

c/o Northland Public Library, 300 Cumberland Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15237-5455

Volume 7 Number - 6 - Feb. 1997

President: Keith Kerr

Vice President: Gary Schlemmer

Treasurer: Sherry L. Brady

Secretary: Debi MacIntyre

Membership: Steph Valentine

Subscription: \$12.00 per year

10 Issues from August to June

Publicity: Gwen Glasbergen

Liaison: Connie Foley

Editor: Marcia Coleman

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*"Mr. Lely, I desire you would use all your skill to paint my picture truly like me, and not flatter me at all; but remark all these roughnesses, pimples, warts, and everything as you see me, otherwise I will never pay a farthing for it."*

Oliver Cromwell, 1650

My son has remarked that we are a spawn of "blacksheep". This impertinent observation I let pass as a typical generation X evaluation. Upon reflection, however, I had to concede some worthiness in his argument.

Our very surname, Kerr, comes from the borders of Scotland. They were a "reiver" family. In other words they were a rough bunch of thugs whose main occupation was plunder and fighting. They attacked Scots and English alike. They maintained a centuries long feud with the Kers, a cousin family. They had more in common with Al Capone than "Braveheart".

Even worse, on my mother's side, were the colonial and revolutionary McMichaels; it seems our ancestor was the member of the family who was always in trouble. One was politically incorrect, as he sought to eliminate the Indian threat in frontier Pennsylvania. Another was found guilty of murder and had to travel to Philadelphia to serve his one year sentence. My Great Grandfather, the son of a Presbyterian minister, had impregnated two women at the same time and had to choose which to marry. One became my Great Grandmother. He was 36, she was 17. He was

nearly as old as his mother-in-law. What a gentleman he must have been. My grandfather, the cause of this marriage, was so ornery, he was tossed out of his home at 16, and made his way to New York to seek his fortune as an artist.

My father never got along with his family. He and his brothers ran out (or were run out) of Sistersville, West Virginia many years before. Nobody seems to get along.

Upon reflection, my son may be right. What a gang of ill tempered, rough and tumble drunks, louts, bullies, and ne'er-do-wells. Surely this collection cannot be the source of such an upstanding family as ours. Some of these people are tough to find any good to say about them. Then, upon further thought, maybe we are them after all...

Be sure to include warts and all in your family history. It is very difficult to be descended from saints. My wife's family for instance. It is always good to know which side of the family is responsible for all the kid's bad behavior.

Sinners make better stories, Trouble, trial, bad behavior make people human. Don't sanitize your family. Let the future judge—and enjoy.

As always, our newsletter editor, Marcia needs stories and clippings. Any help is welcome. Make this year one in which you help out. Remember all the work at the North Hills Genealogists is done by volunteers. Come to a Board meeting and become involved.

KEITH

## WHERE GENEALOGISTS MEET

Tues., Mar. 4 at 7:30 p.m. **NHG Board Meeting** at the home of Debi MacIntyre. All members are welcome to attend.

Tues., Mar. 18 at 7:00 p.m. - **Regular NHG meeting** at Northland Library. Program: Lissa Powell - "Your Own Detective Story: How to Organize Your Genealogy."

Sat., April 12, all day **field trip to Western Reserve Historical Society Library** beginning at 9:00 a.m. We will carpool. Map and directions in next newsletter.

Tues., Apr. 15 at 7:00 p.m. - **Regular NHG meeting** at Northland Library. Program: Round Table Discussion.

## GENEALOGY CONFERENCES

Spring is right around the corner (remember the Groundhog did not see his shadow ) and it is time to plan those summer trips. Keep these dates in mind as you plan your spring/summer vacation trips.

**Ohio Genealogy Conference**, April 17-19 in Independence, Ohio near Cleveland. Contact: The Ohio Genealogical Society, PO Box 2625, Mansfield, OH 44906-0625.

**Ontario Genealogical Society Seminar**, April 25 to 27, 1997, Nottawasaga Inn, Alliston, Ont. Contact: OGS Seminar 97, 46 Uplands Avenue, Hamilton ON, L8S 3X7, Canada.

The **16th Annual National Genealogical Society Conference in the States** will be held at Valley Forge Convention Center, King of Prussia, PA from May 7 - May 10. Elissa and Reed Powell with both be speaking at this conference.

The **1997 National Conference of Palatines to America** will be held in Fort Wayne, IN on June 11 - 13, 1997. It will coincide with Fort Wayne's annual German Fest. Contact: Indiana Genealogical Society, P.O. Box 10507, Ft. Wayne IN 46852-0507.

The **Federation of Genealogical Societies & the Dallas Genealogical Society Conference** in Dallas, Texas, September 3-6, 1997. Contact: 1997 FGS/DGS Conference P.O. Box 830220, Richardson, Texas 75083.

## GENEALOGICAL INSTITUTE 1997 SEMINARS

All classes are held at the Western Reserve Historical Society, 10825 East Blvd. Cleveland, Ohio. For registration and more information call Sara Hill, - (216) 230-0590. There is a late registration fee and no refund policy.

**March 8**, 9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., fee \$15.00, "Gather Round" - Learn about family reunions, newsletters, associations, oral history, etc.

**June 14**, 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Fee \$25.00, "Hidden Resources" Learn about overlooked resources at WRHS, state & local archives around the country, non traditional libraries.

**Sept. 13**, 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., fee \$25.00, "Scaling Your Brick Walls", Learn how to analysis your research to-date and look for those overlooked sources which will help you. Topics include maiden names, nicknames, pre-1850 research, etc.

**Oct. 11**, 9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., fee \$15.00, "Effective Use of the World's Largest Genealogy Library in Salt Lake City, Learn the secrets of accessing record from around the world without leaving northeast Ohio by using local branches of the FHL.

## EXPLORING FAMILY HISTORY A Beginner's Course

Will be offered three more times by WRHS, dates are May 10, August 9 and November 8. Classes run from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., fee \$30.00. Call Sara Hill - (216) 230-0590 to register or ask questions. There is late registration fee and no refund policy.

## QUERIES

Looking for info on Joseph **PARRISH**, who served at various forts in S.W. PA during the Revolutionary War from about 1778-1785. His place of residence in 1785 was Shirley Twp., Huntington Co., PA (tax records). In April of 1793 he had a son Joseph **PARISCH**, Jr. christened at the Jacobs Creek German Lutheran Church, Fayette Co., with the mother being named Cartin. I suspect strongly that she was a **STATLER**. There are no other parish records at that church. There is

overwhelming circumstantial evidence that this couple should also be parents of my great grandfather, John Parrish born 21 Feb. 1791, somewhere in this general area. The family moved to Ohio around the turn of the century. Joseph, Sr. and Catherine died in Sandusky Co., Ohio. He died between 1827 and 1829 and all of his children are named in an estate settlement. *Contact:* Irene Parrish Baker, 1240 Oak Terrance Dr., #108, Traverse City, MI 49686.

Looking for the parents and siblings of Wendell MILLER b. 1840, Altoona, Blair County, PA. His biography in Cass County, IN mentions that he worked at blacksmith job in Pittsburgh until 1862 when he moved to IN. His death certificate says his parents names were Wendell Miller and Jennie Eva SINGER. A Wendell Miller and Mary have been found in the 1850 Census of PA, 5th Ward Pittsburgh, page 292. It could be that Wendell's father was remarried to a Mary. *Contact:* Charlotte E. Flock, 247 S. Brown, Vinita OK 74301-3412.

## BEGINNERS CORNER

**Question:** What does H/F after a person's name in Marriage and Birth Records mean?

**Answer:** This is a form of announcing a union of a man and a woman who wished to live together as husband and wife before receiving the blessing of the church.

They stand before their peers, hold their clasped hands above their head and state their intentions. This agreement was good for a year and a day - or until a preacher came to perform the rites of the church. If at the end of a specified time, both wished to go their own way, they could do so with no ties. No matter what happened, a child of Handfest was considered legitimate and would inherit.

Handfasting was common in some parts of Scotland due to the scarcity of clergy and has existed at times in other countries.

Information from *Tarentum Genealogical Society Newsletter*, Vol. 4, No. 3, summer 1996

**TIDBITS.....**Note what sage Dean William R. Inge said: "A nation is a society united by a delusion about it's ANCESTRY and by a common threat of it's neighbors.

L.M. Boyd's Column, Crown Syndicate

## BOOK REVIEW

### PIONEERS OF MASSACHUSETTS

Reviewed by Jack Sanders, Internet

One of the classic genealogy sources -- and one of the first places many researchers look for early New England families -- is Charles Henry Pope's "The Pioneers of Massachusetts." In fact, this book is so popular, it keeps running out of print. Five reprints have been done since the original edition came out in 1900. A fine clothbound sixth printing has just been issued by Genealogical Publishing Company.

Pope's book contains brief sketches of more than 5,000 of the earliest settlers in Massachusetts, those who came between 1620 and 1650, "drawn from records of the colonies, towns and churches, and other contemporaneous documents."

Entries, arranged alphabetically, may tell where someone came from, when, how ("in the Anne in 1623"), where he or she settled, children and their birth dates, spouses, information on wills and bequests, court cases, deaths ("he was found drowned; inquest 1 Oct. 1664"); possible relationships with others ("The will of Thomas Lawrence of Hingham made in 1655 mentions elder Edward Bates of Weymouth as the brother of his wife Elizabeth."), interesting tidbits ("allowance made...in consideration of their houses being blown up to stop the great fire" or "his house was burned by Indians."), comments ("one of the most sagacious and efficient of the colonial leaders"); employment ("worked for Mr. Thomas Nelson in building dam, grist-mill and sawmill, and in making the stones for said gristmill."); and even some "gossip" ("Richard [Hopkins], Watertown, for selling gun and ammunition to Indians, was sentenced to be whipped and branded on the cheek, Sept. 4, 1632. ")

Here, in other words, is an amazingly detailed and varied collection of data on the pioneers of not just Massachusetts, but of New England and the nation. Certainly, it's a wealth of sources and clues to anyone searching lines that lead back this early. And it's even fun to read for its insights into the activities and hardships of colonial life.

The book is well-indexed. There is an index all the places cited, and to all the names that appear in other entries besides the normal alphabetical surname reports. There's also a list of "gentle pioneers -- residents to whom the titles knight, esquire, gentleman, or lady were applied in

legal documents or by trustworthy writers in the Pioneer Period." Also of entertaining interest is a list of occupations and trades, and how many people practiced each in these early days (while there were 323 planters and 168 carpenters, there was only one upholsterer and one "thacker" -- know what that was?)

Editions of *The Pioneers of Massachusetts*, first published in 1900, can be found in most good libraries. However, the recent reprint is affordably priced at \$35 plus \$2.50 postage and handling from Genealogical Publishing, Dept. SM, 1001 North Calvert Street, Baltimore, Md., 21202 (1-800-727-6687). --J.F.S.

## BOOKS FOR SALE

*Newspaper Account of Births, Marriage & Deaths, 1808 - 1929* (not all Inclusive), Westmoreland Co., PA, compiled by Mary Jane Mains, 1996. 318 pages, alphabetical listing with newspaper reference & maiden name index. Soft cover. \$25.00 + \$1.50 sales tax (PA residents only) + \$3.00 mailing. Contact Westmoreland County Historical Society, 951 Old Salem Road, Greensburg, PA 15601.

*The Historian's Guide to Loudoun County VA, Vol. 1, Colonial Laws of Virginia and Court Orders, 1757-1776*. By John T. Phillips, II. The book which focuses on the years leading to the American Revolution, is now available. It is an excellent resources for anyone who is interested in the late colonial and Revolutionary period in Virginia. For delivery out side of VA \$42.28. Make checks payable to: GCP - John Phillips, P.O. 776, Leesburg, VA 21078.

*Smicksburg History, In the Valley of the Fair Mahoning*, a history of Smicksburg, is now available. Over 200 pages and is bound in heavy paper cover. Orders are being taken. Cost \$12.50 plus \$2.50 postage. Mail orders to: Marilyn Bamette, treasurer, Smicksburg Area Heritage Society, PO Box 74, Smicksburg PA 16256.

*Guide to Family History Research in the Archival Repositories of the United Church of Canada* by The Committee on Archives and History, the United Church of Canada, 1996, V1, 82 pages, soft cover. Order forms available from the Ontario Genealogical Society, 40 Orchard View Blvd., Suite 102, Toronto, Ontario M4R 1B9. Price for non members is \$14.00 plus shipping and handling. Members price is \$11.00.

## RESEARCHING BY COMPUTER

**Government Internet Genealogy Sites**  
*Mahoning Meanderings*, Vol. 20, No. 9, Nov. 1996

There are several URL's that will keep you in touch with the Library of Congress and material relating to genealogy:

<http://lcweb.loc.gov/rr/genealogy> is the home page of page of the Local History and Genealogy Reading Room.  
<http://lcweb.loc.gov/rr/main/services/html> lists the Main Reading Room, Library of Congress, services for researchers.

<http://lcweb.loc.gov/rr/main/collect.html> gives information on the Main Reading Room collections.

<http://lcweb.loc.gov/CDs/sindex.html> is the Subject index to CDS catalog.

<http://lcweb.loc.gov/rr/research.html> is information on research and reference.

<http://www.cr.nps.gov/ncptt/> is the National Center for Preservation Technology & Training.

<http://www-nmd.usgs.gov/www/gnis/gnisform.html> is the US Geological Survey; can locate specific places.

## MAPPING EARLY MIGRATION

*Somos Primos via The Family Tree*, Vol. VI, No. 3,  
June/July 1996

About 9000 years ago, after agriculture began in the Fertile Crescent, people poured out of the Middle East. They migrated in all directions. Their movement through Europe skirted the mountainous Basque region of the Iberian peninsula, where an established people apparently resisted intermingling with the newcomers.

That migratory pattern is just one of the ancient narratives written in the genes of modern Europeans, says Luigi Lue Cavalli-Storza of Stanford University. Using genetic data collected from modern people, he is tracking past migrations and mapping his conclusions.

On genetic trait, Rh-negative, turns up in more than a quarter of the population of Basque country - the highest ratio of Rh-negative in the world. The trait is found in ever decreasing frequency the closer populations are to the Fertile Crescent. Had those early travelers merged more successfully with forebears of the present-day Basque, Rh-negative would have been deluded among them as well. A separate migration may account for the low ratio of Rh-negative documented in Northern Europe.

## WHO MADE THE HEIRLOOMS?

Marcia Coleman

My mother died four years ago and with her went a lot of family information we had foolishly neglected to every ask her. She was not that old when she died and none of us had even thought much about the fact that she was an only child and that with her went the only source of family information.

My dad died this fall and we began the endless task of sorting out and distributing the family heirlooms and keepsakes. We had a rocking chair, a straight back chair and a small table that we knew had been made by our maternal grandmother's grandfather.

But here is where the mystery began, .. which grandfather? Was it her paternal Grandfather, Joseph **ROBINSON** (1805? - 1855) who was married to Elizabeth **GAHAGEN** or her maternal grandfather, George **STITELER** who was married to Anna **KUNZELMAN/KUNSMAN**. Both of these men were from the Smicksburg area of Indiana, County PA. My sister had a vague recollection that it was Robinson who had made the furniture but we had no way of knowing for sure.

Last week while, scanning the numerous publications that I check for possible information for the NHG newsletter, I noticed a book for sale, *Smicksburg History, In the Valley of the Fair Mahoning*, listed in the *Clark House News*, a publication of the Historical and Genealogical Society of Indiana County. I decided that this was a book that I would like to own so I sent off my money and waited expectantly for the book's arrival.

The book arrived this week, just as I left for the doctor's office. While waiting my turn in the office, I scanned the book and came upon an entry in chapter 2 (Founding 1827-1854) which made my heart leap. I read, "The 1831 marriage of Joseph Robinson and Elizabeth Gahagen was the first marriage in the new community." Wow, here were my great, great grandparents listed in chapter #2 as the first marriage in Smicksburg. I had birth and death dates for them but not a marriage date. Having a possible marriage date was an *exciting* find.

I continued to read on and was delighted to discover that Joseph had been a maker of spinning wheels. This little bit of information along with my sister's vague recollections of his profession made me quite certain that it was Joseph Robinson that had made the furniture. I now considered

the mystery of who made the furniture solved.

But alas, my mystery re-opened just days later when I read more of the book and discovered that George Stiteler, a cabinet maker, owned a cabinet shop on Kittanning St. in Smicksburg during the mid 1800's. Then I began to wonder if it was more likely that he had been the crafter of the furniture.

So now I am back to square one, but I am not discouraged. I am sure that somewhere along the line another source will come my way and I may yet figure out who made the one drawer stand that is now one my most cherished pieces of furniture. It has a fascinating history, I just have to figure it out.

## DELMONT

Jean Troxhill Kaufman, *The Rig*, Vol. 4, No. 6

Delmont - (French word meaning. valley in the hills) Once known as New Salem and later Salem Crossroads, was conceived in 1814 and incorporated in 1833. After the signing of the Hannas' Town Resolves in 1775, and before the reading of the Declaration of Independence, dedicated men settled and developed Salem Crossroads.

In 1784; William **WILSON** was warranted 300 acres of land. Upon his death in 1796, his sons George and Thomas, inherited the farm. Later, Thomas became the sole owner of the land. Not inclined to farming Thomas separated the land into 48 lots. Two days before Christmas in 1814, they were sold at public auction - the birth of Salem Crossroads.

The North-South Road, formerly called the Greensburg-Kittanning Pike (now known as Route 66), was completed around 1800. The town became a stagecoach center with as many as five stagelines passing through.

Stage travel became the life blood of the commerce. Population and commerce continued to grow, but began to stagnate around 1880. More efficient and less expensive transportation replaced stagecoach and wagon travel.

The Pennsylvania Canal system, the Portage Railroad and the building of the railroad through Greensburg only ten miles away lead to the decline of growth and prosperity of Salem Crossroads. (Delmont). Today, Salem Crossroads (Delmont) is a thriving ever-growing Community, yet has strived to maintain its original charm and beauty.

## THE NATIONAL SLOVAK SOCIETY

Nase rodina, September 1994 Vol. 6 No. 3

The National Slovak Society needs little introduction to most Slovak Americans. Together with the First Catholic Slovak Union, the National Slovak Society (NSS), is the most well known and historically important Slovak fraternal organization in America.

The NSS is the oldest national Slovak organization in the United States, founded on February 15, 1890, over six months before the first Jednota convention. Unlike the First Catholic Slovak Union, the National Slovak Society is open to all Slovaks regardless of religion.

The first Slovak Society convention was held in Pittsburgh, PA. Organized under the motto Svobodam Rovnost Bratstvo (Liberty, Equality, Fraternity), the NSS provided members with \$200 of life insurance.

By the end of 1890, the organization had over 1,000 members. By the end of the following year the membership figure reached 2,871. Thereafter membership increased steadily, reaching 42,646 adult members in 1929. The youth division, Kruh Mladeze, reached a peak the same year with 21,437 members. Both divisions then began a decline in the 1930s so that by 1941, the senior division had dropped to 34,181 and the Kruh Mladeze numbered only 10,911.

The NSS had at one time over 800 odbory or assemblies from Maine to California. In practically every Slovak community where there was a branch of the First Catholic Slovak Union, there was also an NSS assembly. There were additional assemblies in such unlikely places as Vermont, Utah, and Kentucky.

The NSS has an impressive record of fraternal activities over the past century, and it is impossible to do justice to all its achievements. The founder of the NSS was Peter V. Rovnianek (1867-1933), who with Father Stephan Furdek could share the title, "father of American Slovaks." In addition to the NSS, Rovnianek helped start the Slovak women's organization Zivena and the Slovak League of America. Rovnianek served the National Slovak Society as its first president from 1890 to 1901.

### "A FAMILY IS A GIFT THT LAST FOREVER"

Doona Booth uses this saying as the first sheet in all of her family tree books. We thought that was a nice idea.

## CLUES TO DATING PHOTOGRAPHS

*The Bulletin Kawartha Branch, Ontario Gen Society-* Vol.12, #4(1987) and Vol.20, #4(1995), via JOTS, Nov. 1996, Vol. XXIII, No.3.

One of the most exciting times for a genealogist is when they discover a photograph of an ancestor. Early photographs were not as widely reproduced and distributed as they are today. Any photograph found in the possession of a relative deserves examination.

Daguerreotypes had mirror-like surfaces on silver-plated copper. They were extremely fragile and were housed in a protective leather case. These date from 1839-1850.

Ambrotypes were made from the mid-1850's to the mid-1870's. They were actually negatives on glass but appeared positive because they had a backing of velvet, black paint or paper. They were also placed in protective cases; don't confuse them with daguerreotypes. Tintypes were the earliest (1855-1860) and were on heavy metal, stamped "Neff's Melaintype Pat. 19 Feb. 1857." From 1861 to 1865 they were dated by paper holders. After 1863 these holders were embossed rather than printed. In 1870, one company began producing tintypes with a chocolate tinted surface.

Carte-de-viste, usually made in calling card size (4 1/2" x 2 1/2"), can be dated by corner finish; square corners were from 1860 to 1881 and rounded corners were from 1870 to 1891. Generally the thicker the card the newer the photograph. In 1866 a larger version of the carte-de-viste was introduced. This was known as the cabinet card, which rarely appears after 1906. Years can be estimated by colour, border and corners. A lightweight paper is found on the earlier photographs and a heavier paper on the newer ones."

Information on dating photographs can be found in many books on the history of photography including:

Karen Frisch-Ripley. *Unlocking the Secrets in Old Photographs*. Salt Lake City: Ancestry, 991.

James M. Reilly. *Care and Identification of 19th-Century Photographic Prints*. Rochester, NY: Silver Pixel Press, 1986. [Available from Light impressions.]

Catherine Noren. *The Way We Looked: The Meaning and Magic of Family Photographs*. New York: E. P. Dutton, 1983. [Body language in photographs, short history, how to make your own family album.]

## DEFINITION OF AN ANCESTOR

Brenna Hobson Budd (RUHL researcher) via *Rocky Mountain Buckeye*, Vol. VII, No., 6, Feb./Mar. 1996

A person who gave so little thought to how important he would be to someone someday the he didn't commit nearly enough significant acts to get himself noticed, at least not in the counties with fireproof courthouses. He just frittered away time doing dumb things like pulling up trees or chopping them down, plodding along behind a mule and a plow, keeping his wife (wives) pregnant, or getting punctured by arrows. If he were alive today, you wouldn't even invite him to a party.

## ANOTHER ENTRY IN THE CONTEST

We were delighted to hear from Bernice Broniecki who submitted her idea on what a group of genealogists is called. She wrote:

If a group of frogs is called an army  
and a group of geese a gaggle,  
and a group of rhinos a crash  
then a group of genealogist is called  
**TREESEARCHERS!**

## BOOK REPRINTS

by Jack Robertson, Interent 20 April 1990,

This file appeared on The Source of Magic BBS, Ridgefield CT, 203-431-4687, specializing in genealogy, radio, & writing.

Here are two sources for book reprints (as long as the copyright has expired) :

1. Photoduplication Service  
Library of Congress  
10 First Street SE  
Washington, DC 20540

2. University Microfilms  
Ann Arbor, MI 48106  
(800)521-0600

The latter also will make microfilmed copies.

**Tidbits:** *Most family trees have at least one crop failure and a little sap.* From *The Prospector of Clark County, Nevada* Vol. 12 # 3 via *The Rocky Mountain Buckeye*, Vol. VII, No. 3 Aug./Sept. 95

## STATE LIBRARY OF PA

*FGS Forum*, Vol. 8, No. 3, Fall 1996  
*San Mateo County Genealogical Society Newsletter*,  
14:6, June 1996

The State Library in Harrisburg has restricted the use of the microfilm newspaper collection due to contamination with lead paint during a renovation. All newspaper films from 1719 to 1965 have been withdrawn from public use until further notice. Check the status of other collections in advance of a visit. General reference (717) 787-4440; Newspapers (717) 787-3883.

## HARD TO READ TOMBSTONES

*Zimmerman - SKCGS, Newsletter*, July 1995  
via *Clark House News*, Feb. 1997

The best way to read those hard-to-read tombstones is with a mirror. A compact mirror or a cheap 5 X 7 one will work. Hold the mirror to the side of the transcription and reflect the suns light onto it. The cross light picks up everything. It's fantastic and you don't damage the stone. Try it and you will see. This trick was learned from a fellow whose specialty is tombstone, stone-cutting and stonework.

## NEW ENGLAND HISTORIC GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

Membership in the Nation's oldest and largest genealogical society provides many benefits including:

Unlimited on-site use of the renowned NEHGS Research Library, including access to the distinguished rare book and manuscript collections, and free consultation with the best genealogical reference staff in the country; Access to the 20,000 volume Circulating Library; Subscription of *The New England Historical and Genealogical Register*, a 104-page quarterly journal; Subscription to *NEXUS*, a 40-page magazine published 5 times a year; 10% discount on books published by NEHGS; Special member discount price for the Enquires Service, a research service offered by NEHGS; Numerous opportunities to attend lectures, seminars, and other genealogical events in Boston and throughout the U. S.

For membership information call (617) 536-5740, Ext. 215 or write New England Historic Genealogical Society, 101 Newbury Street, Boston, MA 02116-3007

## CUSTODIAN OF YOUR MEMORY

NHG members attending Gary's pre-meeting group (Tracks in the Attic) on learning how to write down your own memoirs and other aspiring authors might find the following suggestions useful. The excerpts were taken from "Writing your own life story doesn't take author's genius" by Woodene Merriman, Assistant to the Editor, Post Gazette, July 4, 1993.

If you have been thinking about writing your memoirs - something to leave for the grandchildren, perhaps Stanley Weintraub has two suggestions on how to get started.

No. 1 Write a letter. "Write someone a letter dealing with one incident. Follow it with another letter. Write letters to different people, if you like. You can tell them different things."

No. 2 Take a mental walk around your old neighborhood. Draw a diagram of your street and the house where you lived. "Draw a floor plan of the house, and take somebody on a tour. Remember the sights and the smells. Where did people shop? Was it called Uptown or downtown? What were the streets like? Were there a lot of cars? Where was your place of worship?"

As you draw, or write a letter, or both, your memory will be triggered, Weintraub says. One memory will lead to another, and you're on your way. "Don't take time to organize. You can do that later."

Weintraub, professor of art and humanities at Penn State University is a cultural historian and biographer. He has written and edited more than 40 books. Through seminars given by the university, Weintraub helps others get started writing their own biographies.

When you write about your family, describe the people. What were they like, how tall were they, how much did they weight?

Memories can play tricks, Weintraub says so what you remember is the way you think it was, so check with old photos, friends, news papers, and other memorabilia.

After writing a series of letters and drawing diagrams of the houses and streets, you can send them or save them. Maybe an 8-year old grandchild isn't ready for them yet. Or, you might want to photocopy everything you have written so you will have a set for different people.

Maybe you think nothing important has happened in your

life, that you don't have a story to tell. Weintraub disagrees. "Think of the value we place now on the letters sent home by Civil War soldiers. This is social history."

Besides he says, "You're the only one who is the CUSTODIAN OF YOUR MEMORY. When it's lost, it's lost."

## NEWSPAPERS

*The Illuminator, Zion, Il VII #3 1995*  
via *Clark House News, Feb., 1997*

The State Historical Society of Wisconsin has the second largest collection of newspapers in the U. S., surpassed only by that of the Library of Congress. It is national and spans the period from the 17th century to the present. More than 4000 titles are included and many are microfilmed and available by inter-library loan.

## GERMANY

*Forum, Fall 1996, Vol. 8, No. 3 via Bureau County Genealogical Society Newsletter, 7:2, March 1996*

The following German research help cards are available from the South Suburban Genealogical and Historical Society, P.O. Box 96, South Holland, IL 60473: The complete German alphabet (cursive script and printed Fraktur), Genealogy symbols used in German records, German genealogy resource, basic German vocabulary for genealogy research, and dates of German civil records.

## IT'S A WONDER

*Quarterly Bulletin of Genealogical Society of Greater Miami and Fugua Foundation News, Vol. 4, No. 2, 1996*  
via *Clark House News, Nov. 1996*

The commonly held notion of Colonial American family life - that many generations lived together and shared farm and household chores - is far from the truth. Few people lived long enough to see their own children grown, let alone their grandchildren. Data compiled in 1790 by Dr. Benjamin RUSH, the prominent physician, indicates that of 100 people born in a given year in Philadelphia, more than one-third died before the age of 6 and only one-quarter lived beyond 16. The life expectancy at birth for Americans was 34.5 years for males and 36.5 years for females when George Washington became President in 1789. (One wonders if the environment of our cities had something to do with the mortality rates.)

# WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA HISTORY

For the next few months we will be running some material on the early history of some of the counties and townships of Western Pennsylvania and the people that helped settle this area.

The material was taken from "Your Family Tree" written by Frances Strong Helman and printed in *Clark House Quarterly*, published by Historical and Genealogical Society of Indiana County, July 1996, Vol. XVI, No. 3 and October 1996, Vol. XVI, No. 4.

## COUNTIES OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

To aid those not familiar with the formation of the western Pennsylvania counties we arrange the following chart to show the vast territory covered by Bedford, Westmoreland and Northumberland counties during the Revolutionary War.

Bedford formed 1771 from a part of Cumberland

Westmoreland formed from Bedford 1773, and in 1785 part of the purchase of 1784 was added thereto.

Huntington formed 1787 from Bedford.

Somerset formed 1795 from Bedford.

Lycoming formed 1795 from part of Northumberland.

### OLD WESTMORELAND

1. Washington	1781 - from Westmoreland.
A. Allegheny	1788 - from Westmoreland and Washington
a. Armstrong	1880 - from Allegheny, Westmoreland and Lycoming.
Clarion County -	1839 - Armstrong and Venango
b. Butler	1800 - from Allegheny
c. Beaver-	1800 - from Allegheny and Washington
d. Crawford -	1800 - from Allegheny
e. Erie - -	1800 - from Allegheny
f. Mercer	1800 - from Allegheny;
Lawrence -	1849 - from Beaver and Mercer
g. Venango -	1800 - Allegheny and Lycoming
h. Warren -	1800 - Allegheny and Lycoming
B. Greene -	1796 - from Westmoreland
2. Fayette -	1783 - from Westmoreland
3. Indiana -	1803 - from Westmoreland and Lycoming.

### LYCOMING

1. Potter-	1804
2. Tioga-	1804
3. Jefferson-	1804
A. Elk -	1843 - from Jefferson, Clearfield and McKean
B. Forest -	1848 - from Jefferson and Venango
4. Sullivan -	1847
5. Armstrong -	1800 - only a part
6. Indiana -	1803 - only the northern part
7. Venango-	1800 - only a part
8. Warren -	1800 - only a part
9. Clearfield -	1804 - from Lycoming and Huntington

### CAMBRIA -

1804 - from Huntington and Somerset

**NORTH HILLS GENEALOGISTS**  
c/o Northland Public Library  
300 Cumberland Road  
Pittsburgh, PA 15237-5455

# FIRST CLASS

**MARCH 18 — “HOW TO ORGANIZE” - E. POWELL**

## **BITS AND PIECES**

### **NGS OF PA HAS MOVED**

*Clark House News*, Historical and Genealogical Society  
of Indiana County, Jan. 1997

The new address for the Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania is: 1305 Locust St., Philadelphia, PA 19107. Phone (215) 545-0391 Fax (215) 545-0936. Contact them by mail, phone or fax for membership information and a catalog of their latest publications.

### **PATHFINDERS**

*Forum*, Fall 1996, Vol. 8, No. 3

The Historical Genealogy Department of the Allen County Public Library, P.O. Box 2270, Fort Wayne IN, 46801-2270, offers free copies of the following research

pathfinders on ethnic genealogy: #1 French Canadian & Arcadian; #2 English & Welsh; #3 Scottish; #4 Irish; #6 German and #10 Swiss.

### **LATVIA**

*FGS Forum*, Vol. 8, No. 3, Fall 1996  
Latvia SIG publication, *Latvia SIG* 1:1, Jan. 1996

A Latvia special interest group has been established by the Jewish Genealogical Society. Its goals are to create a Latvia Family Finder, organize a bibliography on Latvia, record members' source information, and create files on Latvian towns, villages and neighborhoods with Jewish links. dues for the Latvia SIG are \$20.00 per year, with check made payable to: Latvia SIG. For more information contact: Mike Getz, 5450 Whitley Park Terrace, #901. Bethesda, MD 20814; phone (301) 493-5179; fax (301) 493-9081; e-mail - mgetz@capaccess.org