



First Landing

the VBGS Newsletter

Volume 41 No. 1

ISSN 1044-5897

Feb 2024

In this issue

Genealogy Center at the Allen Co. Public Library	1
Contacts and About VBGS	2
President's Message	3
Calendar	4
Family Photo	8
A Moment in VBGS History	8
The Challenges of Genealogical Research	9
Did You Know?	10
Cape Henry Lighthouse Tour	13
Show and Tell	14
Free VBGS Memberships.....	20
Joan Akers Passes.....	20
Learning Corner.....	20
Gladys Paige Butler: World War I Nurse	21
Recipe Corner.....	24
Member Only Resources.....	25
Genealogy Day at the Beach	26

The Genealogy Center at the Allen County Public Library will Preserve Your Family Story by Diana Quinn



What would my family do with my binders of family information and documents if something happened to me tomorrow? What about my digital files, my scrapbooks, and my photographs? I hope they keep some items, but I know they won't want most.

I have poured my heart into my genealogical endeavors for over 25 years and want it shared with future generations. My children are not interested, but their children or grandchildren may one day want to know the stories.

To ensure that the stories I have uncovered remain available to these future generations, I plan to donate my digital and physical files to The Genealogy Center.

The Genealogy Center at the Allen

County Public Library in

Fort Wayne, Indiana, houses the most extensive publicly available genealogical research collection in the United States, second only to the FamilySearch Library, a private repository in Salt Lake City. The Genealogy Center's collection consists of more than 1.2 million physical items and more than 6 million digital items, specializing in genealogical materials from the United States, Canada, and the British Isles.

At a time when many libraries are not accepting donations of genealogical research, The Genealogy Center welcomes contributions in print and digital formats.

(Continued on page 5)

We are excited to announce the 3rd annual Genealogy Day at the Beach, taking place on Saturday, May 25, 2024. This event aims to bring together genealogy enthusiasts, history buffs, and anyone with an interest in exploring their roots and understanding the rich tapestry of our local and regional history.

See the final page for more information.

Get Involved

New ideas, energy, and help are always welcome.

If you would like to get involved, contact a committee chair directly or message the president.



Newsletter Submissions

As a VBGS member, this is your newsletter and relies on you for content. Whether it's short, long, a personal find, or information to share, send submissions to newsletter@vbgsva.net.



Click here to find us online



Use the email links or contact the administrator, Mary Ann Simmons, at admin@vbgsva.net

For more information, visit vbgsva.net/about--contact

About VBGS

Founding

The Virginia Beach Genealogical Society was founded in 1983. While some members are interested in local genealogy, like the city itself, most are not originally from the area. As a result, the group has far-reaching areas of interest.

Objectives

1. To help individuals conduct genealogical research and compile their family histories.
2. To educate, including lectures, discussions, and workshops.
3. To create and foster an interest in genealogy.
4. To gather and preserve genealogical and historical data.

VBGS Leadership

Board Members

President: Heather Wright

Vice President: Bob Bruce

Secretary: Linn Baiker

Treasurer: Craig Fenton

Past President: Wendy Bransom

Members at Large:

[Debby Christian](#), [Carmen Cross](#),

[Diana Quinn](#), [Raymond Smith](#)

Committee & Group Chairs

Computer User Group: April Owens

Digital Archivist: **could be you!**

Education: Diana Quinn

How-to Group: Diana Quinn

Librarian: Brian Baldwin

Membership: Lori Sherwood

Newsletter: Heather Wright

Program: Mary Ann Simmons

Publicity: Barbara Murray

Social: Debbie Christian

Social Media Ambassador:

Laura Lavene

Webmaster: Donald Moore

Writers Group: Carol Johnson

Membership

The membership year is Sep-Aug,

\$25/individual

\$35/household of 2

For more information and to

become a member, visit

vbgsva.net/membership

current members: 134



The National Genealogical Society
nsgenealogy.org

VBGS is a proud member of

The Virginia Genealogical Society
vgs.org





President's Message

Do you make New Year resolutions? I believe I did around age 13 or 14, but that's about it. After the trip to Washington D. C. in the fall though, I made a Not-So-New Year's Resolution.

The goal: To get my research organized... again.

The problem: My research lately has been here and there due to various commitments. When I do get a chance to sit down, I often find myself without focus. My current research log system is failing me, and I am in need of a refresh.

The process: I started by going through my "saved for later" stash. (It's not done, but I shared one of the finds in the November newsletter.) I am also refreshing my research template and have begun a new spreadsheet for the big-picture items.

It's certainly not done, but I'm on my way.

If research organization (or re-organization) is on your to-do list, don't be afraid to try something out. You can make your own system, use a template, or take elements from different strategies and make it your own. If it doesn't work out, reassess your needs and either adapt your system or try something new.

And, as nice as it would be for everything to be in one place, you may not be able to make that happen. I am currently using OneNote as a research checklist, Airtable for the status of my library and to-do items, and Excel for my overall checklist. I tried to only use One-Note and Airtable but it just wasn't working.

If you need a little inspiration, just a few weeks ago, the How-to Group featured members sharing their organizational strategies. Current VBGS members can access the recording in the members-only section of the website.

Good luck in your 2024 genealogy journey!

heather wright

Welcome 2024!



Representing Virginia Beach Genealogical Society, Diana Quinn and Barbara Murray were at the Meyera E. Oberndorf Central Library at 4100 Virginia Beach Blvd. in Virginia Beach from 10-2 on December 16, 2023. We welcomed and shared information with anyone who wanted to research their ancestors .

CALENDAR

Monthly Meetings are open to all and now hybrid if possible, at the VB Central Library and on Zoom. Small group meetings are open to current VBGS members and may be in person, on Zoom, or hybrid. See the website for more info. vbgsva.net/meetings--events

Februray

- 8 **Monthly Meeting**, 6pm, hybrid, VB Central Library and Zoom
Records of the Freedmen's Bureau: There's Something for Everyone, presented by Renate Yarborough Sanders
- 13 **How-to Group**, 7pm on Zoom
Digging Our Roots in Special Collections: What Three Great Repositories Have to Offer
presented by Renate Yarborough Sanders.
- 29 **Computer User Group**, 5:30pm, hybrid, VB Central Library auditorium and Zoom
Hands on Session: Searching Repositories

March

- 5 **How-to Group**, 7pm on Zoom
Lineage Societies' Requirements, presented by Wendy Bransom and Carmen Cross
- 8 **Monthly Meeting**, 6pm, hybrid, VB Central Library and Zoom
From Clues to Conclusions: Can You Prove It?, presented by Marian Burk Wood.
- 16 **Social Outing**, *Winter Wildlife and History Tram Tour*, 1-5 p.m.
Including Back Bay, False Cape, and optional 1 mile walk to Wash Woods. \$8 cash. Space is limited.
- 25 **Writers Group**, 7pm on Zoom
Your Biggest Writing Challenge, led by Carol Johnson
- 27 **Computer User Group**, 5:30pm, hybrid, VB Central Library Libris room and Zoom
Scanning Tips and Tricks, presented by April Owens

April

- 2 **How-to Group**, 7pm on Zoom
Genealogy Roundtable: Solving Hard Problems
- 11 **Monthly Meeting**, 6pm, hybrid, VB Central Library and Zoom
Getting Started with Germanic Genealogy, presented by Katharine Andrew
- 13 **Social Outing**, Great Bridge Battlefield and Waterways Museum, 10:30, \$10 cash.
- 18 **MyHeritage Class**, 6pm on Zoom, open to all
Join us for a special class in advance of Genealogy Day, where a MyHeritage representative will show us how to get the most from the site. Submit questions for the presenter now by messaging genelaogyday@vbgsva.net.
- 20 **Quarterly Help Session**, 10:30-12:30, VB Central Library, in the Folio meeting room.
Come for help answering your questions and/or offer your help to others, hosted by the Education Committee.
- 24 **Computer User Group**, 5:30pm, hybrid, VB Central Library Libris room and Zoom
WikiTree Basics, presented by Kay Knight

Looking Ahead

4 May 2024 - Trip to Library of Virginia in Richmond

25 May 2024 - Genealogy Day at the Beach at the Virginia Beach Central Library.

9 Jun 2024 - (Tentative) Social Outing, Fort Norfolk and Norfolk Historical Society tour

26-27 Sep 2024 - Trip to National Archives, Library of Congress, and DAR in Washington, D.C.

The Genealogy Center *(Continued from page 1)*

Last month, via email and one very thoughtful telephone conversation, I had the opportunity to communicate with Curt Witcher, Director of Allen County Public Library's Special Collections and manager of The Genealogy Center. He answered all of my questions and questions from several VBGS members.

Sending Your Paper Files to The Genealogy Center

I was surprised to learn that The Genealogy Center receives at least two collections daily. Mr. Witcher wrote, "We are an exception among libraries with genealogical collections. The high percentage of libraries do not accept donations of genealogical research because they typically arrive extremely disorganized."

Mr. Witcher stated that one item he would like added to every donation is a key - a document explaining how your files are organized and how the families in the files are related.

When physical files arrive at The Genealogy Center, they are organized by library staff and cataloged before the collection is ready for scanning and posting to their website. This could take years of research and organization if the collection is poorly organized, or a key is not provided. Once digitized, backed up, archived, and checked, the original files are kept for a year or two and then recycled.

Sending Digital Files to The Genealogy Center

Digital files can be sent to The Genealogy Center on a USB drive or through the free version of WeTransfer ([wetransfer.com](https://www.wetransfer.com)).

Although digital files are processed faster than paper files, a key explaining the organization of the files would help library staff organize the files before adding them to The Genealogy Center's website.

Files from family tree programs such as Roots Magic or Family Tree Maker are also accepted. Two steps are necessary to transfer your entire family tree program. First,

Curt Witcher is the Director of Special Collections of the Allen County Library and manager of The Genealogy Center. He has worked at the Allen County Public Library for more than forty years.

He is a former president of both the Federation of Genealogical Societies (FGS) and the National Genealogical Society (NGS), and the founding president of the Indiana Genealogical Society.

Curt is an internationally known speaker. He has received numerous honors and authored hundreds of articles.

export the files to a GEDCOM, and second, use your program's book-making feature to make a book. This second step will ensure that all photos and documents are included. Both files can be sent on a USB drive or through WeTransfer.

Do Not Donate

- Anything too personal.
- Information you are not comfortable publishing.
- Items such as bank statements, credit card bills, social security cards, and driver's licenses.

More

The Genealogy Center doesn't only want your research and family stories, they want church directories, year-books, research articles, books, images of military veterans in your family history, and copies of family Bible pages.

Why I Chose The Genealogy Center

My parents met when they were both in the Navy in the 1950s. Dad had roots in North Carolina, Texas, and Louisiana, and Mom in Kentucky, North Carolina, and Vermont. I have researched many of their ancestors as well as my husband's New York and Ireland ancestors.

At one time, I considered leaving my research to university libraries and small museums in the areas where various families lived. However, that would be much work for my children, and very few people would have easy access to my research. When I heard that The Genealo-

(Continued on page 6)

The Genealogy Center *(Continued from page 5)*

gy Center would take my paper and digital files, I was interested but a little apprehensive as most of my research had roots in the south, not near Fort Wayne, Indiana.

After finding a much-wanted collection at The Genealogy Center for one of my Texas families, I looked at the [Family Resources](#) section on The Genealogy Center's website. Staff at the center beautifully tailored organization to each individual collection. Below are examples showing a variety of formats.

[George Ely Russell, Jr. Collection](#)

[Etta Mae \(Spencer\) Miller's Heritage](#)

[Monk Family of Virginia and Colorado](#)

[The Kilgore Family of Mount Sherman & Low Gap, Arkansas \(Newton County\)](#)

[Marie Clara \(Schley\) Swearingen Scrapbook](#)

[Gladys Lowe Treadway Collection](#)

Donate to The Genealogical Center

Contributions can be mailed or sent electronically directly to The Genealogy Center. Contact The Genealogy Center for guidance. Email Genealogy@ACPL.Info or call 260-421-1255.

Donate to Other Repositories

If you plan to donate your family's story, do some advance planning. Don't assume a local or state library will take your family Bible, photos, and research files. All libraries/repositories will require you to sign a deed of gift. Once your files are received, library staff often decide what to add to their collection and what to discard. Not all repositories digitize files.

Below are a few other repositories and their donation requirements.

The Virginia Beach Public Library

The Edgar T. Brown Local History Archives at the Virginia Beach Public Library provides a safe place for the community's materials to be preserved for future generations. The archives collects material such as photo-

graphs, slides, negatives, home movies, playbills, fliers, posters, postcards, funeral bulletins, matchbooks, business cards, area newsletters/newspapers, or other items of local interest. If you have items you wish to preserve with the archives but are unsure if this is the right repository for your materials, contact archives@vbgov.com or 757-385-0150 for a consultation.



(Continued on page 7)

The Genealogy Center *(Continued from page 6)*

The Norfolk Public Library

The Sargent Memorial Collection, Norfolk Public Library's local history and genealogy collection at the Slover Library collects personal papers, correspondence, family histories, books, maps, newspapers, photographs, and other items related to the Tidewater area. For information about donating your saved items, send an email to localhistory@norfolk.gov or call 757-431-7429.

The Library of Virginia

The Library of Virginia collects books, manuscripts, maps, newspapers, photographs, portraits, and other items that chronicle the history of the Commonwealth. The Library does accept personal family research files in paper and digital form. They ask that any family research files be in some system that another researcher would find useful and navigable. Should you have materials you think might be appropriate for the Library's collections, please contact library staff as instructed at this link: va.virginia.gov/about/contact/gift.asp

FamilySearch

FamilySearch accepts typed, well-organized materials that include titles, authors, and publication dates. They do not take personal family research files but encourage adding your stories and photos to the FamilySearch Family Tree. GEDCOM files can be added to the Pedigree Resource File at FamilySearch.org. The complete set of guidelines for donations can be found at this link: familysearch.org/en/wiki/img_auth.php/0/0d/Gifts_and_Donations_Policy-final.pdf

American Ancestors/New England Historic Genealogical Society (NEHGS)

The NEHGS assesses each donation of genealogical research on a case-by-case basis. Considerations include the physical organization of the materials, including correspondence, sources consulted, research notes, and original records or transcriptions of original records.

For more information about donating genealogical items, go to this link:

americanancestors.org/give/donate-materials.

DAR Library

According to the DAR Library Manuscript Collections Guideline, the library will take historical family records (i.e., original deeds, marriage records, wills, etc.) and historical/genealogically significant papers such as diaries and correspondence. They will take family Bibles that include family records, Bible records separated from their original Bible, and legible printed scans or copies of Bible records. The library will not accept personal family research files.

If you have unpublished genealogical materials that you wish to donate, contact LibraryAcquisitions@dar.org and include "MSS donation" in the subject of your email.

Outer Banks History Center

Outer Banks History Center encourages donations of genealogy and family history collections related to families primarily residing in the coastal North Carolina region. Find donation information at this link:

archives.ncdcr.gov/researchers/outer-banks-history-center/outer-banks-history-center-faq#WhodoIcontactaboutdonatingmaterialstotheOuterBanksHistoryCenter-372





Dante Bisogni Anna Antonelli

Family Photo shared by Heather Wright

I love this photo of my 2nd great-grandparents, Dante Bisogni (1854-1932) and Anna Antonelli (1853-1939). He looks so handsome in his suit and tie, and they make such a cute couple.

Like most of the Bisogni line, Dante was a cobbler in the Castelnuovo di Val di Cecina area of Tuscany, Italy. I believe he was the patriarch of the wider family, as he's found as an informant or witness on numerous birth, marriage, and death records.

Because he is literate, these records give me many examples of his signature. Because she is also literate, I hit the jackpot in finding her signature in their 1874 marriage record.

Because he is literate, these records give me many examples of his signature. Because she is also literate, I hit the jackpot in finding her signature in their 1874 marriage record.

If you have a family photo to share, send it to newsletter@vbgsva.net.

1983

2024

A Moment in
VBGS History

1987-90

To Return a Bible

At the December 1987 meeting, member Laurretta Vagnoni shared a Bible she purchased for \$25 at a Virginia Beach thrift store. The dedication was from December 1881 and contained family information spanning from 1788 to the early 1900's.

Ron Bruce offered to help locate descendants. He took note of any identifying information, including two towns, Deposit, NY, and New Milford, PA, which, it was learned, were only 20 miles apart. He wrote to the Susquehanna Co. Historical Society seeking any information they may have, and waited. In February 1988, a response came that positively linked the names in the Bible to the area.

The following month, Ron shares what he has found with the society and they decide to approach The Beacon (a Virginia Beach only newspaper) in hopes of having it profiled. After six

months of no interest, they moved their focus to the area where the Bible originated

Another VBGS member, Ron Thayer, wrote several area organizations and, eventually, a descendant was found.

In March 1989, more than a year after Laurretta first shared the Bible with society members, the Pratt Family Bible was mailed to Mrs. Julian R. Johnson of Montrose, PA, descendant of Capt. William Pratt (1653-1718).

A lovely end to the story, but that's not all...

Ron Thayer had also placed an ad in Genealogical Helper, offering the Bible to any proven family member. Although they came after the Bible was returned to Mrs. Johnson, three responses were received and she allowed her contact information to be shared.

The above information was shared in the March 1989 and March 1990 issues of the VBGS newsletter.



The Challenges of Genealogical Research

by Susan Schock

In April, my husband Tom and I went on our second Rhine River cruise, starting in the midst of Amsterdam's gorgeous tulip season. Normally, he is not keen on doing the same or a similar cruise but, as the first was in December, he agreed, but he was going to make me pay!

I can't remember when he first explained what he wanted to do while on the cruise, but I recall vividly my reaction when I turned to him and said, "You want to do what?!" Since he knows that I am not particularly adventurous, he knew that he was going to have to 'sell' me on his notion.

He wanted to visit a church in a little town called Oberkassel Bonn where his 5th great-grandfather Johann Carl Mehlman (later anglicized to Mailman) had been baptized.¹ He 'simply' wanted to visit and take pictures, but I knew better and feared that there was a larger plan...

He had done some preliminary planning and explained that we could get off the cruise ship at Cologne (a stop we had previously visited), take a train to Oberkassel Bonn, and return the same day. And, he noted, that if for some reason we did not return in time for departure, we could stay overnight 'somewhere' and meet the boat in Koblenz. I feel sure that he was planning something more, but knew he had to get me hooked before allowing me to know the full plans. Given my propensity to be wary of details, particularly when the planning was done by my husband, I wanted to say, 'No way'. Actually, I probably did!

He then launched into his best sales pitch, showing me the train station was a 10 to 15-minute walk from the cruise ship port and extolled German trains as being on a very precise timetable.

I started to regret helping him translate the birth certificate that helped locate his ancestors, but I reluctantly acceded to

his enthusiasm for this somewhat unnerving excursion to a rather tiny town in the middle of nowhere. I was concerned we were presuming that when we got off the cruise ship and walked to the train station, we would find someone to assist us in buying tickets to this tiny stop called Oberkassel Bonn. And I note that neither of us speak German. What's to worry??

On the day we arrived in Cologne, the first problem arose – the cruise ship arrived about 5 hours later than planned. That meant we had less time to get to Oberkassel Bonn, find the church, and get back. "Not to worry," says my husband, as we can simply take the train to Koblenz if we get delayed. Of course, we would have to find a hotel and had not made any effort to locate one for the possibility. I then learned he actually 'hoped' to have to spend the night off the cruise ship to do some further exploring. He thought it would be fun to explore Bonn, the former capital of West Germany. I made it clear that I was not interested.

So, having communicated our plans to both family and riverboat personnel, we disembarked with day

packs and water. With the help of map apps on our phones, we walked the half mile to the train station where the hope to find someone to assist us devolved into watching others purchase tickets at electronic machines.

We quickly realized that Google Translate would not suffice, and we needed to speak with a real person, preferably one who spoke sufficient English.

When the customer service agent admonished us for being too close to the counter (we were not able to read the sign telling us where to stand), we were not sure this was going to work out well. But, once we explained our plan, the agent very graciously recommended we buy the one-day unlimited



The sign for Oberkassel Bonn and the main street.



(Continued on page 10)

The Challenges of Genealogical Research (Continued from page 9)

tickets. This would allow us to hop on or off any train and even go to Koblenz, if needed.

After purchasing the tickets, he mentioned that we should 'validate' the ticket before going to the platform. There was an orange validation device at the bottom of the steps and we would have no trouble finding it. Of course, I was beyond nervous at that point and truly wanted to return to the cruise ship (it was not too late). But no, we went to the stairway and the train platform. Thankfully we observed other travelers and figured out how to validate our tickets. We boarded the train for our adventure and were on our way!



The hut along the tracks.

My worries increased exponentially when the conductor announced the Oberkassel Bonn stop. We looked out the window, and all we saw was the sign for Oberkassel Bonn and a small hut a little further down the track. No other buildings or signs of civilization were in sight, just cows and pastureland.

I believe I commented, "This can't be right, there's nothing here." My husband, not to be deterred, said it did no harm to get out and look around. So, with a larger dose of hesitancy than normal on my part, we got off the train.

We wondered how we were supposed to get to the other side and back again later, as the train tracks were down a somewhat steep climb. We walked to the hut and found stairs leading down to two tunnels, one that went under the train track as well as one leading towards the cows and who knows where!

We proceeded down the tunnel under the tracks and came out near a train station which we had not been able to see. But it was just a façade, it was really just the side of a local restaurant, albeit closed.

There was no one in sight to ask where this church might be. Tom then said he had an address and began entering it into his phone only to learn there was rather limited cell access. So we followed the only road away from the tracks and, after a short distance, saw signs of civilization -- churches, commercial buildings, and houses! (picture 3)

Oberkassel, a quiet town with approximately 7,200 inhabitants, is now a rather distant suburb of Bonn but was first mentioned in written documentation around the year 722. Oberkassel's claim to fame is having the oldest known grave that includes remains of a man, woman, and their puppy, dating back around 14,000 years.² It is also known for having Stop 16 of the Beethoven self-guided tour. Beethoven was born in Bonn in 1770, but it is believed he spent some time in Oberkassel at Lippesches Palais.³

As we walked through the town, we saw very few people and even fewer cars. We realized that since this was Sunday, commercial establishments were likely closed and found only churches and the ice cream store were open, and, oh yes, the local (rather tiny) casino parlor.

We roamed the streets, going from church to church by looking for their steeples in the distance. The first church we stopped at was on a rather steep hill. After climbing to it, we saw it wasn't old enough to be the church we were looking for. We tried four more churches with the same result before

finding the correct one, the Evangelische Kirchengemeinde Oberkassel – Dollendorf (picture 5), also known as the Alte Evangelische Kirche.

The church was built in 1683 as noted on the keystone over the arched door and is one of the oldest (if not the oldest) Protestant church in the Rhineland. In 1689, the church was destroyed by fire by French soldiers during the War of Palatinate Succession, also known as the Nine Years' War (1688 to 1697) and was rebuilt in 1694.⁴

While there are multiple plaques



Alte Evangelische Kirche

(Continued on page 11)

The Challenges of Genealogical Research (Continued from page 10)

surrounding the church, most of the inscriptions are not legible. Only the plaque for Baroness Eleonor J. C. von Schwartzenu was mostly clear enough to read. At the top of the roof turret, there is the trumpet angel called Geusendaniel or Geusenengel, which was a symbol of Evangelical Reformed congregations. The Geusen were Calvinists who had fled from the Netherlands.⁴



Husband Tom under the entry arch, dated 1683, and a plaque for Baroness Eleonor J. C. von Schwartzenu.

Unfortunately, church services are only held twice a month, so our timing was off. Tom insisted on looking at every nook and cranny, taking pictures of everything. I think he was trying to find a way to get in, something he had been lucky enough to happen in the past but, thankfully, was not successful. And the only windows were about 10 feet from the ground, so they were not accessible.

As the afternoon wore on, I was starting to dread the possibility that we would miss the return train. I said that we needed to head back to beat the threatening rain but Tom paid little attention, as he is used to me being a “nervous Nelly.” Instead, we leisurely strolled down the central road of the town and periodically stopped to peer into a closed store or building. That was when we happened upon the small parlor casino that was open as well as Stop 16 of the Beethoven Self-Guided tour as we continued back to the train station.

We finally got on the next train heading back to Cologne, only to realize there were three different stations and our destination was nowhere near the cruise port. With the help of our mobiles, we located train schedules and changed trains at a later station. All this convinced me that the German trains were as advertised - precisely on time - and we arrived back at our riverboat before it headed up the Rhine!

This adventure was just a “simple” visit to a German church where my husband’s 5th great-grandfather had been baptized in 1721. One item on a lengthy list, but it felt strangely satisfying (even if a bit unnerving at times) as we had found the church and managed to stand in the footsteps of his ancestors.

Johann Carl Mehlman emigrated to Canada and became one of the founding families of Lunenburg, Nova Scotia in 1753.⁵

Old town Lunenburg is a UNESCO World Heritage Site as it is deemed to be the best surviving planned British colonial town in Canada.⁶

The prolific Mehlman family eventually spread into Annapolis Co., Nova Scotia, and Hingham, Massachusetts (in the Boston area). Today the family is spread out over the towns and cities around Hingham and we are now looking to reconnect with them. So, one question keeps leading to another!

Sources:

1. Certificate of Baptism for Johann Carl Mehlman.
2. "Oberkassel, Bonn." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oberkassel,_Bonn.
3. Ludwig Von Beethoven Walk flyer – Kooperationspartners/partners: Burger fur Beethoven, Beethoven-Haus, Beethovenfest Bonn, Beethoven Orchestra Bonn .
4. Old Church Oberkassel / Short Presentation – 20 Sept 2023 – text and photos: K. Grossjohann, Version 7.2 - 2007-2023 Evangelical Church Community Oberkassel-Konigswitner
5. Lunenburg, Nova Scotia Historical Society, Founding families of Nova Scotia -1753
6. Lunenburg, Nova Scotia Historical Society, Old town Lunenburg -UNESCO World Heritage Site



Did You Know?

by Diana Quinn

Inferred Relationships in Census Records



220224	Brite William	91	M	Farm	700	126
	" Penny	48	F	House		
	" George	9	M			
	" Lewis	7	M			
	Purvis Patsey	9	F			
	Whitty David	15	M	on farm		

From the years 1880 to 1950, the United States Federal census included a field showing the relationship of each person to the head of household. As researchers, we rely heavily on these to reconstruct family relationships.

However, the census records for 1850, 1860, and 1870 identify those living together, but the relationship between those living together is not identified. This leaves it up to family researchers to verify these relationships.

The 1870 census record above, found at Ancestry.com, shows the "family" of 91-year-old William Britt. "Families" was loosely defined in the 1870 Census Instructions to Enumerators as people living together under one roof. This could be any number of people and include single families and those in places such as boarding houses and hotels.

These census instructions tell the enumerator to list the head of household together with other household members. No other instructions are given as to the order of the names. It was specified that the full family name need not be repeated as long as the name remains the same. This rule was followed for the William Britt family.

Note, on the right, that the record view of this census page found at Ancestry.com, shows Penny, George, and Lewis to be the Inferred Children of William Britt. It is up to me, the researcher, to determine if this is correct.

Only two of the three inferred children were the children of William Britt. William Britt was my 4th great-grandfather. He married his second wife, Penelope "Penny" Purvis, on 22 March 1861. Their sons were George and Lewis Britt.

Sources

"1870 Census Instructions to Enumerators," *United States Census Bureau* (<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census/technical-documentation/questionnaires/1870/1870-instructions.html> : accessed 6 January 2024).

1870 U.S. Census, Grantham, Wayne County, North Carolina, population schedule, Grantham Township, PO Goldsboro, p. 28, dwelling 220, family 221, William Britt household; digital images, Ancestry.com (<https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/35040367:7163?> : accessed 6 Jan 2024); citing NARA microfilm M593_1165.

Name	William Brite [William Britt]
Age in 1870	91
Birth Date	abt 1779
Birthplace	North Carolina
Dwelling Number	220
Home in 1870	Grantham, Wayne, North Carolina
Race	White
Gender	Male
Post Office	Goldsboro
Occupation	Farmer
Male Citizen Over 21	Yes
Personal Estate Value	126
Real Estate Value	700
Inferred Children	Penny Brite George Brite Lewis Brite
Household Members (Name)	Age
William Brite	91
Penny Brite	48
George Brite	9
Lewis Brite	7
Patsey Purvis	9
David Whitty	15



Social Outing - Cape Henry Lighthouse Tour

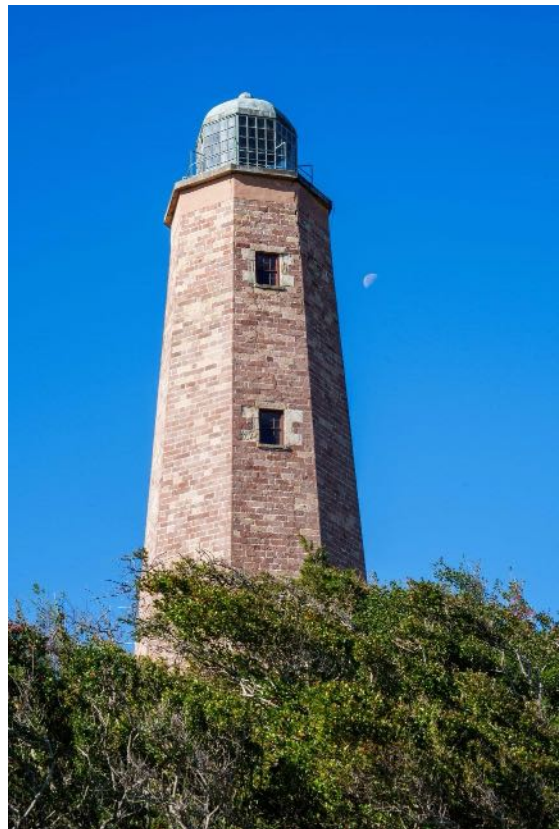
On November 4, 2023, ten VBGS members gathered for a special tour of the Cape Henry Lighthouse in Virginia Beach. Thank you to Elgin Green for taking and sharing the below photos!

Diana Quinn, one of the visiting VBGS members, shares the following:

During the first session of the First Congress of the United States, a law was enacted for the establishment of Light Houses, Beacons, Buoys, and Public Piers. This act (Act 9) specified that a lighthouse would be built near the entrance to Chesapeake Bay. No other structure was named in the act, making the Cape Henry Lighthouse the first federally funded public works project of the newly formed United States government. The lighthouse was authorized by George Washington and overseen by Alexander Hamilton. Located near the "First Landing" site, where English settlers stopped before settling in Jamestown, it was completed in 1792.

After almost 100 years, visible cracks in the Cape Henry Lighthouse prompted the construction of the "new" Cape Henry Light-

(Continued on page 14)



Cape Henry Lighthouse Tour *(Continued from page 13)*

house in 1881. This black and white lighthouse, constructed of cast-iron plates backed by masonry walls, is not open to the public as it is still an active aid to navigation.

Today, both lighthouses are surrounded by the Joint Expeditionary Base Fort Story (JEBFS). The old Cape Henry Lighthouse is owned and operated by Preservation Virginia and is open to the public.

To learn more about the lighthouses at Cape Henry or to plan a visit, go to Preservation Virginia at <https://preservationvirginia.org/historic-sites/cape-henry-lighthouse/>

Sources

Amy Waters Yarsinske, The Making of America Series, Virginia Beach, A History of Virginia's Golden Shore, Arcadia Publishing (Charlestown, SC : 2002).

Cape Henry Lighthouse, Preservation Virginia (<https://preservationvirginia.org/historic-sites/cape-henry-lighthouse/org/> : accessed 14 November 2023).



Show and Tell Time

Here is what a few VBGS members shared with the group at the December 2023 meeting.

1. Wedding Veil of Eva Mollie Kress shared by Cindy Meier

After lying dormant for over 100 years, Cindy's cousin came across pieces of Eva's wedding attire among his mother's things. None of the ten siblings knew it was there.





2. The Travelling Vases

shared by Bob Bruce

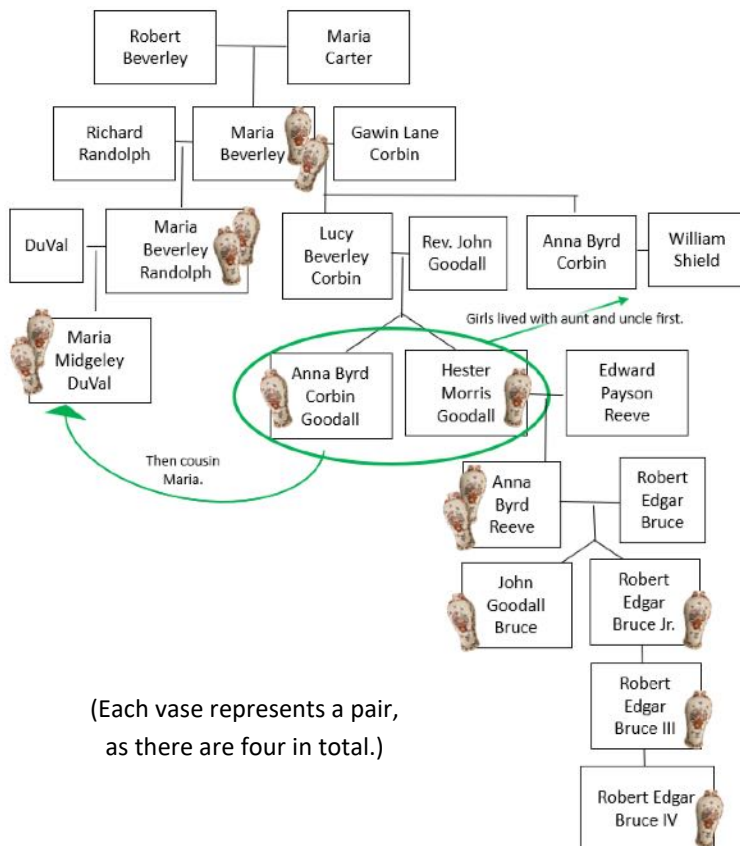
These vases are two of a set of four originally owned by Maria Beverley (1764-1824), daughter of Robert Beverley (1740-1800), builder of "Blandfield," and Maria Carter (1745-1817). It is unknown when these vases were purchased or whether they ever adorned a mantel at "Blandfield." Perhaps Maria had these shipped from England after she married Richard Randolph or Gawin Lane Corbin. Be that as it may, their circuitous route through those who have touched them, and to me, has become more of the story than the vases themselves.

Robert Beverley, a planter, was one of the wealthiest Virginians at the time. Unlike many others of his status, he avoided politics, but leading to the American Revolution, he tried to influence moderation among political leaders. Although he did not support separating from England, he did not actively interfere with patriot war efforts and was allowed to live at



his

home in relative peace. Robert's daughter, Maria, must have been reckless in her personal life. She had already received her dowry when she married Richard Randolph, and Robert noted in his will that it had been "squandered away." He did leave her "one hundred pounds to defray her present exigencies." Richard had died in 1799, leaving Maria with seven children and one on the way. She married Gawin Lane Corbin, fourteen years her junior, a year later, on 12 April 1800, the same day her father died. From this union, the vases descend through my line with a momentary detour.



Maria's daughter, Lucy Beverley Corbin (1804-1836), married John Goodall (1789-1840) as his second wife. They had six children, all but two dying in infancy. Anna Byrd Corbin Goodall (1829-1919) and Hester Morris Goodall (1833-1908) were minors when their father died. They went to live with their aunt, Anna Byrd Corbin (1808-1847) and uncle, Dr. William Henry Shield (1807- 1883), who were married in 1831 by the children's father, Rev. John Goodall. While with their aunt and uncle, they lived at the "Moore House" in Yorktown, Virginia, site of the British surrender. When aunt Anna Byrd Corbin Shield died in 1847, Anna and Hester were still minors, seventeen and thirteen years of age. So, they moved to Richmond to live with their half-first cousin, Maria Midgeley DuVal (1818-1874), a spinster who was a granddaughter of Richard Randolph and Maria Beverley.

Midge DuVal's mother, Maria Beverley Randolph (1794-1845) inherited the vases from her mother, Maria Beverley, and passed them to her daughter, Midge. Thus, my great-great-

(Continued on page 16)

The Travelling Vases (Continued from page 15)

grandmother, Hester Morris Goodall, was now in the same house as the vases. Hester married Edward Payson Reeve (1832-1898) and had my great-grandmother, Anna Byrd Reeve (1862-1911). She married Robert Edgar Bruce (1865-1936) and left this note for her descendants:

Barrell china vases and ornaments were sent from England to mother's grandmother, who was Miss Maria Beverley, who first married Richard Randolph of "Curles" then Major Gawen Lane Corbin of "Kings Creek," York County, Va., our great, great, grandfather. Aunt Maria (DuVal) gave these old vases downstairs to Cousin Midge DuVal, who gave them, during her lifetime, before she was ever sick, to Anna and Hester Goodall, because they had belonged to their grandmother.



3. Grandmother's High Chair shared by Janet Tetterton



Janet's grandmother, Josephine, was born in December 1892 to a 16-year-old mother and 18-year-old father. At left is her high chair, likely made by someone in the family, and most, if not all, of her eight younger siblings probably used it as well. It was passed around the family over time but eventually made it back to Josephine and then Janet's mother. As there is no attached table, Janet remembers her mother strapping children in with a belt or towel and placed a cushion on the seat to prevent a child from falling through the hole. Janet's mother had the seat repaired.

The chair sits in Janet's dining room and is still put to use at times.

4. Lincoln's Second Inaugural Speech shared by Carmen Cross



Carmen shared The Alleganian newspaper from March 8, 1865. It contains Abraham Lincoln's second inaugural speech. Her sister found it at the bottom of their grandmother's closet when she died in 1992.



5. Edith Giddens and the Webster Apartments shared by Diana Quinn



My grandmother's photos were featured in an article about the 100th Anniversary of the Webster Apartments for single women in the November 20, 2023, issue of the NY Daily News. The Webster Apartments were established in 1923 largely due to Charles Webster of the Macy family, who, after his death in 1916, left the bulk of his money to benefit the city's single women. He directed that money go specifically to the creation of apartments to improve the living conditions for single, working women in Manhattan. The 14-story building was built between 9th and 10th Avenues, a short walk from Macy's depart-

ment store at Herald Square. Many women who lived at the Webster worked at Macy's, but not all. My grandmother, Edith Giddens, lived at the Webster from about 1929 to 1931. While living at the Webster, my grandmother worked at the New York Public Library as a clerk and held a similar position at the Museum of Natural History. She used to talk about it as if it were an exclusive club. She had photos with friends on the rooftop and told me about the radio room and the room to meet beaux. Three of her photos appeared in the online version of the article and two in the paper version.

Monday, November 20, 2023

DAILY NEWS NYDailyNews.com



Edith Giddens (above, center and portrait at right) moved to the Webster Apartments in 1929, as relayed by her granddaughter. The original building (right) is at 14th St. and 10th Ave. in Manhattan. Above, Giddens relaxing with friends on the Webster's rooftop deck, one of the many amenities available to the women in the building. BARRY WILKINS FOR NYDN



YOUNG, UNMARRIED, IN NEED OF HOUSING Webster Apartments built 100 years ago as homes for single women who started hitting the city's workforce

BY ELLEN MOYNIHAN

NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

The year was 1923, the decade decade already in full roar and the crash of Wall Street was years off.

"Flaming Youth," a movie starring Colton Moore as a saucy flapper, was playing in the theater. A piece was submitted for the traffic signal Future Hall of Fame Lane Carling took the field inside the newly opened Yankee Stadium, three years after the stadium's women received the right to vote.

It's been 100 years since some of these ambitious young ladies found a new home. On Nov. 15, 1923, the doors opened at 419

W 34th St. in Manhattan to welcome independent young working women looking to live on their own, as more and more of them were doing at that time.

The Webster Apartments were born. Brothers Charles and Josiah Webster had come to New York to join their cousin R.H. Macy at the run-of-the-Manchester store he opened in 1858 at 14th Street and Sixth Ave., the business becoming wildly successful. It was Charles Webster who left behind the bulk of his money to benefit the city's single women.

Webster, who died in 1916, directed the money to go specifically toward creation of the apartments

"to generally improve the conditions of unmarried working women and particularly to establish, maintain and conduct apartments in the Borough of Manhattan, City of New York, for occupation by unmarried working women regardless of their religious belief or nationality and wherein they may find comfortable and attractive homes," according to his will.

The 14-story building was built between Ninth and 10th Aves., a short walk from what was by then Macy's flagship store in Herald Square. According to the apartments' website, there were "between 30 and 40 suite closets from Macy's alone living here" in its first year, but the inhabitants were not

only jazz Age shop girls.

Edith Giddens lived at the Webster in her early 30s, from about 1929 to 1931, first moving in while she worked at the main branch of the New York Public Library typing up index cards for the card catalog, said her granddaughter Diana Hoyan Quinn of Virginia Beach.

"She used to talk about the Webster as if royalty lived there, like it was a special club," said Quinn, 68. "Those two years she was there she had a good time. She made friends that day and you could tell she really liked being there. It sounded like a safe place, too."

The Webster was impressive, especially for young women new to

New York and living on their own for the first time. The building originally had a dance and lecture hall, a lounge and a library in addition to the 360 bedrooms. There was also an on-site dietitian, nurse, chef and housekeeper.

Giddens, born in Phillipsburg, N.J., moved to New York after her mother died, said Quinn, and met her husband on a blind date while living at the Webster. By 1923 Giddens was married and having her first child, but her time at the Webster Apartments remained a cherished part of her life, said her granddaughter.

After working at the American Museum of Natural History,

DAILY NEWS NYDailyNews.com

Monday, November 20, 2023 17



where she hand-lettered signs for

displays, said her granddaughter. "She probably didn't earn much," said Quinn. However, that didn't stop her grandmother from adopting the style of the time, as evidenced in photos of her taken at the Webster Apartments with marcelled hair and high heels.

"She was buying clothes and looking nice when she was single in New York City."

The Webster came fairly late in the era of housing created for working women, which began in New York during the 1860s, said historian Nina E. Harkader.

"There begins to be questions about where are these young women going to live, because

society at this point has very specific rules for women, to grow up under the auspices of your parents and get married and have a home and have children."

The earlier housing was traditional in nature, giving the inhabitants a structured, sheltered existence, but eventually more modern options emerged, said Harkader.

"Right before you get the Webster you get something called the Business Women's Hotel," she said. "Some of this is pushing back against the restrictions."

For nearly 100 years the building housed women exclusively. Bathrooms and showers were still shared, meals continued to be

included in the cost of rent, and gentlemen callers were still forbidden to go above the first floor.

The Webster Apartments as an organization moved temporarily to Lexington Ave. in March, where they occupy the female-only 14th floor of FOUNDRY Study, a coed building of students and interns, to stay the night.

Many of the inhabitants of the original building made the move to FOUNDRY, said Tara Scott, director of admissions, guest services, marketing and business development of the Webster

Apartments. While the building is currently more focused on housing students and interns, young working women will still be able to call Webster home.

According to the nonprofit's website — this new building allows Webster to provide a safe and healthy environment to live, connect, and network with like-minded individuals. Rooms ranged in price from \$2,900 a month for a stand-alone single room with private bathroom, microwave and mini-fridge to \$3,150 for a large deluxe single, which included a kitchenette, a steep increase from the starting cost of \$1,100 in 2019.

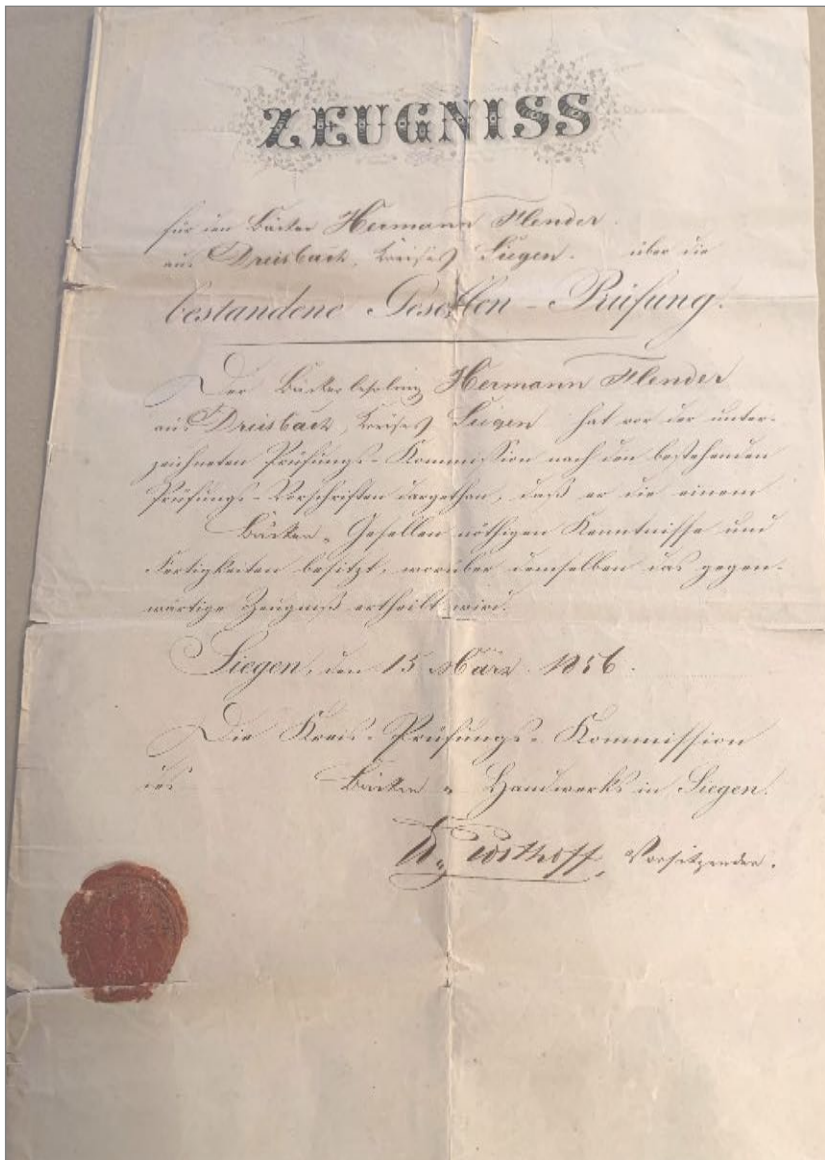
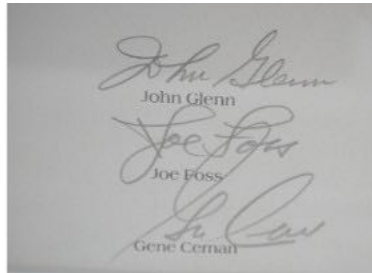
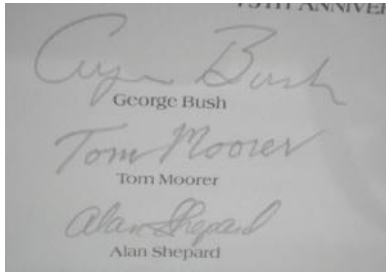
The historic building on W. 34th St. was sold in the spring for \$52.5 million to Educational Housing Services, which also provides dorm-like accommodations for students and interns in Brooklyn Heights, the Financial District and Williamsburg.

"When the world changes with the Depression and World War II, a lot of these places go and they don't come back," she said. "What I find fascinating is that in many ways things have not changed."

"It's not like we solved the problem," said Harkader.

6. The 75th Anniversary Commemorative of Naval Aviation shared by Wendy Bransom

Wendy and her husband are both retired Navy and share a love of Naval Aviation. They came across this signed poster while visiting the Naval Aviation Museum in Florida and had to add it to their treasures. It has a number of notable signatures on it, including John Glenn and Alan Shepard, legendary astronauts.



7. Great-grandfather's Baker's Certificate

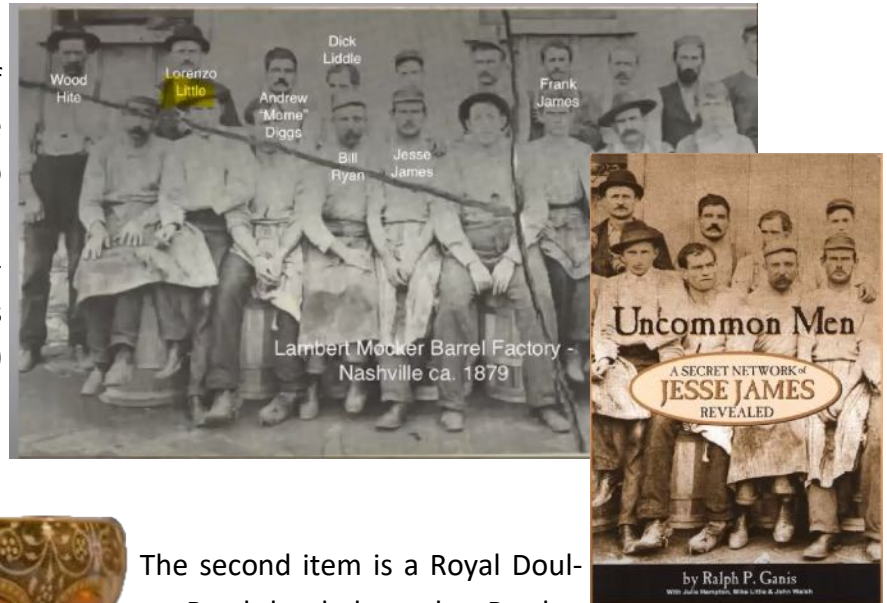
shared by Barbara Hancock

Barbara's grandmother had a cedar chest which held the family treasures. Among the items was a baker's certificate from Siegen, Dreisbach, Germany dated March 15, 1856 for Barbara's great-grandfather, Hermann Flender. He emigrated to Philadelphia and ran a saloon by the Delaware River.

8. A Book, a Bowl, and a Table, shared by Carol Green

Carol shared items connected to great-grandparents David Alexander Little (1882-1918) and Bertha Pearl Thomas (1889-1961). Bertha lived next door to Carol for the last few years of her life and passed when Carol was eight.

The first item is the book, *Uncommon Men: A Secret Network of Jesse James Revealed*. One of the included photos shows Frank and Jesse James with gang members, one being Lorenzo Merriman Little. (Highlighted in the photo and also at top left on the cover.) After some research, Carol discovered Lorenzo was David's first cousin once removed. Also, David was 20 when Lorenzo died, so they may have known each other.



The second item is a Royal Doulton Bowl that belonged to Bertha, then Carol's mother, and now Carol. It is in the Art Nouveau style, 10.25" in diameter and 4.75" tall. Based on the marking, it was produced between 1901 and 1922. Because of the dates, Carol thinks it may have been a wedding present for Bertha and David.

The third item is a hand-carved coffee table with a removable glass-top serving tray that also belonged to Bertha. Like the bowl, Carol believes this may have been a wedding gift at her second marriage based on the dates. It is in the Art Deco style and measures 20" tall, 27.75" wide, and 20.25" deep. Until learning that the top was a removable tray while researching for the show and tell, Carol thought something was wrong with the table - it must be falling apart or about to break!



Along with the table, the top is shown here with and without the glass serving tray.





VBGS Memberships

VBGS wants to encourage young people to get involved in their family history. To make this more accessible, the society has made memberships FREE to anyone under age 25.

Not only do we welcome younger researchers, other than asking for birthdate verification, this membership has no restrictions. We encourage our younger members to attend meetings and social events, to get involved on a committee, and bring new energy and ideas to the table.

Let the young people in your life know and send them to vbgsva.net/membership.html

Former VBGS member Joan Akers Passes

Joan, who served in many roles during her time as a VBGS member, including newsletter editor and member-at-large, passed away on January 2, 2024. She leaves 3 children, 7 grandchildren, 17 great-grandchildren, and 1 great-great-grandchild.

Find her obituary at <https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/pilotonline/name/joan-akers-obituary?id=54025158>.

Learning Corner

from your Education Committee

Beginning Your Family History Research

1. Start with Yourself: Begin by documenting your own details like the date and place of birth, baptism, and marriage.

2. Work Backwards: Move to your immediate ancestors, starting with your parents. Record their names, dates, and places of birth, baptism, marriage, and death. Continue to your grandparents, noting the same details and then for each preceding generation (great-grandparents, great-great-grandparents, etc.) as far back as you can.

3. Talk to Relatives: Engage with your family members, especially the older ones, to gather more information. They might remember details about generations that are no longer alive. Find out if another family member has already started a family tree.

4. Locate Family Documents and Information: Locate birth, baptism, marriage, and death certificates. You may find valuable information in family Bibles, scrapbooks, photo albums, letters, school records, and diaries.

5. Educate Yourself: Visit the Members-Only pages on the VBGS website to find recordings of our monthly meetings and special interest groups dating back to 2020. If you are just beginning to research your family, check out these helpful presentations:

- United States Federal Census Records
- Organizing and Staying on Track
- Finding Family in Newspapers
- Must-use Resources at FamilySearch.org Part 1 – Finding People
- Introduction to U.S. Land Records
- Essential Genealogical Practices, Part 1 and 2

Additional Resources:

25 Best Genealogy Websites for Beginners

<https://familytreemagazine.com/websites/25-best-genealogy-websites-for-beginners/>

How to Begin Genealogical Research

<https://www.archives.gov/riverside/how-to-begin-genealogical-research>

A Beginner's Guide to Getting Started in Genealogy Research

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fx2Tff-R-yI>

How to Get Started the Right Way

<https://www.familysearch.org/en/blog/beginning-genealogy-how-to-get-started-the-right-way>

Gladys Paige Butler: World War I Nurse

by Tom Daley



Gladys Paige Butler, 1911, graduation picture from Hingham High School

Great-aunt Gladys Paige Butler was the first among the descendants of my great-grandparents, William and Sarah (Mailman) Butler, to become a registered nurse.

Gladys (the second of nine children, born 19 Jan 1894¹) was encouraged to attend school, including college, at a time when women were actively discouraged from being educated and, even if so, discriminated against holding a job.

She attended the Derby Academy² in Hingham, MA. (Where the Butlers emigrated to from Canada, see more in my Nov 2023 newsletter article.) The Derby Academy, founded in 1784, was one of the earliest schools formed to prepare children for college (today called 'prep' schools) and is reportedly the first co-ed school in the Americas.³

She continued on to Hingham High School, graduating in 1911⁴, and then attended the Hahnemann Nursing School in Worcester (now part of U Mass), where she graduated in 1915 as a registered nurse.²

Gladys stayed on at Hahnemann as an employee.² Eventually, she and other Worcester nurses volunteered with the Red Cross. They provided nursing services to recently enlisted men in the U.S. Army being

trained at Camp Greene, Charlotte, NC.⁵ I am not clear why she volunteered, but suspect that she may have known some of the servicemen posted for training at Camp Greene, as the Massachusetts 12th Regiment (a National Guard unit that was federalized for World War I) was among those assigned to be trained there.⁶ I have no idea why the U.S. Army would send Massachusetts troops to Charlotte, NC. It would likely have been something of a cultural shock for all.

One of my cousins inherited a box of pictures from his mother that included five of Gladys, which are shared here. Two of them show her sitting with soldiers on a lawn in front of military tents. That is Camp Greene. It was also known as 'Camp Canvas' since it had very few actual buildings but instead relied on tents to house the roughly 40,000 troops being trained.⁷

And this is the most remarkable part of Gladys' story...

Sometime after completing her service at Camp Greene, Gladys enlisted in the U.S. Army as a nurse^{2,8} (later named the Army Nursing Corps). They only accepted women who

trained at Camp Greene, Charlotte, NC.⁵ I am not clear why she volunteered, but suspect that she may have known some

of the servicemen posted for training at Camp Greene, as the Massachusetts 12th Regiment (a National Guard unit that was federalized for World War I) was among those assigned to be trained there.⁶ I have no idea why the U.S. Army would send Massachusetts troops to Charlotte, NC. It would likely have been something of a cultural shock for all.

One of my cousins inherited a box of pictures from his mother that included five of Gladys, which are shared here. Two of them show her sitting with soldiers on a lawn in front of military tents. That is Camp Greene. It was also known as 'Camp Canvas' since it had very few actual buildings but instead relied on tents to house the roughly 40,000 troops being trained.⁷

And this is the most remarkable part of Gladys' story...

Sometime after completing her service at Camp Greene, Gladys enlisted in the U.S. Army as a nurse^{2,8} (later named the Army Nursing Corps). They only accepted women who



*Gladys at Camp Greene.
(at right in the photo below)*



(Continued on page 22)

Gladys Paige Butler (Continued from page 21)

were registered nurses.⁹ I don't know when she enlisted, but I found records that she sailed for France on board the CPOS Melita (a Canadian ship rented by the U.S. Army) on 9 Sep 1918. She was part of a contingent of 100 nurses described on the shipping record as "Exceptional Replacement Nurses." She landed in Brest, France on 19 Sep 1918.¹⁰ I do not know for sure, but Gladys likely arrived at her post, one of the 48 base hospitals established near the front lines of the American Army^{11,12} around 24 Sep 1918.

At that point, there were just 48 days left of World War I. But for the American Army, it was a period of extraordinary casualties.

On 26 Sep 1918, the U.S. Army launched its largest military campaign of the war, involving roughly 1,000,000 men. This was the Meuse-Argonne Offensive. It lasted for 46 days (or until the war's end on 11 Nov 1918). During that period, the U.S. Army suffered over 110,000 casualties, or about 2,400 per day.¹³

Gladys would have arrived at her post just as this offensive was beginning and helped handle the enormous casualties that were incurred. I have not found out to which base hospital she posted, but for the Meuse Argonne offensive it hardly mattered. They were all overwhelmed.

The casualties were roughly 60% (66,000) from battle and 40% (44,000) from disease, with a high death rate. Of the battle casualties, about 1/3 (22,000) were killed and 2/3 (44,000) were wounded. The disease casualties were almost entirely due to the Spanish Flu, which was raging throughout the Western Front in both the Allied and the Central Powers armies. The flu patients would have been treated as well as possible, but many died because they did not have any clear idea of an effective treatment. It affected the young and healthy to a large degree, so it was a surprise that so many died.^{13, 14}



Gladys, at right, likely departing for Camp Greene.

For hospitals designed to handle around 1,000 casualties and staffing for nurses at 1 per 100 soldiers, the impact of receiving 2,400 casualties a day was staggering.¹⁵ Gladys was literally thrown into this maelstrom without any real comprehension of what she was going to have to deal with.

When the war ended, the U.S. Government made every effort to expedite the return of its soldiers, including the wounded from the base hospitals. The last to leave were generally the nurses, as they were needed to assist in preparing the wounded for return. Gladys embarked to return to the U.S. in July 1919, while most of the US Army troops returned prior to that time.¹⁶



Gladys' return was reported in the Hingham newspaper as 25 Jul 1919, in conjunction with a 45-day furlough.¹⁷ I presume that the furlough was to provide time to be released from the Army Nursing Corps.

I have not been able to verify what she did while in France, but her obituary reported that she had

If correct, Gladys holding her sister Hazel's oldest child, Bill Daley (b. 11 Nov 1920.)

been in charge of one of the base hospitals (which I assume meant in charge of the nursing contingent).¹⁸ When she returned, she resumed working for the Hahnemann Hospital in Worcester, MA as the night supervisor. She stayed at the hospital until she had to resign due to her declining health sometime in July 1928.²

Gladys Paige Butler (Continued from page 22)

Today, so removed from the trauma of World War I, I cannot imagine what Gladys saw or experienced. While she did not leave any record of that time, Anna McMullen of Allentown, PA, another nurse on the CPOS Melita, did share her experience. Anna's story, [Over There: A Tribute to WWI Army Nurse Corps Volunteer Anna Marie McMullen](#), can be found on the Lehigh Valley Health Network website.

Gladys died on 31 December 1928, at the age of 34. The Hingham newspaper reported that her untimely death was attributed to an illness she contracted while in France,² likely the Spanish Flu. That paper also reported that the local American Legion Post provided pallbearers, a bugler who

played Taps, and an honor guard that fired a 21-gun salute (3 shots of 7) at her burial. During World War I, there were approximately 10,000 Army Nurses; only about 5,000 served overseas, and less than 4,000 served in France.¹⁹ Gladys was one of those 4,000.

Gladys, in her way, helped pave the way for young women today to be entitled to have an education and a profession. She never married and lived in Worcester, where she was working, until she returned to her parents' home in Hingham when her health declined, about four months before she died.²

She is buried in Fort Hill Cemetery, Hingham, MA, next to her parents. Her tombstone is one provided for service members.^{20,21}

Sources:

- Gladys Butler, Birth Certificate, obtained from Hingham, MA Town Clerk.
- Recent Deaths, Miss Gladys P. Butler, (*Hingham*) *The Hingham Journal*, 4 Jan 1929, p. 4, col. 2
- Roscoe, Theodore Swan. 1984. History of Derby Academy 1784-1984. Hingham MA: Trustees of Derby Academy.
- Hingham High School Yearbook 1911
- Town Topics, (*Hingham*) *The Hingham Journal*, 14 Dec 1917, p. 4, col. 4
- "Order of Battle American Forces – World War I – New River Notes." Newrivernotes <https://www.Newrivernotes.com/order-of-battle-american-forces-world-war-i/>.
- "WWI: Boot camp in Charlotte." NCpedia <https://ncpedia.org/wwi-boot-camp-charlotte>. And "Camp Greene." Our State <https://www.ourstate.com/camp-greene/>.
- "United States, Veterans Administration Master Index, 1917-1940", , FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:QP8H-KKJR> : Wed Oct 25 16:31:01 UTC 2023), Entry for Gladys Paige Butler, 16 Sep 1919.
- "Contributions of the U.S. Army Nurse Corps in World War I." E-anca <https://e-anca.org/History/Topics-in-ANC-History/Contributions-of-the-US-Army-Nurse-Corps-in-WWI>.
- Ancestry.com. U.S., Army Transport Service Arriving and Departing Passenger Lists, 1910-1939 [database on-line]. Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2016. citing Gladys Butler. 1918
- Wever Peter. 2019. A U.S. Army Medical Base in World War I France : Life and Care at Bazoilles Hospital Center 1918-1919. Jefferson North Carolina: McFarland & Company Inc.
- "The Base Hospitals of the AEF." Worldwar1 <http://www.worldwar1.com/dbc/basehosp.htm>.
- "The U.S. Army Campaigns of World War I: Meuse-Argonne 26 September - 11 November 1918." History https://history.army.mil/html/books/077/77-8/cmhPub_77-8.pdf.
- "Meuse-Argonne offensive." Wikipedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meuse-Argonne_offensive.
- Johnson Katherine Burger. 1993. "Called to Serve : American Nurses Go to War 1914-1918." Dissertation. University of Louisville.
- "Coming Home." How WWI Changed America <https://wwichangedus.org/topics/coming-home/>.
- Ancestry.com. U.S., Army Transport Service Arriving and Departing Passenger Lists, 1910-1939 [database on-line]. Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2016. citing Gladys Butler. 1919.
- Gladys Butler, obituary. (*Boston*) *The Boston Globe*, 4 Jan 1929.
- "Highlights in the History of the Army Nurse Corps: Chronology." History <https://history.army.mil/books/anc-highlights/chrono.htm>.
- Gladys Butler, Death Certificate, obtained from Hingham, MA Town Clerk.
- Ancestry.com. U.S., Headstone Applications for Military Veterans, 1861-1985 [database on-line]. Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2012. citing Gladys Butler.



Help is here, VBGS Mentors

VBGS members can get help from fellow member mentors for free?

Visit the [Mentors](#) page at vbgsva.net for more info and to contact people.

Recipe Corner



*This recipe for
Dried Beef and Gravy
has been shared by
Wendy Bransom*



Ingredients

2 packages	dried beef chopped into bite-size pieces
4 Tbs	flour
1/2 stick (1/4 c)	butter
1/4 tsp	black pepper
1 pinch	cayenne pepper
1 1/2 c	milk
6-8 slices	American cheese
Sprinkle	dried onion
to taste	oregano
to taste	Italian seasoning
to taste	Parsley
4 or more	pieces of toast

Directions

1. Taste the dried beef and make sure it is not too salty. If needed, place it in water for 10-20 minutes to remove some of the sodium.
2. Melt the butter in a skillet over low to medium heat, then mix in the flour.
3. Slowly add the milk and bring to a simmer, stirring constantly to ensure it does not stick to sides of pan.
4. Add 6-8 slices of cheese and sprinkle in dried onion, pepper, oregano, Italian seasoning and cayenne pepper.
5. Remove the skillet from heat and add the dried beef, mix well.
6. Place 1-2 pieces of toast on each plate and divide the creamed beef over the toast.
7. Sprinkle with parsley and serve.

Experiment with this recipe, trying other ingredients like dry mustard and Worcestershire sauce.



Do you have a family recipe to share? Contact the Social Committee at social@vbgsva.net.



Save the Date for this Very Special Members Only Event

Digging' Our Roots in Special Collections: What Three Great Repositories Have to Offer

Another wonderful presentation from Renate
Yarborough Sanders!

**Tuesday, February 13, 2024, at 7:00 with the
How-to Group on Zoom**

The Swem Library at William and Mary, the
Joyner Library at East Carolina University, and

the Library of Virginia are outstanding research facilities, filled with exceptionally useful materials and records for genealogical and historical research! Each of these amazing repositories has made much of its collection available online, allowing access to researchers from the comfort of home. Renate will talk about the vast resources each of these repositories has to offer, and how to prepare to visit them, from home or in person.

On **February 29, 2024, at 5:30, the Computer User Group**
will follow up with hands-on searching at these and similar repositories.

Members-Only Resources

During our never-ending research, it can be easy to forget what is right at our fingertips, so here is a little reminder. Start on the Member-Only Resources page and have your password handy!

vbgsva.net/members-only



Working on writing up some of your research? Check out Carol Johnson's handout *Preparing Your Writing for Sharing* from the Writers Group in June 2020.



Have you ever wondered how our ancestors moved around the growing country? Take a look at the handout from the March 2023 Monthly Meeting, when Annette Burke Lyttle shared *Colonial American Migration Routes and Modes of Travel*.



Have you visited the Slover Library yet? Before you go, watch the recording of *Sargeant Memorial Collection at the Slover Library, Norfolk VA* presented by Troy Valos at the February 2022 Monthly Meeting.

Mark your calendars, spread the word, and let's make this the best year yet!

The primary goal of Genealogy Day at the Beach is to promote awareness and ignite a passion for genealogy and its related subjects, including lineage associations, regional history, and the various archives that preserve our shared past. We have designed this event to cater to both beginners and experienced genealogists, ensuring there is something for everyone.

VBGS & the Virginia Beach Central Library present **Genealogy Day at the Beach 2024**

Free and open to the public.

Saturday, May 25th, 10 – 4
at the Meyera E. Oberndorf Central Library,
4100 Virginia Beach Blvd.



- Speakers
- Exhibitors
- Door Prizes
- Children's Activities
- Library Resources
Training Sessions
- Library Genealogy
Section Tour

Seeking presenters and exhibitors in the areas of:

Local and regional history ◇ Lineage associations
Archive research ◇ Family history ◇ Preservation

No speaker fees are paid, and no exhibitor fees are collected. Sales are allowed. Presentations can be up to 50 minutes long. Exhibitors are provided a 6' table and chairs.

Help spread awareness of genealogy and the related local and regional offerings!

Find more information at

www.vbgsva.net/genealogy-day-at-the-beach

If you would like an application to participate, message genealogyday@vbgsva.net.



If you have any books to donate to the VBGS book sale or would like to help at the event, please see the website and let us know!