



Founded 1983

# First Landing

## Newsletter

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November 2021

### Visit to the Family History Library in Salt Lake City

By Wendy Bransom

My visit to Family History Library in Salt Lake City, Utah last month was on my bucket list. I am very pleased that I went even though there were a few issues. It took longer to get to the Salt Lake Plaza Hotel from the airport due to shuttles. There is construction for the Trax Green Line (light rail service) to go from the airport to Temple Square. It would drop you off right in front of the hotel!



I arrived on a Saturday afternoon. Normally, you would stow your luggage in your room and head over to the Family History Library next door. However, due to covid restrictions, they have only been open again since July and their hours are still reduced. Before the virus, they were open 7 days a week, 9:00 am to 9:00 pm. Now they close at 5:00 pm, open weekdays only.

If you plan a trip to the library, make sure you walk to Harmons Grocery to get snacks for when you are researching in the library. The Library new snack rooms are on several floors. They have microwaves along with refrigerators, with plenty of seating and vender machines.

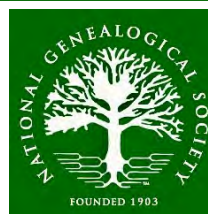
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On Monday, I met up with two ladies in the hotel lobby. We walked next door to the library. There are five floors for research activities; they are well-staffed with volunteers to assist you. We asked for a tour, which was very helpful. The top two floors are for USA and Canada research, with microfilm on the second and books on the third. The two lower floors (Basement 1 and 2) are similar to floors two and three, but with international microfilms on B1 and international books on B2.

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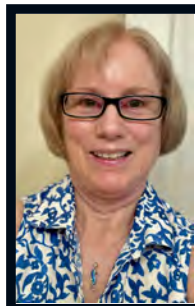
National Genealogical Society: Supporting individuals as they progress in their genealogy education/research, and supporting a diverse community of genealogy societies/organizations.  
<https://www.ngsgenealogy.org/>



The Virginia Genealogical Society was organized in 1960.  
<https://www.vgs.org/>

## Leadership Notes.....President's Message August 2021

Hello everyone, Fall has arrived along with Winter! Do you remember VBGS started a new fiscal year, September 1, 2021? For those of you who have not paid your membership fee, you have until November 30, 2021. After that date you will lose your VBGS benefits. You can pay your dues online at [this link](#) or you can mail your dues in via USPS.



We continue to have our meetings via Zoom, except for the members meeting which is hybrid. We will start the members meetings at 5:30 pm, so we can be done before 7:30 pm. We must be out of the auditorium by 7:30 pm, the library now closes at 8:00 pm. Also, the Computer User Group meeting on December 2 will be at the Central Library at 5:30 pm.

Make sure you check out the VBGS Banquet tab on our website. We have some wonderful donations for drawings. MyHeritage donated 3 annual memberships along with DNA Kits. Legacy Family Tree has donated some wonderful items too! You can check out the banquet and donations at <https://vbgsva.net/2022-banquet/>. Non-VBGS members can now buy tickets to the banquet. We have room for only 80 guests. So, if you want to attend, buy your ticket soon. We are excited to have Kelly McMahon, CG as our guest speaker! The topic of her presentation will be finalized soon. If you would like to help out with the banquet, send an email to [banquet@vbgsva.net](mailto:banquet@vbgsva.net).

Have a wonderful Holiday Season! VBGS looks forward to seeing your smiling faces in 2022!

VBGS was founded 1983 for educational purposes.

The objectives of this Society are:

- To help individuals conduct their genealogical research and compile their family histories
- To aid individuals by educational means, including lectures, discussions and workshops
- To create and foster an interest in genealogy
- To gather and preserve genealogical and historical data.

Membership: \$25 Individual and \$35 Family:

<https://vbgsva.net/membership/>

Mail applications, questions and address changes to: VBGS P.O. Box 62901 Virginia Beach, VA 23466-2901. To contact VBGS Board Members, Committee Chairs and Group Leaders visit

<https://vbgsva.net/about-contact/>

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[admin@vbgsva.net](mailto:admin@vbgsva.net)

## Upcoming Events and Conferences

### 2021 Meetings

VBGS monthly members meetings are hybrid, at the Virginia Beach Central Library (VBCL) and on Zoom.

10 NOV: VBGS Monthly Meeting at VBCL 5:30 pm, Topic: "Ancestors in the U.S. Military: Online and in Military Archives," Speaker: Dr. Margaret McMahon.

16 NOV: VBGS Computer User Group at 7:00 pm via Zoom, Topic: Part 4 of the 5-part series "How to Use Windows File Explorer," with the Nerd Sidekick, Fred Kelly.

29 NOV: VBGS Writers Group at 7:00 pm, via Zoom, Theme for writing and sharing; One interview with a living family member and what you've been able to learn from it. Mini-lesson: When (and how) to make your story longer, and when (and how) to make it shorter.

2 DEC: VBGS Computer User Group at 5:30 pm, VBCL, not on Zoom, Topic: "Scanners and Printer," led by April Owens. Meeting will be recorded.

7 DEC: VBGS How-to Meeting at 7:00 pm via Zoom, Topic: "How to Use Your Y-DNA Results in Your Research," led by Wendy Bransom.

9 DEC: VBGS Monthly Meeting at VBCL and via Zoom at 5:30 pm, Topic: "How an Archivist Can Assist in Your Genealogical Research and Organization," Speaker: Tammy Woodward.

13 DEC: VBGS Writers Group at 7:00 pm via Zoom, Theme for writing and sharing; One holiday custom or family story and what connections you might make from it. Mini-lesson: Doing what the experts do: using mentor texts when writing about genealogy.

### 2022 Meetings

4 JAN: VBGS How-to Meeting at 7:00 pm via Zoom, Topic: "Researching Your Quaker Ancestors," led by Dave Kleppinger.

13 JAN: VBGS Monthly Meeting at VBCL and via Zoom, time TBD, Topic: "Melungeon ethnic group of Southwest Virginia," led by Kimberly Millering.

18 JAN: VBGS Computer User Group at 7:00 pm via Zoom, Topic: Part 5 of the 5-part series with the Nerd Sidekick, Fred Kelly.

1 FEB: VBGS How-to Meeting at 7:00 pm via Zoom, Topic: "Intro to Land Records."

10 FEB: VBGS Monthly Meeting at VBCL and via Zoom, time TBD, Topic: "Slover Library Resources," led by Troy Valos.

15 FEB: VBGS Computer User Group at 7:00 pm via Zoom, Topic: "WikiTree" led by Wendy Bransom.

1 MAR: VBGS How-to Meeting at 7:00 pm via Zoom, Topic: "Begin Your Land Records Journey."

### 2021-2022 Conferences and Other Events

29 JAN: VBGS Social - Members Dinner, time and place TBD

3-5 MAR: RootsTech 2022, Virtual and Free, keep checking online for updates.

5 MAR: Slover Library, Sargeant Memorial Collection Tour from 11:00 am to 12:30 pm, led by Troy Valos

10 MAR: VBGS Banquet, Honey Bee Golf Club, Speaker Kelly McMahon, CG, buy tickets at <https://vbgsva.net/2022-banquet/>

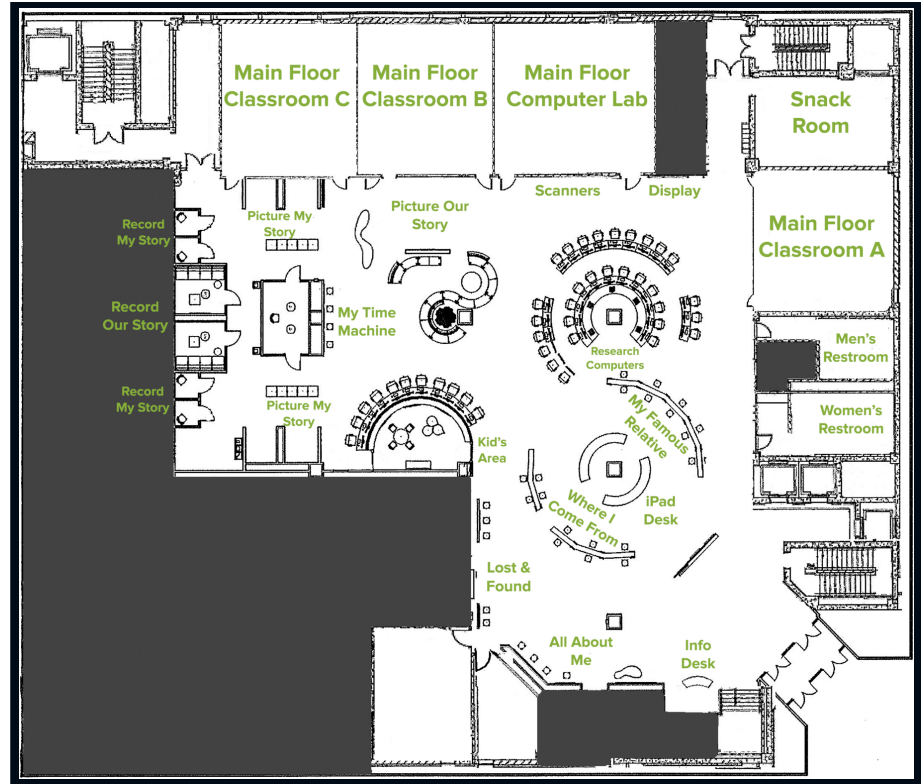
**WikiTree News:** [The US Black Heritage Family Builders Program](#) will create a family tree for anyone with African-American ancestors! This is free with without obligation. Trees will be built from scratch for anyone with US Black heritage who can give enough information to go back to the 1940 census or similar time period record. They do not need to be WikiTree members to apply, but need to create an [account](#) beforehand.



## Visit to Family History Library in Salt Lake City (Continued from page 1)

By Wendy Bransom

A new Global Map Area is on B1. The first floor, [Main](#), contains the Discovery Experiences at the Family History Library, see the first and third picture on this page. There are 8 different experiences that a person can use to learn more about their own family as well as themselves. I did not really explore the main floor, saving for a future trip. However, I did ask for a personal Family Tree poster to take home. You have to have a FamilySearch account. Once you sign in, they bring the fan tree up of your ancestors. They printed out a large colored poster of my family tree which was free.



While there, I did my research in front of three monitors. My FamilySearch tree would be up on one, [catalog](#) up on the 2nd and usually a document or book open on the 3rd. The catalog let me search for books in the library. It is always good to bring your history of what research you are doing; you don't want to repeat your research. I used their brand new book scanners, where you can save multiple pages into one PDF. Browsing the books is recommended. The library has a binder on the book floors. For USA books, look for your state and county. You copy

down their number and go to the stacks to browse. Some counties have only a few books while other have a lot. I found some wonderfully useful books for my research. Some were digitized, but many were not, the scanners came in handy. Don't hesitate to ask for help! They even have helpers that can speak almost all languages. I spoke with a British and German expert. They gave me ideas for solving two roadblocks. Everyone at the library is so friendly and helpful!

Maybe we can convince VBGS Social Chair to schedule a trip next year to the Family History Library.





## VBGS Members Visit Elmwood and Cedar Grove Cemeteries

On October 30, 2021, several VBGS members attended a tour given by Shannon Stafford, a volunteer for the non-profit Norfolk Society for Cemetery Conservation (NSCC). The tour, "For Whom the Bells Toll--The Somber Tales of Elmwood" was very informative, educational and fun. Shannon received a Volunteer of the Year award for his well-researched and entertaining tours of Elmwood Cemetery (established 1853).

We visited a number of sites to discover who was buried and how they died, we also learned about changing burial rites and rituals. For example, there are three arms and two legs buried with no bodies, following Civil War era amputations; there are no headstones for them. Shannon discussed the Victorian era "deathbed," an arrangement of a headstone and footstone, with a bed of ivy or other foliage in between forming a blanket over the actual burial. This way of memorializing the dead is unique to SE Virginia.



Shannon discussed the Victorian era "deathbed," an arrangement of a headstone and footstone, with a bed of ivy or other foliage in between forming a blanket over the actual burial. This way of memorializing the dead is unique to SE Virginia.

Perhaps the most well-known person discussed is James Maybrick (born 1840 in Liverpool, England; died 1888 in Norfolk, Virginia), who is now considered a reasonable suspect as Jack the Ripper. (A recent edition of the *Virginian Pilot* carries an in-depth article about him.) A diary found in 1990 attributed to him indicates his guilt and is supported by circumstantial evidence.

Shannon also covered the history of H. D. Oliver Funeral Apartments. Sterling Oliver, local cabinet maker, started the first professional funeral services business in Virginia in Norfolk following the Civil War. Bodies then were preserved in ice and buried as quickly as possible, often with just the gravediggers and hearse driver present. As successful entrepreneur, Sterling kept up with changing times and was the first to refrigerate bodies. He built H. D. Oliver Funeral Apartments on Colonial Avenue in Norfolk, allowing families of the deceased to stay above the funeral parlor. The business is still successful today.



*From 1890 until 1900 the Woodmen of the World, a fraternal benefit organization, policy included a tombstone.*

Many of our customs have roots in the limitations of funeral practices in Victorian and Edwardian times. For example, a three-day wake ensures the deceased isn't only in a coma. Flowers and candles mask the smell of embalmed deceased. Bodies are carried feet first to keep the deceased from reaching out to take other souls with them. One custom we have discontinued--hiring professional mourners.

(continued on page (14))

## A Two-Week Hiking Vacation Over the Blue Ridge

By Bob Bruce  
rebiv@outlook.com



If you have traveled on Route 33 through Stanardsville, Virginia, heading west, you may have noticed the roadside sign and monuments near the entrance to the Skyline Drive. These markers commemorate the expedition of the “Knights of the Golden Horseshoe.” In August and September 1716, Governor Alexander Spotswood led a “group of 63 men, 74 horses, and several dogs”<sup>1</sup> from Germanna to the South Fork of the Shenandoah River on a trip to:

1. Encourage settlement of the Valley, fostering land speculation
2. Beat the French to stop encroachment into territory desired by English colonists
3. Promote trade with the Indians<sup>2</sup>

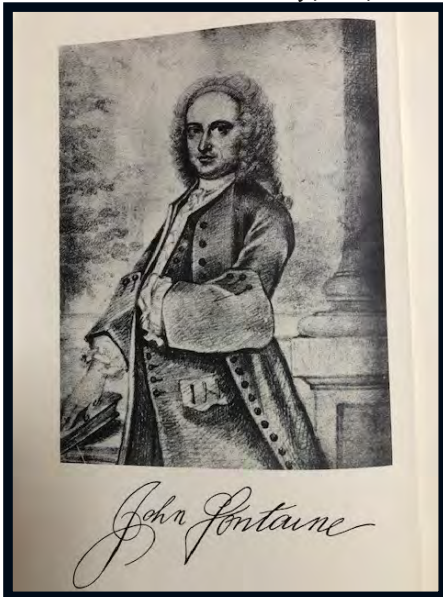
What we know of this excursion into the wilderness of Virginia comes from the Journal of John Fontaine. John was a brother to my seventh great-grandfather, Peter Fontaine. Reading some of the

entries, one might think, ... “the expedition was also a pleasant social occasion--a camping jaunt for congenial gentlemen.”<sup>3</sup>

### The Travelers

John Fontaine only identifies ten other men by surname, in addition to Governor Spotswood and himself. These were all well-to-do members of Virginia society, with the remainder including servants, rangers, and four Indians. The named persons were:

- Robert Beverley, Jr., the historian (another seventh great-grandfather of mine)



- Robert Brooke, surveyor from Essex County
- Captain Jeremiah Clowder of King and Queen County
- Colonel George Mason of Stafford County
- Colonel William Robertson of Williamsburg, clerk of the Council and General Assembly
- Christopher Robinson of Middlesex County
- Augustine Smith, surveyor of Essex County
- Captain Christopher Smith, surveyor of New Kent County
- James Taylor, Jr., surveyor of King and Queen County (another distant uncle of mine), and ancestor of Presidents Zachary Taylor and James Madison
- William Todd, also of King and Queen County<sup>4</sup>



(continued on page 7)



## A Two-Week Hiking Vacation Over the Blue Ridge (continued from page 6)

### The Route

The exact route is the subject of some controversy. It was derived from the descriptions in the Journal of rivers traversed and mountains passed. The route on the attached map running through Swift Run Gap is the most accepted. As the party followed rivers and crossed streams, the names given in the Journal seem to confuse the Rapidan, Rappahannock, Rivanna, and headwaters of the James. This is understandable given that this was uncharted territory.

### The Celebrations

The rendezvous point to begin the exploration was Germanna, a small frontier settlement of German immigrants that Governor Spotswood had established to develop mining in the area. From this point on the outskirts of civilization, the adventurers coursed unfamiliar ground. As in the case of the Lewis and Clark expedition, one might expect Spotswood and his group to have encountered travails of terrain, animals, and native inhabitants. However, no one died on the trip, although one turned back after becoming ill, and no conflict with Indians was recorded. There was one incidence of a thicket being so dense that it tore at clothing and pulled saddlebags from horses. But in other instances, the men enjoyed comforts and companionship:

“August 31, 1716 [Friday] ... We killed several deer, and about two miles from the place where we killed the bear, we encamped upon Rappahannock River and from our encampment we see the Appalachian Hills very plain. We made large fires, pitched our tents and cut boughs to lie upon, and had good liquor and at ten we went to sleep.” <sup>5</sup>

“September 5, 1716 [Wednesday] ... About one of the clock, we came to the top of the mountain; ... We drunk King George’s health here and all the Royal Family. This is the very top of the Appalachian Mountains.... Several of the company were for returning but the Governor persuaded them to continue on. About five we were down on the other side and continued our way for about seven miles further until we came to a large river where we camped by the side of it.... We eat very good grapes, and see a vine which bore a sort of wild cucumber, and a shrub which bore a fruit like unto a currant.” <sup>6</sup>

“September 6, 1716 [Thursday] We crossed the river which we called Euphrates [this was the South Fork of the Shenandoah River] .... We had a good dinner. After dinner we got the men all together and loaded all their arms and we drunk the King’s health in Champagne, and fired a volley; the Prince’s health in Burgundy, and fired a volley; and all the rest of the Royal Family in Claret, and a volley. We drunk the Governor’s health and fired another volley. We had several sorts of liquors, namely Virginia Red Wine and White Wine, Irish Usquebaugh, Brandy, Shrub, two sorts of Rum, Champagne, Canary, Cherry punch, Cider, Water &c.... The highest of the mountains we called it Mount George, and the one we crossed over Mount Spotswood.” <sup>7</sup>

### The Golden Horseshoe

Sometime after the return of the explorers, Governor Spotswood is said to have given a small golden horseshoe to some of the gentlemen to commemorate their trip.

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## A Two-Week Hiking Vacation Over the Blue Ridge (continued from page 7)

These souvenirs had “valuable stones representing the heads of nails,” and were engraved in Latin, “Sic juvat Transcendere montes,” on one side, and “The Tramontane Order” on the other. These souvenirs had “valuable stones representing the heads of nails,” and were engraved in Latin, “Sic juvat Transcendere montes,” on one side, and “The Tramontane Order” on the other. This description was noted by Hugh Jones in 1724.<sup>8</sup> But alas, there is no known golden horseshoes that exists today--fact or legend?!



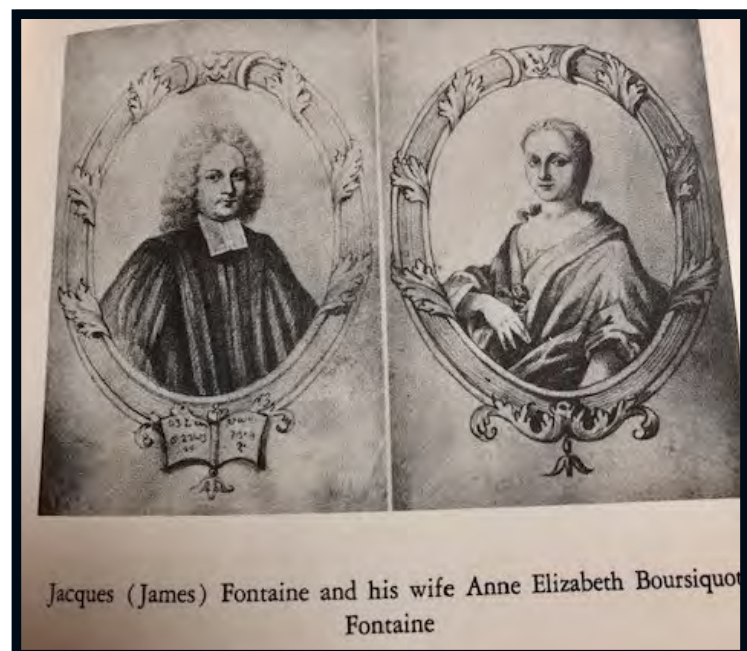
### The Journal

The exploration over the Blue Ridge is only a part of the journal that John Fontaine kept. It begins in 1710, when he was a British soldier in Spain and ends in 1719, upon his return to Dublin, Ireland after many travels. The original journal is lost to history. What we have today is attributed to the efforts of Ann Maury (1803-1876), a great-granddaughter of Mary Ann (John's sister) and Matthew Maury, who in 1853 published *Memoirs of a Huguenot Family* containing a version of the Journal. Miss Maury, in a footnote, said she had obtained the Journal from two great-granddaughters of John Fontaine.

In 1957, Edward Porter Alexander, an editor working with Colonial Williamsburg for its “Eyewitness to History Series,” set out to find the original. His search led him to Anne Fontaine Maury (Mrs. William G. Hirschfeld of Delray Beach, Florida), and in 1966 Colonial Williamsburg acquired the 198-page manuscript notebook containing the Journal. This was the copy that Miss Maury had made in 1840--no Xerox back then!

### My Fontaine Genealogy

John Fontaine was the fourth son and fifth child of Jacques (James) Fontaine and Anne Elizabeth Boursiquot, Huguenots who had fled France upon the persecution of Protestants. Their daughter Mary Ann married Matthew Maury, who was also of Huguenot descent.



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## A Two-Week Hiking Vacation Over the Blue Ridge (continued from page 8)

Their son, James Maury, an Anglican cleric and educator, was in the middle of the famous lawsuit argued by Patrick Henry, known as "The Parson's Cause." James Maury also educated a young Thomas Jefferson. Their great-grandson was Matthew Fontaine Maury, the oceanographer and the namesake of the Norfolk, Virginia high school.

Another son of Jacques and Anne Elizabeth Fontaine was Peter, my seventh great-grandfather, who also was an Anglican minister and after serving at Jamestown, went to Westover Parish. Here he became a close friend of William Byrd II, also a seventh great-grandfather of mine, and was chaplain to the Virginia Commission on the 1728 expedition to determine the dividing line between the colonies of Virginia and North Carolina--another adventure for another article!

### Notes

1. John Fontaine, *The Journal of John Fontaine, An Irish Huguenot Son in Spain and Virginia 1710-1719*, Edited by Edward Porter Alexander (The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Williamsburg, Virginia, 1972), 14.
2. Fontaine, *The Journal of John Fontaine*, 14.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid., 104.
6. Ibid., 105.
7. Ibid, 106. Modern identification of river is mine.
8. Ibid., 14.

## Family History at Elmwood Cemetery

By Ted Barham  
tbar3rd@gmail.com



My step-grandmother's mother Ethel M. Etheridge Lewis, worked in the Elmwood Cemetery admin office for many years. She lived from 1888-1983. On the right are 3 photos of the map/survey of the 'new' Elmwood Cemetery West Addition dated July 15, 1919. Princess Anne Ave is at the bottom, the site of the 'proposed new office' in the lower left, the 'small gate' in the lower right and the 'road from small gate' vertically along the right. If anyone would like to have the map, or perhaps Elmwood might want it, I'd be glad to send it. The map is approx 17"x 20", fragile, with some tears but is repairable.



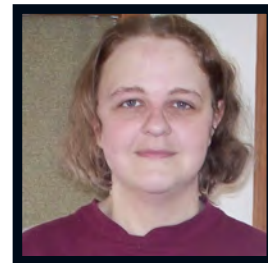
Left is a picture of Ethel standing in front of the old office building. Possibly on her right is Major Bondurant, the other man could have had the surname of Payne.



## Using the DAR's Ancestors and Descendants Databases

By Carmen Cross

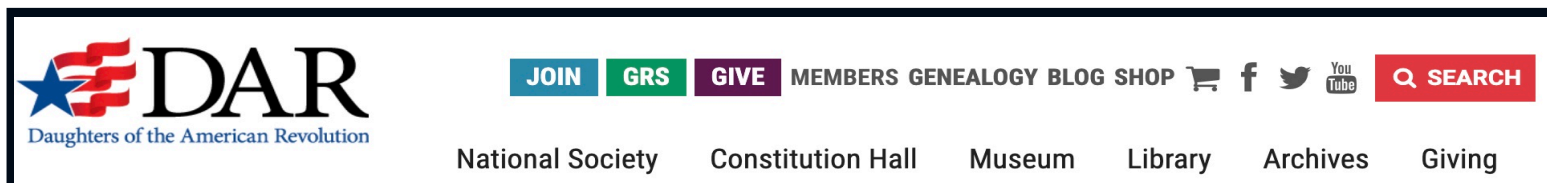
carmensuecross@yahoo.com



Are you descended from someone who aided the American cause during the American Revolution? Would you like to learn more about your military ancestor(s)? If you answered yes, then the Ancestor and Descendants Databases, created and maintained by the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, are for you! These two databases, which are available to the public, can be very useful for locating a person who supported the American cause during the American Revolution (henceforth "Patriot"). Using examples from my own research, I will show you how to effectively use these databases to further your own genealogical research.

### About the Descendants Database

The Descendants Database is part of the GRS (Genealogical Research System), which is a collection of three databases that is an invaluable resource for genealogical research. When used with the Ancestors Database, this database is very helpful when trying to locate a Patriot as it contains the names of those persons appearing on the lineage page of DAR applications and supplemental applications. It is worth noting here that only those Patriots for whom applicants have proved service and have at least one descendant who has joined the DAR under his/her record will appear in the Ancestors Database.



You can access the Descendants Database by going to the DAR's homepage, <https://www.dar.org>, and selecting Genealogy at the top of the page (see below). This will take you to the Genealogy page. From there, scroll down to Genealogical Research (GRS) and then select Descendants Database.

<sup>1</sup> Henceforth the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution will be referred to as Daughters of the American Revolution and by its acronym, DAR.

<sup>2</sup> Please note that these "databases contain DAR proprietary information which should under no circumstances be redistributed to others, assembled, reproduced, published, or posted in any form whatsoever with the exception of the following: (i) DAR membership and supplemental applications; (ii) citation in genealogical scholarship; and (iii) citing a DAR patriot name and number in publications and on third party websites." DAR Genealogical Research Databases.

(continued on page 18)



## Finding Genealogy in Unsuspected Places

Barbara Murray

barbaramurray@vbgsva.net



My husband John and I were visiting Ocean View Station Museum located inside Mary D. Pretlow Anchor Branch Library, 111 West Ocean View Avenue, Norfolk, Virginia, when I was amazed at a display in the corner of the museum.

There are assorted High School yearbooks and school memorabilia. Among the yearbook collection, you will find Maury High School, Norview High School, Norfolk Catholic High School and Holy Trinity High School.

What a treasure to find for someone who was looking for family history.



Walking inside the museum, I was very amazed to see the history of Ocean View with stories, pictures, artifacts and even a refurbished car from the famous Rocket roller coaster. If you have family who lived in Ocean View area or even visited Ocean View Amusement Park, you will find this museum very interesting. My husband's mother was employed in the gift shop at the Ocean View Amusement Park. Walking around the museum, we found a photo of a man and women who were the owners of a gift shop John's mother worked.

What a great find to add to my husband's family history. John found a picture of Sisters of The Sacred Heart that taught at Holy Trinity Grammar School in Norfolk. One of the sisters my husband remembers vividly.

The museum is all volunteer and they are happy to answer questions. The museum has information on Willoughby Spit, Ocean View and East Ocean View.



## Getting to Know the Baird family

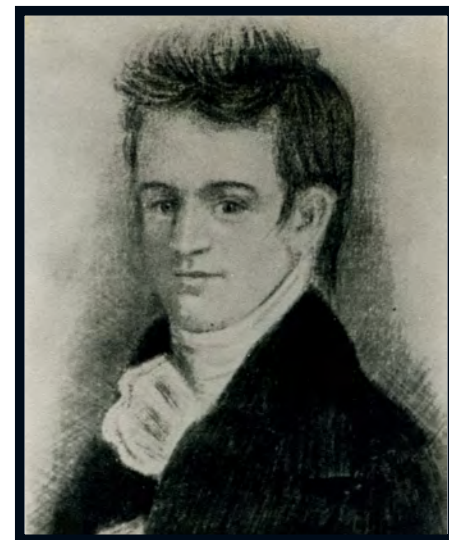
By Heather Wright  
heatherwright@vbgsva.net

I thought I had my 5th great-grandfather, the Hon. Thomas Harlan Baird, figured out pretty well... until I unearthed letters at the Detre Library & Archives at the Heinz History Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Thomas is born on November 15, 1787, in Washington, Washington Co., Pennsylvania to Dr. Absalom Baird and Susanna Harlan Brown. He is well-educated and is granted a bar license in July 1808. Late that same year or sometime in 1809, he marries Nancy McCullough; they have thirteen children together, including my 4th great-grandmother Ellinor, their eldest. All thirteen are born, I believe, at Harlem, the family farm in Washington county. He remains in the Washington area (except when working in Pittsburgh as a lawyer) and holds numerous positions in the community, among them: Deputy Attorney General, town councilman, and President Judge of the Fourteenth District. He also has a hand in various businesses and seems to profit greatly. In 1860, six years prior to his death, his real estate alone is valued at \$35,000 – over 1.2 million today. From all I'd gathered, Thomas appeared to spend his life happily with his family and chosen profession.

The letters though, seventy-nine in total, reveal another side to his story. Figuring out the handwriting is difficult at times but is worth it in the end. The love Thomas has for his family, the lingering ailments of wife Nancy, births and deaths, and so much more, is all there for me to see.

All of the letters are written to Ellinor (Ellen) and her husband Dr. Robert Rentoul Reed (my 4th great-grandfather), most from her father Thomas. Though the other half of the conversations are missing, what is there is fascinating and something I now cherish. Not only for the contents but for having a piece of them in their handwriting. A few of my favorites...



*Thomas Harlan Baird  
(1787-1866)*

Thomas' earliest letter is to Ellen in March 1824, she is thirteen. He wants to correspond while he travels for work so she can develop her writing skills. He warns her he will critique her letters but she shouldn't worry, "You need not fear to submit your errors to the kind correction of a father who loves you & who would see you faults that he may endeavor to amend them."

Ellen, age 17, spends a few months in Kentucky with an aunt and uncle. Her sister Harriet, age 8, writes that she will send some flowers she picked.

Son Thomas Jr. is the problem child of the group, lacking motivation and direction. In August 1841, Thomas writes, "As you supposed I have been greatly distressed about Thomas. – My hopes in regards to him are it seems to be totally disappointed. I had flattered myself that I might see him respectably settled in a profession [...] My plans are frustrated, and I am totally at a loss what to do with him."

(continued on page 13)



## Getting to Know the Baird family (continued from page 12)

By 1841 Thomas splits his time between Pittsburgh and Washington, trying to stay ahead of financial troubles. Though he would like to work closer to his family at the farm, he struggles. In October he says, "I feel a good deal of anxiety for the future support of the many who are dependent upon me." At the same time, he's building a house in Pittsburgh, "If I can get it finished & paid for, it will save me 400 pr.ann. in rent. [...] My family however are increasing in their demands upon me. I am not able to give them the advantages that I would desire."

Ellen's sister Eliza writes to her after the Pittsburgh fire in April 1845, "Fearing that you would hear from other sources of the dreadful fire which has devastated our city and be alarmed for our safety, I write to inform you that amidst so much danger we are unharmed. [...] We ought to be very thankful I am sure that we are saved – although Father will lose a good deal –" Money troubles continue and in 1850 Thomas' daughter Eliza takes work as a governess, it pains him. "I have always disliked the situation of a governess. [...] Eliza I know, determined to encounter it, in order to relieve me from some portion of what she regards as the incumbrance of a large family. – I would rather however suffer the inconvenience of poverty & the gnawing reflection continually that I cannot do all I wish for my children, these have let her go away to dwell with strangers and to be exposed to insult from the very persons to whose improvement she is devoting her intellectual & physical energies. –"

Thomas never fully recovers financially but manages to hang on with the help of family. Even amongst all their troubles, love and joy comes through in the letters. In August 1847, he writes, "The blackberries are very fine & in prime order. I think hundreds of bushels could be gathered. [...] The girls (his youngest daughters) are crowding messages upon me. Suzy says I must tell you that the "cow horn potatoes" are "first rate" – ; that we have roasting ears – cabbage – beats – tomatoes &c &c – This is a great horticultural exploit on the part of the Harlemites – and worthy of a feast –" The girls invite their whole family over for a picnic – aunts, uncles, cousins, siblings, nieces, nephews...everyone.

Of course, these examples are just a sampling of what the letters contain. To better share everything with family and cousins, I've transcribed and annotated each letter, noting everyone and everything I am able to. I hope people enjoy them as much as I do!

## Sources

letters: "Papers of the Reed Family,"; MSS#135; Detre Library & Archives, Heinz History Center, Pittsburgh, Allegheny Co., PA., photo: from source 6 below

## Thomas' information:

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2. George Norbury Mackenzie LL.B., editor, Colonial Families of the United States of America (Baltimore, Maryland: The Seaforth Press, 1917), Vol. 6: 58-60.
3. "U.S., Revolutionary War Pension and Bounty-Land Warrant Application Files, 1800-1900," database and images, Ancestry (ancestry.com); Absolam Baird.
4. "Hon. Thomas H. Baird," (Harrisburg) Harrisburg Telegraph (1879-1948), 1 Dec 1866, col. obituary.
5. Alpheus H. Harlan, History and Genealogy of the Harlan Family, and particularly of the descendants of George and Michael Harlan, who settled in Chester County, Pa., 1687 (Baltimore, Maryland: The Lord Baltimore Press, 1914), p.353.

(continued on page 14)

## Getting to Know the Baird family (continued from page 13)

6. Boyd Crumrine, *The Courts of Justice Bench and Bar of Washington County, Pennsylvania, With Sketches of the Early Court-houses, the Judicial System, the Law Judges, and the Roll of Attorneys of that County; and a History of the Erection and Dedication of the Court-house of 1900; with Portraits and Illustrations* (Chicago, IL: The Lakeside Press. R. R. Donnelley & Sons Company, 1902), p. 50-53. HON. THOMAS H. BAIRD.

7. J.H. Beers & Co, editor, *Commemorative biographical record of Washington county: Biographical Sketches of Prominent and Representative Citizens, and of many of the Early Settled Families* (Chicago, Ill.: J.H. Beers & Co, 1893), pg250-253.

8. Alfred Creigh LL. D., *History of Washington County from it First Settlement to the Present Time: First Under Virginia as Yohogania, Ohio, or Augusta County Until 1781, and Subsequently Under Pennsylvania* (Washington, PA: n.p., 1870), p.132-135.

9. 1860 U.S. census, population schedule, Carroll Township, Washington Co., Pennsylvania, dwelling 293, family 293, Thos H Baird; digital images; citing National Archives and Records Administration microfilm M653.

## VBGS Members Visit Elmwood and Cedar Grove Cemeteries (continued from page 5)

One of the most touching stories was of a gravedigger who served for fifty years. In a newspaper interview in the 1920s, he remarked on how one needs to become hardened to daily burials for two or more deceased; two-thirds of the dead are children. Read more about Elmwood at <https://www.nscvva.org/elmwood-cemetery>.

Two VBGS members continued on to visit the Cedar Grove Cemetery which became Norfolk's first municipal cemetery in 1825. Cedar Grove was designed in the Victorian park fashion with several large family vaults, popular from 1830-1870. Cedar Grove is one of three known sites containing mass burials of Yellow Fever victims. Yellow Fever struck Norfolk in 1795, 1802, 1821 and 1855. At the height of the 1821 and 1855 epidemics, nearly 100 Norfolk citizens died on a daily basis. The bodies were loaded onto a wagon and brought to Cedar Grove Cemetery to be buried in their family lot or a mass grave. You can read about Cedar Grove in more

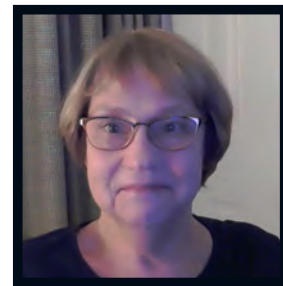


detail at <https://www.nscvva.org/cedar-grove-cemetery>. You can keep up with other tours at <https://www.nscvva.org/>. NSCC can also use more volunteers and contributions to support restoring headstones and landscaping maintenance. The City of Norfolk owns and operates 8 cemeteries. NSCC has worked with the Norfolk Bureau of Cemeteries at many of these cemeteries which does not include Saint Mary's Catholic Cemetery.



## Finding Helen

By Diana Quinn  
dewquinn@gmail.com



After my husband's cousin Mary Margaret died, her daughter, knowing my interest in the Quinn family history, sent me some old Quinn family photos. Most were easily identified but one photograph of two beautiful young girls remained unidentified until we visited my husband's Aunt Kitty in 2012.



*Mary and Helen Quinn ca. 1935* <sup>5</sup>

Kitty identified the two young girls as Mary and Helen Quinn, daughters of John Quinn, brother to her father, William Quinn. Kitty knew nothing more.

A search for these girls beyond the 1940 census was unsuccessful due to the common names of Mary and Helen Quinn.<sup>1</sup> Happy I was able to identify the girls, but with no way to find more, I put them aside.

### A DNA Match

Early in 2019, a Helen Quinn matched my husband as a 1st to 2nd cousin at AncestryDNA.<sup>2</sup> She had to be the youngest girl in the photo. I wrote immediately and waited. The next month I wrote again but received no response. Again, I put them aside.

### A Search Strategy

In September 2020, I was reminded of a search strategy to use when looking for someone with a common name.<sup>3</sup> When searching, include something not so common along with their name. I put "Helen Quinn" and her mother's not so common maiden name into the Google search engine and came up with an obituary that named Helen as a dear cousin.<sup>4</sup>

I researched others mentioned in the obituary and found the address of the person most likely to know Helen. I quickly wrote a letter asking that she pass my phone number on to Helen. The next week, Helen called.

### Helen

I talk to Helen at least once a month and my husband and I had the opportunity to visit her in September 2021. She has added many Quinns and much social history to my Quinn family research. Helen has become a good friend. I enjoy our conversations and her stories. I am happy that I continued to search for her and that we connected.



*My husband and Helen, his first cousin once removed.* <sup>6</sup>

(continued on page 16)

## Finding Helen (continued from page 15)

## Sources

1. 1940 U.S. Census, New York, New York, population census, New York, civil district 21, enumeration district 31-1141, page 18B, household 367, John Quinn household; digital images, Ancestry.com (<https://www.ancestry.com/> : accessed 25 October 2021); citing NARA microfilm publication T627, roll 2651.
2. "Ancestry DNA Results for Helen Quinn," database, Ancestry.com (<https://www.ancestry.com>: accessed 25 October 2021), AncestryDNA results of test-taker Helen Quinn; results from this database require the private login credentials of the test-taker.
3. Amy Johnson Crow, "3 Tips for Researching an Ancestor with a Common Name," blog entry, 6 October 2016, Amy Johnson Crow : Modern Genealogy Made Easy, (<https://www.amyjohnsoncrow.com/researching-ancestor-common-name/> : accessed 25 September 2021).
4. Obituary, name of deceased and location not revealed to protect the family's privacy
5. My Husband and Helen, 2021; digital image, privately held by Diana Quinn, Virginia Beach, VA, 2021.
6. Mary and Helen Quinn, ca. 1935; scanned image, original image privately held by Diana Quinn, Virginia Beach, VA, 2021.

## VBGS Tour of the Thoroughgood House

Twelve of our VBGS members enjoyed a beautiful September Saturday on a private tour of one of the oldest Virginia Beach homes, the Thoroughgood House, followed by lunch at The Leaping Lizard on Shore Drive. Jasmine, our engaging tour guide, told stories of the homes' colonial residents (minus Adam Thoroughgood who never lived in the house) up to more recent times when the house was restored.

Adam's great-grandson, Argall Thorowgood and his wife, Susannah, were in the midst of building the home when Argall passed away. Susannah, who was the daughter of a Woodhouse and a Sanford, completed the house in 1719, which later became a center for entertaining neighboring wealthy guests including Keeling, Moseley, Walke and Lawson, who were all related to the Thoroughgood family. That level of Princess Anne County society often married amongst themselves. The family is also aligned by marriage and DNA with the Yeardleys, descendants of Governor Yeardley from the mid 1600s on, and tied closely to both the Virginia and Maryland Eastern Shore, the Maryland Western Shore and the Northern Neck of Virginia.



The two-story brick house is interpreted in the years 1760-1762, when John, fifth generation, had been living on the 600-acre plantation with his third wife Margaret Scarborough. The whereabouts of the home's original furniture is unknown but the replicas show the family's wealth from the intricately woven bed canopy to the table settings.

There were cabins nearby for the enslaved, and perhaps the cook and an enslaved person acting as a nanny, might have slept in the house. We know their names from John's will, which listed the first names of the enslaved persons instead of listing them only by gender and age.

(continued on page 17)



## VBGS Tour of the Thoroughgood House (continued from page 16)

Jasmine pointed out an original indigo coverlet in the eldest daughter's bedroom, the large animal footprints on the chimney bricks, the animal sculptures that keep the evil spirits away plus other interesting stories including ... a woman dressed in period clothing who "appeared" on the staircase during a tour. Startled to see Jasmine, the woman turned around, lifted her skirt and proceeded up the steps. Other staff members have reported seeing the same woman spirit and the spirit of a man playing a fiddle.



The new Education Center is full of information about the history of our local area and a mural of the Thoroughgood Family Tree which includes lineage to Robert E. Lee and George Mason. Jasmine, in her animated manner and interest in history, held everyone's attention by sharing little known details of several family members which led to more conversations.

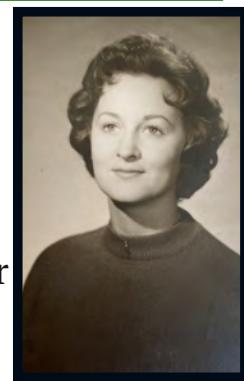
Since the day was so lovely, we had lunch under the trees in the backyard of the Leaping Lizard. Everyone enjoyed being together and sharing our own family history stories and we all agreed that we want to continue having VBGS social events.

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### Brenda Parham Bunting

By Kit Rancourt

My mom would talk endlessly about her many hobbies. Genealogy was one of them. Others were a knitting guild, bowling league, Virginia Bonsai Society and the Cornish cardiac health group. Our family could hardly keep up with her. She had non-Hodgkin's for 24 years, but it never slowed her down. In July, her cancer mutated to a new aggressive form. After one treatment, prognosis was poor.





Mother passed away on October 16, 2021 at the age of 78. A family friend wrote in a card, "God needed someone to straighten a few things out in Heaven, so he called her home." Mom researched genealogy for at least 25 years. She used Family Tree Maker with Ancestry. She had 6 trees, with the largest with 3,983 profiles. She had backups on disks, CDs and thumb drives for current years. My family will be busy looking at those including a large file box of newspaper clipping, records and photos of people and graveyards.

My mom's 89-year-old sister, Elizabeth, remembers "We spent hours in courthouses and libraries! And once in the archives in Raleigh, NC, she forgot to eat, hours went by until closing! I soon realized that when Brenda was on a roll, you'd better back your lunch and wear your best Depends! She had me busy going to family graveyards that I didn't know existed. We really had a lot of finds in Henderson, NC."

Brenda's oldest son, Chuck Bunting, stated, "Mom was committed to following the truth wherever it led! She discovered we did not have a heritage we thought we had for so long. When she discovered this, she didn't hesitate to declare it."

## Using the DAR's Ancestors and Descendants Database (continued from page 10)

For example, searching with Samuel's spouse, Sarah May, displays only 5 results, all which show this Samuel Brown is a descendant of at least one Patriot, i.e. Samuel Drennan. Of course, the more accurate information you have for the person you are looking for, the better your chances will be of finding a corresponding lineage going back to a Patriot. For privacy reasons, I have removed the member number associated with the two applications right:

Items Found: 5		Hint: Click on the icon to view the list.
Husband/Member/Spouse	Associated Patriot	
<b>Brown, Samuel B</b> Born: PA 4 - Dec - 1860 Died: PA 27 - Feb - 1909	<b>DRENNAN, SAMUEL</b> Ancestor #: A033661 Member #:	
<b>May, Sarah Anna</b> Born: PA 18 - Dec - 1858 Died: PA 31 - Oct - 1928		
<b>Brown, Samuel B</b> Born: PA 4 - Dec - 1860 Died: PA 27 - Feb - 1909	<b>DRENNAN, WILLIAM</b> Ancestor # Member #: 951266	
<b>May, Sarah Anna</b> Born: PA 18 - Dec - 1858 Died: PA 31 - Oct - 1928		

Clicking on the red icon to the right of the Patriot will bring up a page containing a lot of information for the researcher and/or individual wishing to join the DAR. This really shows the power of the Descendants Database and its usefulness for locating a Patriot. Below is the lineage I had to prove to join the DAR under Samuel Drennan (the first three generations have been restricted for privacy reasons, and only the first five generations are shown below).

<b>Member:</b> -- Name Restricted --	<b>Nat'l #:</b>	<b>Ancestor #:</b> A033661
1. -- Generation Restricted --		
2. -- Generation Restricted --		
3. -- Generation Restricted --		
4. The Said -- Name Restricted -- was the child of		<a href="#">Search</a>
Kie E Brown born on 9 - Aug - 1889 at Sulphur Springs PA died at Gregg Union Co PA on 16 - Dec - 1951 and his ( 1st ) wife Jessie Emeline Whetstone born on 8 - Jun - 1889 at Manns Choice Bedford Co PA died at Huntington Huntington Co PA on 24 - Apr - 1953 married on 4 - Apr - 1908 married at Cumberland Allegany Co MD		
5. The Said Kie E Brown was the child of		<a href="#">Search</a>
Samuel B Brown born on 4 - Dec - 1860 at Bedford Co PA died at Harrison Bedford Co PA on 27 - Feb - 1909 and his ( 1st ) wife Sarah Anna May born on 18 - Dec - 1858 at PA died at Harrison Bedford Co PA on 31 - Oct - 1928 married on c - - 1881		

Clicking on the Ancestor number in the top right will provide you with information about the Patriot's life, residence and a description of his/her service along with the source of the proven service. As you can see, I joined the DAR through Samuel's son, William, who also served in the American Revolution.

(continued on page 19)



## Using the DAR's Ancestors and Descendants Database (continued from page 18)

**DRENNAN, SAMUEL** Ancestor #: A033661

Service: PENNSYLVANIA Rank(s): PATRIOTIC SERVICE  
 Birth: CIRCA 1735 IRELAND  
 Death: ANTE 4-30-1787 BEDFORD CO PENNSYLVANIA  
 Service Source: PENSION OF SON WILLIAM, S22737; PA ARCH, 3RD SER, VOL 22, P 206  
 Service Description: 1) FURNISHED SUBSTITUTE; SUFFERED DEPREDAATION

**RESIDENCE**

1) City: BEDFORD TWP - County: BEDFORD CO - State: PENNSYLVANIA

**SPOUSE**

Number	Name
1)	ANN X

*Hint: Click on the member number to see more.*

**ASSOCIATED APPLICATIONS AND SUPPLEMENTALS**

Nat'l Num	Add Vol.	Docs	Child	[Spouse #] Spouse	
556			WILLIAM	[1] MARY FRIEND	<a href="#">PURCHASE</a>
603			WILLIAM	[1] MARY FRIEND	<a href="#">PURCHASE</a>
1027			WILLIAM	[1] MARY FRIEND	<a href="#">PURCHASE</a>
			WILLIAM	[1] MARY FRIEND	<a href="#">PURCHASE</a>

= Supporting documentation available  
 = Descendants list available for this member and this ancestor  
 = Descendants list available for this member but not this ancestor

You may even be able to find the documents used as proof of service to learn more about the Patriot, as well as very detailed information about his/her's personal characteristics. For example, I would never have found out that Edward Northcraft (Ancestor #A207667), my 6th great-grandfather, was a pensioner (\*S8920), was at Valley Forge and participated in the siege of Yorktown.

The pension examiner documented in Edward's pension application that "his [Edward's] details in the other parts of his campaign were equally minute, and I thought too prolix [i.e. too lengthy and tiresome to write] to be inserted verbatim; he told of a wound in the elbow [he] got near the Valley Forge; made me feel the indent [was] caused by a shot in his thigh; he

offered before the Magistrate to show the board of his other wounds; he went very minutely to describe his campaign thru Virginia, named the counties he marched thru, Gloucester Point, when they opened the trenches upon Cornwallis at York xx [Yorktown]." <sup>3</sup>

I also would never have found out that Edward was a very forthright and forthcoming character when providing information to the pension examiner about his service. Not only did he provide much appreciated details (at least from my perspective) about his service, but also offered to show the Magistrate his wounds as proof that he actually received them. When I transcribed the pension examiner's comment that he did not want to write Edward's words verbatim, I thought "No, no, no!" This is a perfect example of a document that was created for a specific purpose (i.e. to provide evidence of service in the American Revolution) and not for genealogical purposes. If only the examiner just continued writing what Edward was saying...." A girl can wish!

(continued on page 20)

## Using the DAR's Ancestors and Descendants Database (continued from page 19)

However, to end on a positive note, I was able to honor Edward and his service at Valley Forge. I was in the process of submitting a supplemental application as a direct descendant of Edward when I discovered he was not on the Valley Forge Legacy Muster Roll project (Valley Forge Legacy (valleyformemusterroll.org). I contacted them, sent his pension file, and they added him!<sup>4</sup>

**NORTHCRAFT, EDWARD**

Service: MARYLAND Rank(s): SERGEANT

Birth: 08-18-1758 FREDERICK CO MARYLAND

Death: ANTE 09-01-1839 ALLEGANY CO MARYLAND

Pension Number: \*S8920

Service Source: \*S8920

The Descendants Database is a wonderful genealogical resource. Whether you are researching a person who aided the American cause during the American Revolution or would like to join the DAR, this database is an excellent addition to your genealogical toolbox. Of course, I am always happy to help! Here's to many happy discoveries!

*His details in the other parts of his campaigns were equally minute, and I thought too plain if he inserted verbatim; he told of a wound in the elbow got near the Valley Forge; made me feel the indent caused by a shot in his thigh; he offered before the Magistrate to show the scars of his other wounds; he went very minutely to describe his campaign thro' Virginia, named the counties he marched thro', Gloucester point, - when they opened the trenches upon Cornwallis at York &c.*

# VALLEY FORGE

## Legacy

THE MUSTER ROLL PROJECT

Overview

The Encampment

Continental Army

Divisions

Brigades

Regiments

**THE MUSTER ROLL**

SEARCH:

Last Name: northcraft

State: Maryland

Regiment: 1st Maryland

Go!

Clear

ID	Last Name	First Name	Rank	State	Regiment
MD34130	Northcraft	Edward	Private	Maryland	1st Maryland

**Private Edward Northcraft**

Rank and File

State: Maryland

Ethnicity:

ID: MD34130

Division:

Regiment: 1st Maryland

Brigade:

Company: Capt Henry Gaither

 DEC 1777  
 JAN 1778  
 FEB 1778  
 MAR 1778  
 APR 1778  
 MAY 1778  
 JUN 1778

Carmen Cross  
Registrar,  
Princess Anne  
County Chapter  
NSDAR

3. Edward Northcraft, pension no. S. 8920 (Maryland); digital image, "U.S., Revolutionary War Pension and Bounty-Land Warrant Application Files, 1800-1900," Ancestry.com (<http://www.ancestry.com> : accessed 18 June 2019); Case Files of Pension and Bounty-Land Warrant Applications Based on Revolutionary War Service, compiled ca. 1800 - ca. 1912, documenting the period ca. 1775 - ca. 1900 (NARA microfilm publication M804, 2,670 rolls); Record Group 15: Records of the Department of Veterans Affairs; National Archives, Washington, D.C.

4. "The Muster Roll Project," Valley Forge Legacy, (<http://valleyformemusterroll.org/>: accessed 9 September 2019), entry for Edward Northcraft.