

SIMSBURY

Genealogical and Historical Research Library

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DESCENDANTS BY THE MILLIONS

"Some 30 million Americans can validly claim to be descended from the 23 families who lived through the first winter after the Mayflower landed." This intriguing statement, attributed to Mr. Tweed Roosevelt, can be found in the June/July issue of *Civilization*, the magazine published by the Library of Congress.

How many persons alive today do you think are descended from the first settlers of Simsbury? A brief survey of *A Record and Documentary History of Simsbury* by Lucius I. Barber yielded 53 different surnames among the 74 heads of households known to have settled within the ancient town boundaries between 1664 and 1700. Not surprisingly, many of the people from all over the United States who come into this library to research their family history begin by saying, "My ancestors came from Simsbury."

During its ten years of operation the staff, board and volunteers of the Simsbury Genealogical and Historical Research Library have worked systematically to gather records pertaining to all generations of Simsbury's citizens and to make them accessible to you in the library's pleasant reading rooms. We also have published some of those records, like the list of marriages in town that is continued in this issue. In the Winter issue we will announce the details of a new research project that is yielding information about the occupations of several hundred townspeople in the 1700s.

This focus on Simsbury does not mean that the library's resources are limited to this town's records. We either have on hand or can help you obtain copies of documents in the rest of the United States and abroad. Also, Stephen Simon, our librarian and genealogist, can suggest other record repositories that you may need to visit for your particular purposes.

And, of course, our many members with Internet access have found helpful Web sites. One of the library's new books, *Genealogy Via the Internet* by Ralph Roberts, lists 415 sites dedicated to genealogy. If you have found a particularly helpful site, please let us know so we can pass the word along.

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Meanwhile, all of us here at the Simsbury Genealogical and Historical Research Library hope that your summer excursions in search of your family history have been fruitful and that you will make a special trip to visit us before the snow flies. ☺

Notes from the Chairman

Let me first introduce the new editor of our newsletter. She is Mary Jane Springman, a Trustee of the Simsbury Free Library, where she has served five years as Membership Chairman. She holds a B.A. Degree in English and an M.A. in American Studies. Mary Jane is the co-author of *East Granby: The Evolution of a Connecticut Town*, a history that has brought her honors from the Connecticut League of Historical Societies and the American Association for State and Local History. From 1990 to 1996 she was on the Board of Directors of the Simsbury Historical Society, where she served in several capacities, including Chairman of the Publications Committee. She is also a stickler for detail and accuracy and I am certain you'll enjoy her newsletters.

We all wish ex-editor Dawn Bobryk the very best with her new challenges as President of the Simsbury Historical Society. We thank her for all her volunteer work here at the SGHRL.

Work on the archival room and the front terrace is progressing - slower than we had hoped, but we look forward to showing it all to you when completed. In the meantime, keep up your research and enjoy your discoveries.

Peg Donohue, *Chairman*
Simsbury Free Library
Board of Trustees

Treasures

When we think of the Simsbury Genealogical and Historical Research Library's treasures, our thoughts turn to our books, manuscripts, archival records, microfilm, microfiche, etc. While these holdings are all our treasures, our real treasure is the service that we receive from Librarian Steve Simon and his wonderful volunteers who work with enthusiasm, skill and good humor.

In appreciation of their many hours of service, the Board of Trustees of the Simsbury Free Library held a volunteer recognition luncheon in June that was attended by the Trustees and the following volunteers: Joyce Cahill, Jean Bishop, Dawn Bobryk, Dorothy Cathles, Carol Laun, Muriel Leak, Margaret Lindauer, Clair Sharpless, Tom Sharpless, Bette Shaw, Donald Shaw and Catharine Sherman. Volunteers Tom Ayres, Betsy Cathles and Elaine O'Leary were unable to attend.

Trustee Chairperson Margaret Donohue expressed the thanks and appreciation of the board to the volunteers for their outstanding service. She gave special recognition to Catharine Sherman who has volunteered steadily on Saturdays for the past five years. During this time Catharine has worked to create subject cards for the card file, photocopied records and performed other clerical activities.

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CEMETERY SURVEY NOW COMPLETE

Joyce Cahill searched for the gravestone of a family member in 100-degree heat one day in an Illinois cemetery and could not find it. Now she has made sure that people coming to look for relatives' graves in the new section of Simsbury's Center Cemetery will not suffer the same frustration. Now, because of her work and that of the volunteers who helped her, the library has an alphabetized card file that gives the location of all the graves in the part of the cemetery north of Plank Hill Road and a detailed map of the entire cemetery.

Four teams, consisting of Bob and Margaret Lindauer, Don and Bette Shaw, Tom Sharpless, and Mrs. Cahill, made a sweep of the cemetery during the summer of 1997. They recorded more than a thousand graves, the earliest dating from about 1947. The teams wrote down all the information inscribed on every gravestone and noted its the Section designation (I - J). They also reported any emblem, like a Masonic symbol or Star of David, engraved on a stone.

Some of the stones had unusual features, which they also noted. Mrs. Cahill wondered about the couple who died on the same day. A two-seater bi-plane was engraved on their headstone. "Was it an accident?" she mused. The Lindauers and the Shaws, whose memories of Simsbury's townspeople stretch back more than sixty years, could give her some answers. The gentleman who had a huge circus tent carved on his monument was in the tent business, they told her. Margaret Lindauer said that she sometimes felt as if she were visiting old friends as she made her way along the rows.

Bob Lindauer was interested in all the inscriptions telling of people's military service. He noticed veterans of the Spanish American War, World War I, World War II, Korea and Vietnam. Veterans of the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 are in the older section of the cemetery, which was surveyed some time ago. "Simsbury has provided men for every conflict that this country has been in," he said. "That shows the stability of the town."

The teams also recorded each military marker placed on veterans' graves and many significant objects left by mourners.

In addition to surveying his assigned gravestones, Tom Sharpless developed the precisely scaled map that accompanies the card file. He took his data from maps provided by the Simsbury Cemetery Association, the Simsbury Public Library, and the town engineer.

The survey officially ended this August after Mrs. Cahill completed a second sweep of the cemetery to verify the information on each card and record each plot number. The teams found the work sad at times, especially when they recorded the headstones of young people. But they agreed that, for the most part, it was an enjoyable task and they feel sure that their work will be useful to people researching their family histories for generations to come. ☺

QUERIES

Seeking origins of Simeon (Simon) Mills in England. Reply to: Sheryl Mills Drew, 205 Mohave Road, Parker, AZ 85344; Telephone: 520/669-2323. ☉

Looking for information on Elizabeth Tiff (b. 1760) who married Peter Gruner (Crown). Elizabeth's father was Joseph Teffe. Reply to: Richard Dority, 4912 Rosewood Drive, South Jordan, UT 84095; Telephone: 801/282-1285. ☉

Seeking origins and ancestry of John Griffin of Windsor and Simsbury (1600's). He married Anna Bancroft in Windsor in 1647. Reply to: Douglas Case, 182 Banff Springs Way, San Jose, CA 95139-1505. ☉

Seeking information on Ellen L. Gilbert (b. 1845 in Hartford, CT, m. Francis Porter). Ellen's father was Ralph L. Gilbert (b. March 1821 in Andover, CT). Her grandparents were Ralph Gilbert and Sarah B. Nichols.

Also seeking ancestors of Revolutionary war hero Capt. Nathan Hale (b. June 1755 in Coventry, CT; d. Sept. 1776) and a Boynton Family connection.

Also seeking allied families of John Porter of Ancient Windsor, CT (about. 1635): White, Stanley, Butler, Deane, Tarbox, West, Mann, Hardee, Gilbert, Lemere, Cooke, Miles. Reply to: Marge Porter O'Brien, 201 Fairway Drive, East Windsor, CT 06088; Telephone: 860/623-2277. ☉

Please direct all queries to Stephen E. Simon, Librarian.

SUGGESTIONS FOR A NEW NEWSLETTER TITLE?

We are considering changing the title of the newsletter, beginning with the Spring 1999 issue. If you have suggestions or comments, please leave a message for Mary Jane Springman, Editor, at the library.

TREASURES *Continued from page two.*

During the past months, volunteers have assisted visitors with their research and have cared for the flowers at the entrance to the library. They also have been busy indexing all the births and deaths listed in town reports dating back to the early nineteen hundreds. Cemetery records have been reviewed and updated and obituaries in early editions of the *Farmington Valley Herald* are being cataloged.

Robert Lindauer, *Chairman of Volunteers*

BOOKS FROM THE ABIGAIL PHELPS CHAPTER, NSDAR

Simsbury's chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution has again made a gift of funds for the purchase of genealogical books. The library has purchased *Virginia Revolutionary Public Claims*; *Master Index to the New York Daughters of the American Revolution Genealogical Records*; *History of Enfield, Connecticut*; and the *Barbour Collection of Connecticut Town Vital Records, volumes 6-12*. The library already owns volumes 1-5.

The monies for the books came from the DAR's Juliet Collier Research Fund. Mrs. Collier, who died last February at the age of 95, was a member of the Abigail Phelps Chapter, NSDAR, for more than fifty years and she had held local and state offices. She established the fund during her lifetime and through it has been most generous in her gifts to the library.

Books for Sale

The Abigail Phelps Chapter, NSDAR, is the publisher of two books relating to the history of Simsbury and its townspeople. They both are for sale in the library. *A Record and Documentary History of Simsbury* by Lucius I. Barber is an especially fine source of information about the town in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries because the author clearly cites his sources. Lucius Barber (1806-1889) was a physician and a scholar with an abiding interest in his town. The DAR published his work posthumously in 1931. A 429-page hard bound 1974 reprint is available and it comes with a separate, comprehensive index compiled in 1993 by Priscilla Bergethon. The cost is \$25.00.

Simsbury Soldiers in the War of the Revolution was compiled by the members of the Abigail Phelps Chapter. It is a 537-page soft cover book, published in 1982, that gives the service record and some genealogical records of the Simsbury men who served in the Revolutionary War. The cost is \$18.00.

GIRL SCOUTS TO VISIT LIBRARY

Junior Girl Scouts in the Connecticut Trails Council will visit SGHRL on Saturday, October 3 from 1:30 to 4:00 p.m. Librarian Stephen Simon will assist as many as 100 girls to complete one of five activities for their Local Lore Badge.

The five 25-minute workshops will introduce the scouts to the bound volumes and microfilms of the *Farmington Valley Herald*. After examining the newspapers, they will be able to answer the questions: What was happening in your community 20 or 80 years ago? And how has your community changed?

SIMSBURY MARRIAGES

Date	Name	Age	Occupation	Birthplace
Jun. 16, 1857	E. Hayden Watrous	27	Minister	Chester, Ct
	Angie G. Barnard	20		Bloomfield
Aug. 8, 1857	Charles Hill	22	laborer	Ireland
	Bridget Connelly	21		Ireland
Sept. 6, 1857	Martin Samon	22	laborer	Ireland
	Mary Herline	22		Ireland
Oct. 6, 1857	Cornelius Beach	29		England
	Ann Bowen	25		England
Oct. 14, 1857	Norton Andruss	26	Farmer	Bloomfield
	Harriet M. Holcomb	16		Simsbury
Oct. 27, 1857	Solomon D. North	24		Avon
	Ellen A. Marks	22		Simsbury
Apr. 9, 1857	Michael McCarty	40	Farmer	Ireland
	Winefred Sullivan	41		Ireland
Jan. 2, 1858	John Shay	21	Farmer	Ireland
	Mary Dunn	22		
Jan. 18, 1858	John M. Hathaway	34	Farmer	Suffield
	Julia M. Goodrich	30		Simsbury
Feb. 12, 1858	John Hayes	22	Farmer	Ireland
	Ann Clark	18		
Feb. 20, 1858	William Steele	23		Ireland
	Elizebeth Brodie	22		Scotland
Mar. 16, 1858	George Wilcox	29	Mechanic	Simsbury
	Ruth C. Vining	25		Simsbury
Mar. 18, 1858	Rollin Higley	23		Canton
	Huldah M. Sisson	18		Simsbury

Apr. 24, 1858	Alexander Patterson Eliza Ann Holmes	30 40	Farmer	Ireland
May 19, 1858	Christian Murphy Alice Boyler	51 38	Laborer	Ireland
May 25, 1858	Davis M. Tyler Synthia L. Lane	21 21		Haddam Deep river
July 8(?), 1858	William Andrus Harriet M. Stickle	20 22	Farmer	Simsbury York State
Sept. 18(?), 1858	Cornelius V. Chapin Mary E. Vining	22 20	Mechanic	Collinsville Birmingham
Sept. 30, 1858	Robert Siddelle Esther Dexter	37 40	Blacksmith	England Coventry, Ct.
Oct. 26, 1858	Albert Day Lucinda C. Bartlett	38 21	Farmer	Brooklyn, Ct. Windsor
Oct. 30, 1858	Joseph L. Bartlett Ellen M. Weston	23 21	Farmer	Windsor Simsbury
Dec. 8, 1858	James Wells Mary E. Miller	25 30	Farmer	Weston, Ct. Hartford
Dec. 31, 1858	Charles G. Walker Harriet George	25 19	Farmer	England England
Oct. 27, 1858	Chancey E. Eno Mariah Bacon	42 32	Farmer	Simsbury
Dec. 11, 1858	William Curry Ann Mahar	24 28	Farmer	Ireland Ireland
Feb. 19, 1859	Dwight G. Godell Francis Parsons	27 29	printer	Hartford Winsted
Feb. 24, 1859	Jesse Head Eliza A. Bacon	25 30	Farmer	England Simsbury

FALL OPEN HOUSE

Saturday, November 28

9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Please come and bring your friends on the Saturday after Thanksgiving. Entrance is free. Refreshments for all!



SIMSBURY FREE LIBRARY

749 Hopmeadow St.

P.O. Box 484

Simsbury, CT 06070

860 658-5382

E-mail: genehist@miracle.net

<http://www2.miracle.net/~genehist>

Open Thurs-Sat 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Stephen E. Simon, Librarian & Genealogist

Mary Jane Springman, Editor

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