

Editorial

Though the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence is rapidly approaching, it is the result of pure serendipity and not intentional planning that three of the articles in this issue feature participants in the Revolutionary War. The first two men featured in the Douglass article are the brothers Capt. Samuel Douglass and Phineas Douglass, both of whom were Continental soldiers. The Sellingham article concerns a family who came to the colonies from Hesse in the 1700s; while one might assume that they were among the Hessian mercenaries hired to bolster the British forces, in fact they had come over a generation earlier and in their second and third generations in Massachusetts fought on the American side. Finally, the Parmenter article is the story of a Revolutionary War veteran, placing both him and that conflict in the context of the times.

Our lead article in this issue is **The English Origin and Ancestry of Brothers John¹ Lay of Lyme, Connecticut, Edward¹ Lay of Portsmouth, Rhode Island, and Robert¹ Lay of Saybrook, Connecticut**. Randy A. West discovered the origin of these three brothers, who came to New England in the early-mid 1600s, in a cluster of parishes in the East Anglian counties of Essex and Suffolk, tracing their ancestry back to their grandparents.

The family treated in the second article came over about 100 years later, and from a different part of Europe. In **Jacob and Henry Sellingham, Hessian Immigrants, of Boston, Ashburnham, and Ashby, Massachusetts**, author George W. Varney traces the history of the Hessian Sellingham family from its 1751 arrival in Massachusetts. In this first installment, the family is carried down through the immigrants' grandchildren in eastern and central Massachusetts and New Hampshire, to be concluded in the Summer issue with the next two generations.

In the third article, authors Virginia Day Lynch, Valerie Day, and Randy A. West detail **The English Origin and Ancestry of Joyce, Wife of Richard¹ Waters of Salem, Massachusetts**. The vital clue for discovering Joyce's identity and parents was found in a set of records of the orphans of London freeman kept in the London Archives; at the end of the article a note about this underutilized source is provided by Nathan W. Murphy, the Director of American Ancestors' Great Migration Study Project. Starting with this record, the authors traced Joyce's ancestry back to her paternal and maternal grandparents in London and Kent.

In the fourth article, **The English Origin and Ancestry of John¹ Keech and Mary, First Wife of William¹ Habberfield, and their Connection to John Higgs, All of Boston, Massachusetts**, author Jared James Nathan noticed that William Habberfield and John Keech, merchants in Boston in the late 1600s,

seemed to have a prior connection to each other back in Bristol, England. He found that connection and, in this article, presents their family and business roots in Bristol as well as their hitherto-unnoticed connection to the family of John Higgs of Boston and his descendants among the Epes family of Salem and Danvers, Massachusetts.

In the fifth article, **From Patriot to Insurgent: Jason Parmenter of Bernardston, Massachusetts, and Stoddard, New Hampshire**, author Ralph Parmenter Bennett tells the story of a veteran of the Revolutionary War and the following events of Shays' Rebellion, who through tragic circumstances was sentenced to death before receiving a reprieve on the gallows.

The sixth article is **The English Origin of William¹ Gilson, John¹ Damon, and Hannah¹ Damon of Scituate, Massachusetts**. The Damons, known to be children of Gilson's unnamed sister, came over with Gilson and his wife as their foster children. Starting from a record in the parish of St. Botolph in Colchester, Essex, linking the Gilson and Damon surnames, authors Ann Sadler and Jo Fitz-Henry were able to trace the ancestry of the Damons for three generations in Essex.

The seventh article presents **The Parentage of Samuel M. Andrews of New Haven, Connecticut, and Orleans County, New York**. Using a combination of documentary evidence, onomastics, and genetics, author Michael Andrews shows that the parents of Samuel M. Andrews were Samuel Andrews (b. 1742) and his wife Rhoda Alling of New Haven.

The eighth and final item in this issue is the second half of Robert Battle's article **From MacDougall to Douglass: Descendants of Alexander MacDougall (later Douglass)—a Scottish Prisoner from the 1650 Battle of Dunbar—in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Connecticut**. Appearing in this portion are the last few generations of the immigrant's descendants, a summary of the Y-DNA evidence linking the immigrant's descendants to one another and to the rest of the MacDougall family, and an appendix covering a different Alexander Douglass, of Hartford, Connecticut, who was mistakenly (and possibly fraudulently) identified with the subject of this article.

– Robert Battle and Christopher Challender Child