are three volumes: United States, 1948–1983 (in 2 volumes A–O and P–Z; actual dates of newspapers 1704–1972) and Foreign Countries, 1948–1983 (actual dates of newspapers 1655–1972). Available online at loc.gov/item/75644000.

These resources—and other statewide union lists and bibliographies—can be valuable tools for newspaper research. While some details in these sources—such as which newspapers are held by which repositories—may now be out of date, the key aspect is the information on specific newspapers published for particular cities and towns at a given time. With these details, researchers can determine whether a newspaper was published in the location where an ancestral family lived, or whether their closest newspaper was published in a larger town or city nearby. Once relevant newspaper titles have been identified, family historians can seek them online or elsewhere.

Locating newspapers

Newspaper research often used to require trips to multiple far-flung repositories, but today family historians can begin with a handful of newspapers sites that provide extensive coverage for both North America and Europe.

Resources that can assist in finding newspapers online

- Cyndi’s List, cyndislist.com/newspapers
- Claudia C. Breland, *Search for Your Ancestors in Historic Newspapers* (Gig Harbor, Wash.: the author, 2014)

- Ernest Thode, *Historic German Newspapers Online*, 2nd ed. (Baltimore, Md.: Genealogical Publishing Company, Inc., 2018)

Online newspaper sites with a significant number of digitized newspapers

- 19th Century U.S. Newspapers [subscription*]
- Ancestry.com [subscription]
- Chronicling America
- Early American Newspapers [subscription*]
- GenealogyBank.com [subscription]
- Google News Archive Search
- NewspaperArchive.com [subscription*]
- Newspapers.com [subscription]

*Available to members through AmericanAncestors.org.

Effective online searching

As with all online searching, newspaper search results are only as reliable as the “indexed” information retrieved from the data. Historic newspaper websites use information indexed by individuals, optical character recognition (OCR), or artificial intelligence.

When your search results are not what you expected or a search engine reports nothing was found, consider whether that analysis is valid. Individuals can make mistakes, OCR can be thrown off by splashes of ink or a faded line of text, and artificial intelligence is fallible. The only way to ensure that an item is not included in a newspaper is to go “old school” and review key pages yourself.

Once you’ve identified a likely newspaper for a place and time of interest, I find that the most productive approach can be to search each page for the week before and the week after the date of a particular event. Not only does this method ensure that you have truly exhausted those issues as a potential source of information, but the process familiarizes you with the paper’s organization and prepares you to search additional issues efficiently.

Consider digging deeper

With the ease of online searching, we often take newspapers and the information they provide at face value and stop there. Instead, consider using the information you find in newspapers as a starting point. When you locate vital record substitutes, seek to verify them and build on them with other sources when possible. Research the people, businesses, institutions, and organizations connected to your relatives. Look at the news of the day and try to locate historical references to events that may have impacted your ancestors, such as epidemics, natural



More on “Mining the Treasures in Newspapers”

Watch author Rhonda R. McClure’s free online hour-long presentation on this topic.

AmericanAncestors.org/video-library/mining-treasures-newspapers

disasters, and community disagreements. With this information, research these topics using online search engines and online catalogs of archives, historical societies, and university libraries. These explorations could reveal relevant manuscript items and other sources—more than you may have thought possible.

Final thoughts

Historic newspapers offer a window to the past, providing insight into both significant and trivial matters. In many cases, newspapers can answer family history questions and deliver details that no other source can. While newspaper research can require a bit of perseverance, your investment of time and energy will almost certainly pay off and you may discover some unexpected and wonderful finds. ♦



Unidentified women reacting to an item in a newspaper.

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SCAN ME

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“Black man reading newspaper by candlelight”
by H. L. Stephens, ca. 1863. Library of Congress.

Using Newspapers to Search for What Slavery Had Stolen

Excerpts from *Last Seen*



On February 4, Dr. Judith Giesberg discussed her book *Last Seen: The Enduring Search by Formerly Enslaved People to Find Their Lost Families* as part of our American Inspiration author series. The event was moderated by Tera W. Hunter, PhD, Edwards Professor of American History and Professor of African American Studies and Chair of the Department of African American Studies at Princeton University. The program can be viewed at AmericanAncestors.org/video-library.

Last Seen presents a handful of individual accounts that convey the shocking history of family separation and highlight the resilience and determination of the formerly enslaved to find one another again. We are pleased to present excerpts from the introduction that describe how these people separated by enslavement and war used newspapers to search for their loved ones.



MARK TASSONI

Judith Giesberg is professor of history and Robert M. Birmingham Chair in the Humanities at Villanova University. She is the founder and director of the *Last Seen* archive and the author of several books on Civil War history, including *Army at Home* and *Emilie Davis's Civil War*.

By 1860, one million enslaved people had been sold from the Upper South to the Deep South. Each of them left behind family. One-quarter of those sold were between the ages of eight and fifteen; these children were often sold without a parent or a sibling.¹ When a child traveled that far from home, to a place where everyone was a stranger and nothing was familiar, they must have felt lost. Many never saw their family again. Enslaved people ran away more often to be close to family members than they did to escape to free states; we know this because when enslavers took out ads looking for run-aways, they often had a good idea where to find them—with their spouses, parents, or children.² When a child ran away they headed in the direction of their mother or father. But they were not always sure how to get there and sometimes their legs couldn't carry them that far.



In the absence of a federal commitment to reuniting slavery's separated families, freed people recruited allies from within their own communities. They sought advice from United States Colored Troops (USCT) soldiers and schoolteachers. They repeated the names of loved

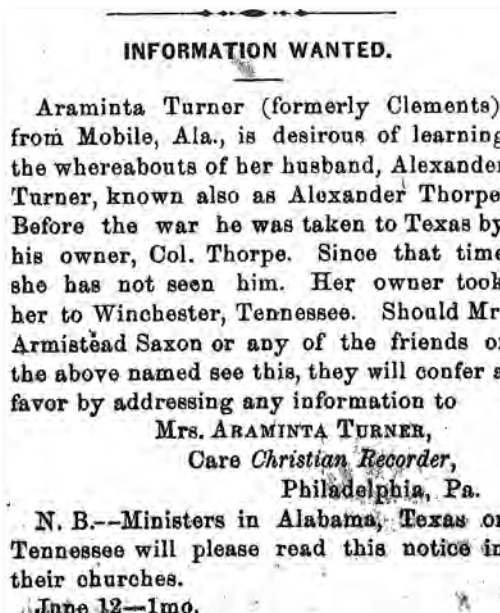
ones to Black pastors and newspaper editors. They took inspiration from their neighbors. And they left behind an archive of thousands of advertisements printed in Black newspapers documenting their decades-long efforts to rebuild their families after slavery.

From California to New Jersey, Massachusetts to Texas, and everywhere in between, formerly enslaved people took out ads in newspapers searching for what slavery had stolen from them. Under headlines such as “Information Wanted,” “Seeking For the Lost,” “Do You Know Them?” or, simply, “Dear Editor,” they looked for children, parents, siblings, spouses, uncles, aunts, army comrades, and friends. Hundreds of these ads appeared in papers in the first years of freedom, and they continued for decades. Columns of ads could be found in newspapers well into the 1910s, fifty years after emancipation. As late as 1920, the *Chicago Defender* was still publishing ads from formerly enslaved people looking for family lost in slavery.

The ads were a regular feature in African American newspapers, especially Philadelphia’s *Christian Recorder* and New Orleans’s *Southwestern Christian Advocate*, whose editors were singularly committed to soliciting and publishing them. Both were associated with Black churches, where church and newspaper offices served as clearinghouses for information for Freedom Generation—men and women who were born enslaved and became free during or just before the U.S. Civil War—as they searched for their family members. The *Recorder* ran a regular column of ads beginning in 1864 appearing under the heading “Information Wanted,” making them easily recognizable to anyone who might have been able to help. Published by Philadelphia’s Mother Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church, the *Christian Recorder* had deep ties to the USCT; during the Civil War the paper printed soldiers’ letters from the front and supported their strike for wages equal to white soldiers. Philadelphia was an important training ground for Black soldiers, and recruits traveling through the city circulated the *Recorder* throughout the South. Regimental chaplains took out multiple subscriptions of the paper to support the expansion of literacy and to draw men into the church.³ A onetime ad cost \$1.50 and came with a subscription to the paper; \$4 bought an ad that ran for three months, \$6 for six months, and for \$10, an ad ran for a year. These fees could not have been easy for formerly enslaved people to manage. The editor of the *Christian Recorder*, Rev. Elisha Weaver, appealed to pastors of Black churches throughout the country to read the ads aloud to their congregations. This ensured that each search was broadcast widely and that the ads

reached people who could not read the paper or who did not subscribe.

The *Southwestern Christian Advocate* was published by the Methodist Episcopal Church of New Orleans, and, like the *Recorder*, the paper was circulated widely, particularly in Methodist parishes in Louisiana, Mississippi, Arkansas, and Texas.⁴ The terms were comparable to those offered in the *Recorder*. Subscribers ran Lost Friends notices for free. Others were charged 50 cents, a smaller onetime fee than paying \$2 for an annual subscription. Letters to the *Advocate* appeared under the heading “Lost Friends.” A short note appeared at the top of the column directing ministers to read the requests from their pulpits and “report any case where friends are brought together by means of the letters of the *Southwestern*.” Freed people sometimes wrote to report they had found their family. “Sir,” wrote Naro Gillespie from Egypt, Mississippi, “I feel very thankful for your

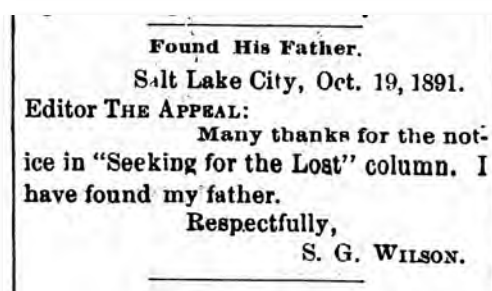


INFORMATION WANTED.

Araminta Turner (formerly Clements), from Mobile, Ala., is desirous of learning the whereabouts of her husband, Alexander Turner, known also as Alexander Thorpe. Before the war he was taken to Texas by his owner, Col. Thorpe. Since that time she has not seen him. Her owner took her to Winchester, Tennessee. Should Mr. Armistead Saxon or any of the friends of the above named see this, they will confer a favor by addressing any information to Mrs. ARAMINTA TURNER, Care *Christian Recorder*, Philadelphia, Pa.

N. B.--Ministers in Alabama, Texas or Tennessee will please read this notice in their churches.

June 12--1mo.



Found His Father.

Salt Lake City, Oct. 19, 1891.

Editor THE APPEAL:

Many thanks for the notice in “Seeking for the Lost” column. I have found my father.

Respectfully,
S. G. WILSON.

Top: “Information Wanted,” *The Christian Recorder* (Philadelphia, Pa.), June 12, 1869.

Bottom: “Found His Father,” *Appeal: A National Afro-American Newspaper* (St. Paul and Minneapolis, Minn.), October 24, 1891.

Images are from the Last Seen Project at informationwanted.org.

LOST FRIENDS.
Goliad, Texas, Dec. 11, 1896.

Dear Pastors: Please read this from all of your pulpits. I desire to find the whereabouts of my people. I was born in North Carolina, Rewan county. My mother and father belonged to one George Hellard. Mother was named Hannah, father Jack Hellard. Sisters were Jency and Flora Hellard. I had a brother, Ben Hellard. Father died and mother married one Benjamin Garner. They had a daughter named Lucy, and two boys named John and Milas Calvern Garner. My name was Diana Hellard; it is now Diana Johnson. Any information concerning any of the above named persons will be very thankfully received. Address, Mrs. Diana Johnson, Goliad, Texas.

Do You Know These?

I would like to know the whereabouts of my brother, (Lias Tibbs), who belonged to Mrs. Moore Carter. He left Warrenton, Tarquier County, 65 years ago, and was sold. His father's name was Adam Tibbs; mother's name, Lucy Tibbs; had a brother by the name of George Tibbs, who has another by the name of Beverly Tibbs, who is the youngest one. Anyone knowing anything of his whereabouts will kindly notify his brother.
GROESBEE TEXAS,
19 Cross Street,
Montclair, N. J.

A LOST FAMILY.
BY NOAH KNIGHT.

My mother's name was Lucy. I was sold from her in 1858. She had three children to my knowledge, and the baby one was sold when quite young; he could not even sit alone. The last time I saw my mother I met her at a gathering of a small meeting, and on that day she was sold, and I have not seen her since. That was somewhere in the western part of Virginia.

INFORMATION WANTED.

ANY person knowing of the whereabouts of my wife, ROSA, (who was sold in this place by Mr Cohen, last Feb. a year ago; Rosa is about 18 years old, bright mulatto, full chest, black eyes, chestnut hair) will confer a great favor on me by telling her that her husband, Andrew Jenkins; is still in Augusta, and very anxious to see her. He is living at the second house from the corner of Houston and Reynolds Streets.

Clockwise from top left:

"Lost Friends," *Southwestern Christian Advocate* (New Orleans, La.), January 28, 1897.

"Do You Know These?," *The Richmond Planet* (Richmond, Va.), January 1, 1916.

"Information Wanted," *Loyal Georgian* (Augusta, Ga.), July 21, 1866.

"A Lost Family," *The Star of Zion* (Charlotte, N.C.), March 24, 1892.

Images are from the Last Seen Project at informationwanted.org.

paper which was the cause of my finding my relatives that I thought were dead. I found them in Sweet Home, Arkansas." The cost of sending a letter to the paper again—and the effort involved—surely dissuaded people from reporting back.

Other papers also ran these ads. Some, like the *Richmond Planet*, were long-lived, but many papers came and went quickly. The *Afro-American Advocate* of Coffeyville, Kansas, for instance, lasted only two years, 1891–1893. The *Chicago Defender* was around for sixty years. The first copies of the *Defender* hit newsstands in 1906; soon after, the paper began publishing ads from formerly enslaved people looking for loved ones lost in slavery.

The advertisements highlight the role newspapers played in supporting Black communities and allow us to see how news and information traveled through and between these communities. The grapevine telegraph from slavery continued in freedom; it overlapped with the newspapers and continued to fill information gaps where there were no papers.

The ads provide narrative accounts of the lived experience of slavery, including everyday resistance. Freed people describe genealogies of slavery, naming kin and giving details about how enslavers and slave traders separated their families. The details allow us to understand how enslaved people survived separation, how family members got word to one another despite great distances

and considerable surveillance, and how they managed to maintain hope. Many indicate how the separation occurred, and some offer a rough timeline of events. Sometimes loved ones are described in detail. Including the name of an enslaver could stand in for other details, such as a changed last name or an imprecise location. Memory can be fickle. Age, too, can be its enemy. Written by survivors of traumatic events, the ads that form the basis for this book are imperfect and incomplete, but they are part of an archive of family stories never before told.



I began clipping and saving Information Wanted and Lost Friends ads many years ago as I came across them in the Black newspapers I read via the subscription database at my university library. I knew I had to make the stories told in the ads available to the descendants of the people named in them. Each ad contains information that can help a family find their ancestors. I knew, too, that whatever this archive would look like, it would be free. No one should have to pay to know their family's history. The result was the Last Seen Project website (informationwanted.org), which my graduate students and I built and which we launched in 2017. We'd dig into the microfilmed copies of African American newspapers that we borrowed through interlibrary loan and see what we found there. We hoped that one day we'd be able to publish one thousand ads. As of February 2025, the site had registered over eighteen million hits by 399,030 visitors. Currently—in October 2025—we have 5,020 ads.



We want stories that end in reunion, for families to be made whole. We require that freed people's lives "be made useful or instructive," as author Saidiya Hartman has explained: we demand "a lesson for our future or a hope for history."⁶ Today, the desire for Black family reunion remains strong; it explains the proliferation of Black genealogy groups and television shows that cater to them. It drives tourism to the remains of West African slave dungeons. The desire for reunion accounts for the popularity of stories that end happily.

Last Seen: The Enduring Search by Formerly Enslaved People to Find Their Lost Families recounts the story of one generation's work to reimagine and rebuild family against considerable odds. It points to the truth: in spite of efforts that persisted over several generations, few of these searches resulted in happy endings. Still, Freedom Generation's love for their lost family endured—and so did their search. ♦



Last Seen: The Enduring Search by Formerly Enslaved People to Find Their Lost Families by Judith Giesberg (Simon & Schuster, 2025) is available from a wide range of booksellers.

"This unvarnished account reminds us that centuries of suffering have yet to be fully acknowledged or atoned for. Informative and sobering."

Kirkus Reviews

"Heartbreaking, and essential." **Jill Lepore, author of *These Truths***

The Last Seen website, at informationwanted.org, offers a rich set of resources, including ads, associated maps, and educator resources. Online exhibits include letters to former enslavers and genealogy success stories.

Notes

- 1 Michael Tadman, *Speculators and Slaves: Masters, Traders and Slaves in the Old South* (University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), 144.
- 2 John Hope Franklin and Loren Schweninger, *Runaway Slaves: Rebels on the Plantation* (Oxford University Press, 1999), 52, 97–123.
- 3 Eric Gardner, "Remembered (Black) Readers: Subscribers to the *Christian Recorder*, 1864–1865," *American Literary History* 23, no. 2 (2011): 240–42.
- 4 James B. Bennett, *Religion and the Rise of Jim Crow in New Orleans* (Princeton University Press, 2005), 47–51. Irvine Garland Penn, *The Afro-American Press, and Its Editors* (1891) (Arno Press, 1969), 223–27.
- 5 Naro Gillespie, "Lost Friends," *Southwestern Christian Advocate* (New Orleans, La.), December 1, 1881, in *Last Seen: Finding Family After Slavery*, informationwanted.org/items/show/1393.
- 6 Saidiya Hartman, "Venus in Two Acts," *Small Axe* 12, no. 2 (June 2008): 14, 4.

Researching Mortimer

How Newspapers Brought a Vermont Family Scandal to Light

I began researching my ancestors and relatives in newspapers to learn more about their lives and personalities long before newspapers were digitized and online. I visited many libraries and other repositories and spent countless hours scrolling through issues using microfilm or microfiche readers—the only technology available at the time. Searchable online newspaper databases have made the process easier and produced more results.

When I began newspaper research on my great-great-grandfather Mortimer Wilson Brooks, I thought I knew quite a lot about him. Mortimer, the youngest of eight surviving children, was born to Thomas and Fanny (Doyen) Brooks in 1847 in Warwick, Arthabaska County, Quebec.¹ Over several years beginning in the mid-1860s, the Brooks siblings all moved from Quebec to the United States, settling in Vermont, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts.

Mortimer W. Brooks married Orilla E. “Rilla” Husk on January 3, 1868, in Shipton, Richmond County, Quebec.² In the fall of 1885, Mortimer, Orilla, and their five children relocated to Penacook, New Hampshire.³ After two more moves, Mortimer and Orilla settled at a farm in West Fairlee, Vermont, purchased by Orilla in 1893.⁴

A surprising episode

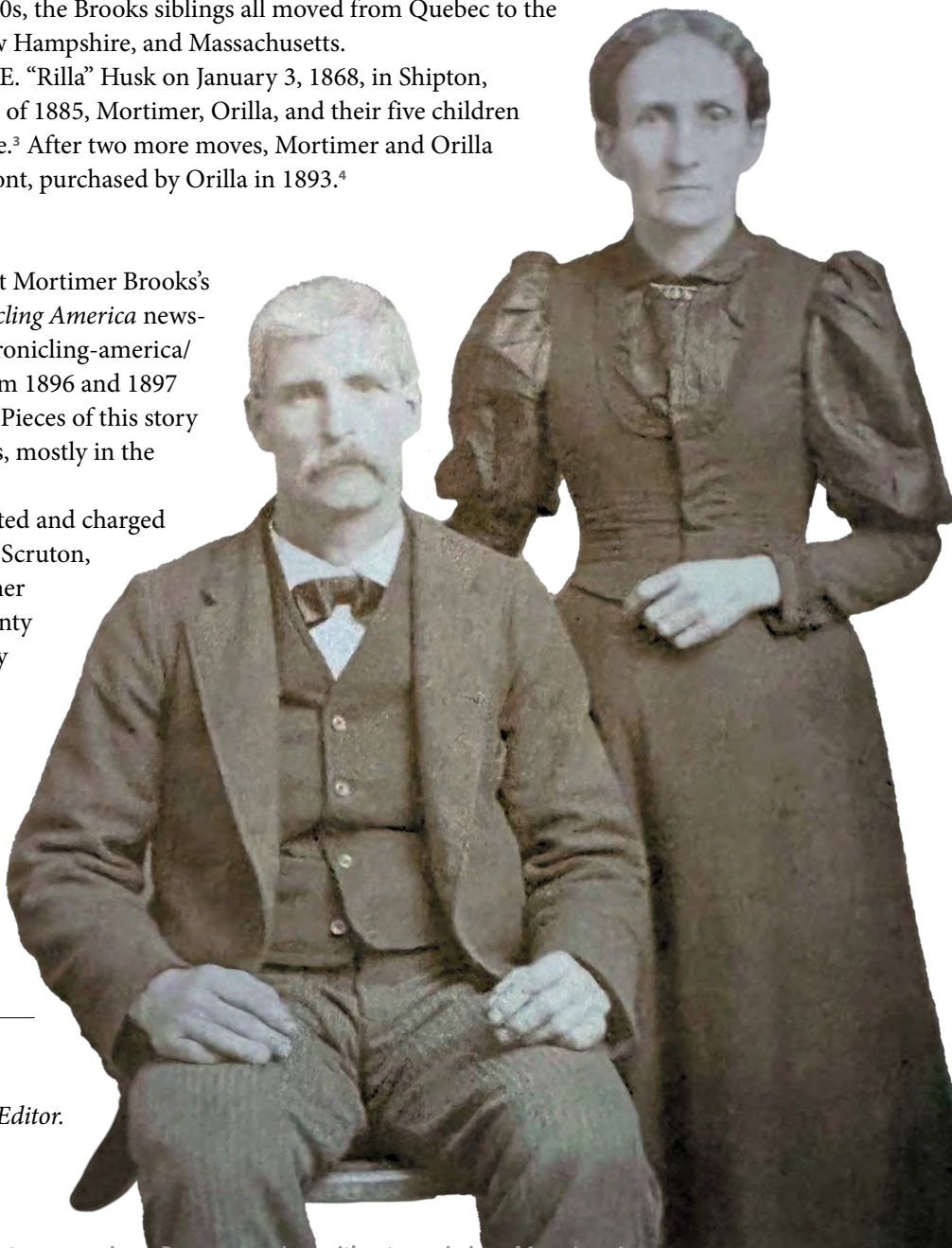
I decided to look for more details about Mortimer Brooks’s life in the Library of Congress’s *Chronicling America* newspaper database (loc.gov/collections/chronicling-america/ titles). To my surprise, a few articles from 1896 and 1897 revealed a completely unexpected tale. Pieces of this story appeared in three Vermont newspapers, mostly in the “Orange County Courts” columns.

On July 1, 1896, Mortimer was arrested and charged with adultery.⁵ His co-respondent, Eva Scruton, lived on an adjoining property. Mortimer spent several weeks in the Orange County Jail before he was bailed out for \$300 by his brother George W. Brooks and his nephew John T. Brooks on July 25.⁶

Mortimer Brooks’s trial began June 21, 1897, and lasted four days. On June 24, his co-respondent, Eva Scruton, unexpectedly testified for the state and Mortimer then pled guilty, bringing the trial to a close.



On the American Ancestors staff since 2002, Valerie Beaudrault is an Assistant Editor.



Mortimer was sentenced to five years at the Vermont State Prison in Windsor.⁷

Subsequent research led me to the Vermont State Archives, which held many details about Mortimer Brooks at the time he began his sentence, including that he had fifty cents in his pocket upon arrival. The prison intake form listed his age (50), height (5' 7¾"), weight (162), complexion (light), eyes (brown) and hair color (iron gray), and identifying marks. Those marks included a vaccination scar on his upper left arm and other scars on his upper right arm, left hand, and right instep. The examiner even noted that Mortimer's right little toe turned up and laid across the toe next to it. The form also stated that Mortimer was a carpenter, his religious preference was Baptist, and he used tobacco. Mortimer's emergency contact was his wife, Orilla.⁸

An article published a week after the sentencing reported that Bertha (Brooks) Richardson was visiting her mother, Orilla, in West Fairlee.⁹ Bertha, the fourth child in the family, was the eldest daughter. No doubt Bertha, who was recently married and living in Milford, New Hampshire, came to support her mother at a difficult time. In October 1898, almost a year and a half after Mortimer was jailed, Orilla sold the farm in West Fairlee. Mortimer participated in the sale from a distance:

A separate page on the deed was signed by Mortimer at Windsor State Prison and attached to the document.¹⁰ Afterwards, Orilla moved to Milford to live with Bertha and her family.

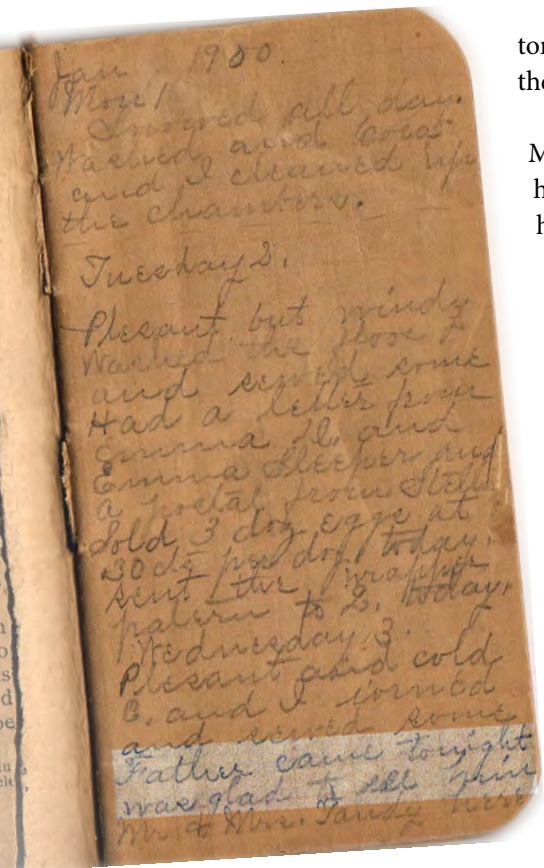
Mortimer did not spend five years in jail. He received a conditional pardon on December 29, 1899, after serving two and a half years of his sentence.¹¹ His sister Rebecca DeChamp, writing as "R. C. DeChamps," contacted the Vermont governor, Edward Curtis Smith, asking him to consider pardoning Mortimer. At the end of November, a letter sent by the governor indicated he saw no reason for a pardon, but nevertheless one was issued a month later.¹²

Within a few days of his release, Mortimer took up residence in Milford with Orilla and Bertha and her family. Bertha, my great-grandmother, noted his arrival in a brief diary entry on January 3, 1900: "Father came

Opposite: Mortimer and Orilla (Husk) Brooks, ca. early to mid 1890s. All images are from the collection of the author.

Below: A ca. 1898 Brooks family photo taken at the West Fairlee, Vermont, farm while Mortimer was in prison. Orilla, seated on the right, is pictured with her sons Cliff and Will; her daughter Cora; her daughters-in-law Lizzie and Mary; and her grandchildren Arthur and Bertha May.





A page from Bertha (Brooks) Richardson's diary, with the January 3, 1900, entry highlighted.

tonight was glad to see him."¹³ (This was the only mention of the entire episode in the diary.)

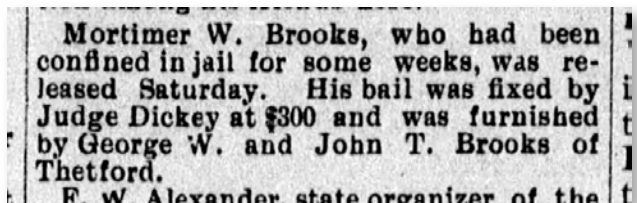
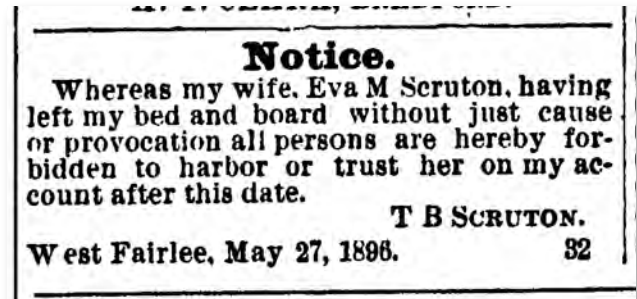
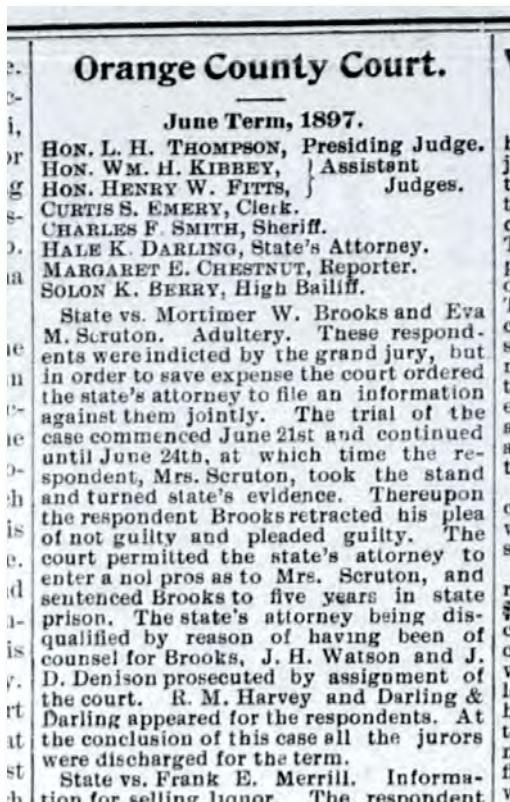
Orilla died in Saxton's River, Vermont, on June 30, 1907.¹⁴ On October 22, 1908, Mortimer Brooks, then 61, married 37-year-old Joanna (Carroll) Davis in Haverhill, Massachusetts.¹⁵ After Joanna's death in 1928, Mortimer returned to Bertha's home in Milford, where he died on April 20, 1931.¹⁶

I held onto the information about Mortimer's conviction for adultery for quite a while before I revealed it to my mother. She knew Mortimer—her great-grandfather—when she was a youngster. She took it in stride and just said he was the last person she would have imagined in that situation. I wonder if my grandmother—Bertha's daughter—who was 27 when Mortimer died, knew about this episode, or whether no one in the family referred to it after Mortimer's release from prison.

Eva's story

Eva Scruton, Mortimer's co-respondent in this case, turned state's evidence on June 24, 1897, and the charges against her were dropped. Nevertheless, the fallout of the affair was significant for her. The July 2, 1897, issue of *The United Opinion* of Bradford, Vermont, that reported on the *State v. Mortimer W. Brooks and Eva Scruton* case ran a separate court notice stating that a divorce was granted to Tyrell Scruton due to the adultery of his wife, Eva M. Scruton.¹⁷

At the time of the trial, Eva (Austin) Scruton (b. 1865) was the mother of five sons born in 1886, 1887, 1890, 1895, and 1896. I wondered if her youngest child was Mortimer's son, based on the timing and because I have never located a birth record for him. I found Tyrell Scruton placed a notice in the May 27, 1896, *United Opinion* stating that his wife, Eva, had left his "bed and board without just cause or provocation" and warning that "all persons are hereby forbidden to harbor or trust her my account." This notice ran three days after Eva's



Left: "Orange County Court," *Herald and News* (West Randolph, Vt.), July 1, 1897, p. 2. Chronicling America, Library of Congress.

Above, top: "Notice," *The United Opinion* (Bradford, Vt.), June 19, 1896, p. 4. GenealogyBank.

Above, bottom: "Notice," *Herald and News*, July 30, 1896, p. 1. Chronicling America, Library of Congress.

youngest child was born and approximately a month before the arrest for adultery.¹⁸ Tyrell petitioned for divorce in 1896, and the proceedings were finalized on June 11, 1897.¹⁹

Three years after the trial, in 1900, Eva Scruton was working as a housekeeper in Norwich, Vermont, and living with her youngest two sons.²⁰ Eva died on October 6, 1909, in Keene, New Hampshire, at age 44.²¹ Her younger sons were 13 and 14. Her second-to-youngest son lived a long life and left descendants, while her youngest son died unmarried in his early twenties.

DNA results

Not long after these discoveries, I found a new DNA match—a third cousin—in my Ancestry.com account. Looking at my match's profile, I initially did not see any surnames that we shared. Then, a light bulb went off. I realized that this man was a Scruton and had to be a descendant of Eva—and Mortimer Brooks. According to his Ancestry tree, my match was the grandson of Eva Scruton's fourth son, so her affair with Mortimer must have begun much earlier than the newspapers reported. Given the circumstances, I decided not to contact my DNA match.

I believe that the only reason I learned of Mortimer Brooks's indiscretions was because of my newspaper research. Had I not decided to search in the Library of Congress's *Chronicling America* database, I might never have known about this consequential chapter in my great-great grandfather's life. The newspaper articles, plus a family diary and a host of other records, offer a window into a fraught situation that resulted in complicated family relationships and long-reaching impacts. ♦

Notes

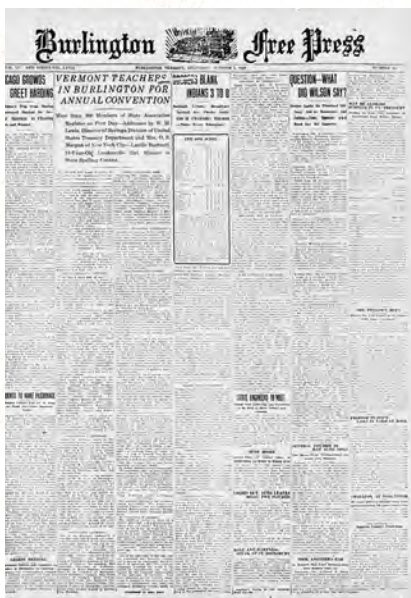
- ¹ Mortimer W. Brooks death record, *New Hampshire: Births, Deaths and Marriages, 1654–1969*, citing original records held by New Hampshire Division of Vital Records Administration. AmericanAncestors.org. (Exact age used to calculate a date of birth.)
- ² Baptist Church, Warwick Township, Quebec, Church Records, 1865–1873, image 147, FamilySearch.org [FHL 1,430,859]. (Familysearch.org/en/search/catalog/koha:615792.)
- ³ Bertha (Brooks) Richardson diary, 1910. Collection of Priscilla Beaudrault.
- ⁴ West Fairlee, Orange Co., Vt., Vermont Land Records, Early to 1900 (1892–1906), 10:625–6, image 232 of 425, citing Town Clerk. Image Group Number: 004156957. FamilySearch.org.

- ⁵ Vermont County Court Records, "Orange County Jail Register, 1876–1921," series ID: FN400.1671.1103.081, item: OECC-00038, Vermont State Archives and Records Administration, Middlesex, Vt.
- ⁶ Hale K. Darling, "Chelsea Home News," *Herald and News* (Randolph, Vt.), July 30, 1896, p. 1. loc.gov/item/sn86082061/1896-07-30/ed-1; and "Orange County Court," *The United Opinion* (Bradford, Vt.), July 2, 1897, p. 2. loc.gov/item/sn85038102/1897-07-02/ed-1.
- ⁷ "Orange County Court," *Herald and News* (Randolph, Vt.), July 1, 1897, p. 2. loc.gov/item/sn86082061/1897-07-01/ed-1.
- ⁸ Vermont State Prison Records (Series ID: FN400.1671.1103.081), Registers, Description Books and Summary Cards, 1809–1975 (F-04552, 1895–1917), Windsor State Prison, p. 99 (No. 3178), Vermont State Archives and Records Administration, Middlesex, Vt.
- ⁹ "West Fairlee Center," *Vermont Watchman and State Journal* (Montpelier, Vt.), July 7, 1897, p. 4. loc.gov/item/sn86071719/1897-07-07/ed-1.
- ¹⁰ West Fairlee, Orange Co., Vt., Vermont Land Records, [note 4]. 1:89.
- ¹¹ Vermont State Prison Records [note 8].
- ¹² Edward Curtis Smith, Governor, "Outgoing Correspondence, 1898–1900," letter to R. C. DeChamp, Esq., November 14, 1899, Series A154, Box A154-000001, p. 528, Vermont State Archives and Records Administration, Middlesex, Vt.
- ¹³ Bertha (Brooks) Richardson diary, January 1–May 21, 1900 [note 3].
- ¹⁴ *Vermont Births, Marriages and Deaths to 2008*, citing original records held by the Vermont State Archives and Records Administration. (Orilla is indexed as Ovilla.) AmericanAncestors.org.
- ¹⁵ *Massachusetts: Vital Records, 1841–1910*, citing original records held by the Massachusetts Archives. AmericanAncestors.org.
- ¹⁶ Mortimer Brooks death record [note 1].
- ¹⁷ "Orange County Court," *The United Opinion*, July 2, 1897 [note 6], p. 2.
- ¹⁸ "Notice," *The United Opinion* (Bradford, Vt.), June 19, 1896, p. 4, GenealogyBank; and Roy Scruton death record, January 12, 1919, *New Hampshire: Births, Deaths and Marriages, 1654–1969* [note 1]. (Exact age used to calculate a date of birth.)
- ¹⁹ *Vermont, U.S., Divorce Records, 1861–2003*, citing original records held by Vermont State Archives & Records Administration. Ancestry.com.
- ²⁰ Charles Smith household, 1900 U.S. Census, Norwich, Windsor, Vermont. Ancestry.com.
- ²¹ Eva M. Scruton death record, *New Hampshire: Births, Deaths and Marriages, 1654–1969* [note 1].

STORIES & CLUES in Yesterday's News

Last October, we asked readers of our *Weekly Genealogist* newsletter to share stories about family history discoveries in old newspapers. A selection of responses is presented here.

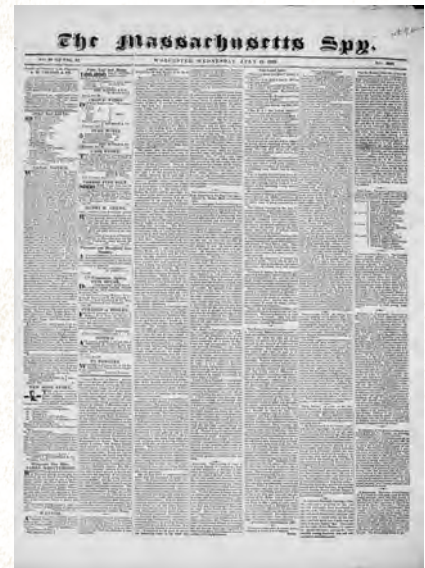
Rainie B. Jueschke, Covington, Georgia: For years I'd heard my mother, Georgiana Slade, say that she was one of the first two women to enroll in the Vermont State School of Agriculture. But I learned the school couldn't verify her claim, and I had no documentation to prove it. Then, while searching 1940s Vermont newspapers, I struck gold. In 1949, the *Burlington Free Press* and the *Rutland Daily Herald* reported that two young women—one of them my mother—had broken the school's all-male tradition dating back to 1910. The *Herald* even published several photos of her. It was exciting to find that my mother's inspiring story was absolutely true and locally significant.



Burlington Weekly Free Press
(Burlington, Vt.), October 7, 1920, p. 1.

Nanette Pigaga, Santa Barbara, California: My father was adopted as an infant in 1926 and raised as an only child. I located my father's biological mother in 1995, and my father and I met her when she was 90. Even so, I wasn't prepared for the devastating blow of reading a 1925 article in the *South Bend [Indiana] Tribune*: "Local Man Arrested, Child Neglect is Charged Against Harmon Lane." Two children were in the household: a 3-year-old boy and a newborn infant (my father), who Harmon Lane described as "a millstone about his neck." I learned that Harmon Lane deserted the family about two months later. The older boy was raised by his mother and stepfather and joyfully met his brother (my father) later in life. Unfortunately, neither brother ever knew about their sister, between them in age, who had been placed in a home as an infant. I discovered her existence in 2018.

Rick Acker, Akron, Ohio: In my newspaper research, I found a story about a visit I made to the hospital when I was 3. I had heard the tale but have no memory of it. My grandfather had done extermination work and left his case of poison on our front porch. My mother and father thought I got into the poison and took me to the hospital to have my stomach pumped. The newspaper reported that I was proud of my tricycle and was using the poison to grease its wheels! It was nice



The Massachusetts Spy (Worcester, Mass.),
July 11, 1832, p. 1.

to find out exactly what happened 72 years ago—and learn I was smart enough not to have eaten the poison.

Bob Rainville, North Andover, Massachusetts: My ancestor Dr. Luther Allen was the town clerk in Sterling, Massachusetts, for many years in the early to mid-1800s. He was responsible for recording the town's births, marriages, and deaths. When he passed in 1837, apparently no one documented his death, so the date was not recorded in town or state records. I finally found his death date—June 13, 1837—in an issue of the *Massachusetts Spy* published soon after he died.

Tracey Stewart, Wallingford, Connecticut: I began researching my father's side of the family hoping to find evidence of an ancestor who served in the Civil War. Instead, I found that my great-great-grandfather served time. I found articles from 1865 reporting on the tiny crime spree orchestrated in Maine by my great-great-grandparents, who counterfeited money (fifty cent denominations) and then tried to pass it in shops (not very successfully). They were caught pretty quickly.

Dee Rowan Eva, Redwood City, California: I made a startling discovery in a San Francisco newspaper. A 1927 article reported on a car that went over an embankment, killing two passengers. A very clear photo showed the scene of the accident. The fatalities were my maternal grandfather and his stepfather. The driver was a boarder in my grandparents' home. The article stated that "through a lack of knowledge of the city the driver mistook a vacant lot for the continuation of 22nd Street." My grandmother was left widowed with three daughters, ages 11, 10, and 8. Four months later, the boarder married my grandmother.

Jim Babcock, Orange, New Jersey: Through Newspapers.com, I discovered that my paternal grandfather had attempted suicide in 1947, but an unexpected visitor intervened. His son (my uncle) Cliff was not at school that day because he and my grandmother were visiting her sister. A school truancy officer was sent to investigate Cliff's absence, and her arrival likely saved my grandfather's life. My grandfather died of natural causes in 1979.



The Wichita Tribune (Wichita, Kans.), September 17, 1898, p. 1.

Barbara Laughlin Adler, Ann Arbor, Michigan: My ancestor Thomas Lauchlin was a merchant seaman in the British Isles before arriving in Boston, where he was captain of his own ship. His journeys are documented in the "Shipping News" columns of three early Boston newspapers: *New-England Courant*, *Boston News-Letter*, and the *New England Weekly Journal*. Beginning in August 1722, the papers recorded that Thomas sailed to many ports, including London, Glasgow, and others in Maryland, South Carolina, and Jamaica. On September 14, 1727, Thomas placed an ad in the *Boston News-Letter* requesting information about a runaway servant girl from Ireland and promising a reward of "Three Pounds" for her return. On December 31, 1733, Thomas set off for Antigua, likely on his last voyage, since he then disappeared from shipping reports. I assume he died in 1734 since his wife, Anne, is referenced in a January 1735 probate record as "the widow of Thomas Lauchlin, Mariner."

Renée Zimmerman Hanrahan, Wichita, Kansas: I knew that my great-grandmother Lucy Zimmerman was bed-ridden after suffering a stroke in the early 1920s. But reading an old Wichita newspaper, I learned that my great-grandfather Albert Zimmerman died on the floor next to her bed. According to the account, at the time of Albert's death, Lucy had been confined to bed for thirteen years. "Because he was called upon so often to attend to her wants, her husband had, in recent years, formed the habit of sleeping in his clothing on the floor at her bedside." Early one morning, Lucy called out to him several times without a response, and she assumed he was sleeping deeply. Some hours later, a neighbor arrived and "found his body at the bedside" following a massive heart attack. I was touched by this proof of his loving devotion.

Ann Blaisdell Rothery, Bureau County, Illinois: I'd heard family stories that my ancestors were stationmasters on the Underground Railroad in Illinois. Even in northern states, people who helped freedom seekers reach Canada were breaking the law. For this reason, finding documentation about work on the Underground Railroad can be challenging. I found confirmation of my family stories in 2023. My great-grandfather was the editor of the newspaper in Bradford, Illinois, and in an 1893 article, he described how in 1855, when he was 5, a family escaping enslavement came to his family's cabin seeking assistance. He recalled, "The sight of the fugitives, the story they told of their wrongs and sufferings made an ineffaceable impression on my mind." ♦



The National Desertion Bureau Card Catalog From Missing Husband Case Files to Family History Database

A new searchable database, “The National Desertion Bureau Card Catalog, 1911–1935,” provides access to records about early twentieth-century Jewish husbands who abandoned their families. This database is part of 150yearsofcare.org, a digital exhibit commemorating The Jewish Board of New York City’s 150th anniversary.

Senior Editor Jean Powers spoke with Public History Consultant Gavin Beinart-Smollan about the history of the National Desertion Bureau, the unique information contained in these records, and how this database can help Jewish researchers trace their families.

What was the purpose of the National Desertion Bureau (NDB)?
 The National Desertion Bureau was established in New York City in 1911 with the goal of tracking down Jewish men who had abandoned their wives. The Bureau aimed to bring these men to justice, force them to pay child support, and, when possible, effect a reconciliation between husband and wife. The Bureau worked with hundreds of organizations to find missing men. Cases were publicized in the press, most famously in the *Jewish Daily Forward’s* “Gallery of Missing Husbands.”



Gavin Beinart-Smollan is the public historian in residence at The Jewish Board. He is the project lead for the agency’s digital history exhibition and genealogy database, 150yearsofcare.org. Gavin is also a PhD candidate in History at New York University (and consequently has researched at the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center at American Ancestors). He grew up in New Zealand and now lives in Stamford, Connecticut, with his family. **Jean Powers** is Senior Editor at American Ancestors.

The Jewish Board's first predecessor organization, the United Hebrew Charities, had addressed the issue of men deserting their wives and children since its founding in 1874. Desertion was not an exclusively Jewish issue, but Jewish communal leaders placed particular emphasis on it. They worried that if large numbers of Jewish families required public welfare due to desertion, it would be perceived as a characteristically "Jewish" issue and that perception would lead to a rise in antisemitism and fuel opposition to immigration. A group of Jewish leaders decided to establish an agency to tackle this issue.

Can you share some history of the National Desertion Bureau?

The NDB was created in 1911 by the National Conference of Jewish Charities (NCJC) and eventually came under the auspices of the New York Federation of Jewish Philanthropies. Much of the NDB's funds were provided by the multimillionaire Heinsheimer brothers through the New York Foundation. The organization also collected contributions from Jewish charities across the United States.



Opposite: "A Gallery of Missing Husbands" published in the *Forward* on February 14, 1914. Above: "New Jewish market on the East Side, New York," 1901. Library of Congress.

The NDB headquarters near New York City's Union Square was run by two attorneys, Monroe M. Goldstein and Charles Zunsler, who worked with a team of investigators. Despite its small staff, the Bureau was able to handle thousands of cases with the help of national and international affiliates.

Because of the density of the Jewish population in New York City, most of the Bureau's efforts were focused there. Over two-thirds of the men were located in New York and its vicinity. But the Bureau's efforts extended well beyond New York; by the 1950s, it had dealt with cases in fifty countries and in all states except Hawaii.

How were men reported to the NDB?

Women typically came to the NDB after being referred by one of the organization's partner agencies. Historian Annette Igra, author of *Wives Without Husbands: Marriage, Desertion, and Welfare in New York, 1900–1935*, determined that most NDB clients sought help after exhausting all other means of supporting themselves. Many of these applications were triggered by a financial crisis—such as illness, job loss, or the needs of young children—that occurred years after the actual desertion. Jewish charities often made their aid to these deserted women conditional, requiring them to cooperate in searching for their husbands and forcing them to pay child support.

After a referral, women were interviewed at the NDB office in New York or one of the agency's affiliates around the country. An investigator would ask the woman to provide as many details as possible about her husband, including his physical characteristics; occupation; languages spoken; place of birth; names and addresses of friends, relatives, and work colleagues; and the perceived cause of desertion. The NDB also asked women to submit photographs of their husbands to help in publicizing the cases and tracking the men down.

How were the cases publicized?

In addition to sharing information with its extensive array of affiliate organizations in the United States and abroad, the NDB publicized its cases through the Jewish immigrant press in Yiddish and the English-language press across the country. The most prominent and effective outlet was the *Jewish Daily Forward's* "Gallery of Missing Husbands" column. The Gallery printed names, photographs, and descriptions of the men with the intent of shaming them into supporting their families. Readers were also encouraged to report the men. By the end of World War I, the *Forward* had a daily circulation of more than a million readers.

76869

NATIONAL DESERTION BUREAU
 NAME Adler, Morris-Lena CASE No. ~~D-880~~

REFERRED BY United Hebrew Charities DATE 2/3/14

DESERTED AT New York

DATE OF DESERTION 1/26/14

LOCATED AT New York (new desertion) 2. Louisville Ky. 3. Decatur Ill.
 DATE OF LOCATION 11/15/13 2. May/14 3. June 21/14
 4. San Francisco May 1915.

CAUSE OF DESERTION Lack of employment

DISPOSITION Reconciliation effected. New desertion; Jan 1915
 men indicted; May 1915; new desertion.
 Oct. 1915 man located in Elgin, Ill. arrested;
 extradited; convicted; sentenced to serve term.

National Desertion Bureau card catalog file for Lena and Morris Adler. Credit: YIVO Archives.

The “Gallery of Missing Husbands” column began in 1908 when the editor of the *Forward* received a number of photographs from women seeking their missing husbands. The Gallery soon became a regular feature and by 1913 it was published twice a week. Once the NDB was established in 1911, the Bureau worked hand in hand with the *Forward* to publicize the cases.

How successful was the NDB in tracking down wayward husbands and holding them accountable?

The Bureau succeeded in locating missing husbands in seventy-five percent of cases. However, it was far less successful in convincing men to reconcile with their wives or financially support their children. The NDB worked with local authorities to extradite men and put them on trial for failing to support their families, but only three percent of these cases resulted in the payment of child support. Reconciliation was likewise very rare. In many cases, women did not want their husbands back.

What happened to the National Desertion Bureau and its case files?

Jews made up most of its clientele at the beginning, but over time it increasingly served a more diverse range of people. As Jewish families entered the middle class and desertion rates declined, the Bureau’s focus shifted.

In the 1950s, the National Desertion Bureau donated its case files to the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research Archives in New York City. The NDB created a card catalog to help organize the cases. Access to the collection was highly restricted to protect the privacy of the NDB’s clients.

In 1954, the Bureau was renamed the Family Location Service and began taking on new types of search cases, including refugees seeking family members and parents

looking for runaway children. It was eventually incorporated back into the organization that became The Jewish Board, and it ceased operations in the 1960s.

How did these documents come to be accessible to researchers?

In 2022, The Jewish Board of Family and Children’s Services, one of New York State’s largest social service agencies, hired me to lead a project to document and commemorate the agency’s 150th anniversary. The Jewish Board had more than thirty predecessor organizations, including the National Desertion Bureau. The Board’s leader-

ship, particularly CEO Jeff Brenner, thought the history of the Bureau was particularly compelling. While some of the information contained in the case files is sensitive, both YIVO and The Jewish Board decided to open the collection. The organizations determined that enough time had passed and that the material’s great research potential outweighed the possible negatives. In addition to details on particular individuals and families, these records provide information on Jewish immigrant life in the early twentieth century and show how social services responded to poverty, family crisis, and desertion.

Explore the databases

The National Desertion Bureau Card Catalog, 1911–1935

150yearsofcare.org/ndb-database

The Jewish Board’s database contains 19,696 case cards. Users can search this collection by name or use filters to narrow the results. Full case files can be requested from YIVO Archives at no cost.

The Forward: A Gallery of Missing Husbands (1908–1920)

jewishgen.org/databases/usa/missinghusbands.html

JewishGen’s database, created by Michael Morgenstern, includes approximately 3,000 entries with full name, aliases, age, place of origin, place and time of disappearance, occupation, and year of immigration. This database can be searched by name. Researchers should be aware that the *Forward* was a Yiddish language newspaper.

When my part in this project began, YIVO had already digitized the card catalog. My team and I indexed part of the catalog (1911–1935) using AI document parsing software and human proofreaders. The case files are not available online at this time. Users can search names in the card catalog database at 150yearsofcare.org, and request reference images of the associated case files at no cost.

How can researchers benefit from the National Desertion Bureau Card Catalog database?

The database includes names, case numbers, dates, referring organizations, and, sometimes, the reason given for the desertion and the outcome of the case. Perceived causes of desertion were supplied by the wives.

The causes of desertion are fascinating, and I encourage people to download the whole dataset and explore the stories. The most frequent cause of desertion was the husband taking up with another woman. Other common

causes were lack of financial support, incompatibility, laziness, bad habits, interference of relatives, gambling, and drinking. Many other reasons were given, including “Broadway high life” and “Didn’t like Baltimore.”

The case files (which are not available online but can be requested) vary considerably in length. Some cases continued for many years, resulting in extensive documentation. Some “chronic deserters” ran away multiple times. Other case files contain very few details. Most case files include the questionnaire filled out during the initial interview with the deserted woman, case notes, photographs of the families, and correspondence between the Bureau and its partner agencies, the police, and the courts. Many files are incredibly rich and contain details about Jewish family life that can’t be found anywhere else.

The response to the database has been enthusiastic. In online Jewish genealogy groups, people have been sharing stories of finding their ancestors in the database. One user found her great-great-grandfather’s name in the database as a deserter, even though he and his wife are buried next to each other in the family plot. What exactly transpired is still quite a mystery!

What lessons would you like researchers to take from the work of the National Desertion Bureau?

We at The Jewish Board were very intentional in creating this genealogy database, which is not something that a social service agency typically does! Too often as a society, when we talk about people in poverty or people struggling with social issues, we are very judgmental. We ask, “Why can’t they just pull themselves up by their bootstraps?” One of the ideas behind this database was to help people discover their own families in the history of The Jewish Board—to understand that their ancestors and relatives might have needed charity or other kinds of assistance. Our goal is to help cultivate empathy for the next generation of people in need.

We hope researchers can use this database to discover information and perhaps answer longstanding questions about their own families. In addition, we hope people will learn about this largely unknown aspect of Jewish life in the early twentieth century.

While we can’t excuse the men who abandoned their wives, I hope that looking at the National Desertion Bureau case files will help people understand the enormous difficulties that their ancestors faced when they came to America. Within these files people will also find some remarkable stories of resilient women who, on their own, raised and supported their children and advocated for themselves and their families. ♦



“Social Conditions in Manhattan: The rear of an East Side tenement with some of its population,” 1927. New York Public Library Digital Collections.

Case study: Morris and Lena Adler

On March 2, 1914, Lena Adler, age 29, walked into the offices of the National Desertion Bureau in New York City. She told the investigator that her husband, Morris, had disappeared a month prior. Morris had run away for a few weeks at a time in 1912 and 1913. Lena opened a case with the Desertion Bureau in 1913, but Morris had returned. Now, she did not know if he would come back.

Alone with two small children to care for and no source of income, Lena had turned to the United Hebrew Charities for help. The organization began to give Lena a monthly allowance and referred her back to its sister agency, the National Desertion Bureau, which could reopen her case. The Bureau resumed its efforts to track down Morris so it could force him to pay child support.

As a result of an earlier case opened by Lena, Morris's mugshot had appeared in the Gallery of Missing Husbands, a regular column in the Yiddish-language newspaper the *Forward*, in February 1914. A few weeks later, A. Rogowsky, a Metropolitan Life Insurance Company agent in Louisville, Kentucky, wrote to the paper. Rogowsky reported that a man named "Morris Held" had recently arrived in Louisville, married Rogowsky's sister, and disappeared without a trace shortly thereafter. A Rogowsky family friend had seen Morris's picture in the Gallery of Missing Husbands. The family was shocked to discover that Morris already had a wife and children in New York.

Mr. Rogowsky asked the Desertion Bureau for help in locating Morris and having him arrested for bigamy. The Bureau activated its network of local affiliates to



מאָררײַס אַדלער.
אַדער העלד.

מאָררײַס אַדלער אַדער העלד, 30 יאָהר
אלט, אַ ווײַנדאָו קלינער, וועלכער איז איין
יאָהר 1906 געקומען פון פּישעמינסקי, גאָ-
ליציען, איז דעם 26טען יאנואר, 1914 פער-
שוואונדען געווארען, איבערלאָזענדיג איין
ניו יאָרק זיין פרוי לינא און זיינע צוויי
קינדער.

Morris Adler clipping from Gallery of Missing Husbands. Credit: YIVO Archives.

track Morris down. In May 1914, investigators located him in Cincinnati, Ohio, and then in Decatur, Illinois. In August, a Mr. Etvinkrantz of Chicago wrote to disclose that Morris was living in that city. The Bureau tracked Morris to Elgin, Illinois, where the law finally caught up with him.

In September 1915, the police extradited Morris to New York and imprisoned him in the Manhattan House of Detention. On October 20, a judge convicted Morris

Adler and sent him to the penitentiary for four months. The couple reunited after Morris's release but the Adlers apparently separated permanently in 1928. ♦

Adapted from "Be a Father to Them: The Story of Morris and Lena Adler." For more details on this case, visit 150yearsofcare.org/deserted-family.

Portrait of the Adler children.
Credit: YIVO Archives.



A page from the record book kept by Nehemiah Hobart of Hingham, Massachusetts. Collection of the Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, Massachusetts.



Karin Wulf is the Beatrice and Julio Mario Santo Domingo Director and Librarian at the John Carter Brown Library and Professor of History at Brown University. A historian of gender, family, and politics in British America, she earned her PhD at Johns Hopkins University.

Chronicling Vital Records in Early America

This text is excerpted from Karin Wulf's latest book, *Lineage: Genealogy and the Power of Connection in Early America* (2025). This selection is from chapter 4, "The Chroniclers," pages 136–141, 158.

In British America, information about births, marriages, and deaths constituted the basic building blocks of a community's recordation. Though families regularly collected and kept this information, its official recordation was not their responsibility, but that of churches and local governments.

The onus of keeping vital records thus fell on ministers and local officials. In Massachusetts the law imagined that not only would clerks "[r]ecord all Births and Deaths of persons in their Towns" once every household reported this information (including "every newly Married Man shall like-wise bring a certificate ... unto the said Clerk"), but that every year they would "deliver into the Recorder of the Court of the Jurisdiction ... a true transcript thereof."¹ In Pennsylvania, the very first codes were the Duke of York's laws, which preceded the adoption of specifically Pennsylvania law. These required that "the minister or town clark" was to "well and truly and plainly Record all Births, Marriages and Burials" with a financial incentive for each entry, and a fine for any that were missed.² In Virginia every parish minister was expected to "[r]ecord all Births, Burials, or Marriages ... in a Book to be provided by the Vestry for that purpose." If the head of household "shall omit giving notice to the said Minister or Reader, of the day of the Birth, Death, or Marriage, of any to him or them related, [in] the space of a Month such person for such his neglect, be fined One hundred pounds of Tobacco."³

The evidentiary record suggests that across British America, records were kept much less regularly than the law would have liked, but that officials and others recognized their importance and even commented on lapses. It could be a struggle to collect information and then to gather it into an appropriate place. What officials produced and then left for the record was the result of a combination of access to materials, time, and

likely the expectation of their colleagues and community. The town clerk for Danvers, Massachusetts, for example, carefully labeled a neat square volume as “A Book of Records for the District of Danvers, July 1753.” This book marked the emergence of Danvers with a new name (it had been Salem Village). The fresh records were meant to catch up on several previous years and thus families were grouped alphabetically, often with entries all at one time, or at least several events over a couple of years entered at one time. “Account of the Birth of Children” of “Mr. Henry Putnam & Hannah his Wife,” for example, included six sons born between 1738 and 1751. By the time Nathan Felton was the town clerk at the end of the century, he had a less formal notebook to keep account of his payments for having recorded the births and deaths in Danvers. In April 1803, for example, he was paid for having recorded two births for the Putnam family. In the course of his work, Felton also kept his own family record near the back. “Nathan Felton and Lydia his wife Married January 24th 1796,” he wrote. And then in one entry he noted the dates of “The Birth of their Children.”⁴

Virginia’s parish record books, like so much of its early manuscript and printed archive, have been vulnerable to fire, weather, and war. But those that remain illuminate an essential pattern throughout British America. Ministers, when they did their job well, recorded the important life moments for parishioners, who included their own family. And in the case of Virginia ministers, they also recorded information for the parishioners whom they held in bondage. Bartholomew Yates was one of Christ Church’s longest serving ministers (after some disappointments and criminals in the position). In Middlesex County on the middle peninsula, first he, from 1704 to 1734, and then his son, Bartholomew Jr., from 1737 to 1767, served their parish as minister. They recorded births, marriages, and deaths, intermingling their own events with the others. In the spring of 1709, Yates recorded the birth of “Mary, belonging to Mr Bartholomew Yates, born May, 28th, 1709.” In February 1712, after baptizing the daughter of Patrick and Rebecca Deagon and the son of Thomas and Ann Smyth, Yates baptized his own son and heir, Bartholomew Jr., “son of Bartho; & Sarah Yates bborn Feb. ye 9th baptized ye 17th Feb. 1712.” Thirty-two years later, it was the son having a son: “Bartholomew son of Barth: & Eliza Yates born October 22 Bap 1744.”⁵

In New England the requirement for record keeping was similarly intense and expressed early in colonization. By 1638, the Massachusetts General Court had established an expectation that each town would keep

records not only of “all wills, administrations and inventories” but “also of the days of every marriage, birth and death of every person within [that] jurisdiction.” With modest variation, such laws remained in place throughout the colonial and into the early national period. Such changes to the system that required parents and newly married men to inform designated officials of relevant family events generally only concerned the application, adjustment, and then rescinding of registration fees and fines.⁶

There was clear agreement about the communal benefits of capturing such vital information. For identifying orphans, administering estates, and allocating poor relief, knowing who was who, and who belonged to whom, was of paramount importance. Records were valuable, and their collection and security was encouraged. In Massachusetts should “any person ... repairing to any publick Officer ... to view any Record or Writings committed to his charge ... willingly Deface or Rent any such Record or Writing ... every person so offending shall” among other punishments “stand in the Pillory two hours in Boston Market with a Paper over his head written in Capital Letters A DEFACER OF RECORDS.”⁷ Thus, local governments and ministers were the producers of a documentary record of vital information. In New England, this accounting work was a crucial layer in the accretion of a genealogical and historical archive. Ministers, town clerks, and others tasked with creating this archive could feel the weight of responsibility.

The Reverend Daniel Fuller was relatively ordinary among the privileged men of revolutionary New England. Born in Middleton, Massachusetts, in 1740, after he graduated with a second degree from Harvard in 1766, he was called to a congregation in Gloucester, where he served as pastor of the west parish for fifty years. Along with keeping account of his congregation, he drily and succinctly observed key moments of Boston’s revolutionary experience. In one June 1775 diary passage, he noted that “the Provincials & Regular Troops from Boston had a very smart engagement at Bunkers Hill Charlestown,” and in the next, “My horse kicked one of my legs by which I was very lame.”⁸ He was a writing sort of man.

Near the end of the eighteenth century, Fuller began to narrate his own family history alongside recording of the histories of his community’s families. “It is very unaccountable,” he mused, that so many of the earliest settlers were “so deficient in giving us their descendants an Account of their family, the Place of their Nativity, the Place of their First Settlement here, and the occasion

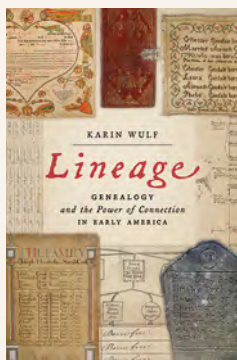
of their emigration &c.” This was a responsibility he could shoulder, and he commenced a recitation that began with the arrival in Plymouth in 1638 of Thomas Fuller, who was both the author’s paternal great-grandfather and maternal great-great grandfather.⁹ Fuller was among several successive cohorts of eighteenth-century New England men that played a particular role in creating both the archive and the method for producing foundational narratives about American history.¹⁰

Although he decried a failure of “the first settlers” in providing genealogical accounts, in fact Fuller’s own endeavors were dependent on the work of those previous generations. His account was replete with specific information about his ancestors, including when they were born, married, and died, where they lived (sometimes to the house), how many children were born to each generation and their names and vital details. It is a tautology to note that family histories do not spring, *sui generis*, from the hand or head of their creator. They are by their very nature collections, compilations. But Fuller’s exclamation that previous generations had been “deficient” really only meant that the specific sort of reflection he was creating, a narrative history, was a rarer specimen. The skeleton of family history, the raw materials, were always thick on the ground. The work of ministers like Fuller himself constituted one of the principal archives for family history.

Ministers’ record keeping, whether in Massachusetts or Pennsylvania or Virginia, whether Congregational, Baptist, or Anglican, reveals key patterns: first, that they often felt deeply and personally connected to the information that they recorded, and second, that they and their congregations struggled to determine to whom that information actually belonged. Was it a public work product, or was it the property of the author? Combining their own families’ histories with those

of their congregation and community muddied this distinction considerably. Illustrative is the record of the three generations of ministers of the Old Ship Church in Hingham, in which three generations of clergymen—Peter Hobart (1635–1679), his son David (1697–1717), and David’s two sons, Nehemiah (1717–1740) and David (1740–1780)—recorded the vital information of both their parishioners and their own family. More than a dry accounting of dates, this book was imbued with emotional texture. When the Reverend Nehemiah Hobart recorded the death of his aunt Lydia Lincoln in 1732, he added sorrowfully, “now my Grandfathers children are all Removed By Death. I hope we are to meet in Heaven.” A responsibility to account for his congregation called each Hobart to list births, baptisms, marriages, and deaths. Surely it was a related, shared impulse that moved this Hobart to specify his own, extended family in this fashion by pointing to a lineal ancestor, and to the community of their descendants.¹¹

Is it any wonder that the lines between a minister’s diary and a congregation’s records became indistinct? The Reverend Job Cushing very clearly noted that for the records of his Shrewsbury congregation, begun in 1723, “This book [was] bought with my own money and still remains mine.” After he died, the church leadership noted on the same title page that they had “purchased this book of the Administratrix and [it] is now their property.” When Daniel Foster, pastor of the New Braintree, Massachusetts, Church of Christ, seemed to prioritize his own children’s births and his own family’s events within the church book over those of the congregation, they issued a sharp remonstrance, considering the “unhappy situation in regard to the very imperfect condition of their Chh. Records” and enjoined their next minister to do better. The New Braintree community expressed an anxiety about the need for full



Lineage: Genealogy and the Power of Connection in Early America

by Karin Wulf. Oxford University Press, 2025. 6 x 9 hardcover, 376 pp.

“Karin Wulf’s *Lineage* transforms mind-numbing and mostly forgotten books and artifacts into vibrant accounts of forgotten pasts. A Wampanoag account book, a lock of hair, a stained glass window, a goat-leather-bound genealogy of a Stuart King, and reams of court records, diaries, letters, and plantation accounts affirm that ‘genealogy has never been, nor is it now, purely a matter of private interest.’”

— Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, author of *The Age of Homespun: Objects and Stories in the Creation of an American Myth*

To order, visit Bookshop.org, Amazon.com, or other booksellers.

and complete family records, and the “disadvantages to which they must necessarily be subjected for want thereof.”¹² Though there are few responses to ministerial record keeping as explicit as that of the New Braintree congregation so disappointed in Reverend Foster, other ministers do seem to have kept records in a more organized fashion. Nathan Webb of Uxbridge, for example, kept such orderly records, with each entry distinguished from the next by a full line and a separate column for dates, that he also included his signature, “N. Webb,” at the end of each.¹³

It is unsurprising, then, even conventional, that a minister such as Daniel Foster would take to family history. He was part of a pattern of rooting local families in the history of a community—and vice versa. In one respect, many of those who created genealogical records were already archivist-historians; as ministers, town clerks, or business people, they were charged with collecting and recording information of use and importance for their community. The double placement of accounts—accounts of family, and accounts of shoemaking, farm business, congregation or town business—within a single ledger flags this phenomenon.



As New England’s chroniclers knitted family into the history of this place, they reinforced genealogy as its cultural infrastructure. They created public records, which they then drew on for family histories, and vice versa. When men like the many Mathers, Thomas Prince, and Stephen Hopkins wrote New England’s history, they could not help but see it as a history of families—and particular families at that. In the nineteenth century, privileged white men and women would return again and again to these archives of genealogy to make the history of the place they found so compelling. They would transcribe and reprint materials—some of which are no longer available to researchers—that reflected the depth of care and attention paid by the previous centuries to family connections as indicative of historical significance. And they would assert as America’s history that history of New England which had begun with the chroniclers of the long eighteenth century.¹⁴ ♦

Notes

- ¹ *The Colonial Laws of Massachusetts, Reprinted from the Edition of 1672* (Boston, 1887), 130.
- ² *Charter to William Penn Laws of the Province of Pennsylvania Preceded by the Duke of York’s Laws . . .* (Harrisburg: 1879), 13–14.

- ³ *The Lawes of Virginia Now in Force: Collected out of the Assembly Records, and Digested into One Volume* (London, 1661), 6–7.
- ⁴ “A Book of Records for the District of Danvers, July 1753” and Nathan Felton Account Book, 1800–1803, Danvers Peabody Essex Institute Library.
- ⁵ The Christ Church parish record was published as a project of the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America in the State of Virginia as *The Parish Register of Christ Church, Middlesex County, VA., from 1653–1812* (Richmond, 1897).
- ⁶ In Pennsylvania, first under the “Duke of Yorke’s Laws” there was a requirement for registration by parish. Pennsylvania’s Great Law of 1682 provided for a central registry for births, marriages, and other information critical to family law. *Charter to William Penn and Laws of the Province of Pennsylvania . . . Preceded by Duke of Yorke’s Laws in force from the year 1676 to the year 1682 . . .* (Harrisburg, 1879), 13, 186. In Massachusetts, the 1638 law was revised a few times, including in 1692 under the new provincial charter, and then largely adopted by the state government, when it got around to it in 1796. Massachusetts law is summarized in Robert Gutman, “Birth and Death Registration in Massachusetts I: the Colonial Background, 1839–1800,” *The Millbank Memorial Fund Quarterly* 36, no. 1 (January 1958): 58–74.
- ⁷ *The Colonial Laws of Massachusetts Reprinted from the Edition of 1672* (Boston, 1887), 130–131.
- ⁸ Daniel Fuller Appleton, ed., *The Diary of the Rev. Daniel Fuller with his account of his family and other matters* (New York, 1894), 36.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, 15, 23.
- ¹⁰ In 1894, Daniel Fuller’s grandson, Daniel Fuller Appleton, edited and published 100 copies of the diary “for private distribution.”
- ¹¹ Hobart mss. journal, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, Mass.
- ¹² Records of the New Braintree Church of Christ, vols. 1 and 2.
- ¹³ “Then was baptized Nathan the son of Nathan Park and Sarah his wife N. Webb.” Records of the Church of Christ, Uxbridge, MA. American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Mass.
- ¹⁴ On the histories of New England that erased Black and Indigenous people, as well as histories of slavery and dispossession, see especially Joanne Pope Melish, *Disowning Slavery: Gradual Emancipation and “Race” in New England, 1780–1860* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000), and Jean M. O’Brien, *Firsting and Lasting: Writing Indians out of Existence in New England* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010).

State Spotlight

Digitally Accessing Newspapers State by State



Kyle Hurst is a Senior Genealogist of the Newbury Street Press at American Ancestors.

Appreciating the importance of preserving US newspapers, all fifty states have participated in at least one project to digitize their newspaper collections. This column discusses the major free newspaper archives for each state and highlights a selection of those archives recommended by American Ancestors staff members.

The National Digital Newspaper Program (NDNP) has supported the most extensive digitization effort to date by funding partner institutions. The National Endowment for the Humanities and the Library of Congress partnered to make newspapers freely accessible online via the *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers* collection (ChroniclingAmerica.loc.gov). Per the website, “Chronicling America contains millions of newspaper pages from nearly every state and territory in the United States published through 1963.”

About one third of the states have elected to keep their NDNP collections solely accessible via *Chronicling America*. These states are Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, Delaware, Idaho, Iowa, Louisiana, Mississippi, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Dakota, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Tennessee, Vermont, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Washington, DC.

Of those listed above, Kansas, Missouri, Montana, and Vermont also offer free access via their own portals to *Newspapers.com*, a commercial site that adheres to the NDNP standards. The first three portals are managed by the state historical societies, while the Vermont Department of Libraries requires state residency to access their portal.

Individual state institutions offer digital newspaper collections via distinct offshoots of their websites. Among them are eight state libraries (Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, Indiana, Maine, Virginia, Washington, and Wyoming), three state historical societies (Minnesota, Ohio, and Oklahoma), and one state archives (Maryland). By and large, these state collections are easy to search and browse.



State universities serve as the other major creator of digital newspaper content. Special pages have been set up in connection with the websites of state universities in California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Kentucky, Michigan, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas, and Utah. Nearly all of them also offer convenient search and browse functionality. Community libraries have made use of scanning services to provide complimentary digital access to their own collections. The most widespread



The **California Digital Newspaper Collection** (CDNC) from the University of California, Riverside offers access to over 1.5 million issues of California newspapers dating back to 1846. My grandmother was raised in southern California, then went to the University of Michigan, where she met and married my grandfather. She was able to attend college due to the generosity of her uncle, a well-connected California businessman. Using the CDNC allowed me to find hundreds of articles discussing his business interests, particularly in the *Los Angeles Daily News* and the *Valley Times* (North Hollywood), giving me a better picture of how he was able to fund her education.

Hallie Kirchner, Senior Genealogist

effort has come from Advantage Archives and their “portal to the past” Community History Archives (CommunityHistoryArchives.com). Researchers can check the map on their website to see over 1,100 community partners. Iowa has some of the best coverage with about 280 participating communities. Massachusetts’s NDNP has been led by Boston Public Library, and many of its newspaper holdings can be browsed by subject, place, and date via Digital Commonwealth: Massachusetts Collections Online.

Consortiums of institutions may also provide access to digital newspaper collections. Some of them are run by governmental agencies, like the Office of Hawaiian Affairs and the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Bureau of Libraries. Louisiana Digital Library pulls from thirty-two participating institutions, including the state archives, state museum, many universities, and the State Library of Louisiana. Newspapers from Puerto Rico, a US territory, have been added to the Digital Library of the Caribbean, which offers a number of collections from many partner institutions in the US and Caribbean.

Finally, singular newspapers and private individuals have established their own databases for digital access. For instance, *The New York Times* has its own website (NYTimes.com) that allows access to articles dating back to 1851 with viewing options based on subscriber levels. Perhaps the most unique and comprehensive individually operated archive is Old Fulton New York Post Cards, created in 1999 by Thomas M. Tryniski. His offerings currently exceed 57 million newspaper pages, more than double the page count of Chronicling

America. Unlike the free access Tryniski provides, most private websites shield digitized images behind a paywall.

The existing assortment of digital newspaper archives, both institutional and commercial, often results in overlaps of coverage. For example, the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* can be accessed via NYS Historic Newspapers (1849–1902), Old Fulton New York Post Cards (1841–1955), and Brooklyn Newsstand (1841–1963) hosted by Newspapers.com (bklyn.newspapers.com/paper/brooklyn-eagle/13893/). If multiple collections exist for a newspaper of interest, researchers can survey their options and make a choice based on factors such as search and browse options, accurately targeted results, enhanced optical character recognition and filtering functionality, and image clarity and download ability. Multiple digitization options increase researchers’ chances of tracking families via newspapers. ♦

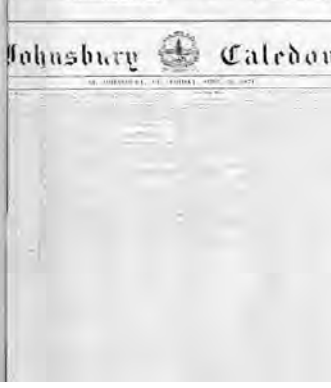


COLORADO

If your research includes Colorado, be sure to delve into the **Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection**. It provides over 6.9 million digitized pages dating back to April 1859 with the first edition

of Colorado’s oldest newspaper, Denver’s *Rocky Mountain News*. Gold and silver mining opportunities drew large numbers of people to the area starting in the late 1850s. Various newspapers in this collection, such as the *Ashcroft Herald* (Pitkin County), frequently reported on those who worked and managed the mines. The collection also features a topics tab providing samplings of newspaper articles pertaining to over seventy subjects, such as the 1918–1919 influenza pandemic. As a coffee drinker, I enjoyed reading the early twentieth-century newspaper advertisements under the topic “Coffee: Good or Evil?”

Eileen Pironti, Senior Genealogist of the Newbury Street Press



Freely accessible digital state newspaper archives

State collections not listed here can be found on the [Chronicling America](http://ChroniclingAmerica) website.

General United States

Chronicling America

Library of Congress
ChroniclingAmerica.loc.gov
loc.gov/collections/chronicling-america

Community History Archives

Advantage Archives
directory.historyarchives.online

Arizona

Arizona Memory Project Historical Digital Newspapers

Arizona State Library
azmemory.azlibrary.gov/nodes/view/3

California

California Digital Newspaper Collection

University of California, Riverside
cbsrinfo.ucr.edu/CDNC
cdnc.ucr.edu/cgi-bin/cdnc

Colorado

Colorado Historic Newspaper Collection

Colorado State Library
ColoradoHistoricNewspapers.org

Connecticut

Newspapers of Connecticut

Connecticut State Library
Collections.ctdigitalarchive.org/node/8440

Delaware

New Castle Public Library: Community History Archive

Advantage Archives
NewCastle.advantage-preservation.com

Florida

Florida Digital Newspaper Library

University of Florida
Newspapers.uflib.ufl.edu

Georgia

Georgia Historic Newspapers

University of Georgia
GAHistoricNewspapers.galileo.usg.edu

Hawaii

Papakilo Database: Hawaiian Newspapers Collection

Office of Hawaiian Affairs
PapakiloDatabase.com/pdnupepa/cgi-bin/pdnupepa?a=p&p=home

Illinois

Illinois Digital Newspaper Collections

University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
idnc.library.illinois.edu



The **Kansas Digital Newspapers Program** allowed me to find some wonderful stories about my family who left Prince Edward Island and obtained a Kansas homestead in the 1870s. The newspaper collection boasts that they have nearly every

paper from every city and town in Kansas between 1854 and 1923. Browsing through the papers allowed me to step back to the time when newspapers were social media, sharing the latest news and gossip in town and nearby. I found a lengthy article in the *Abilene Daily Reflector* about my third great-grandfather Francis Dougherty. He was supposedly one of the oldest citizens in Dickinson County, at the advanced age of 103. I also learned about his family's journey from Canada to the United States.

Melanie McComb, Senior Genealogist



Indiana

Hoosier State Chronicles

Indiana State Library
Newspapers.library.in.gov

Iowa

Iowa City Public Library: Historical Iowa City Newspapers

Advantage Archives
IowaCity.advantage-preservation.com

Southeast Iowa Digital Archive

Advantage Archives
SEIowa.advantage-preservation.com

Kansas

Kansas Digital Newspapers Program

Kansas Historical Society
KansasHistory.gov/p/
kansas-digital-newspaper-program/16126

Kentucky

National Digital Newspaper Program: The Kentucky Edition

University of Kentucky
uky.edu/NDNP

Louisiana

Louisiana Newspapers

Louisiana Digital Library
LouisianaDigitalLibrary.org/
louisiananewspapers

Maine

Maine Newspaper Project

Maine State Library
DigitalMaine.com/newspapers

Maryland

Maryland Newspaper Guide

Maryland State Archives
speccol.msa.maryland.gov/pages/newspaper

Massachusetts

Digital Commonwealth (newspaper collections)

Boston Public Library
DigitalCommonwealth.org

Michigan

Digital Michigan Newspaper Portal

Central Michigan University
DigMichNews.cmich.edu

Minnesota

Minnesota Digital Newspaper Hub

Minnesota Historical Society
mnhs.org/newspapers/hub

Missouri

SHSMO Digital Newspaper Project

State Historical Society of Missouri
shsmo.org/collections/newspapers/mdnp

Montana

Montana Historical Society Newspapers

Montana Historical Society
mths.mt.gov/Research/collections/
newspapers/mtnews

Nebraska

Nebraska Newspapers

University of Nebraska—Lincoln & History
Nebraska
NebNewspapers.unl.edu

New Jersey

New Jersey Historical Portal

Innovative Document Imaging
NJHistorical.org

New Mexico

New Mexico Historical Newspapers

University of New Mexico
DigitalRepository.unm.edu/
nm_newspapers

New York

NYS Historic Newspapers

Northern New York Library Network
NYSHistoricNewspapers.org

Old Fulton New York Post Cards

Thomas M. Tryniski
FultonHistory.com

North Carolina

Digital NC: North Carolina Newspapers

University of North Carolina
DigitalNC.org/newspapers

Ohio

Ohio Memory: Newspapers

Ohio History Connection
OhioMemory.ohiohistory.org/newspapers

Oklahoma

Oklahoma Digital Newspaper Program

Oklahoma Historical Society
gateway.okhistory.org/explore/collections/
ODNP



My family has lived in Minnesota for many generations, so I've appreciated accessing the Minnesota Historical Society's Minnesota Digital Newspaper Hub. In 2024, the *St. Cloud Register* (1938–1955) and the *St. Cloud Visitor* (1955–2018), newspapers of the Diocese of St. Cloud in central Minnesota, were added. Browsing through the pages provided me with a sense of the area's strong Catholic community life. I enjoyed finding family members in photos I'd never seen before, like a 1959 one showing my dad and uncle with fellow members of an organization for Catholic teenage boys. Although I've long used newspapers in my research, I found that these two papers offered a different perspective on my family through information and images that were new to me.

Lynn Betlock, Managing Editor, AMERICAN ANCESTORS magazine



New York ancestors are easier to track thanks to significant digital newspaper collections. I first researched my own New Yorkers using **Old Fulton New York Post Cards**, which offers nearly 1,000 newspapers published in New York out of a total collection of 1,775. As my research expanded, my quest necessarily extended to **NYS (New York State) Historic Newspapers**, which featured twice that amount, and the regional **HRVH (Hudson River Valley Heritage) Historical Newspapers** collection, with its 75 Hudson River Valley newspapers. While looking for my great-great-grandmother's 1905 obituary in the *Kingston Daily Freeman*, I found that all three sites had related but differing collections, with HRVH Historical Newspapers holding the issue I needed. The obituary mentioned her sister's name and address in Ellenville, clues for researching the family locally.

Kyle Hurst, Senior Genealogist of the Newbury Street Press



Wisconsin

BadgerLink: Wisconsin Newspaper Association

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
<https://badgerlink.dpi.wi.gov>; click "newspapers"

Wyoming

Wyoming Digital Newspaper Collection
 University of Wyoming & Wyoming State Library
WyomingNewspapers.org

Colorado & Wyoming

Plains to Peaks Historic Newspapers
 Colorado & Wyoming State Libraries & University of Wyoming
ppc-historicnewspapers.org

Puerto Rico

Digital Library of the Caribbean
 Partner institutions in the US & Caribbean
dloc.com

Oregon

Historic Oregon Newspapers
 University of Oregon
OregonNews.uoregon.edu

Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania Newspaper Archive
 Penn State University
PANewsArchive.psu.edu

South Carolina

Historical Newspapers of South Carolina
 University of South Carolina
HistoricNewspapers.sc.edu

Texas

The Portal to Texas History: Early Texas Newspapers & Texas Digital Newspaper Program
 University of North Texas
<https://texashistory.unt.edu/explore/collections/TDNP>

Utah

Utah Digital Newspapers
 University of Utah
Newspapers.lib.utah.edu

Vermont

Free Online Newspapers for Research
 Vermont Department of Libraries
Libraries.vermont.gov/online_library/free-online-newspapers-research

Virginia

Virginia Chronicle
 Library of Virginia
VirginiaChronicle.com

Washington

Washington Digital Newspapers
 Washington State Library
WashingtonDigitalNewspapers.org



Historical Newspapers of South Carolina, housed at the University of South Carolina, provides access to digitized newspapers throughout the state. The website offers a helpful map, as well as an advanced search feature. This newspaper collection has been vital to my research of emancipated people in the Reconstruction era. One of the more useful newspapers, *The Charleston Daily News*, is available from 1865 to 1873. This publication helped me trace the political career of Jacob C. Allman, a formerly enslaved man from Marlboro County, South Carolina, who served in the South Carolina House of Representatives from 1872 to 1876.

Sheilagh Doerfler, Senior Genealogist

from our collections

Captain John Bonner and his Map



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.

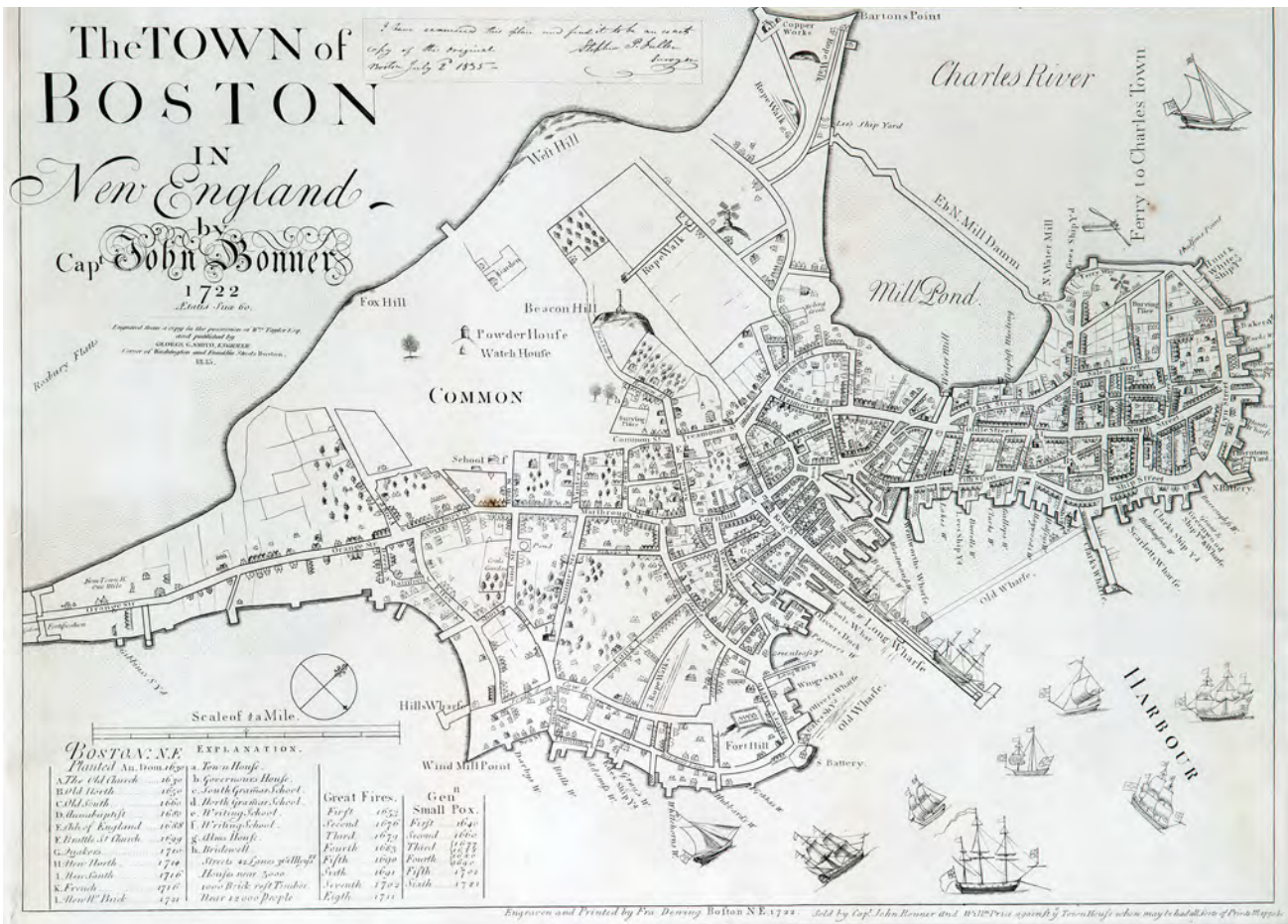
Captain John Bonner Jr. (1641/42–1725/26) is best known today for his 1722 map of Boston, the first effort by a cartographer to depict the city. Such a feat might be expected from a man whom the *Boston News-Letter* described at the time of his death as “a Gentleman very Skillful and Ingenious in many Arts and Sciences; especially in Navigation, Drawing, Moulding of Ships &c. [He was] One of the best acquainted with the Coasts of North America, of any of his time; of great Knowledge and Judgment in Marine Affairs.”

Bonner portraits

The force of Captain Bonner’s personality is conveyed in this portrait, probably done in Boston by an as-yet-unidentified artist. The use of eastern white pine for its stretchers suggests an American origin. Bonner’s face is carefully rendered to provide a good likeness, while his clothing is painted more loosely. His long, attenuated fingers are a good demonstration of the mannerist style that lingers in this portrait.

John Bonner III (1693–1762), depicted here at the age of 4 or 5, was the son and namesake of Capt. Bonner and his second wife, Mary Clark (1664/65–1697) of Cambridge. It is believed that this portrait, by a different hand than the image of the captain, was painted while the Bonner family was in London in 1698. Young John is shown with a red flower in his right hand and pointing with his left to a merchant ship flying the English red ensign. A related portrait of Jane Bonner Ellery (1691–1739),





John's older sister, also dated 1698, survives and is today in the collection of the Connecticut Museum of Culture and History (1885.1.2).

These two "ancient and interesting portraits" remained in the family, until presented to American Ancestors by a descendant, Mary Bonner Cazneau (1830–1925), on February 2, 1884. She died at age 95 and is buried in Hingham, Massachusetts.

Bonner map facsimile

This 1835 facsimile of John Bonner Jr.'s famous 1722 map is "Engraved from a copy in the possession of Wm. Taylor Esq. / and published by / GEORGE G. SMITH, ENGRAVER / Corner of Washington and Franklin Streets Boston. / 1835." It includes a note attesting to its authenticity: "I have examined this plan and find it to be an exact / copy of the original [signed] Stephen P. Fuller Surveyor / Boston July 2d 1835."

George Girdler Smith (1795–1878) based his copy on the third state of the work, engraved in 1725 or 1726 by Francis Dewing. A unique copy of this version is in the collection of the Massachusetts Historical Society. The American Ancestors facsimile leaves out several details

and inadvertently gives Bonner's age as 60, rather than 80. Smith reissued the map in 1867.

Smith became a resident member of New England Historic Genealogical Society in 1855. At his death, he was remembered as a fine artist. As an engraver, "he stood first in his profession in Boston," and he was also known for his watercolors. He was a Mason, a member of the Boston Light Infantry, and the Massachusetts Charitable Mechanic Association.

This map was given to American Ancestors by Bickford Pulsifer of Charlestown, Massachusetts, in January 1874. ♦

Opposite, left: Unknown artist, *Captain John Bonner, Jr.*, probably Boston, Massachusetts, circa 1690, oil on canvas, 34 x 30 in., including frame.

Opposite, right: Unknown artist, *John Bonner III*, probably London, England, 1698, 33 x 28 in., including frame.

Above: George Girdler Smith, after John Bonner, *John Bonner's 1722 Map of Boston*, Engraving, ink on paper, 34 x 23½ in.

Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center Spotlight

Henry Treadwell is the Digital Archivist at the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center at American Ancestors.



Preserving Family History in the Arthur S. Obermayer Papers

Dr. Arthur S. Obermayer (1931–2016), a Boston-area scientist, entrepreneur, and philanthropist, donated his collection of personal and professional papers to the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center in 2015. Thanks to a donation from his wife, Dr. Judith Obermayer, we were able to send a large portion of the collection to the Northeast Document Conservation Center for digitization and make it available online through our Digital Library & Archives in 2025.

The collection encompasses aspects of Arthur's professional and philanthropic work, ranging from his studies at Swarthmore and MIT to his role as the founder of the scientific research and development company Moleculon Research Company (later Moleculon, Inc.). The material also includes numerous papers related to Arthur's political advocacy, which spanned active involvement in numerous political campaigns (including Robert Drinan's campaigns for the US House of Representatives from Massachusetts and George McGovern's unsuccessful run for president). In the early 1980s, Arthur testified before Congress in support of the establishment of the Small Business Innovation Research program; he and Judith were inducted into the SBIR Hall of Fame in 2015.

The collection also illustrates Arthur's wide-ranging philanthropic activities. The Obermayer Foundation, established by Arthur and Judith, founded the Creglingen Jewish Museum in Creglingen, Germany, once home to Arthur's maternal grandparents; supported the Jewish genealogical organization JewishGen; and established the Obermayer German Jewish History Awards, which recognizes non-Jewish Germans' contributions to preserving German Jewish history. Arthur's research into his family history formed the basis of *The Obermayers: A History of a Jewish Family in Germany and America, 1618–2009*.¹ Arthur's philanthropic work also included promoting dialogue between the US and USSR through American Soviet Economic Education Television (later East–West TV) and the nonprofit US–USSR Bridges for Peace, as well as cofounding Partners for Progressive Israel.

The collection also offers insight into the lives of Arthur's immediate family members: his brother Herman "Obe" Obermayer, sister Helen Obermayer Sellers, and parents Leon and Julia (Sinsheimer) Obermayer. The most substantial section of family papers relates to Leon, covering his early life and education, his career as a Philadelphia lawyer, and his civic and charitable involvement, including his tenure as president of the American Jewish Historical Society.² The papers also cover Leon's personal life: his travels with his wife, Julia; their birthday and anniversary celebrations; plus correspondence between Leon's mother, Veronika Lehmann Obermayer, and her relatives in Germany.

One of the most interesting items in the collection is a set of five phonograph records containing three radio broadcasts. One is an undated interview with Leon Obermayer for the program *Law In Action*. The other

Arthur Obermayer affixes a mezuzah to the doorpost at the opening of the Creglingen Jewish Museum in 2000.



One of the lacquer discs from the collection.

two are 1950s interviews from the WIP radio program *Famous Philadelphians at the Mike*, one with Leon and the other with lawyer and politician George Wharton Pepper, one of Leon's law professors at the University of Pennsylvania. The records are acetate discs (also known as lacquer discs), a format frequently used from the 1930s to the 1950s to record directly from radio broadcasts. (A recording lathe cut the discs in real time, rather than pressing them from a mold as in vinyl record production.) Acetate records, which are aluminum discs with a coating of nitrocellulose lacquer, are heavier than vinyl records but less durable due to being made from a softer material. The five discs in the collection are in poor condition and too fragile to be played. Some of the discs have patches of palmitic acid (caused by the castor oil in the lacquer leaching out and reacting with oxygen) and are beginning to delaminate, with the lacquer surfaces cracking and bubbling.

Audio engineers at the Northeast Document Conservation Center used the digital imaging technology IRENE to scan and digitize the audio on the discs. IRENE (named for the song "Goodnight, Irene," the first audio digitized by the technology, but later turned into the acronym "Image, Reconstruct, Erase Noise, Etc.") uses a high-powered microscope to capture images of grooved audio recordings such as discs or cylinders, which can then be converted into a digital audio file. Because the method captures images without touching the disc or cylinder, not requiring playback with a needle, IRENE avoids further damage to the audio carrier and digitizes media that could otherwise only be played on obsolete equipment.³

Despite the damage to these discs, the audio digitized via IRENE is largely intelligible—and now available in our Digital Library & Archives. The longest interview, recorded in 1953 or 1954 for *Famous Philadelphians at the Mike* yields interesting insights into Leon Obermayer's life and values. Host Samuel Serota asked Leon about his family, religious observance, collection of Jewish ceremonial objects, and his civic and philanthropic engagement in Philadelphia, particularly with the Boy Scouts.



Leon's close relationship with his wife and children was a major theme throughout the interview and he spoke proudly of his son Arthur's recently awarded National Science Foundation fellowship for his doctoral studies at MIT. Serota observed to Leon that "You don't make a mention of yourself without making some reference to a member of your family."

One important family tradition that Leon discussed in the interview was the Obermayers' annual Passover seder, held every year since 1924, the year after Leon and Julia's marriage. Leon noted that he and Julia typically hosted between twenty-five and thirty people, a mixture of family members and friends. Leon remarked that their children always came home for the seder no matter where they were living. At the time of the recording, Leon and Julia had been hosting seders for thirty years. In 2024, sixty-five of Leon and Julia's family members from around the world gathered in Philadelphia to observe the hundredth family seder.⁴

The Obermayer family seder is one of countless examples demonstrating the importance of family and connection in the Arthur S. Obermayer Papers. Arthur's legacy lives on through his family history and the organizations he founded to preserve and honor his ancestors' heritage and experiences. ♦

The Arthur S. Obermayer Papers (P-1019) are available on the JHC's Digital Library & Archives at digital.americanancestors.org/digital/collection/p15869coll4.

Notes

- ¹ Kenneth Libo and Michael Feldberg, *The Obermayers: A History of a Jewish Family in Germany and America, 1618–2009* (Newton, Mass.: Obermayer Foundation, 2009).
- ² Additional archival collections related to Leon Obermayer are held at the American Jewish Historical Society in New York and Temple University Libraries.
- ³ Julia Hawkins and Bryce Roe, "IRENE Audio Preservation at the Northeast Document Conservation Center: Developing Workflows and Standards for Preservation Projects That Use Innovative Technology," *Journal of Digital Media Management* 9, No. 3 (2021).
- ⁴ Zoe Greenberg, "A Philadelphia Passover Seder, 100 Years After the First," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, April 26, 2024, [inquirer.com/news/passover-seder-philadelphia-100-20240426.html](https://www.inquirer.com/news/passover-seder-philadelphia-100-20240426.html).



Ancestry of Pope Leo XIV exhibit launch

On October 3, we launched *The Ancestry of Pope Leo XIV: An American Story* exhibit in the Family Heritage Experience at the American Ancestors headquarters in Boston. The exhibit highlights many discoveries about the pope's family tree, including new ancestral lines and countries of origin.

The event featured a panel discussion with Honorary Trustee Henry Louis Gates, Jr., host of the PBS series *Finding Your Roots*; Lourdes del Pino, Vice President of the Cuban Genealogy Club of Miami; and Jari C. Honora, a New Orleans-based genealogist who uncovered the pope's Creole heritage. The conversation was moderated by Lindsay Fulton, Chief Research Officer at American Ancestors.

WCVB Boston's *CityLine* newsmagazine was on the scene filming interviews. The event was also covered by the Catholic News Agency, *National Catholic Reporter*, and *The Pilot*.



Thank you to our event sponsors

Gerry and MaryLee Halpin
David and Jean Kruger
Mark Nichols and Lowell Massey
Morrison DeS. and Stacie Webb

- 1 Jari C. Honora, Mirelis Peraza González, Lourdes del Pino, Marial Iglesias Utset, Lindsay Fulton, and Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr.
- 2 Peter Van Demark and Sherry Atkinson-Mallory visit the exhibit.
- 3 Guests enjoy a panel discussion at the exhibit launch.
- 4 Gwill York, Advisory Board Chair of 10 Million Names; Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr.; Dr. Brandon M. Terry, Scholar's Council of 10 Million Names; and Dr. Kendra Field, Chief Historian of 10 Million Names
- 5 Judge Raymond P. Moore, Lourdes del Pino, Jari C. Honora, and Mirelis Peraza González.



ON THE ROAD

with American Ancestors

See page 10 for upcoming programs and tours.

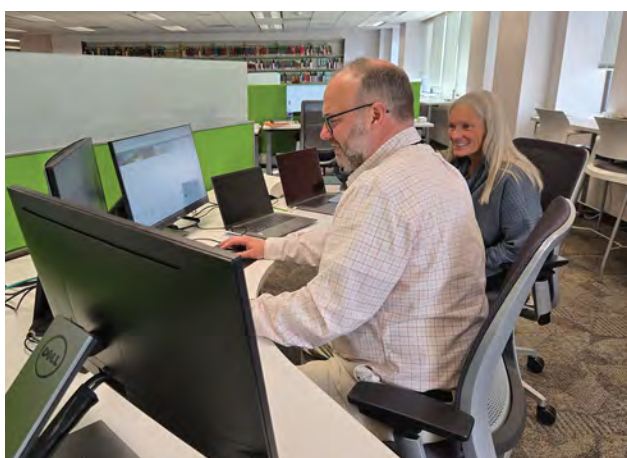


New England Regional Genealogical Consortium Conference

American Ancestors was pleased to participate in the New England Regional Genealogical Consortium Conference (NERGC) from October 29 to November 1 in Manchester, New Hampshire. Four of our experts presented lectures at the conference—Chief Genealogist David Allen Lambert, 10 Million Names Senior Researcher Anjelica Oswald, Senior Genealogist Melanie McComb, and 10 Million Names Volunteer Manager Danielle Rose. Their presentation topics included researching enslaved ancestors, Revolutionary War veterans, and ancestors involved in the Salem witchcraft trials. American Ancestors also had a booth in the exhibit hall and our staff enjoyed connecting with conference attendees there.

Salt Lake City Research Tour

American Ancestors experts led fifty-eight participants on our annual research tour to Salt Lake City in November. Participants spent the week at the FamilySearch Library exploring records and resources with support from Senior Genealogist of the Newbury Street Press Christopher C. Child, Chief Genealogist David Allen Lambert, and Senior Genealogists Rhonda R. McClure and Melanie McComb. Our experts also provided one-on-one consultations for attendees and presented lectures throughout the week. Tour participants enjoyed group meals and the camaraderie of researching with fellow family history enthusiasts.



Left: The American Ancestors booth at NERGC.

Above, top: Salt Lake City Research Tour participants outside the FamilySearch Library.

Above, bottom: Salt Lake City Research Tour participant Denise Danielson and Senior Genealogist of the Newbury Street Press Christopher C. Child.

10 Million Names

10 Million Names aims to recover the names and restore information to families of the estimated 10 million people of African descent who were enslaved in America before 1865.

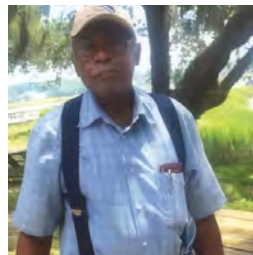
10MillionNames.org

Preserving the voices of Hilton Head Island

In 2025, American Ancestors was honored to receive a \$37,955 grant from the Council on Library and Information Resources to launch an exciting new storytelling initiative. “Hilton Head Island Voices: Interviews with Residents on Segregation, Gullah Traditions, and the Arrival of the Bridge” will complement one of our 10 Million Names flagship projects, “Remembering Slavery: Testimonials After Emancipation,” and be made freely available on 10millionnames.org.

10 Million Names is an ambitious effort to reconnect the estimated 44 million living descendants of enslaved African people in the United States with their ancestors. Through genealogical research, the aggregation of digitized records, and the building of family trees, the project will illuminate the lives of the 10 million men, women, and children who were enslaved prior to Emancipation and provide African Americans with far greater access to their ancestral roots and family stories.

Hilton Head Island Voices, a partnership with the Heritage Library Foundation, will safeguard and share more than seventy oral histories recorded in the late 1980s and early 1990s—conversations that now exist only on fragile cassette tapes. These remarkable interviews capture the authentic voices and memories of mostly African American elders who witnessed a period of profound change on Hilton Head Island, from the isolation of earlier decades to the opening of the first bridge to the mainland in 1956.



The recordings also preserve recollections of Mitchelville—the nation’s first self-governed town of freed people—alongside accounts of Gullah cultural traditions, the impact of segregation and desegregation, and the resilient family and community networks that defined island life. Mitchelville once thrived with up to 3,000 residents, a vibrant example of freedom, self-governance, and cultural continuity that still resonates today.

With grant support, these vulnerable recordings will be digitized, conserved, and promoted through a vigorous media campaign. An interactive web exhibit composed of first-person voices, transcripts, student reports, and photographs will further bring this Hilton Head Island history and heritage alive.

Audiences from all walks of life will be able to access and explore these engaging digital resources on multiple platforms, including the websites of American Ancestors, Heritage Library, and the Town of Hilton Head Island.

Beyond preservation, the project will highlight the power of storytelling and genealogy to deepen our understanding of American history. These voices—intimate, vivid, and often overlooked—will capture the attention of researchers, educators, students, families, and tourists alike. By rescuing these oral histories from obscurity and sharing them widely, this partnership will ensure that Hilton Head Island’s extraordinary history remains a living resource for generations to come.



New gifts expand Youth Education

A new wave of students (from Boston to Maine to the Caribbean) will soon uncover their family histories, thanks to a series of gifts for the American Ancestors Youth Education Program.



Inspiring Boston's youth

Through a \$25,000 Presenting Sponsorship donation, Liberty Mutual Insurance will support our youth education program's events at our American Ancestors headquarters. The offerings will include interactive student field trips, on-site educator workshops, and family days for Liberty Mutual Insurance employees and their families.

From Maine to the nation

A transformative \$1.5 million gift from author and philanthropist Tabitha King will support our youth education program's national rollout, bringing our Family History Curriculum to classrooms and organizations around the country. King was inspired by the program's impact in Maine, leading her to fund its national expansion.



NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR THE
HUMANITIES



Returning to the US Virgin Islands

In 2026 and 2027 American Ancestors will return to the US Virgin Islands to deliver a day-long teacher workshop, *Genealogy in the Classroom: Bringing History to Life with Family History*. (This program was first delivered in the Virgin Islands in 2024.) These upcoming workshops will be held on St. Croix and support the training of fifty educators from across the islands. Through a series of lectures, case studies, and small group activities, the teachers will learn best practices for leveraging family trees, oral histories, and other primary source data in the classroom. Through a partnership with the Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands, American Ancestors received \$50,000 for this program, made possible by funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Above and right: Boston-area classroom teachers participate in a three-day workshop at our Boston headquarters.

National recognition for excellence

The Library of Congress awarded American Ancestors a \$22,223 Teaching with Primary Sources grant through Waynesburg University. These funds will launch a year-long Boston-based professional development program for homeschool educators, titled Homeschool Teacher Workshop: Bringing History to Life with Family History. This prestigious award will fund training teachers to integrate genealogy into social studies and English lessons for grades 4 to 8 by using primary sources from the Library of Congress.

—Dionne Jackson, Assistant Vice President for Inspirational Giving



Youth Education: Building an inclusive youth genealogy program

Special collections are typically tucked away in climate-controlled rooms and are seldom accessible to younger audiences. But many of these collections contain treasures like photographs, handwritten narratives, or everyday objects that can connect young people to the past.

At the Virginia Room, the special collections archive of the Fairfax County Public Library system, we wanted to facilitate young people's connection to the past through activities that turn local artifacts into teaching tools and students into critical thinkers. Our Genealogy for Kids program invited younger participants ages, 9 to 12, to engage with local history.

Partnering with American Ancestors

Our Genealogy for Kids series emerged from our collaboration with Dustin Axe, School Programs and Curriculum Manager at American Ancestors, and is based on the American Ancestors curriculum framework. We adapted the activities for our audience by using items from our own collections and simplifying activities to accommodate shorter attention spans and unpredictable summer schedules. We carefully curated our materials to ensure that participants would see themselves in the historical objects and narratives.

Our sessions

In our first session, Heirloom Detectives, we invited participants to investigate objects from our collection. Participants sketched the objects and wrote conclusions based on their observations. Parents of participants offered their own stories, inspired by memories sparked by these familiar objects.

In our Photo Detectives session, we presented black and white photographs featuring school-age children across diverse contexts: boys after a baseball game, a typing class in the county's first Black high school, the daughters of a Japanese diplomat among cherry blossoms, and Latino youngsters absorbed in a comic book. We invited participants to examine one or more of these photographs.

In our Scrapbook Detectives session, we offered participants two contrasting scrapbooks. The first was the genealogical record of Lucie Wilshire (1891–1962), who documented her family history and European travels. The second was dedicated to Arthur Azo



Matsu (1904–1987), a renowned football player and the first Asian American to graduate from William and Mary University.

Activity sheets guided participants through viewing each scrapbook and recording their observations.

Our final session was the Family Interview Workshop. Participants practiced crafting open-ended questions, engaging in active listening, and asking follow-up questions to learn more about their family members' lives. Participants left with a list of sample questions for family interviews and information on the library's genealogical resources.

Looking ahead

The American Ancestors curriculum proved itself to be a replicable and accessible model for our library system. It also revealed the untapped potential of our special collection for teaching resources and as the basis for inclusive, representative programming. We were encouraged by the engagement and enthusiasm of our young participants.

Future iterations of the youth genealogy program will expand age ranges, increase session frequency, and deepen partnerships with community organizations. We envision a sustained genealogy program where young people actively participate in preserving and interpreting our collective memory. Every family has stories; at the library, we'll continue making space for children in our community to develop the skills and confidence to discover them. ♦



Hannivett Nabahe is the Virginia Room Librarian at the Fairfax County Public Library, in Fairfax, Virginia.

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Charitable gift annuity rates have increased to their highest level since 2009! If you've ever considered establishing a gift annuity—or already have one—now is an especially attractive time. And if you choose to defer the start of payments for a year or more, your rate can be even higher.

A charitable gift annuity offers fixed, guaranteed payments for life in exchange for a gift of cash or securities to American Ancestors. These payments are backed by the general resources of our organization, and the annuity is easy to establish.

A gift annuity may be a good option for you if:

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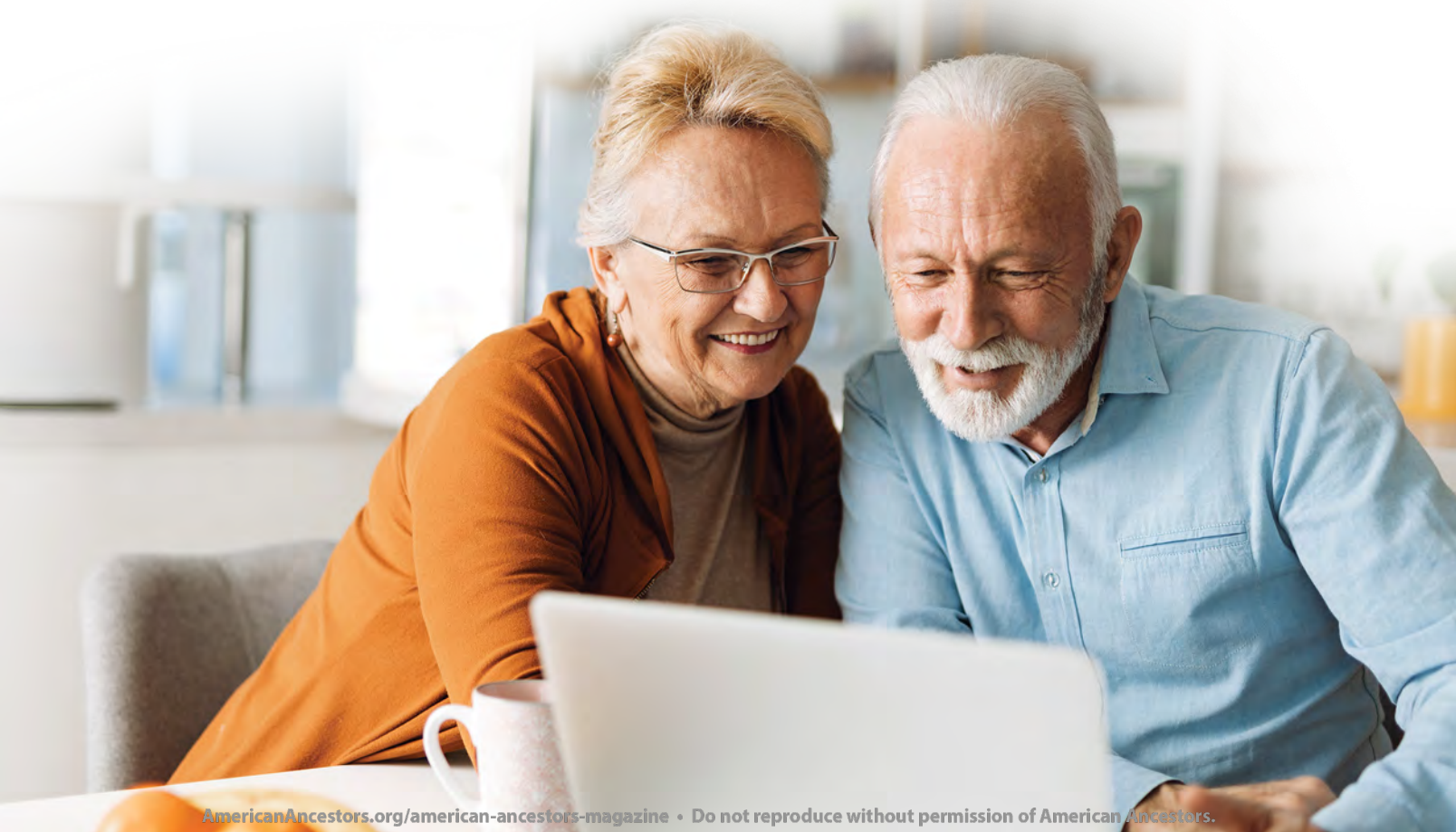
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Ted MacMahon, CFRE

Vice President for Gift Planning
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617-549-0300

To schedule a time for Ted to call you, please visit www.meetme.so/tedm





staff profile

MEET **DON REAGAN** CHIEF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & MARKETING OFFICER

I joined the American Ancestors staff in September 2017, drawn by a unique opportunity to align my professional expertise with a lifelong personal passion. As Chief Business Development and Marketing Officer, I oversee marketing, revenue opportunities, partnerships, analytics, and audience growth. My role blends strategic vision with creative execution, helping American Ancestors expand its reach and deepen its connections with members, visitors, and partners.

Leading marketing and business development at American Ancestors allows me to shape strategies that advance our mission and deliver meaningful experiences. Directing initiatives like membership and the Family Heritage Experience, I strive to deepen engagement, cultivate collaboration, and guide individuals on meaningful family history journeys.

Much of my prior career was spent in the startup world, guiding early-stage companies as they scaled from modest beginnings to enterprise-level success. That fast-paced environment taught me the value of adaptability and data-driven decision-making—skills I now apply to help American Ancestors grow while staying true to its mission.

I was a member of American Ancestors long before I was hired. My love of genealogy began in childhood when my father told me family stories about his great-grandfather Christopher. He didn't know Christopher's surname but had heard he was a Civil War drummer boy who lost both legs due to battle wounds. Eventually, I used vital records and obituaries to discover his name was Christopher McNanny. He wasn't a drummer boy, but a private in Company G of the 106th New York Infantry Regiment who lost one leg, not two. The most astonishing revelation came later, when I learned that Christopher's amputated foot was preserved as a teaching specimen and remains in the anatomical collection of the National Museum of Health and Medicine in Silver Spring, Maryland. While this is an unusual family history find, I think each discovery—no matter how small or strange—connects us to the real lives of our ancestors, illuminating their struggles, triumphs, pain, and joy.

Genealogy is a shared pursuit in my family. My father and I bond over sports, but my mother and I bond over genealogy. For the past twenty years, we've researched our family together, and it's been one of the great joys of my life. Bringing that same sense of exploration and connection to my work at American Ancestors has made for a truly fulfilling career—one that blends personal passion with professional purpose. ♦



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MEMBER NOTICES

DNA STUDIES

We are looking for men with the Armstrong surname to take the FamilyTreeDNA Y-DNA test, then join the Armstrong project group. We are specifically seeking Armstrong men with ancestors in the Susquehanna area of Pennsylvania; New Castle, Delaware; and Cecil County, Maryland, from 1710 to 1760. Contact russellanichols@verizon.net.

FAMILY ASSOCIATIONS

The Risley Family Association will hold its biennial reunion from August 13 to 16, 2026, in Hartford, Connecticut. Richard Risley, our immigrant ancestor, was a founder of Hartford. We will have interesting speakers and visit historic sites connected to our Risley heritage, including an original colonial Risley home. Everyone is invited. Contact risleyfamilyassociation@gmail.com.

GENEALOGIES

The Ancestry of Winifred Effie (Fairley) Minehart, 1620–1950, Thomas George Minehart (Heron Creek Press, 2025). Hardcover \$90. 910 pp. + preface. Person and place index, illustrations. This genealogy of the author's grandmother includes immigrants who arrived in Massachusetts during the Puritan Great Migration. Indices and contents can be viewed at minehart-ancestry-press.square.site. Contact Hans.Georg.Minehart@gmail.com.

My Great Great Story, Sixteen Second Great Grandparents and Their Stories, Louise Scholl Furber (lulu.com, 2025). Softcover \$35.63 + shipping. 324 pp. Illustrations, photographs. This book traces the ancestors of Louise Scholl Furber. Families include Bammerlin, Cole, Crumbecker, Eglisdörfer, Kirkhuff, Lange, Nitschke, Pennock, Riker, Robinson, Schmidt, Scholl, Slocum, and Truesdell. Available from lulu.com.

Stephen Tracy, Jr. (1595–1672) of the New England Colonies, Martin B. Tracy, PhD (the author, 2025). Softcover \$30. 33 pp. Annotated bibliography. This is a report on the life and times of Pilgrim Stephen Tracy, Jr. (1595–1672) of Plymouth and Duxbury, Mass. Available from Martin B. Tracy, 372 Putnam Ln., Lake Mary, FL 32746. Contact mbtracy@murray-ky.net.

OTHER BOOKS

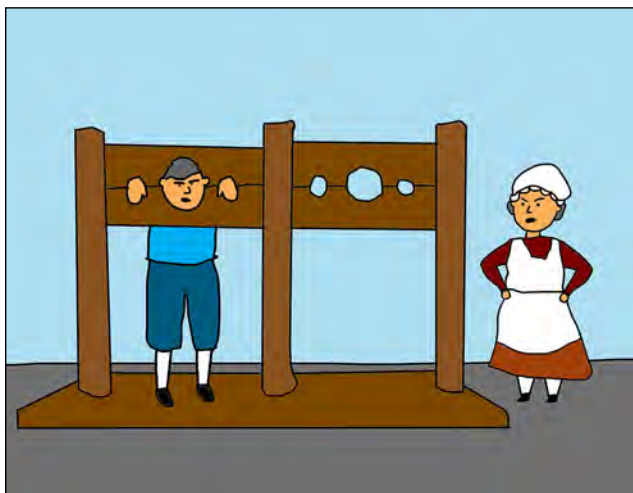
Into the Maine . . . : One Maine Family's Quest for Land, 1630–1830, Jennifer Wixson (White Wave, 2025). Softcover \$35; eBook \$9.99. 457 pp. Illustrations, appendix, index. This history of Maine is told through the Crockett family, beginning with Thomas who arrived at the Piscataqua in 1630. Other early families covered include Gunnison, Roberts, Robinson, Skillin, and Westcoat. Available at Amazon.com.

On a Visit to Provincetown: Hand-Colored Lantern Slide Views 1910–1930, Amy Whorf McGuiggan (Incollectpublishing.com, 2025). Hardcover \$24.95. 80 pp. Color images. Return to the Provincetown of a century ago with this collection of hand-colored glass lantern slide views by illustrator, designer, and photographer Harry C. Whorf. Author Amy Whorf McGuiggan, granddaughter of this noted watercolorist, provides accompanying essays. Available at Incollectpublishing.com

Submit your book notice: Members may submit details of their relevant books published within the last year at AmericanAncestors.org/Book-Notices.

Submit your genealogies in progress, family associations, and DNA studies: Members may submit notices of 75 words or less at AmericanAncestors.org/Notices.

The American Ancestors cartoon



"Ask me again if I've finished my family tree."

Caption submitted by Laura Shepler. Drawing by Jean Powers.

SUBMISSIONS: *American Ancestors* invites the submission of articles. Guidelines are available at AmericanAncestors.org/publications/american-ancestors-magazine. Submissions and queries should be directed to magazine@americanancestors.org.

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December 2–8, 2026

The holiday season in London offers a magical blend of historic charm, festive splendor, and vibrant city energy. Join us in December 2026 as we stroll through cobblestone streets illuminated by twinkling lights, where the scent of roasted chestnuts drifts from bustling market stalls and carolers fill the crisp winter air with timeless melodies. Warm your hands with a cup of mulled wine as you explore London's iconic landmarks dressed in their holiday best.

Experience a whimsical Christmas wonderland and see London like never before!



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london-christmas-carol-holiday-celebration](https://AmericanAncestors.org/events/london-christmas-carol-holiday-celebration)



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Image transcriptions

Lemuel N. Woods: Old Soldier Who Died at the Home Had Been There Ten Years.

Eddy H. Woods arrived here last evening and will return to West Danvill, Vt., today with the remains of his father, Lemuel N. Woods, who died at the Vermont Soldiers home Tuesday. Services will be held at the Methodist church West Danville, Friday, the burial to be at Passumpsic, Vt.

Mr. Woods enlisted from Barnet, Vt., in company C, 8th Vt. Regt. After the close of the war he bought a farm at Peacham and remained there until 1894, when after selling his farm he went to live with his son Eddy at Walden, Vt.

Mr. Woods came to the home in 1899. He was known as a clean honest man, he was loved by all who knew him and was especially kind to children. Although 88 years of age he sought the company of young people and was welcome to many homes in this village. Three sons survive him, Eddy H. of Waldon; Frank T. of Peacham; Seth N. of Danville, all of Vermont.

Commissioners Proceedings.

Office of the County Clerk,
Ellis county, Kansas,
Hays City, Kan., Oct. 2, 1899.

The Board of county Commissioners of Ellis county, Kan. met this day in regular session all the members being present.

The following bills were allowed and scrip ordered drawn for same,

Fees & Salaries

J W Downer, Justice fees 6.40
Eli Fox ditto 53.10
W C Sly " 1.40
Sheriff Loreditsch fees 683.62
Henry Knoche fees 70.43
B T Miller 29.25
A O Robinson balance assessing 10.00
W E Johnson examining teachers 24.00
S Motz, A Goetchies each " treasury 2.00
H C Freese salary as county printer less 2.50 for old oil stove 10.00
E A Rea transcribing testimony 11.45
J Middlekauff health officer 12.50
ditto county physician 25.00
Dr. Kidd ditto ditto 25.00
Philip Jacobs, treasurer, Jacob Bissing clerk and Alex Meier salary each 250.00
Fred Miller constable fees 30.30
J Wageman ditto 8.22
L D Kirkman ditto 3.80
D Rathbone atty fees 25.00
J T Nolan, salary as Co. atty 200.00
A O Robinson bailiff 19.50
George Loreditsch ditto 21.00
R Mulroy ditto 24.00

L Judd commissioner 43.50
J H Gerken ditto 46.10
Jos Griese ditto 45.70

Miscellany Bills

F Havemann chairs for court house 7.00
F Judd mdse ditto 10.50
Justus Bissing labor on court house 2.75
M H Mulroy, job printing 16.00
Hall Lithograph co. stationery 17.70
Crane & Co " 108.25
Free Press printing delinquent tax list 156.50
Philip Jacobs freight etc 19.30
C Russell, M J Dawler, Elias Hoffman road viewers each 2.00
Mrs Wm King, boarding jurors 23.40
George Philip & Son hardware 21.10
J H Gestner labor on bridge \$9
Hughes & Joslin ditto 298.15
W T Mack ditto \$9.00
Joe Lineberger ditto 125.00
F Kuhn hardware bridge 5.67
C Schwaller & Co brick for sidewalk \$200
Jacob Snyder labor on court house sidewalk \$36
W D Butts ditto 31.50
Chas Snyder hauling sand ditto 20.50
E J Mullen ditto \$32.00
A N Horn ditto 19.75
E W Decker repairing plank sidewalks 19.70
C Schwaller & Co lumber ditto 19.60
Hertline & Wolfe hardware ditto 8.60

Coyote scalps.

Peter Leiker, Ign Papas, Adam Wagner, J M Smith, Ed Krans, George Flatt, Frank Flatt, J Gerken, And Riedel,

H C George, L R Moore, Wm Moore, G Flatt, C Krueger each \$1	John Hall 14.00
Henry Hoff 2.00	John McCarthy 12.00
Joe Denning and Caleb Thayer each 3.00	W F Haddock 10.00
M Lemunyan and John Klause & Phil Mock each 4.00	Joe Cerny, Enest Grippen and Andrew each 9.00
Alex Staab, Fred Johnson, C Kruger, Wm Wagner each 5.00	Wm Griffin and G G Sackman each 8.00
A Leahy, Rudolph Thausser and John Legge each 6.00	Total for Coyote scalps \$229.
Alex Staab 15.00	
Cornel Staab 9.00	
Ambrose Staab 10.00	
J B Ellsworth 15.00	
James Byers 16.00	
Andrew Jensen 13.00	

Information Wanted

Araminta Turner (formerly Clements), from Mobile, Ala., is desirous of learning the whereabouts of her husband, Alexander Turner; known also as Alexander Thorpe. Before the war he was taken to Texas by his owner, Col. Thorpe. Since that time she has not seen him. Her owner took her to Winchester, Tennessee. Should Mr. Armistead Saxon or any of the friends of the above named see this, they will confer a favor by addressing any information to MRS. ARAMINTA TURNER, Care Christian Recorder, Philadelphia, Pa.

N. B.—Ministers in Alabama, Texas or Tennessee will please read this notice in their churches.
June 12–1mo.

Found His Father

Salt Lake City, Oct. 19, 1891.
Editor *The Appeal*:
Many thanks for the notice in "Seeking for the Lost" column. I have found my father.
Respectfully,
S. G. Wilson.

Lost Friends

Goliad, Texas, Dec. 11, 1896.
Dear Pastors: Please read this from all of your pulpits. I desire to find the whereabouts of my people. I was born in North Carolina, Rewan county. My mother and father belonged to one George Hellard. Mother was named Hannah, father Jack Hellard. Sisters were Jency and Flora Hellard. I had a brother, Ben Hellard. Father died and mother married one Benjamin Garner. They had a daughter named Lucy, and two boys named John and Milas Calvern Garner. My name was Diana Hellard; it is now Diana Johnson. Any information concerning any of the above named persons will be very thankfully received.
Address, Mrs. Diana Johnson, Goliad, Texas.

Do You Know These?

I would like to know the whereabouts of my brother, (Lias Tibbs), who belonged to Mrs. Moore Carter. He left Warrenton, Tarquier County, 65 years ago, and was sold. His father's name was Adam Tibbs; mother's name, Lucy Tibbs. I had a brother by the name of George Tibbs, who has another by the name of Beverly Tibbs, who is the youngest one. Anyone knowing anything of his whereabouts will kindly notify his brother.
George Tibbs,
19 Cross Street,
Montclair, N. J.

Information Wanted

Any person knowing of the whereabouts of my wife, Rosa, (who was sold in this place by Mr. Cohen, last Feb. a year ago; Rosa is about 18 years old, bright mulatto, full chest, black eyes, chestnut hair) will confer a great favor on me by telling her that her husband, Andrew Jenkins, is still in Augusta, and very anxious to see her. He is living at the second house from the corner of Houston and Reynolds Streets.

A Lost Family

By Noah Knight

My mother's name was Lucy. I was sold from her in 1858. She had three children to my knowledge, and the baby one was sold when quite young; he could not even sit alone. The last time I saw my mother I met her at a gathering of a small meeting, and on that day she was sold, and I have not seen her since. That was somewhere in the western part of Virginia.

Jan 1900

Monday 1

Snowed all day. Washed and ... and I cleaned up the chambers.

Tuesday 2

Pleasant but windy. Washed the floor and sewed some. Had a letter from Emma D. and Emma Sleeper and a postal from Stella. Sold 3 doz. eggs at 30 cts per doz. Sent the wrapper pattern to ... today.

Wednesday 3

Pleasant and cold. C. and I ironed and sewed some. Father came tonight was glad to see him.

Orange County Court

June Term, 1897.

HON. L. H. THOMPSON, Presiding Judge

HON. WM. H. KIBBEY, HON. HENRY W. FITTS, Assistant Judges.

CURTIS S. EMERY, Clerk.

CHARLES F. SMITH, Sheriff.

HALE K. DARLING, State's Attorney.

MARGARET E. CHESTNUT, Reporter.

SOLON K. BERRY, High Bailiff.

State vs. Mortimer W. Brooks and Eva M. Scruton. Adultery. These respondents were indicted by the grand jury, but in order to save expense the court ordered the state's attorney to file an information against them jointly. The trial of the case commenced June 21st and continued until June 24th, at which time the respondent, Mrs. Scruton, took the stand and turned state's evidence. Thereupon the respondent Brooks retracted his plea of not guilty and pleaded guilty. The court permitted the state's attorney to enter a nol pros as to Mrs. Scruton, and sentenced Brooks to five years in state prison. The state's attorney being disqualified by reason of having been of counsel for Brooks, J. H. Watson and J. D. Denison prosecuted by assignment of the court. R. M. Harvey and Darling & Darling appeared for the respondents. At the conclusion of the case all the jurors were discharged for the term.

Notice

Whereas my wife, Eva M. Scruton, having left my bed and board without just cause or provocation all persons are hereby forbidden to harbor or trust her on my account after this date.

T. B. Scruton.

West Fairlee, May 27, 1896.

32

Mortimer W. Brooks

Mortimer W. Brooks, who had been confined in jail for some weeks, was released Saturday. His bail was fixed by Judge Dickey at \$300 and was furnished by George W. and John T. Brooks of Thetford.

Burlington Free Press

Chicago Crowds Greet Harding
Vermont Teachers in Burlington for Annual Convention
Dodgers Blank Indians 3 to 0
Question-What Did Wilson Say?

The Massachusetts Spy

Worcester, Wednesday, July 11, 1832
(No. 8 of Vol. 62)

The Wichita Tribune

The Cyclone
L & C Richards, Groceries
Red Front Racket

National Desertion Bureau

NAME: Adler, Morris-Lena
CASE NO.: A6869
REFERRED BY: United Hebrew Charities
DATE: 2/3/14
DESERTED AT: New York
DATE OF DESERTION: 1/26/14
LOCATED AT: New York (new desertion)
2. Louisville, Ky.
3. Decatur Ill.
4. San Francisco May 1915
DATE OF LOCATION: 11/15/13
2. May/14
3. June 21/14
CAUSE OF DESERTION: Lack of employment
DISPOSITION: Reconciliation effected. New desertion;
Jan. 1915 man indicted; May 1915; new desertion. Oct.
1915 man located in Elgin, Ill. arrested; extradited; con-
victed; sentenced to serve term.

Rocky Mountain News

Will Build, Significant Report on the Condition of Santa
Fe Property at Denver, Recommendation That at Least
\$80,000 Be Spent on the Terminals
Warner's Appeal, A Ringing Letter Against the Carlisle
Scheme
To-day's Meeting, Populists Assembling in St. Louis, An
Important Gathering
Favorable, Carlisle's Letter on the Erection of a Mint of
Coinage in Denver

Los Angeles Daily News

The Weekly News, The largest Paper in southern Cali-
fornia published every Saturday
M. W. Childs
Ducommun Watchmaker
Merchant Tailor
Our Own Manufacture: The Only Cracker Bakery

The Abilene Reflector

Abilene, Dickinson County, Kansas — February 5, 1885
Vol. 8, No. 25
We've Got Em!
\$12,000 Stock Boots and Shoes!
Reduced in Price to correspond with the Price of Wheat.

The St. Cloud Visitor

Squire Circle Organized By Little Falls KC
Reports That Cuba Is Heading Towards Communism
Called Gross Exaggeration

The Kingston Daily Freeman

Explosion of a Ton of Nitro-Glycerine
Russian Events at Oyster Bay
The Equitable Life Assurance
Forsyth & Davis, Stationers
Do Not Miss Opportunities When They Come.
Ice Cream, For Your Dinner or Your Supper
Hamilton & Osterhoudt, Real Estate Brokers
Johnson & Elmendorf, Insurance
Fire! Fire!
For Sale
Your Style, Stock & Cordts,
Furniture, Carpets, Rugs and Mantels
We Can Please You If You Will Give Us a Chance

The Charleston Daily News

The So. Ca. Railroad
The Charleston College
The Railroad Tax Cases
The Governor's Message
Ireland's Troubles