

The Falmouth Genealogical Society

Vol. 21 Number 2
P. O. Box 2107, Teaticket, MA 02536
www.falgen.org

Newsletter
May – July 2009

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*The Falmouth Genealogical Society Newsletter is published four times a year
and is dedicated to news, events and ideas that will help members enhance their genealogical research.*

Program Notes From Meetings

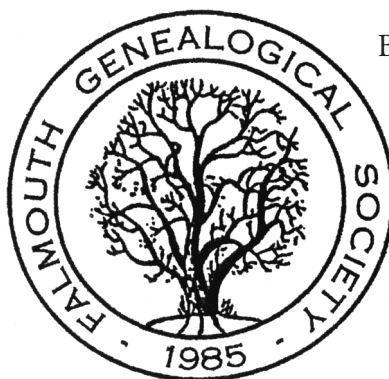
Sharing Family Artifacts – February 14, 2009

by Joyce Pendery

On Valentine's Day, members of Falmouth Genealogical Society gathered to show and tell about treasured family artifacts. Fascinating, curious, amusing, educational are words that describe the audience's reaction to the explanations and the objects displayed. *Falmouth Bulletin* reporter and photographer Sarah Murphy wrote a feature article for the February 19, 2009 edition about this meeting.

Mary Hunt showed a silver (possibly plated) tray engraved with a message of gratitude that students had presented to her grandfather, who taught in Brooklyn in the 1870s. Mary was surprised to find the tray among her mother's

possessions, since her mother had never shown it to the family.



Bob Rice brandished a long, slim, old sword in its sheath. He began by talking about how kids who grew up during the Great Depression (of the 1930s, that is) had no money to buy toys and had to make do with whatever was around, and of course we all wondered if he played with the sword. He did, but only with the sheath in place! The sword was his grandfather's late 19th century Mason regalia sword, engraved with his grandfather's name and the name of his

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Calendar of Meetings for 2009

Saturdays, 10 a.m., Falmouth Public Library

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|----------|--|
| May 9 | Paul Cyr, Librarian – Genealogical Holdings of the New Bedford Free Public Library |
| June 13 | B. Grant Willis as Jonathan Hatch, and Annual Meeting |
| July 11 | Leslie Huber – Family Search.org |
| Aug. 8 | What's New on the Web? |
| Sept. 12 | TBA |
| Oct. 10 | Paul Bumpus, Historian General, General Society of Mayflower Descendants, Plymouth, MA |
| Nov. 14 | Joint Meeting with Cape Cod Genealogical Society |

We're Back At The Falmouth Public Library

We are pleased to be back at the Falmouth Public Library for our meetings held on the second Saturday of each month; the downstairs meeting room now has shades. Our Tuesday help sessions are from 2 to 4 p.m. at the Falmouth Public Library in our new Genealogical Society area and by appointment at the Cataumet LDS Family History Center on County Road. Call Joyce at 508-540-2849 for an appointment.

Irish American Catholic Genealogical Research – March 14, 2009

Presented by Michael Brophy

by Ralph Wadleigh

On Saturday, March 14, 2009, Michael Brophy spoke to about 40 attendees regarding Irish-American Catholic Genealogy. His interesting and detailed presentation focused first on recognizing the limitations of what can be achieved and what sources should be consulted here in the US before attempting Irish-based research.

Several historical events have created challenges for researchers of Irish ancestry. The most important challenge was the destruction of the Irish Archives in Dublin on June 30, 1922 at the end of the Irish Civil War. Lost were the censuses of 1821, 1831, 1841 and 1851, early wills and testamentary records, over 50% of Anglican Parish Records post-1869, and many pre-1900 local and legal records. Furthermore, the sole copies of Irish censuses of 1861 to 1891 were destroyed during the First World War by bureaucratic error. Earlier historical challenges include records lost during long years of Catholic repression by England.

It is no wonder that researchers run into brick walls!

These obstacles are the reason that most Irish pedigrees begin about 1840; even someone as thoroughly researched as former President Kennedy can't be traced prior to this era.

When they get started, researchers should realize that Ireland has significantly different administrative divisions from those in America. Ireland is divided into both civil and religious districts. The civil districts are provinces, counties, baronies, parishes, electoral districts, Poor Law Unions and town lands. Religious districts include Dioceses, bishoprics and parishes. One needs to differentiate between the records kept by each respective administrative division.

Also at the start, several good research rules always apply. Start with a wide focus, cite all your sources, start with yourself and work backwards and learn to improve the odds of success with common Irish surnames using tools like Griffith's Valuation, a mid-19th century tax

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Sharing Family Artifacts

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Masonic chapter. Bob came into possession of the sword when his sister, to whom the sword was originally given, didn't want it and gave it to him.

Bebe Brock showed an early 19th-century sampler, featuring extremely fine stitching, that commemorated a death in her family, and included family names and dates, Bible verses, and appropriate symbols of death.

Marianne Schafer showed an enormous patent Queen Victoria granted to her great great grandfather and his brother in 1869 for inventing a method of cutting (wood) veneer, complete with an attached thick wax seal, in a metal container. The size of a dinner plate, the seal featured bas reliefs of Queen Victoria.

John Peri told about visiting the Peri family home and village in Switzerland, where making wine was a local

industry in the past. The huge village wine press is now a tourist attraction. As their host and distant cousin was bidding John and Barbara farewell, he asked John what he would like as a souvenir of his visit, and seeing a board covered with many large, old keys, John suggested that a key or two would fine. The host reached up and gave John two huge keys, which John showed us. The host, guardian of the historic wine press, inadvertently gave John the keys to the wine press, resulting in an expensive trip to the village by an area locksmith to break open the lock. (See more complete story by John on page 8 of this newsletter.)

Other participants with equally unusual family artifacts included, among others, Barbara Bunker, Steve Hemberger, Shirely Dunkle, Ed Shibata and Ralph Wadleigh.

Genealogical Holdings of the Falmouth Historical Society – April 11, 2009

or Dead Genealogists, Illegal Substances and Other Things I Have Found In the Vaults

Presented by Mary Sicchio, FHS Archivist

By David Martin, CCGS

The Falmouth Historical Society's archivist, Mary Sicchio, provided a highly informative presentation on April 11 about the varied holdings of the Society as they relate to those doing genealogical research. She distributed a handout listing categories and specific holdings.

Among the strengths of the FHS collection are original documents such as letters and manuscripts, town records (made available by the town in 1989), old photographs and portraits, vital records, and a number of published genealogies by surnames. The documents are filed in special archival boxes and are available on the shelves to peruse.

The works of three different genealogists over the years are also contained in the collection, which helps to put a number of the holdings into perspective. Included in this category are items such as reflections on life in Falmouth in the 19th century.

Other holdings include poor-house records, 33 whaling ship logs and account books, records of the Davis funeral parlor which are useful for those seeking death records, a postcard collection, stereo cards from the 1870s and 1880s, and material on Katharine Lee Bates. Some of the materials are kept in two special vaults, including maps and town documents.

Volunteers are needed to help record and transcribe different records such as the stereo cards and the collection of 1950s and 1960s photographs.

Mary is at the Society on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9 to 1, but arrangements can also be made for people to use the collection at other times. The collection is in Conant House, at 65 Palmer Avenue, near the Village Green; the entry door is on the side of the building. Visit the Society web page at www.falmouthhistoricalsociety.org for more information. Telephone is 508-548-4857.



Irish Catholic Research

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listing of Irish households, and John Grenham's CD on Irish Surnames.

So before buying that plane ticket to Ireland, where else can one look right here? Fortunately there are many potential sources that might reveal vital records and that all important Irish place name. These include:

- Naturalization records
- Cemeteries
- Church Records – the Central Catholic Records Repository in Braintree for example. Also microfilm copies of Catholic newspapers like *The Pilot* and its "Search for Missing Friends" columns.
- US Censuses
- Military records such as pension applications, draft records and service records
- Passenger Lists

- Fraternal Organizations like the Catholic Order of Foresters
- Passport Applications
- Business Records
- The International Genealogical Index on familysearch.org.

Other important sources of information might be the Hayes Manuscript Index, a manuscript of Irish surname information found on microfilm at the Boston University and Boston College libraries and possibly the Boston Public Library. Also to be checked are the aforementioned Griffith's Valuation, which can be accessed for free at askaboutireland.ie and John Grenham's excellent book, *Tracing your Irish Ancestors*, available at the Falmouth Public Library and other CLAMS libraries.

Mr. Brophy concluded his informative talk with an active question and answer period.

From the President

Joyce S. Pendery, CG

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From Small Beginnings – FGS to Celebrate Its 25th Anniversary Year

According to a page in the FGS President's book: "The 12th of June 1984, a meeting was held downstairs in Room #1 of the Falmouth Public Library in the hopes of starting a genealogical group whereby we can all learn from each other about tracing our roots." Life Members Eleanor Baldic and Marguerite Riley, plus Falmouth resident Virginia Dow who also attended that meeting, decided to call the group "Climbing the Family Tree." Several other informal organizational meetings were held during 1984. Current member Clifford Harding attended some of those meetings, along with 12 others who are no longer members. At the first formal meeting on Tuesday, January 22, 1985, the Society adopted the name "Falmouth Genealogical Society" and the seal, and instituted dues to help purchase genealogical books for the Library and to cover expenses. Volume 1 of the newsletter, originally called "The Tracer," was published in October 1985. Twenty-five years later, membership totals about 120.

Other current members who joined during the 1980s include Paul J. Bunnell, Falmouth Historical Society, Ted Karlson, Natalie Mather, Eleanor Mendoza, Virginia Nielsen and Dorothy Sandlin. Members for 15 or more years include Shirley Barnes, Dara Bowin, Robert and Hilde Chase, Ronald and Nancy Church, Edith de Lyon, Gardner Edgarton, Grace Fraser, Gary and Nancy Hayward, Barbara Hopewood, Mary Hunt, Jacqueline Johnson, Barbara Lassen, John MacDonald, Frances and Walter McLean, Joyce Pendery, John and Barbara Peri, Deane and Barbara Robbins, Priscilla Scudder, Robert Tilden, Gary and Lynn Webb, and Mary Louise Whitaker.

During 1995, two major projects marked the Society's 10th Anniversary year. First, FGS published member Marjorie Hubbell Gibson's *Historical & Genealogical Atlas & Guide to Barnstable County, Mass. (Cape Cod)* in 1995. Marjorie, who spent several years seeking information in all Cape Cod towns, donated proceeds from sales of her book to the Society. Sales of the highly praised book continue to the present time.

The second major event that year was the Society-organized Cape Cod Genealogical Conference, held at Sea Crest Resort in North Falmouth on May 6 & 7, 1995. Thirty-six lecturers presented 36 lectures to about 300 attendees during the very successful day-and-a-half-long conference that drew genealogists, including many with Cape Cod roots, from all over the country.

From late 1995 to early 1997 members John and Barbara Peri planned and filmed a series of more than 20 TV programs on genealogy for broadcast on local channel FCTV, starring FGS members who spoke on topics of special interest to them. For many years, these films were available on loan from Falmouth Public Library. About the same time, members planned and presented two lecture series on Beginning Genealogy, one through the Falmouth Public School's Adult Education Program and the other through Friends of Falmouth Public Library.

In 1998 Mary Hunt compiled "A Guide to Genealogical Resources at Falmouth Public Library," available in print and online at www.falgen.org under the "Falmouth Library" tab. Second Vice President Janice Zlatev is currently updating Mary's Guide to include books purchased during the last 10 years.

Under the direction of then-President Donna Walcovy, in the summer of 2001, the Falmouth Genealogical Society undertook a major project: to "read" the 16 cemeteries in the Town of Falmouth. Results are posted on www.falgen.org with searchable indexes for each cemetery completed. Many dedicated volunteers have donated thousands of hours to read and record transcriptions, photograph gravestones, search public records for vital information, enter data into computer programs, and proofread results. Donna hopes to complete the project within two years.

FGS, always an active member society in the New England Genealogical Conference (NERGC), hosted

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In Memoriam: Marjorie Gibson (1928-2009)

by Joyce Pendery, CG

Marjorie (Hubbell) Gibson, a FGS member since 1987, passed away in Worcester on March 30, 2009. An avid genealogist, historian, and writer, Marjorie was the editor of the FGS Newsletter from 1993 to 2003, and she presented several programs at Society meetings.

During the early 1990s, Marjorie visited every town on Cape Cod to gather information for the *Historical and Genealogical Atlas of Barnstable County, Mass. (Cape Cod)*. FGS published two editions of this "best seller" during 1995 and 1996, and Marjorie generously donated all proceeds to the Society. A few copies are still available.

In addition, Marjorie was the author of *H.M.S. Somerset 1746-1788: The Life and Times of an Eighteenth Century*

British Man-O-War and Her Impact on North America, published in 1993. She was the co-author of *Hubbell by Choice: The Ancestry of Some Early Connecticut Women* (2008), grand prize winner of the Connecticut Society of Genealogists' 2009 Literary Award Contest.

Several articles Marjorie wrote were published in *New England Ancestors*. She also volunteered at several historical, genealogical and lineage societies in Massachusetts.

Marjorie was buried among her ancestors at Mt. Vernon Cemetery at West Boylston, Mass. FGS has made a donation to the West Boylston Historical Society in her memory.



From the President

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NERGC's November 6-9, 2003 gathering at Sea Crest Resort in North Falmouth. Attendance exceeded their highest expectations! Over the years, several FGS members have presented lectures at NERGC Conferences.

During the past two years joint meetings with Cape Cod Genealogical Society have opened new ways to communicate with area genealogists. Member Bob Rice, our resident expert on DNA testing for genealogical reasons, has shared his knowledge of this new technique through articles and lectures, as well as with one-on-one discussions.

Vice President Ralph Wadleigh spends several hours each week preparing an index of obituaries published in *The Falmouth Enterprise*. The listing, by 10-year periods beginning with 2000-2009, will soon be available on our website and at the library.

True to its original goal, FGS has used donations, as well as proceeds from NERGC gatherings and book sales, to purchase well over \$2,000 worth of genealogical books for the Falmouth Public Library Genealogical collection. FGS also purchased microfiche containing the Family History Library's IGI records, before they

were available online. During the 1990s, when CD-ROMs with genealogical information were popular, the Society purchased nearly 90 CDs for use at the library on one of the two Society-purchased computers with a printer. Keeping up with the times, in recent years, the Society has donated nearly \$6,000 to the library for subscriptions to the Library Editions of the popular genealogical websites New England Ancestors, HeritageQuest and Ancestry. Both individual members and the Society contributed to the Falmouth Public Library Building Fund.

In addition, for many years members have been volunteering their time at Falmouth Public Library on Tuesdays from 2-4 p.m. to assist members and nonmembers with genealogical research.

Since FGS's founding, astounding changes in technology have transformed the how, when and where genealogical information is obtained, documented, transmitted and shared. Who can guess what changes the next 20 years will bring? Fortunately, the who, what and why have not changed. If you are interested in becoming a part of FGS's future endeavors, we would love to hear from you.

FGS Smiles From NERGC

Photos by David Martin, CCGS



FGS vice president and program chair Ralph Wadleigh was a featured speaker at the New England Regional Genealogical Conference held April 22-26 in Manchester, NH. His talk was titled "Planning Your Genealogical Treasure Trip Without Spending Too Much." Donna Walcovy led a workshop on Cemetery Research.



FGS member Judy Wadleigh and president Joyce Penderyman the Falmouth Genealogical Society table at the New England Regional Genealogical Conference.

Bookends

Notes from the Library Committee

Janice Zlatev, Chair



I recently read a new historical novel that was recommended to me and that I enjoyed. The book is *Until You Reach Home* by Lynn Austin. It is the story of three sisters who emigrated from Sweden in 1897.

Their parents have both died and an uncle and his young family have taken over the farm. Life on the farm becomes unbearable and the oldest sister writes to an uncle in Chicago. He sends tickets for all three of the girls to come to America. The story tells about their two weeks in steerage crossing the ocean, their arrival at Ellis Island speaking no English, and their further hardships. With all their difficulties, the sisters question their decision to come to America, but they still have faith and hope for the future. It is

a well-written story that may be of interest to others whose ancestors came across the ocean.

The other book I read is Bryan Sykes' book about the DNA of the British Isles titled *Saxons, Vikings, and Celts: The Genetic Roots of Britain and Ireland*. Bryan Sykes is also the author of *The Seven Daughters of Eve*. Much of his DNA sampling was done at blood drives at various locations in the British Isles. Later the swabs were used for collection of samples. He did mention that the swabs seem to "hold up better." Sykes sampled in specific areas where he expected certain results as from the Vikings. It was interesting that the sampling showed that the Vikings were not just raiders, but had women with them and settled in some areas. To me, as a lay person, his conclusions are not so obvious. I could not see great distinction between the areas he sampled. Also, now Sykes believes that there are eight daughters of Eve.



Website and Cemetery News

by Donna Walcovy

Here's some feedback from the website.

Thank you for this wonderful work. I am a descendant of the Nye family trying to gather information. Many of these people are listed in my family tree. Thank you for having this information available. I will have to visit someday.

Sincerely, Lea P. Wright

Thank you so much for your response and invitation. Your painstaking work as been such a benefit for me as I try to pin down my family tree. I got goose bumps at seeing the grave marker for Zenas Leonard Nye (B. 10/05/1850 and D. 9/16/

Also I'd like to know which members have Rev. War Vets in their family tree, buried in Falmouth.

Work will begin soon on the outside work of the cemetery project. There's no use begging folks any more. I'm

taking a new avenue, I'll be writing emails to the Snow Birds, because I know they are free during the summer, and new members to see if I can get some new volunteers. Hope it works.



Cape Cod Genealogical Society

Sponsors Boston Trip May 19th

The Cape Cod Genealogical Society is sponsoring a bus trip to Boston on Tuesday, May 19, 2009. Destination points are: Boston Public Library (Copley Square), New England Historic Genealogical Society (Newbury Street) and the Massachusetts Archives – JFK Library (Columbia Point).

Cost is \$35 for the round-trip. Bring brown-bag lunch if desired. Register by going online to www.capecodgensoc.org, and to the link on Activities and then to the link on Research Trip; within the description is one more link for the registration form, OR call Ellen Geanacopoulos at 508-432-5469.

The Key to An Ancient Industry

From the Editor: John's story presented at the FGS meeting on February 14 was so interesting that many attendees asked him to tell the whole story about how he ended up with the keys to a village wine press in Switzerland.

by John B. Peri

In our Falmouth home I keep two ancient black iron keys that were given me in 1960 by a grand-uncle then living in the large old stone house in Cavigliano, Switzerland, where my Peri ancestors lived for at least the past 400 years. Cavigliano is a village located about four miles from Locarno in Ticino, the Italian-speaking canton of Switzerland. (The village is now almost a Locarno suburb.) My father was born in California – as were his siblings – but my grandfather was born in Cavigliano.

During the California Gold Rush many Ticinese went to California, including some from Cavigliano and neighboring villages. Very few struck it rich as miners, but all were pleased with the climate and scenery of California. They soon found that they could do well with their traditional dairy farming and wine making as well as in other occupations. A few did fairly well, and a cousin, Alberto Peri, returned briefly to Cavigliano in 1889 to have a new 16-room villa constructed on a five-acre estate along with a stable, a winery, a hothouse and a picturesque “fort.” About this time, probably inspired by his example, my grandfather and two of his brothers left Cavigliano for California.

As I first remember my grandfather he was a dairy farmer. Somewhat later he also had a vineyard and was raising grapes and making wine as well as cheese. He made wine both during and after prohibition (200 gallons being legal for family use).

Contact had always been maintained between the Swiss and California families, and when my wife and I first visited Cavigliano in 1960 we were greeted enthusiastically by my 81-year-old grand-uncle, Michele, the youngest brother of my grandfather. He entertained us royally, introduced us to all the relatives, and showed us the local tourist attractions. Outstanding among these was an impressive old wine press, dating from 1609 or earlier, having a huge beam cut from a single tree trunk, about 40 feet long and up to three feet in diameter. (To

learn more about this wine press online just Google “Torchio di Cavigliano.”)

When it came time to leave he urged us to choose some things in the old house that we would like to take back as souvenirs. (He was a bachelor with no children.) We were flying back and could hardly take large items such as the old copper pots and kettles once used to cook in the fireplace. Seeing a rack on the wall in one room that held about a dozen large old iron keys I asked if these keys were still used. He said that they were not and gave us two which we took home. Several years later my uncle visited Cavigliano and learned that one of the keys we had taken had been the only key to the village wine press. It had been necessary to obtain an oxy-acetylene torch from Locarno and ruin the lock to get into the wine press. The wine press now has a new lock. My grand-uncle died about 1970; visitors wishing to see the wine press must now ask for the key from another relative, Albino Peri.

The Peri family home has since been sold to some Germans who renovated it for use as a summer vacation home. In recent years much of Ticino has also been taken over by Germans and others as tourism has become more important. New construction has also spoiled some of the charm of the old villa.



Nominations for FGS Officers

At the April 11 meeting of the Falmouth Genealogical Society the Nominating Committee consisting of Janet B. Chalmers, chair; Ron Church and Betsy King submitted the following slate of officers to be elected at the FGS Annual Meeting on June 13, 2009:

President: Ralph Wadleigh

Secretary: Sue Hutchinson



CCGS Plans Trip To Salt Lake City

Cape Cod Genealogical Society is putting together a trip to the Family History Library at Salt Lake City, UT running from Nov. 15 to Nov. 20, 2009. If anyone is interested in finding out more they should contact David Martin at davidchina_2000@yahoo.com.

FGS Welcomes New Members

by Ed Shibata, FGS Treasurer & Membership Chair.

We had a flood of new members since the last issue. Most of them have very definite research goals.

#371, Pamela and Wayne Vincent of North Falmouth. Wayne is researching Vincent of Perry Sound, Canada; Davis from Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and England; Burke from Massachusetts & Vermont, and Bristol from Naugatuck, Connecticut and England. Pam is researching Davis also, from Massachusetts & New Brunswick, Maine; Swett from England, Newbury, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Maine; Foster and MacMillian from Massachusetts and Nova Scotia; Preeper/Prieper/Preper from Massachusetts, Nova Scotia, and possibly Germany; O'Mara/O'Meara, Shea, and Morrissey from Ireland and Nova Scotia; White from Bona, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, and Massachusetts, and Murray and Connell from Massachusetts.

#372, Harry and Carolyn Hodges of Brewster, Massachusetts.

#373, John Bourke of Falmouth, researching Burke and Bourke on the East Coast and Prince Edward Island.

#374, Kathleen M. Kirby of Hyannis, researching Corbeil/Kirby (a surname change occurred in going from Canada to the United States) in Quebec, Vermont, Massachusetts; Monette from Quebec, New York, Massachusetts; Tatro, Charpentier, and Brodeur in Quebec and Vermont; Landry, Despres, Surette in New Brunswick, Massachusetts; Eliassen in Hedmark County, Norway, and Massachusetts; Day, Haskell, Tibbetts, and Leeman in Maine and Massachusetts.

#375, Beverly A. Deignan of East Falmouth, researching Waters of Massachusetts, Everett of Massachusetts and Nova Scotia, Davis of Illinois, and Payette of Rhode Island.

#376, Patrick J. Mahoney of East Falmouth, researching Forester and Mahoney in Ireland.

#377, Mary Louise Klimm of Falmouth, researching Waldie, McKenna, McGuire, Bert (Burt), Beauparlant, Grace, Dowling in U.S., Ireland, Scotland.

#378, Charles Allen Davis, III, of Haverhill, Massachusetts, researching Davis and Hatch. An article in the Tuesday, April 12, 2009, *Falmouth Enterprise* describes his discovery that his great-great-great-great-grandfather, Francis Davis, served in the Revolutionary War for five months in 1776 and is buried in the Old Burying Ground. Charles grew up on Captains Lane, off Davisville Road, in East Falmouth.

#379, Leslie McDonald of Falmouth, researching Johnson of County Tyrone, Barrett of Mallow, McDonald of Calais, all of Ireland; Hewins of Falmouth.

#380, Joyce I. Keay of East Falmouth, is researching Bullin of Medfield and Sherborn; Carr of Sudbury; Henderson of Arlington; Holbrook (and alternate spellings) of Medfield; Layland, Leland, Lealand (all the same family) of Sherborn; Lovering of Holliston; Maynard of Sudbury; Noyes of Wayland; Richardson of Woburn; Robinson in Middlesex County; Smith of Sudbury; Wyman in Woburn.

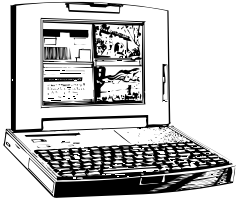


Book Review:

The Wordy Shipmates by Sarah Vowell

by Ralph Wadleigh

Browsing through the West Falmouth Library recently, I came across a new work titled *The Wordy Shipmates* by Sarah Vowell. Since some little pilgrim figures were on the cover, I opened it and discovered a down-to-earth treatise on Great Migration ideologues John Winthrop, John Cotton, Roger Williams, Henry Vane and Anne Hutchinson and how their opinions percolated through 17th century New England. Vowell treats her subject in a conversational, matter-of-fact way and brings Puritan thought right to the modern day. Her comparisons of the political justifications for the Pequot War and the Iraq War were quite interesting. If you have ever been bogged down in a dry scholarly presentation of those times, and have always wondered what all the fuss about the antinomian controversy was, this book is for you! It is available at any CLAMS library.



Online Tips/FYI



Research Hours Cut

from Joyce Pendery, CG

The following was in a recent Dick Eastman column:

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health has announced a drastic cut in the research hours available to genealogists and the public at large. The notice reads:

Due to budget restrictions and staffing reductions, the Registry of Vital Records and Statistics will be reducing research room hours effective February 23, 2009. New research hours will be:

Monday: 2:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Tuesday: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon
Wednesday: No Research Hours
Thursday: 2:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Friday: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

We apologize for any inconvenience.

The cutback in hours represents a 16½ hour loss of research time from a previous weekly service level of 27½ hours. The reading room is not large enough to fit the current number of users in the new hours, so numerous researchers will be turned away.



Research Tip

from Ralph Wadleigh

Here's a research tip: If you have persons under investigation who may have left a will in Middlesex County, MA you might want to use the services of the Mass Document Retrieval Services. If you know the date of death or the date probate was initiated, this service for a minimum fee of \$45 will obtain copies of the relevant documents. I did it for one Eva Wadleigh whose probate notice I found while perusing old newspapers on the web. With just the date of death and the date of the newspaper notice, this service provided me with copies of the will and valuation. It saved me a trip to either the Middlesex County Courthouse or NEHGS' microfilms.

I mailed my request on February 14 and received the information March 18. Check them out at www.mass-doc.com. Note that not all MA counties are available for this service.



Ralph Wadleigh Plans Monthly Trips to NEHGS

Ralph Wadleigh is planning his second monthly trip to New England Historic & Genealogical Society in Boston on Wednesday, May 6th. He plans to go on the first Wednesday of each month. Ed Shibata, Bob Rice and Janet Chalmers enjoyed their research trip with Ralph on April 1st. Anyone who would like to join him and share expenses can contact Ralph at whplar@comcast.



Online Tutorials Helpful

For Searching On www.Ancestry.com

from Joyce Pendery, CG

Ancestry.com frequently changes its format and often adds additional information, making it difficult to keep up with what information is available and how to search for it. Genealogist Barbara Renick has created two short video tutorials titled "Searching on Ancestry.com," parts 1 and 2. You can access these tutorials at: <http://www.zroots.com/tutorials1.htm>. Or you can also find these tutorials on the www.zroots.com home page. Just click on Notes, then click on NGS, and then on Tutorials. Lastly, click on the link that says "Click here to see a short video on Searching at Ancestry.com Parts 1 and 2."



Katharine Lee Bates Biography Released

Voice of the Tide by Falmouth resident Leonard Miele has just been released. The biography of Katharine Lee Bates, author of "America the Beautiful," is richly illustrated with photographs from the Falmouth Historical Society archives. The book is available for sale at the Falmouth Historical Society, Eight Cousins, Inkwell and Booksmith.