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A Research Trip to England Part 2: The Trip and Back at Home

The trip itself began on an auspicious note. The volcano in Iceland erupted about the time we were boarding our plane in Newark, but our flight was released to many cheers after waiting on the tarmac for two hours. When we landed in Bristol, the airport closed behind us.

On the first four days, Jon and Elaine Ayres and several of their friends introduced us to the sights and pubs of Somerset, Devon, and Dorset. It was lambing season, and the patchwork fields were filled with youngsters that actually gamboled. We learned the thrill of meeting lorries on narrow roads between towering hedgerows. We hiked along the southern coast cliffs by the English Channel. We had local beer and learned to play skittles. We went to a car boot sale and wandered around an old manor house. Elaine served a cream tea.

On Saturday, I called the West Sussex Records Office and learned that, yes, they would be open on Monday. I could hear hammers in the background.

Monday morning Jon took us and our bags to the Thrifty car rental. We worked our way through a long list of options, debating the necessity of each. GPS? Pricey. We'd rely on my detailed directions and maps. We jammed our things into the boot of our little blue Ford Fiesta and I tied on a red MADD ribbon to help find it in car parks.

Our drive started south following the same roads we had taken with our hosts, then we picked up the M27 (similar to an interstate) and headed east. We made our way to Chichester, where printed directions reliant on street names met the reality of a serious lack of street signs. We circled around a bit before we found the car park I'd seen on Google Maps.

Tip #10: Spring for the GPS. In our case, an eight-day hire, it would have been an extra £5 a day. (For one to six days, it was £10 a day.) Or bring your own, even as a cell phone app.

At the West Sussex Records Office, I met Susie, and she set us up to search records and make copies. I found the 1835 marriage record for my twice great-grandparents, William Dorward and Eliza Sophia Andrews, which included their signatures and the signatures of her parents! Baptismal records for two of their children yielded new information about his occupation. (He was a tailor when they married, probably apprenticed as a boy in Montrose, Scotland.) A 19th-century map of Sidlesham showed Mill Lane, where they lived. Unfortunately, the Nonconformist holdings didn't provide any additional information.

Tip #11: Whenever possible, always look for the original records. None of the online baptism indices had William's occupation, and you don't have to be a signature junkie to be thrilled by the sight of an ancestor's handwriting. For one thing, it shows that the ancestor was literate. And don't forget period county and city maps to locate the addresses from directories and censuses.

More circling around as we left, a horn-honking encounter with drivers who were just trying to get home from work, and we continued south to Sidlesham. We headed down Mill Lane, which quickly went from cottages to a quay along the top of Pagham Harbour. We pulled over. It was overcast and a little misty there, the view, I imagined, not too much changed in the last 170 years. The residential block included a

former Methodist chapel and a house that had been the schoolhouse, though from what Susie had told me, both were built after my ancestors left.

We did pretty well getting to the Bear Inn in Havant, though the alley-width street leading to their parking lot was hard to find. We stayed there from Monday evening to Thursday morning, having breakfast and supper in their restaurant each day, waited on by young Lacey. By the time we left, I was able to understand most of what she said.

Tuesday morning we proceeded to Portsmouth and got thoroughly lost. We pulled into a shopping center and I approached a young salesman in a bedding store with "Hello, I am totally lost in your fair city," and he wrote out detailed directions to the Portsmouth Museum. These got us closer to our goal, but I took us out the wrong exit from a roundabout and we wound up at an amusement pier. This time I found a fellow in a reflective vest and uniform and tried "Hello, I am partially lost in your fair city," and he laughed and set us straight. We parked for free behind the museum.



Photo courtesy of Kathryn Lord

Eliza Sophia Andrews married William Doward in England in 1835. This photograph was taken in either Wisconsin or Iowa, probably in the 1860s.

Tip #12: Spring for the GPS. Seriously. Failing that, ask for directions with a smile on your face. In Portsmouth, we eventually found two street names, one posted on a low wall and the other on the second story of a building.

We found and copied many parish records for the Andrews family in the Portsmouth archives, including a period street map which indicated that they lived near the dockyards. We ate lunch in the museum's "tea room," featuring cheap and filling food, heavy on the cheese. We browsed through the museum exhibits, which depicted daily life over the centuries, and I searched the gift shop for books that might illuminate early 19th-century life in particular.

Getting out of Portsmouth, which occupies a small peninsula, was ridiculously easy; we followed the arrowed signs that said "Out of Town."

Wednesday we only had to ask directions once to find the Portsmouth Library, and we were just around the corner from it when we did. A check of city directories revealed that three times great-grandmother Ann (Hammond) Andrews made straw hats (as did her daughter Eliza Sophia for a while in Sussex).

We left the car in the lot by the library and walked to the Historic Dockyards, where shipbuilding began in the 13th century, with the first drydock built in 1495. We toured two ships, the *Warrior* (1860 steam/sail hybrid), and the *Victory* (Nelson's flagship at Trafalgar), and went through the museum for a

third (Henry VIII's *Mary Rose*). I learned more about life aboard ships from the 16th to the 19th centuries than I'll ever find necessary, and not nearly as much as I wanted to about the role of the sailmaker. There was one small exhibit of a sailmaker's tools and a list of his responsibilities. It is, however, a destination well worth going to if your ancestors had anything to do with the sea.

Thursday morning, after once again declining Lacey's suggestion of a Full English Breakfast (eggs, sausage, bacon, potatoes, beans, tomatoes, toast and jam), we started up through the Midlands to Lincoln. Our sightseeing break, an hour into the drive, was a tour of Winchester Cathedral, which had a Jane Austen exhibit up near her tomb. A quick lunch and we were on the road, only to turn back an hour later when I discovered my camera (with photos of Mill Lane!) was missing. I had left it at the souvenir stand and recovered it in the Virgers' Office.

Tip #13: Wear your camera around your neck. Do not be afraid of looking like a tourist.

We pulled in at our B&B in Lincoln two hours late, but I had called to let our host know of the delay. The only complication was that we lost the time I had scheduled for walking around the city.

Friday morning's breakfast introduced me to Lincolnshire sausages, a juicy coarse-ground pork sausage heavily flavored with sage. Since by law the pork must be raised in Lincolnshire for the sausage to carry the name, this was the only part of the country in which I could enjoy them.

We had no trouble finding the County Archives. After we stashed our bags in a locker and got buzzed in, an archivist came out with an armload of papers and books, "to get you started." As we chatted, my glance fell on the top one: Will & Codicil of John Maidens, Mumby, 1821. My pupils must have dilated, or I must have done a small double take, because the archivist smiled.

We took our haul to our reserved table and started poring over the papers, some of which were bound into books. I was astounded that I could touch these documents, touch the paper *they* had touched, run my finger over *their* signatures. The oldest was from 1749, a filled-in printed form for a £600 administrative bond (the mysterious "admon") against which Thomas Mountain's executors in Saleby promised to inventory and distribute his estate within a year; he had died without a will. Despite the form being mostly boilerplate, I immediately got three things out of it: his widow's signature told me that Rebecca (Ward) Mountain was literate, the size of the bond indicated he was well off, and his son Thomas was a "yeoman farmer," which I later learned was the wealthiest level of farmers.

Going by the wills of some of Thomas Senior's sons and grandsons, the most valuable part of his estate was probably his leasehold. At that time, land was owned by nobles, churches, colleges, and other

royal grantees and was leased to farmers. Back at home, I tracked clues from the wills through online histories and learned that a lease could be passed down through a will, or if circumstances necessitated, sold.

We established a routine. Harvey copied details of dates, names, places, occupations and heirs, filling pages in our spiral-bound notebooks. I took the documents one at a time to a tilted stand near the front desk where I could prop them open and take as many digital



Photo courtesy of Kathryn Lord

Nearly the entirety of Mill Lane in Sidlesham, West Sussex

photographs (without flash) as I wanted for £5. If an archivist made official copies, it would have cost at least £1 per page, and more for oversized ones. There were twenty pages, five of them double-sized. I opted for close-ups rather than photos of entire pages, and took eighty-four shots of wills and administrative bonds.*

Tip #14: Be sure to extract the most important details from the documents – names, relationships, dates, places, monetary amounts, descriptions of property – in case your digital copies are hard to read. We did hard copy in notebooks, but a laptop or tablet/pad would work, too.

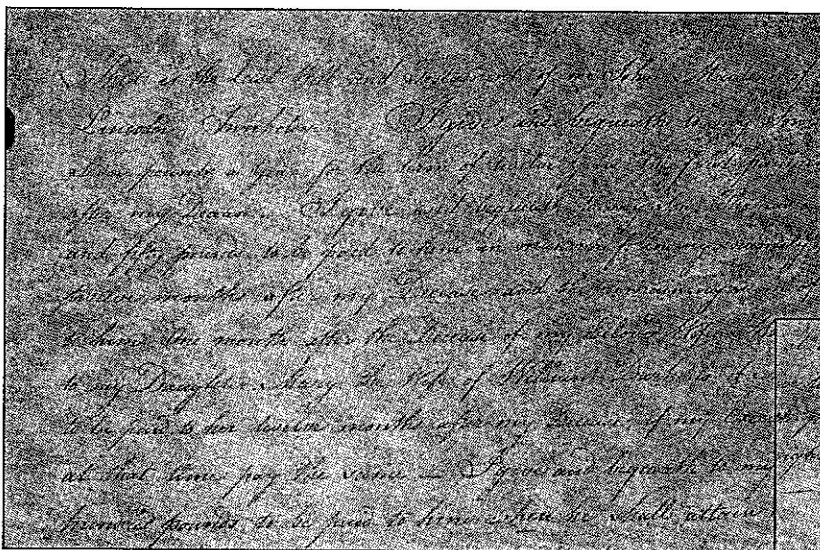
Tip #15: Along with a voltage converter and an outlet converter for your charger, invest in one or two extra batteries for your camera, and charge them all every evening. You won't regret it.

During one photo session, our archivist asked how it was going. I pointed to John Maidens' will, which named his son Thomas, the farmer in Mumby, and thus verified my relationship to John. "I just found out my fourth great-grandfather was an innholder," I said. She made a few quick notes and disappeared. A couple of wills later, she was back. "So sorry," she said. "I couldn't find a name or place for his establishment, but I did find that he paid a license fee of £10 to sell food and alcoholic beverages in 1815."

Tip #16: Remember that the staff is there to help the researchers. Share your findings and they may well think of other records you don't know about.

The most recent of the documents was the will of the innholder's son, Thomas Maidens. It was a clerk's copy, and so lacked the *frisson* of signatures, but it was packed with information. He wrote his will in 1854, four years before his death and two years after his daughter Charlotte moved to Wisconsin with her husband, Thomas Mountain. Charlotte was the first person named in his will, and he left her £100. Both his wife Eleanor and his daughter Mary had died by then, but he named his son John and Mary's daughter, Ellen Halgarth, which confirmed an entire collateral line and also that he was indeed the Thomas Maidens living in Manor House in Mumby in the 1851 census with young Ellen in the household.

We asked our archivist where we might have some lunch, and she steered us to a pub a short walk away. It was St. George's Day, and the pub was festooned with white flags bearing his red cross. I had more Lincolnshire sausages, and then we strolled around a pedestrian mall near a canal.

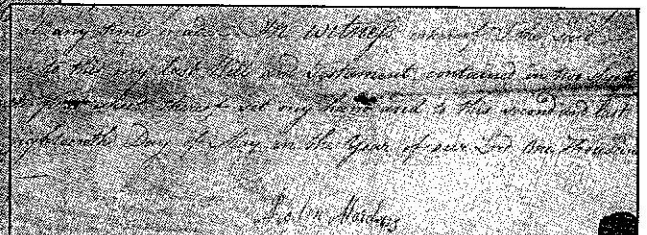


Left: The will of John Maidens of Mumby, Innholder, signed May 1818, along with a codicil signed 30 January, 1819, and proved 14 March 1821. Lengthy and on oversized paper, the will required 24 photos to encompass it.

Below: John Maiden's signature on the codicil.

Document Reference No.: LCC WILLS/1821/179

With the permission of Lincolnshire Archives



*Editor's note: Some public record repositories prohibit taking digital photos, so be sure to check ahead.

Tip #17: Try traditional local food for a taste of what your ancestors might have eaten. When I first encountered "mushy peas" (which tastes like split pea soup but has the texture of mashed potatoes), I realized that my great-grandfather George Dorward's preference for older peas that he mashed with his fork probably came from a dish his mother Eliza Sophia may have prepared.

Back at the archives, I started pulling parish records on fiche. The self-service fiche copier was in its own room away from the fiche readers. I found the birth, marriage, and burial records and Harvey fed coins into the copier. He made so many trips to the desk for change that they ran out. No problem. They unloaded the coin box on the copier and started again.

Tip #18 – If possible, travel with a companion who is a good sport about taking on some research duties. The work goes faster, and the value of camaraderie is huge at the end of the day.

The 19th-century records were clear, divided by type and arranged by date on printed forms. In contrast, the 18th-century records were jumbled together, a burial noted along with a christening the same day, and sometimes the recorder seemed loathe to start a new page, instead resorting to smaller and smaller writing. A tendency to stretch ink by dilution turned some entries into suggestions of themselves. I had begun with the most recent records, so as the material got harder to read, my physical and mental ability to read it diminished in equal measure, the hours spent at the task taking their toll.

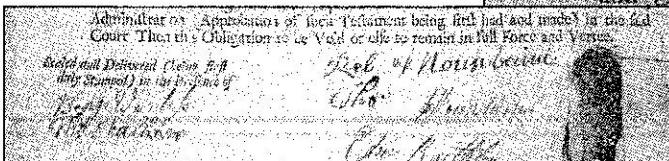
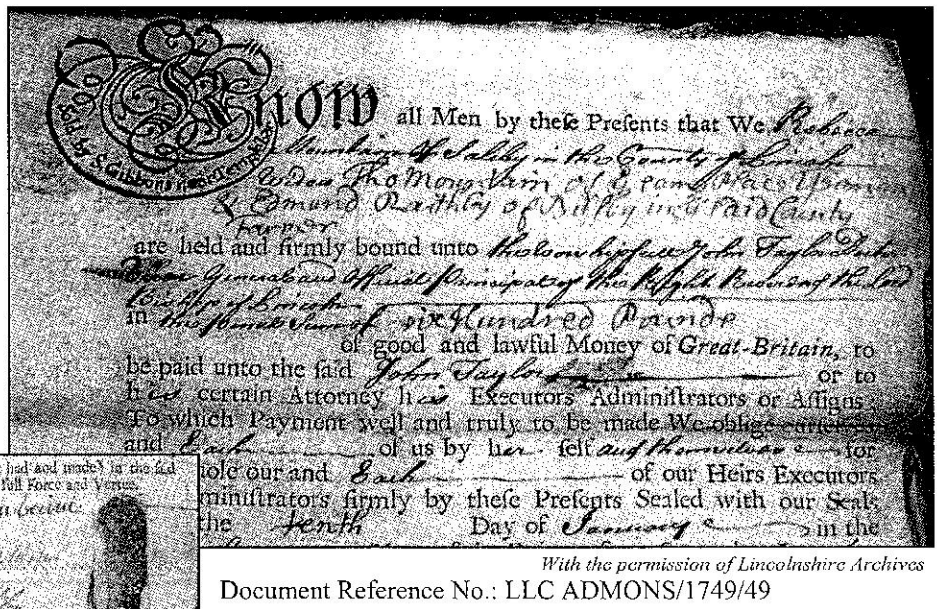
Tip #19: Schedule as many days as possible when fiche or microfilm reading is involved. A second day would have been useful for us, our eyes, and our brains.

The late afternoon drive from Lincoln to Chapel St. Leonards was relaxing, along A roads (think state roads), B roads (like county roads), and lanes (narrow), through increasingly flat coastal farmland. Signs cautioned us about safe driving as we came into a village and thanked us for our courtesy as we left it, a few blocks later. We smiled at the village names, a cross between Dr. Seuss, *Wind in the Willows*, and Miss Marple: Wragby, Strubby, Thimbleby, Hagworthingham, Scremby, Orby, Burgh le Marsh, Sloothby, Hogsthorpe, Bilsby.

Chapel St. Leonards is a small resort town for the middle class, with acres of "caravans" for weekly rental where Thomas Mountain once farmed before moving to Wisconsin. There are nature trails for hiking

Left: The £600 administrative bond for the estate of Thomas Mountain was posted 13 June 1749 by Rebecca Mountain, widow, Thomas Mountain, Yeoman, and Edmund Raithby, Farmer, to John Taylor, the Bishop of Lincoln, to ensure that the estate would be inventoried and disbursed within a year.

Below: All three posting the bond signed their names, indicating they were literate.





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along the sandy beaches that abut the North Sea. Our hosts at the B&B recommended a pub for supper, which quite hit the spot.

Tip #20: When booking rooms, pay a little extra (as we did) for *en suite*, which means you have your own bathroom and don't have to share the one down the hall. This place was full, and the line was slow.

Saturday morning was for gravestones. I planned a 20-mile round-trip on mostly A and B roads, with a couple of lanes, that would get us to five local churchyards. I abandoned turn-by-turn directions in favor of one map showing all the sites, plus six really close-up village maps with churches and cemeteries marked in red, all downloaded from Google Maps.

Our first church was in Hogsthorpe. Harvey was armed with a notebook and I with the camera and freshly-charged batteries. The first picture taken at each place was the name of the village writ large on a notebook page. The second picture was of the church.

Tip #21: Identify every place you go in a picture, whether of a local sign or one of your own making. These churches, while all different, all look alike after a while.

Hogsthorpe did not bode well for our research. Nearly all of the headstones from the old part of the churchyard had been removed from the graves and lined up along the walls of the yard, faces tilted slightly up into the ravages of weather. Many were unreadable, and ivy embraced several. We found one Mountain, a woman named Ann who died in 1857 at the age of 61.

At Mumby we had much better luck. We parked at the Red Lion (this seems to be the most popular name for inns in the country) and walked across the road to the church. The yard was filled with primroses and, encouragingly,

several rows of gravestones. We found five stones commemorating eight relatives, including John Maidens the innholder. His stone, like the others, was covered with a hard layer of lichen. I squatted in front of each stone, gently scraping at the lichen with a fingernail, running my finger around the carved lettering to decipher the words. Harvey wrote down my mutterings as backup in case the photographs were less than clear.

Huttoft was a lovely churchyard perfumed by cherry blossoms. We found several headstones for members of the Mountain and Maidens families whose relationship to me was uncertain, but we copied and photographed them just in case. This was the first place we found stones with hunks broken off the top; luckily damage was confined to the area where "sacred to the memory of" was carved. I took a close-up of Eleanor Mountain's stone, in which a tendril of ivy entered the carving at the date and exited just above through the "U" in "Mountain." I didn't dare try to tug it out.

Tip #22: Leave stone cleaning to the experts.

We found another five Mountains in Bilsby, who died between 1869 and 1927 and whom I recognized from the research done by cousin Patrick. The newer stones had some other material inlaid into the carved lettering, apparently a fad for a few decades. Weathering had caused some of the inlays to pop out.

Saleby was the potential pot of gold, and the first one I scouted in Google Maps' Street View. Patrick had visited some years before and found it completely covered in brambles, though another 5th

cousin to both of us, Bill Brown, went there after Patrick did and said it had been cleared. It was where Thomas Mountain was buried in 1748 and his wife Rebecca in 1751.

Another pretty yard full of primroses and Mountains, though not, alas, Thomas. Bill Brown had found him, but anything could have happened to the stone between then and my visit. A great pile of brambles attested to another recent clearing.

While changing my camera battery, I paused a moment between the church and the car to absorb the place. Saleby is literally a dot on the map. If other town buildings existed there in the past, there is no trace of them now. According to the censuses for 1841 and 1851, most of the 233 and 248 inhabitants were engaged in farming and its supporting trades. The village had a blacksmith, a grocer, a miller, and a brickmaker, all of whom probably lived in or next to their establishments. Since the grocer was also a school teacher, classes for the thirty-eight residents identified as "scholars" may have been above the store. Saleby today consists of the church and a couple of farmhouses.

From there we went south to the larger resort town of Skegness to have lunch and do our laundry. Back in Chapel, I prowled the shops looking for postcards (lots), and local history books (dismal selection, but I did get a book of 19th- and early 20th-century farming photos and a little history of the local church, only 50p each!). Then we strolled on the beach and I dabbled my fingers against those of a gentle (and cold) wave just to say I did, not having the fortitude of the children who scampered barefoot in the shallows.

This day I had definitely walked and breathed where ancestors had. They were christened inside those churches, married in the doorways, and buried outside, even if I couldn't find their stones. It is entirely possible that Thomas and Charlotte Mountain took baby Ellen and the other children to the beach for an outing. It is possible that the Red Lion Inn we parked at in Mumby is in the same building as the inn held by John Maidens, who is buried across the street. As I sipped an excellent local ale that evening, past and present blended.

Sunday morning began the total tourist phase of the trip, after a quick stop in the Chapel St. Leonards' churchyard on the dim hope of finding a couple of Mountain babies and a patriarch. The first drizzle of the trip let up when we parked, so our shoes were all that got wet in the fruitless venture. I did get a nice picture of the church where great-grandma Ellen was christened, however.

The rain stopped again at Tattershall Castle, a 15th-century brick tower in Lincolnshire that is all that is left of Ralph Cromwell's then-innovative stronghold. Cromwell was the Lord Treasurer of England under Henry VI. The tower was restored in the early 20th century, and is now part of the National Trust.

Then on to Stratford-Upon-Avon, where we wandered along the Avon, visited Shakespeare's Birthplace, and went out to Mary Arden's House, a working Tudor-era farm. This was where I learned what a yeoman farmer was.

Monday was the final leg back to Somerset, and as we zipped along the M5 toward Bristol, I checked the road atlas and confirmed that, yes, that was the Severn to the north, which meant that those hills over there were in Wales – another geographical jolt.

That night back at Jon and Elaine's, I organized my family findings in preparation for meeting Patrick. It was a big pile of raw stuff, and I couldn't imagine that I had found anything new for him. All my headstone and will photos were buried on the camera's memory card somewhere in the middle of all the others I had taken on the trip. What could I show him?

Patrick picked us up at Thrifty when we dropped off the car Tuesday morning. He looked exactly like his photograph, tall, bearded, and white-haired, though he used to have the auburn hair that runs in the family. After reservedly jolly greetings on both sides (we'd been e-mailing for three years), Patrick gave us

the driving tour of his part of Somerset. As it turns out, we couldn't have had a better guide. He is not only active in local art and history organizations, but he also wrote the history section for Somerton's town website, and possibly the virtual tour as well.

Somerton itself has been the site of a town for more than 2,000 years, with Saxon and Roman artifacts surfacing in back gardens on a regular basis. The population now is just under 5,000. Patrick lives in the older part of town, where cow fields are protected as archaeologically significant sites.

We dropped my things off at his house, said hello to his wife Jackie, and then we three set off on foot in search of cress and history. Patrick rattled off building names and dates as we tramped along, pointing sometimes with his free hand, sometimes with the cress from the greengrocer. Since he is a church official, he had a key to St. Michaels and All Angels Church, which dates to the 13th century.

This was the first village church we were actually able to tour inside. It was about the same size as the ones in Lincolnshire, which ranged about forty feet on either side of a hundred feet long, and followed a universal layout: nave, choir, altar. There were a dozen or so rows of pews, handsomely carved on the aisle ends. The woodcarving in the church is a point of pride; the pulpit is quite ornate, and even the ceiling is carved to look like tiles.

Back at the house, we met Patrick's sister, Jennifer, and had tea out on the back patio. Of course there was a photo taken, several in fact. Patrick brought out the small family Bible that belonged to his great-grandfather Henry Mountain, born 1832 in Stickney, Lincolnshire. Henry received it when he was twelve. Either a son or a grandson had added details of Henry's life, birth, marriage, issue, and death, and Patrick had extended his own male line down to his grandsons.



Photo courtesy of Harvey Lord

The fifth cousins meet in Somerton, Somerset: Patrick Mountain, Kathryn Lord and Jennifer (Mountain) Willmott. Our common ancestors are Thomas Mountain and Rebecca Ward.

After a light lunch, we got to my research. I gave Patrick a printout of the Mountain family in the United States, as complete as I could make it for Thomas and Charlotte's descendants. I showed him the parish record copies from Lincolnshire and talked about the archives and churchyards. He had a universal card reader that attached to his television, so with minimal fuss, my camera card went into the appropriate slot and there were my photos in wide-screened splendor. We navigated to the ones from Lincolnshire. As soon as the first administrative bond went up, the one for Thomas Mountain's estate in 1749, Patrick got the same wide-eyed look that I'd had. "My word," he said, over and over. "Oh my. Look at that." I was thrilled that he was thrilled. I promised to e-mail transcripts and photos as soon as possible.

Into the churchyards. I consulted Harvey's notebook to help decipher what was on the screen. I admitted not being sure who most of them were, but Patrick hopped over to his computer and pulled up the massive family tree he had e-mailed to me some months before. Even with that reference, there were a couple who left us mystified.

We rendezvoused with Elaine at yet another pub (Jon had to work) and we treated all of our hosts to a final meal. I had a magnificent double lamb chop in honor of those little fellows I'd watched in the fields.

Back at Home

All those photos and all that stuff I had jammed into bags to be sorted out later? Well, later was now. I pulled nearly 600 photos off the camera, dumping them unlabeled into eight folders for places, wills, and gravestones. One by one, I opened and enlarged the photos of wills and stones, and transcribed them directly into Word. For the stones, I played with heightened contrasts, negatives, and even solarization to bring out carved words I hadn't been able to read in the churchyards.

Tip #23: Make full use of photo software to make lichen-covered carvings more legible, but always keep a copy of the untouched original.

Tip #24: Send thank-you e-mails or notes to the staffs of every place you searched records. It's polite.

The transcriptions flew off in e-mails to Patrick and the other online cousins, with a few photos attached of the signatures and other genealogically exciting bits. I also transcribed the photocopies of parish records, a faster job.

One of the biggest disappointments on the trip was that I didn't learn more about William Dorward's Nonconformist affiliation, but that may just require finding the correct records repository. I also wished I had more time with the parish records. Hmmm. Sounds like another trip is needed.

The real triumphs were finding the wills and visiting the places my ancestors lived. The connections with all those great-greats were real and visceral. I can find them in online records, read about their occupations and what life was like in their times, and imagine their lives, but walking in even modern Portsmouth, walking on Mill Lane, visiting their churches and villages in Lincolnshire, staring out at the English Channel and the North Sea, I saw some of what their eyes saw. I heard the bird songs they heard and breathed their air, smelled their flowers and seaside. I got inside them just a little bit and felt their resilience, intellectual seeking, and love of shore and farmland. I now know where these, in me, come from.

Tip #25: Take time to look around, and just absorb where you are. Enjoy yourself.

By Kathryn J. Lord

The Simsbury Free Library is indebted to Kathryn J. Lord for contributing this fine two-part article to the *Quarterly*. For the benefit of family historians and genealogists doing similar research, she also has listed the sources that proved most useful to her:

Web sites initially found through <http://genuki.org.uk>

Hampshire county archives

Hampshire Genealogical Society

Portsmouth records office & search room (in city museum)

Portsmouth Historic Dockyard

Portsmouth Library

A Memorial to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

The documentary *Martin Luther King Jr. in Connecticut*, produced by Simsbury High School students under the guidance of Social Studies Chair Richard E. Curtiss, premiered in the Simsbury Free Library in September 2010. Each January since then the town has presented a program in honor of Dr. King, recalling the two summers he spent with other Morehouse College Students picking tobacco in Simsbury.

Now a coalition of students and townspeople are working toward erecting a permanent memorial to Dr. King. For information about the planned memorial, which is to be on the Simsbury Historical Society grounds, please view the Web site MLKinCT.com. The documentary video can be seen on this site and you can obtain a DVD of it at the Simsbury Free Library. A donation toward the memorial is requested.

The MLK Memorial committee plans to hold a benefit concert and to sell personalized, engraved bricks that will be placed in the memorial. Please watch for information in the local media and come to the annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day program on January 21. See the back cover for details.

Sussex Family History Group

West Sussex Record Office at the West Sussex County Council, Chichester

Found George Andrews' will in the British National Archives Documents online—Prerogative Court of Canterbury wills (1384-1858). The PCC was the most important of these courts dealing with relatively wealthy individuals living mainly in the south of England and most of Wales.

Other Web sites used:

British Historical Directories

USGenWeb sites & archives for counties in Wisconsin & Iowa

Wisconsin Veterans Museum

Wisconsin Local History Network

FamilySearch

Ancestry.com

Rootsweb

Googlemaps

Scotland national archives for Montrose, Forfar, parish records of marriages & births.

Records used:

Censuses: US, England, Scotland

Many vital records indices in US & England

Parish records in England

Wills & administrative bonds in US & England

Ship manifests

Headstones in cemeteries, US & England

County histories in US

Newspaper articles

Family letters; birth, graduation, wedding & death announcements

Grandmother's journals

Land records

Photographs

Contacts made through Ancestry & Rootsweb

Patrick Mountain (5th cousin) in Somerset, England, shared Mountain tree back to early 18th century

Richard Yockey (3rd cousin) in California, shared John Mountain's line

Patricia Furrer (4th cousin) in Oregon & her daughter Michelle, shared Alexander Dorward line

Pre-Internet contact, made by searching through telephone books & sending cold letters

Douglas Durward (4th cousin) in Washington & Montana, shared BI Durward/Dorward line

❧ New Acquisitions ❧

Post Roads & Iron Horses: Transportation in Connecticut from Colonial Times to the Age of Steam by Richard DeLuca (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 2011)

Richard DeLuca gives a comprehensive account of transportation modes in Connecticut from the footpaths trod by native tribes through the development of railroads. He explains types of road construction used in colonial days and the impact of steamboats on travel along the state's rivers and Long Island Sound. He gives the history of all the state's canals, some only proposed and others built, including the Farmington Canal that ran through Simsbury. Finally, Mr. DeLuca traces the spread of a web of railroad lines, two of which served Simsbury. Throughout this important study, the author, who worked as a transportation planner in Connecticut, assesses how economic and political conditions affected and were affected by each additional type of transportation.



Until the Robin Walks on Snow by Bernice L. Rocque. (Trumbull, Conn.: 3Houses, 2012)

Authors of historical fiction rarely explain which elements in their stories are documented facts and which are invented with an eye to the general conditions of a place or period in time, but Bernice L. Rocque does just that. Mrs. Rocque based her novella on the experiences of her Polish and Lithuanian forebears who immigrated to Norwich, Connecticut, in the early 1900s. She tells of their valiant efforts to keep alive a tiny infant born prematurely with the help of a midwife in November 1922 in their farmhouse which, like many houses in those days, had neither a bathroom nor central heat.

Anyone researching family history can learn much from the notes that the author provides about the sources she used to accumulate the myriad details from which she constructed this compelling story. We thank our member Celia Roberts for bringing to our attention this book, which is fiction supported by genealogical research.



Mary L. Nason has donated her research material on Simsbury women in the 18th and 19th centuries to the library's archives. She began her research in 1985, while a graduate student at Trinity College, for a paper for an American history class. Her professor, the late Dr. Glenn Weaver, suggesting that she write a book, encouraged her to continue her research. This she did in many collections, including the Library of Congress and Radcliffe College library.

In her letter of conveyance to the Simsbury Free Library, Mrs. Nason wrote, "I realize that I am no longer motivated to tackle the project, but am reluctant to discard the information I had collected. Trusting that parts of it may be useful to anyone researching the topic ... I would like to donate the original paper and my files. I would not wish any credit other than to be cited as a source."

Mrs. Nason is the author of the study *African-Americans in Simsbury 1725-1925*, which she published in 1996. She volunteered for many years as the archivist of the Simsbury Historical Society.



Barbara S. Tuller has donated materials collected by Theona Holcomb Tuller (1890-1990), wife of Oliver D. Tuller. The materials include the "Annual Report of the Simsbury Dairy Co. for year ending Dec. 31, 1918" and a 1928 memorandum book with handwritten notations on the business of the Tuller farm (Tulmeadow), including bull breeding schedules and comments on general economic conditions relating to the 1929 stock market crash. There are also two sheets of notes made by Theona Tuller on subjects relating to the history of West Simsbury.

The materials are in the library's archives; copies are in the Simsbury Historical Society archives.

MLK jr.

and the
MOREHOUSE STUDENTS
in Simsbury

Monday, January 21

2:00 p.m.

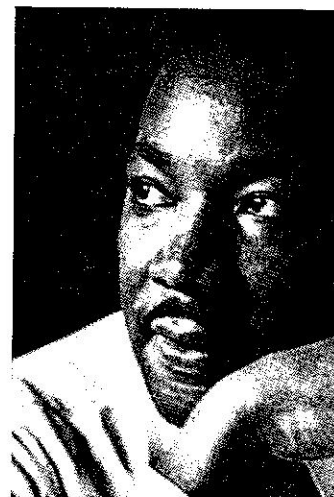
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Mary Jane Springman, Editor, SFL Quarterly

