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The Livermore Roots Tracer



Livermore-Amador Genealogical Society

P.O. Box 901, Livermore, California 94551-0901

<http://l-ags.org> & <http://facebook.com/Livermore.Amador.Genealogical.Society/>

Membership Report

May 2022

Patrons

Anonymous, Lois Barber, Susan Davis, Richard and Wanda Finn, Richard and Jean Lerche, Doris Matthews, Thomas and Natasha Mathews, Duncan Tanner and Shirley Terry

Benefactors

Kristina Ahuja, Denise Barr, Matthew Berry, Annette Breingan, Linda Driver and Walt Crawford, Barbara Hemphill, Cindy McKenna, Ileen Peterson and Peggy Weber

L-AGS Members

81 active memberships and 115 members

Meeting News –

All face-to-face meetings are suspended indefinitely due to Covid-19.

General Meetings –

Monday, June 13, 2022, 7:00 – 8:30 p.m. via Zoom – site opens 6:30 p.m.

Karen LaDuca: How to Research your Ancestors in Italian Records.

Monday July 11, 7:00 – 8:30 p.m. – via Zoom – site opens 6:30 p.m.

Gena Philibert-Ortega The WPA:
Sources for Your Genealogy

Monday, August 8, 2022, 7:00 – 8:30 p.m. via Zoom – site opens 6:30 p.m.

Glen Holstein, PhD: The Geography of American Genealogy

Let's Talk AND Write Genealogy — When: Sundays at 3:00 p.m. REMOTE via Zoom Chair: Debbie Mascot - Our theme will be the National Genealogical Society 2022 Conference 24-28 May 2022 in Sacramento. Location: Contact talkgenealogy.chair@L-AGS.org

The Master Genealogist Group — Due to Covid-19 meetings via Zoom on the 2nd Friday and 4th Saturday of the month, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. The Friday meeting is because the Roots User Group in Virginia meets on the 2nd Saturday. TV-TMG Forum Topic: Reports and Problem Assistance; Location: Contact TV-TMG Chair (Duncan Tanner) mailto:tvtmg.chair@L-AGS.org

Meeting News *continued on Page 9*

L-AGS Leadership for 2022

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President's Message

As May 2022 arrives, what has also arrived is the 1950 U.S. census. Something that many of us have been anxiously awaiting for many years. Have you gone to the NARA site www.archives.gov/research/census/1950? I found my aunt who was living in Kansas City, Missouri at the time. I didn't find my mother who I thought was living with her at the time and that was without having the Enumeration District. Of course, instead of "Filbin" the OCR read the name as "Tilbin." Tilbin was close enough for it to get pulled up for me to find. I have to say that it was exciting to actually see it. I knew that she worked for an airline and I assumed that she was a flight attendant. Turns out that she was a telephone operator. Possibly booking airline tickets for people. They really did use to do it that way.

As I continue to peruse the 1950 census, I will eventually go to www.stevemorse.org to help translate the 1940 ED to a 1950 ED.

So what will you find in the 1950 census? Will you find parents, grandparents or yourself? Were you surprised by what you found? Let us know. What were your surprises?

The 1960 census was the first to employ a form of self-enumeration. The Census Bureau mailed each householder an "Advance Census Report" form that they were to fill out without the aid of census employees. Census takers (enumerators) later collected these forms in person and transferred the information they contained onto permanent FOSDIC (Film Optical Sensing Device) census forms that computers read to derive the official tabulations. If a household failed to complete its advance report form, or filled it out incorrectly, the census taker interviewed that household and copied the answers directly to the permanent forms. A few of the housing items were completed by the enumerators without consulting the respondents.

Spring has sprung and before you know it summer will be upon us. That is when I start looking for volunteers to fill open spots on our L-AGS board. Right now, most of our board has been in their position for a number of years. While we love helping out and sharing our enthusiasm for genealogy, it is always good to bring in new people. It brings in fresh perspectives and new ideas. We are a fun group to hang with and all of our board meetings will continue via zoom for the duration. We have found that we get just as much done and we don't have to travel to do it. So if you are interested in helping out, I would love to discuss what any of the positions are that MAY be available.

So I wish you the best in your genealogical pursuits this summer. I hope that you will be able to attend the many informative lectures that our Program coordinator Tom Mathews has set up for us. If you want to see what is set up for the entire year, go to <http://www.l-ags.org/speakers> to see the entire schedule.

Julie Liu, President, L-AGS

**SO WHAT WILL YOU FIND
IN THE 1950 CENSUS?**

The Livermore Roots Tracer

The Roots Tracer is the quarterly publication of the Livermore-Amador Genealogical Society. The mission statement of the Roots Tracer is: "Instruct. Inspire. Inform."

We encourage members to submit articles for publication. Material can be e-mailed to: rootstracer.chair@L-AGS.org or mailed to L-AGS, P.O. Box 901, Livermore, CA 94551-0901. Want ghostwriting help? Just ask!

The Roots Tracer Staff

Editor..... Patrick Lofft

Contributors.....Sandy Aberer, Denise Barr, Gene Block, Richard Finn, Patrick Lofft, Tom Mathews, Kelly O'Hair, Shirley Siems Terry

Composer..... Andi Winters

Printing and Distribution..... Sue Davis,
.....Jean Lerche

Writing My Own Life Story Was Much Easier Than I Anticipated

By Gene Block

Over the years, like most people who do genealogy, I kept finding excuse after excuse for never taking the time to write up my own life story. Then when the Covid 19 virus was sweeping the country in the early months of 2020, my wife and I spent six weeks with my son and daughter-in-law at their condo in Carefree, Arizona. Our kids thought we would be less likely to come down with the virus there, than at the retirement community where we live in Pleasanton, California with nearly 800 other senior citizens.

One night while my son was cooking dinner on the BBQ, for some reason he asked me about jobs I had had during my lifetime. I mentioned that while I was in college I delivered Christmas mail for the Post Office during two winter breaks from my classes. My son said he never knew that. He then asked me about other jobs I had had and I mentioned four summer jobs I had had working away from home during my last two years in high school and after my first two years in college. My son said he was only vaguely aware about those jobs. After dinner he called his two sisters and asked them if they knew about the jobs I had told him about. Neither of them knew any specifics about these jobs either. Our kids then decided they would come up with ten questions they wanted both my wife and me to answer about our previous lives.



Block kids, from left to right, Cyndi, David & Cheryl

The questions we were asked to answer were very interesting and several made me really stop and think before answering them. After I answered all the questions and typed them up, I was surprised to realize that I had filled 14 ½ typed pages with my answers.

After I completed answering all the questions, I realized that I had spent quite a bit of time thinking about various stages in my life. It was then I made the decision to follow the advice I had heard many times at various genealogy conferences over the years and write up my own life history.

I broke my write-up into the following chapters:

- Pre-school and grade school years
- High school years
- Summer jobs away from home
- College years
- Other activities while in college
- Full-time jobs I have had since graduating from college
- Local government involvement
- Retirement years

I did not go into extreme depth in any of the write ups in any chapter. I just highlighted events about my life in each chapter. The whole experience turned out to be much easier than what I had anticipated and brought back many memories.

My wife also answered the questions our kids gave us and then she also decided to keep going and write up the history of her life. All in all, the time we each spent on this project was at least several hours a day for a week to 10 days. We each included several pictures in each of the chapters of our lives. We also included copies of various records like birth certificates, diplomas, etc., as well as copies of meaningful letters and other memorabilia we have received throughout our lives which we have kept and are special to each of us.

One thing that was very helpful in the write up of our married life was going back and reviewing copies of Christmas letters we had sent out to our out of town friends and family members for the past several decades. This eliminated all the guess work as to which year we took river boat trips in Europe, Elderhostel trips to South America and years we went on trips with our kids and grandkids.

Since completing the write up of our lives, we have discovered several friends who are involved in similar projects documenting their lives like we have but the format differs in some ways. Each of them are answering a much longer list of questions that their kids have generated. Their kids have hired a company that sends them one question to answer each week. After they answer the question, they e-mail their answer back to the company. My understanding is that they can receive up to 50 questions that cover every aspect of their lifetime. After all the questions are answered the company places the answers, along with any photographs they have included, in a hard-bound book. The family can then purchase as many copies of the book as they desire. I understand our friends are receiving the questions generated by their kids through a company called "Story Worth."¹

I looked up Story Worth on their website and discovered it is headquartered in Delaware.

It was started in 2012 by a husband and wife. Interesting is the fact that the wife's hometown is

¹"Story Worth" <https://welcome.storyworth.com/>

Questions asked by the Block kids for their parents to answer

- ◆ What advancement/invention has had the most significant impact on your life and why?
- ◆ What was your biggest disappointment in life and why?
- ◆ How did your life turn out differently than you imagined it would have when you were 25-30?
- ◆ Tell us about the jobs you had in your life. What did you like best and least about each one?
- ◆ Looking back on your childhood, what characteristics do you respect the most about your father and mother?
- ◆ If you had the opportunity to relive one day in your childhood, teenage and adult life, what days would they be and why?
- ◆ What lesson or skill that your father or mother taught you has been the most important for you and why?
- ◆ If you could travel into the future and give one piece of advice to your grandchildren's children what would it be and why?
- ◆ What about your a)childhood, b)high school days, c)college years did you enjoy the most?
- ◆ What would you say has been your greatest accomplishment other than your family?

listed as Pleasanton, California. The company will either send you questions your kids have generated or will send you questions they have developed. You get one question a week to answer. After you e-mail it back the company sends you the next question.

After my wife and I finished answering the 10 questions our kids gave us, plus a write up of our life stories, we made copies of everything we had

Life Story continued on page 14

Roots Tracer Article Results in Surprise Find

By Denise Barr

Who knew? Over 100 years later, a great-granddaughter receives item from her great-grandfather! In May of 2021, Roots Tracer included an article I wrote about my great-grandmother, Annie Macgenn. In February of 2022, I was pleasantly surprised to receive an email from a wonderful woman by the name of Gwen Allen. Gwen was cleaning out some drawers and came across an old night order logbook for the SS Rose City. The SS Rose City is a ship that ran lumber and a few passengers between Portland Oregon and San Francisco. She can't remember how she came to own the logbook but believes it was a gift.

Thankfully for my family, she just couldn't throw it away. In an email, Gwen shared: "I asked a friend what she thought I should do with the log and she replied "WWCMD?" or "What Would Captain Macgenn Do"? I imagined that as a poet he liked a good story and she figured what better way to keep his story going than to pass this along to his descendants?" During Gwen's research, she came upon interesting stories of my great-grandfather Capt. T.J. Macgenn. Good fortune for me led Gwen to the Livermore-Amador Valley online May 2021 edition of Roots Tracer. That edition included my article about my great-grandmother Annie Macgenn; which included a bit about her husband, Capt. Macgenn.

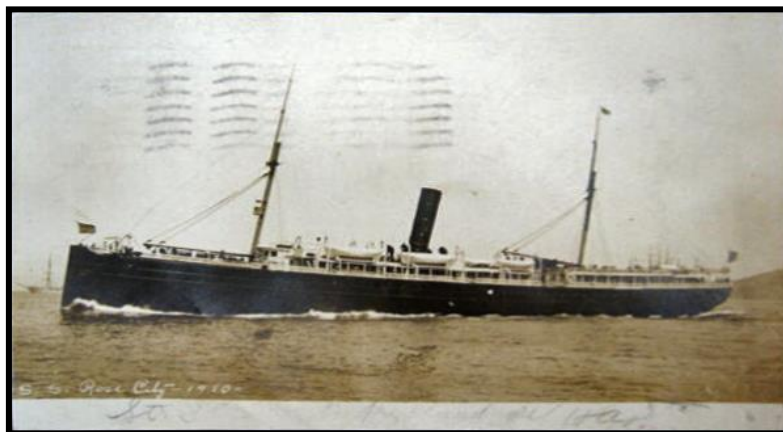
Gwen emailed the L-AGS board asking her email be forwarded to me, the author of the article. I immediately emailed Gwen and after a few emails exchanged, she kindly mailed the logbook to me. I was thrilled to receive the night orders logbook of the SS Rose City; a book my great-grandfather actually held! It was moving to hold a book he held and to view his handwriting.

The night order logbook is directions the ship leaves for the night watch crew. An excerpt from the book: "Course to Pt. Reyes N 85 W and from Pt. Reyes to Pt. Arena N 52 W. Call me if you see any lights ahead or nearly so and if there is any change in the weather. T.J. Macgenn Master."

My family will always be grateful to Gwen for taking the time to find the family of the Captain.

Macgenn Family Lineage
Annie May Campbell b. April 21, 1868 Liverpool, Merseyside, England d. May 1, 1961 San Leandro, Alameda, California m. November 1890 San Francisco, California Thomas James Macgenn b. April 9, 1858 Glasgow, Scotland d. February 9, 1931 San Francisco, California
Elizabeth (Betty) Ellen Macgenn b. November 18, 1903 Empire, Oregon d. June 29, 1954 San Francisco, California m. July 10, 1923 San Francisco, California George Leonard Barr, Sr. b. December 1, 1908 R.M. Blanshard, Manitoba d. March 20, 1959 San Francisco, California
George Leonard Barr, Jr. b. December 8, 1934 San Francisco, California d. October 16, 2003 Pacifica, California m. February 6, 1954 San Francisco, California Diane Lee Martin b. September 10, 1936 Cincinnati, Ohio d. June 15, 2002 Pacifica, California
Denise Lynn Barr, author of article, living

Who knows what you might reap from an article in the Roots Tracer? I have heard at least one other LAGS member received some long-sought information when someone contacted her through her article.



SS Rose City

Tale of 3 Sarahs

By Kelly Thomas O'Hair

A Tale of 3 Sarahs (not Sirah's, this isn't about wine, just more genealogy madness), and to be accurate, there were many, many Sarah Elledge's, but the confusing three I had to deal with are the puzzle here. So to continue.

Sarah¹: Sarah Ann (O'Hair) Elledge (b. 1849, d. 1916), born in Illinois, parents born in Kentucky or Virginia (the middle name and parents birth states are critical). Married William Elledge (b. 1848, d. 1879) in 1870, son of James Elledge (b. 1824). Children Rose and Florence. <https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/O'Hair-144>

Sarah²: Sarah Elvira Main (b. 1850, d. 1938) born in Illinois, parents born in Pennsylvania and Kentucky. (middle name is important). Married John Elledge (b. 1850, d. 1932) in 1883, son of James Elledge, b. 1824. Child Vernon. <https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Main-3377>

Sarah³: Sarah Elledge (b. 1852, d. 1926), born in Illinois, parents born in Indiana. Elledge is her birth name, daughter of James E. Elledge (b. 1824) and Mary (Barr) Elledge. Married Samuel Wells (b. 1841, d. 1909) in 1870. Child Mary. <https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Elledge-232>.

So lucky James Elledge (b. 1824) ends up with two daughters-in-law named Sarah and a daughter named Sarah, born, respectively, in 1849, 1850 and 1852.

What started this puzzle for me was some inaccurate information in my primary O'Hair reference book "The Michael O'Hair Family - By Mrs. C. Gerald Brann, May 1957", it had connected Sarah Ann O'Hair with John Elledge, which seemed to pollute lots and lots of family trees on the internet. I have concluded that this was messed up after viewing this tombstone: FindAGrave.com Memorial ID 80366161 <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/80366161/john-sylvester-elledge>

I had to dig into census records to be sure.

The clues:

Sarah A. vs. Sarah E. on gravestones and in census records occasionally. John Elledge's gravestone includes the name "Sarah E.", now assuming this E. is for her birth middle name Elvira and not her married name; this would be a primary clue.



*John Sylvester Elledge (1850-1932)
Memorial ID 80366161*

But to continue. . .

Children names in census. Sarah had a daughter Florence who seemed to stay with her mom through many censuses.

Death dates of husbands helped finding census records where the Sarah was widowed. Sarah¹ was single after 1879, so the 1880-1910 census records would have her as head of household "Sarah Elledge". Sarah² did not become head of household until 1930 where she was also "Sarah Elledge". Sarah³ was head of household after 1909, so the 1910 and 1920 census would have her as "Sarah Wells", a bit easier

Birth locations of parents (when the census included them) helped Identify which Sarah was which, but sometimes they were inaccurate. Sarah¹ Kentucky/Virginia, Sarah² Pennsylvania/Kentucky, and Sarah³ Indiana. But not all census records had this data.

Age difference was somewhat useful, but the census records are sometimes really messed up on ages, did people lie about their ages? And the census wasn't taken at the same time each year, so that makes all ages possibly off by 1 year, with these birth years so close, that was tricky.

Hope this was somewhat interesting. If you have concluded that I am nuts, I can understand. But these kinds of puzzles keep me entertained.

Livermore-Amador Genealogical Society Publications

Second half of listing. Of interest to people researching early Livermore area families and businesses. .

Compiled by Richard W. Finn, past-president

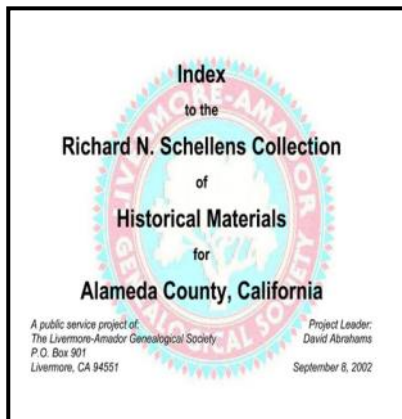
The Livermore-Amador Genealogical Society (L-AGS) has produced a large number of books about the history of the greater Livermore area. You will see from the listing they include information on local cemeteries, burial records, church records, local history, mortuary records, etc. This is the second half of the listing. The first half was in the last issue of the *Roots Tracer*. Even if you are not from this area (like me) I think you will find many of these books very fascinating.

Note: Most of L-AGS books can be viewed online on the L-AGS website. Printed paperback or eBook copies are available (with a few noted exceptions) from <https://www.lulu.com>. Search for *L-AGS*. The prices for the books range between \$7-\$17. Downloadable eBook versions all cost \$1.19.

INDEX TO THE SCHELLENS COLLECTION OF HISTORICAL MATERIALS FOR ALAMEDA COUNTY (2002)

L-AGS volunteers have compiled an index of 17,219 names appearing in the Richard N. Schellens collection of Alameda County printed sources, dating mainly from 1850 to 1920.

Mr. Schellens spent many years extracting material of historical value from directories, maps, newspapers, books, magazines, land records and other sources. A copy of the 1912 pages of his extracts from which the index was made is housed in the Pleasanton Library.

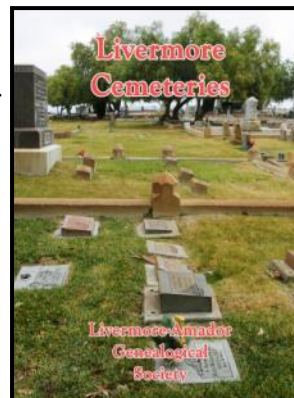


INDEX TO WOOD'S 1883 HISTORY OF ALAMEDA COUNTY

A L-AGS reprint (1999) of a rare typescript published by the WPA in 1936. The original history by Myron Winslow Wood contained an index limited to the names of prominent citizens of that time. The WPA, a federal project to employ out-of-work librarians and historians during the depression, subsidized this 9000-entry full name and subject index. [**Note:** This book is *not available* through Lulu. Send e-mail to publications.manager@L-AGS.org if you have interest in the book.

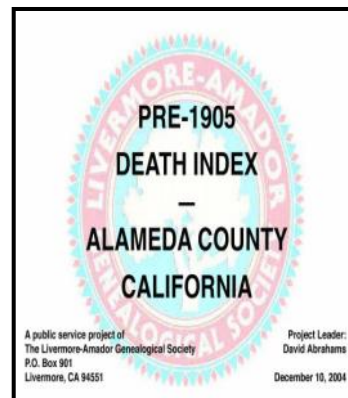
LIVERMORE CEMETERIES

This book contains over 5800 names of people buried in the four cemeteries of Livermore: Roselawn, St. Michael's Catholic, Memory Gardens, and Oak Knoll - a pioneer cemetery that has been abandoned. 1988. Indexed.



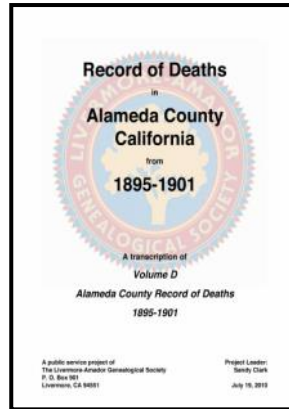
PRE-1905 DEATH INDEX FOR ALAMEDA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

Printed 2004. 3023 names of deceased persons extracted from records of cemeteries and mortuaries in Alameda County, excluding Oakland, City of Alameda and Murray Township. 84 pages, self-indexed. Very few listed are from the Livermore Valley.



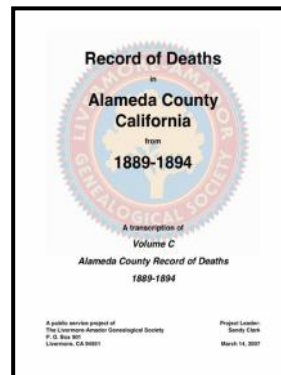
RECORD OF DEATHS IN ALAMEDA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA, FROM 1889-1894

A transcription of data on 5217 deaths documented in Volume C, Alameda County Record of Deaths, 1889-1894. Sandy Clark, Project Leader. March 14, 2007. A companion book to Pre-1905 Death Index for Alameda County, California, containing cemetery data. 140 pages, self-indexed.



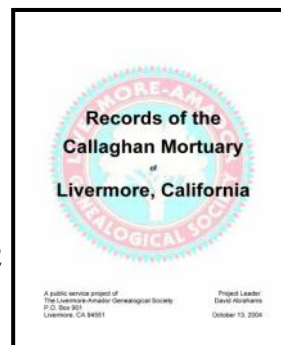
RECORD OF DEATHS IN ALAMEDA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA, FROM 1895-1901

A transcription of data on 6655 deaths documented in Volume D, Alameda County Record of Deaths, 1895-1901. Sandy Clark, Project Leader. July 20, 2010. A companion book to Record of Deaths in Alameda County, 1889-1894.



RECORDS OF THE CALLAGHAN MORTUARY, LIVERMORE, CALIFORNIA

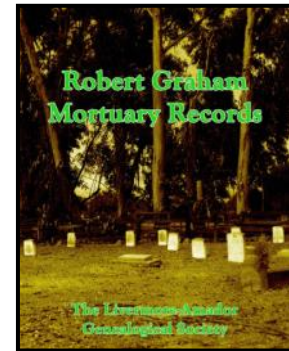
Printed 2004. Information extracted from the mortuary records for 1522 persons who died during the periods 1895-1897 and 1917-1940. 71 pages, indexed.



ROBERT GRAHAM MORTUARY RECORDS (358 entries)

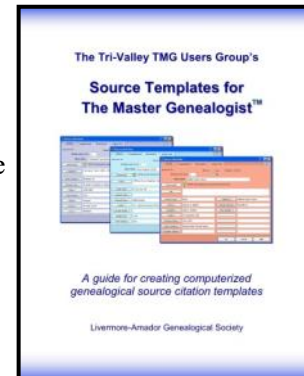
Records of the Robert Graham Mortuary of Livermore, California, from 1878 to 1887 with a brief set of additional records from 1893. The records were transcribed sometime after 1893,

probably by Elmer Still, former editor of the Livermore Echo. The late Janet Newton, noted local historian, owned the original typescript of the data, and bequeathed it to the Livermore Heritage Guild.



SOURCE TEMPLATES FOR THE MASTER GENEALOGIST(TM)

A guide for creating computerized genealogical source citation templates for The Master Genealogist(TM) software package. Each source type template includes the template structure for footnotes and bibliography, as well as citation examples of each. In addition, there are a number of extra tips, ideas and discussion points. These examples and pointers may serve as useful guides when creating source citations in other genealogy software applications.



If you purchased the book you may obtain the templates by email TVMG.editors@L-AGS.org. The web page in the book is not available.

Meeting News *continued from Page 2*

Pleasanton Genealogy Center — is jointly supported by L-AGS, the Friends of the Pleasanton Library, and the Pleasanton Public Library. A L-AGS genealogy docent will be available by appointment, Wednesdays from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Pleasanton Public Library, 400 Old Bernal Avenue Pleasanton, California, request a mutually agreeable appointment via e-mail: docents.chair@L-AGS.org



A Review - Ancestor Trouble: A Reckoning and a Reconciliation, by Maud Newton

By Tom Mathews

Maud Newton is a writer and critic. Ancestor Trouble: A Reckoning and a Reconciliation is her first book.

As an amateur family historian and moderator of a southern literary book club, I was excited to get an advance copy of what has been described as ‘an unflinching exploration into the history of a troubled family tree and the universal but also peculiarly American need to discover ROOTS.’

Readers hoping for a how-to manual on researching family history may be disappointed. While the author does focus a lot on genealogy, she doesn’t dwell much on standard research procedures in the search for her ancestors’ stories. Hers is more a journey of self-discovery, an attempt to come to terms with her role as the descendant of racists, slave-owners, and abusers of indigenous peoples. In addition to genealogy, which she referred to as the oldest form of logic, this exhaustively researched memoir delves deeply into genetics, history, philosophy, psychology, and theology.

Newton’s first experience with family history came when her white supremacist father showed her pedigree charts in a failed effort to show their family’s superiority over other races. As she put it:

“I got interested in researching my father’s family when I learned there were things they didn’t want me to know. My sleuthing began in a spirit of gleeful defiance shadowed by a grimly obstinate self-righteousness. I wanted to root out every secret, lie, and hypocrisy and parade their skeletons up and down the block, to refute my dad’s mythology about what he called ‘our blood.’”

She soon came to believe in the quintessential nature of genealogy, arriving at the understanding that “the stories we tell ourselves about our ancestors have the power to shape us, in some ways nearly as much as our genetics do.” She cited as an example a story that her mother was fond of telling regarding the atmosphere at home when her father came home from work.

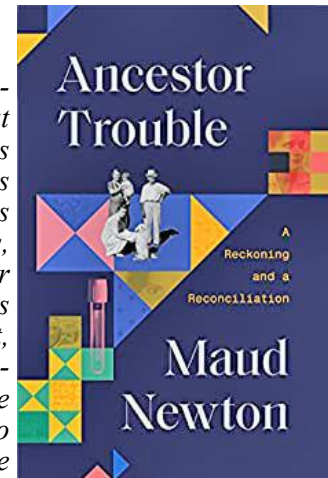
“Then his car would pull into the driveway, and,

as she gleefully dramatized it to her friends at the time and still says now, the parakeets stopped singing, the cats slunk under the sofas, the dogs tucked their tails between their legs and crept out of sight, and my sister and I hovered anxiously near the hallway, waiting to gauge his mood when he came through the door.”

As a believer in the practice of verifying facts behind one’s research, part of me cringed at what I considered the lackadaisical approach she used in reporting her family history. Much of what she reports appears to be based solely on conjecture and hearsay or derived from facial expressions in photographs. She makes up her ancestors’ childhood attitudes and imagines the appearance of family dwellings she’s never seen. She attributes causal relationships to their vices and creates entire scenarios based solely on one snippet of information. She uses the word probably 30 times and variations of the word imagine another 77. It took me a while to realize that the journey that led her to learn about her family was not the same as mine. In her words:

“How did my grandfather feel as he churned through wives and livelihoods and opted out of parenting his children? Was he regretful? Optimistic? Indifferent? Photos, letters, certificates, and census data couldn’t answer these questions, nor could my mom. I began to feel a sympathetic kinship with Robert only when I let my imagination and intuition become involved with the evidence.”

As many family researchers do, Ms. Newton turned to genetics to provide insights into her heritage but became disillusioned when she delved into the algorithms used to define geographic ancestries. Commenting on how the number of European ‘reference individuals’ vastly outnumber



Ancestor Trouble: A Reckoning and a Reconciliation, by Maud Newton

those from other continents, she cited a comment on Twitter that said: “Only white people can steal you, enslave you for hundreds of years, systematically oppress you for hundreds more, then charge you \$99.99 to tell you where they stole you from.”

In places the book veers off in totally unexpected directions. One such diversion is the chapter titled Lineage Repair in which Newton attends a seminar in the Black Mountains of western North Carolina that focused on connecting with and repairing relationships with ancestors dating back thousands of years. She described the procedure as ‘a little abstract’, an opinion supported by her claim to have communicated with a ‘sort of fairy insect’ that ‘had a fat blue -green body like a caterpillar,

large blue wings, and a blue human face.’

While this chapter did not endear me to the methods Newton employed to connect with her ancestors, she was sincere in her dedicated search for self-discovery, something we all aspire to. Her approach may be unique, but I commend her for the effort she put into it.

**Quotations are cited from an advanced reading copy provided by NetGalley and may not be the same as appears in the final published edition. This review was based on an advanced reading copy obtained at no cost in exchange for an unbiased review. While this does take any ‘not worth what I paid for it’ statements out of my review, it otherwise has no impact on the content of my review.*

James Rae Trager, his untold life story

Prologue By Sandy Aberer

James Rae Trager [b April 14, 1948] has lived with his life story untold until recently. His recollections recall some unique memories. Many young men & women love our country despite experiences that have altered their lifelong vision.

I admire my cousin, a Kansas farmer, who lived a colorful life full of compassion buried beneath bravado. Recently his advancing Parkinson’s is changing his life. He no longer can physically climb into his air-conditioned farm equipment; even handwriting has given way to typing. Jim has written about his Army experiences in Korea through his present lens colored by the passage of time and diminishment of his faculties. He is a proud American with a story that deserves to be heard.

My hope is that you look beyond his words and discover a proud caring American soldier.

My Years In The Military

By James Rae Trager

I was drafted on Feb 9, 1969. Had to be at k [Kansas] city at 4am, it was a damn cold snowy day. We were all scared to death. The first thing they wanted was 3 volunteers for xparatroopers. We all looked xx at each other, not me. No hands sent up so they divided 3 into our roster and got the 3 that way. xxxThose 3 looked like they had

seen a ghost. Then the long bus ride to Ft Leonard wood mo. We figured out that the drill sgts have to go thru training on x how to be an asshole. I got upper respiratory infection, spent 6 xx days in the hosp. Missed all the rifle training, still made marksman. enough there.

{My first plane ride}to ft sam houston a 14 passenger plane that stopped at little towns like waverly [Waverly, Kansas pop. 531]. They fed us just before we took off. now coming dowtoit would hit an air pocket and shoot up 10 ft and back down. I would fill a barth bag every time we landed, landed 8 times before sam houston, not a fun trip for me.

On to Houston xxmedical training, whoopee. We had to watch a baby being bornx, half of them got up and left the room, Just like a calf being born, i didnt mind. they didnt tell us it was mandatory, so those who got up had to watch it twice. We had to practice giving each other shots and taking temps, oh boy that was fun. no more there.

I figured i would be a bed pan jockey in a hosp in the xxxxxx states, just great. they asked where i wanted to goxx, so i put down Vietnam, south korea, or germany. I am going to south xxkorea, no leave.

[My] first [international] plane ride, x what a

James Rae Trager continued on page 14

Our Lives Changed by COVID-19 Pandemic

by Shirley Siems Terry

As genealogists, we cherish details of our ancestors' lives found in old diaries and letters and wish we knew more about their lives especially during major world events. We've just been through two years of such an event - The COVID-19 world-wide Pandemic. A Pandemic is an Epidemic that has spread over several countries or continents. We need to pass along how our own families have been affected by the disease, deaths, vaccinations, masks and politics of the last couple of years. I urge you to sit down today and write about the experiences within your own family. How were they affected? Did anyone die or have to be hospitalized or lose their job or home? How did it affect your children's or grandchildren's education? How did you all cope?

Do you remember the early months of 2020 when we were going about our daily lives attending genealogical meetings and conferences, church services, meeting friends and family at local restaurants, planning cruises or trips to Europe or just flying across country to visit relatives or attend funerals, etc.

My own life revolves around my family. Several times a year I'd fly to northern California to see my son's family or Washington state to see my older daughter's family or other relatives in the Northwest. I had a weekly routine of attending church three times a week, a monthly genealogy meeting and picking up my three local grandchildren from school two or three times a week, driving them to sports activities or doing art projects with them after school. All that ended abruptly on Friday, 13 March 2020, when local school districts announced a two-week closure which then extended through the rest of the school year. My daughter who teaches at Orange Coast College and her husband started working on-line from home. My daughter had to re-vamp lesson plans and figure out how to post on-line videos and Zoom with students plus over-see her three kids on-line school work. Suddenly they needed to set up four computer stations. They were equipped to cope pretty well but many parents were not.

We wore masks when out in public, washed our hands, socially distanced and sheltered in place. Because of back and shoulder problems, I had been having my groceries delivered for a couple of years, but they were no longer allowed to carry



them into the house. Luckily, I had one of those rolling laundry carts so I didn't have to lift and carry bags. They stopped delivering toilet paper and paper towels. My son-in-law was the hunter-gatherer as he did all their grocery shopping and brought me what I couldn't get delivered. Remember how hard it was to find toilet paper and disinfectant gel?! People hoarded it!

Before the pandemic, zoom was a camera feature, but I suddenly had a busy ZOOM schedule with church, genealogy and family. My daughter set up weekly family Zoom sessions for my three kids and me every Saturday noon. It's been a blessing that continues. Once kids' sports resumed, two of my kids often join via their phones at kids' games or enroute.

Churches went through constant changes depending on what the authorities decreed. I attended via Zoom whether they met on-line, inside or in the parking lot. All three of my genealogical societies have been on Zoom these past two years. We do hear more professional speakers, but I think we need regular meetings if we want to keep societies thriving. We'll have to wait to see what the future brings.

My Grandma Duties were terminated for a whole year to protect me until vaccines became available in early 2021, so naturally I spent more time on genealogy. Before the vaccine, I didn't go inside their house and they only came in mine to deliver or do something for me. We were lucky to live in southern California where we stayed outside masked and socially distanced to celebrate special

occasions. On that first Easter Sunday and my birthday, we visited in my open garage out of the sun. I sat in a lawn chair outside to attend my grandkids' Drive-by Birthday Parties when friends drove by at the specified time honking and waving. That first Christmas, we did a four-way family Zoom while eating dinner, and on Christmas Eve 2020, I sat on their back patio under a heat lamp with their glass accordion door wide open for our annual gift exchange.

Vaccines were available to adults in early 2021; I had my two Moderna shots in March and April.

They were administered in a drive-through at a large parking lot with two-hour bumper to bumper traffic the last five miles; the second only took about 15 minutes. I believe the Pfizer vaccine was available in July so my 15-year-old granddaughter got hers, but her younger brother and sister waited until November when the vaccine was available to those over five. Viruses tend to mutate and the Delta variant caused a surge of cases for 4th of July and summer travelers. An even more troublesome Omicron variant went rampant in December. The symptoms were milder but was more contagious. We've had two new variants since then some of us have had our second booster. Even with shots and tests, eight of my nine grandchildren have had COVID.

When you record your story, don't forget the adversities your family suffered. Did anybody lose their job, home or business? Were there hard feelings regarding family gatherings? Many unvaccinated grandparents and relatives weren't allowed to spend the holidays with their vaccinated children and grandchildren.

I've been able to write this article because I kept a running time-line of events and a table with dates and flu symptoms of more than 100 people I knew that had COVID. At least a dozen of them died due to COVID. My neighbor's father died after eight months of being hospitalized with various setbacks and on a ventilator. I had three cousins who died in those early months, supposedly not due to the virus, but similar symptoms. We need to remember that family members

were not able to visit those in hospitals or even hold normal funerals. Luckily, some of the funeral homes caught on to the Zoom craze allowing family and friends to attend virtually.

Just to remind you of how this all began. Sometime in December 2019, the Coronavirus began in Wuhan, China. It spread world-wide quickly because of air and cruise ship travelers. Entry into the U.S. was banned to travelers from China, except for US nationals, in early January 2020. A Carnival cruise ship quarantined off the coast of Japan for two weeks in February because more than 700 people were infected. Passengers had to self-quarantine in their cabins for two weeks.

Another cruise ship learned that passengers that disembarked in mid-February had the virus. The ship was at sea with new passengers and by March 3, passengers and crew were getting sick.

Italy was one of the hardest hit countries. Again, our President closed entry to all coming from that country except American nationals.

A nursing center in Kirkland WA was the early epicenter of cases and deaths in the U.S. One aged couple got the virus after attending a Mardi Gras party with a friend who was a resident.

Residents were wearing masks they made in unmasked craft groups the day before. One resident had been taken to the hospital the previous day and died of COVID-19.



James Rae Trager, continued from page 11

thrill. 10 hour flight I was looking out the little window and commented on the tiny boat in the ocean. A sgt said "tiny boat hell" he said that was a big ocean liner. He said "son se are 35000 ft up". I x thought shit and pulled the shade down, no more looking out.

They told us Vietnam and korea were the only hardship tours in the world. "Nothing going on in xxxkorea all is quiet"¹. So the plane lands at kimpo air base¹, tanks are going every x where, lying damn sgts. What happened was on our flight over there n[north] korea captured a s [south] korea boat, so all hell was xxxxx breaking loose. got off the plane after 3 hrs.. They put me in an ambulance company, which was great.

What in the hell smells, like something dead, it was everywhere. Still that damn smell wherever u go, Come to find out korea is a very poor and backward country, they dont have fertilizer like we do , so they use human feces, xxxx thats right, human shit. That is what they use to gro crops and rice. now do u understand cousin why in the 70s u wanted to take me to a Chinese place to eat, xx I said "no". it was 20 years before i couls eat

¹Gimpo International Airport, commonly known as Gimpo Airport (formerly rendered in English as Kimpo International Airport), is located in the far western end of Seoul, some 15 km (9 mi) west of the Central District of Seoul.

Life Story continued from page 5

written and placed it in 3 ring binders and gave copies to each one of them. All 3 kids subsequently told us they had learned about events in our lives that they never knew before and they were very appreciative that we took the time to document everything on paper. Hopefully years from now, after our grandkids have children and they are old enough to begin asking questions about their relatives' lives, copies of these binders will be on a bookshelf which they can look at and read and have their questions answered.

The other interesting thing that came out of this project is that really, for the first time, I realized that at certain points in my life, if I had made a different decision about what to study in college, what job offer to accept, etc., etc., my life would have probably turned out very differently. I also

rice, they will hang small fish on a wire to dry in the sun, then eat it head guts and all. enough of that.

It was 20 years before I could eat rice

Since i was a farm kid and xxx knew hou to drive a stick shift. i got to help these idiots from ny, Chicago, la how to drive. xxx u couldnt tell the hippies anything, all they wanted to do was smoke pot and pop pills. I finally got to go on some runs, one was to the 121skst evac hosp². we took soldiers there for dr visits. u a had to wait till they were done would take 3 to 4 hours. Time to kill, i went to the wards ^here the wounded from Vietnam were, what a sight at first, arms gone, legs gone and worse. Some wanted somebody to talk to, others didnt want anybody around. I would sit aind talk to some of them, hard to do.

Epilogue By Sandy Aberer

His writing is from his experiences and reflect his gut wrenching struggles in the Army and its lasting influence on his life.

²The 121st Combat Support Hospital was originally activated in 1944 as the 121st Evacuation Hospital, Semimobile and has served continuously in Korea as a field unit since 25 September 1950 and as fixed medical treatment facility, Seoul Military Hospital, since 1959. On 16 April 1994, the 121st Evacuation Hospital reorganized and was redesignated the 121st General Hospital. On 30 June 2008 the facility was formally renamed the Brian D. Allgood Army Community Hospital.

realized for the first time, that a number of times when good things happened in my life, I just happened to be at the right place at their right time which enabled me to take advantage of the opportunities when they arose.

All in all the whole process of answering the questions our kids asked us, as well as our continuing to write about our lifetime was a very interesting experience that I would recommend everyone consider doing. I think when you are finished you will be glad you took the time to record the major events in your life and your kids will appreciate the effort you took to write it down. And when some future relative of yours decides to get involved in genealogy, they will be forever appreciative that you took the time to record all of this.

Chester Creek Murders

Review by Patrick M. Lofft

Author, Nathan Dylan Goodwin, was born and raised in Hastings, East Sussex. Schooled in the town, he then completed a Bachelor of Arts degree in Radio, Film and Television, followed by a Master of Arts Degree in Creative Writing at Canterbury Christ Church University. His interests include reading, writing, photography, genealogy and travelling. As I enjoyed Nathan's prior Forensic Genealogist series I was eager to read his initial novel in the fresh Venator Cold Case series.

This tale begins in March 2020 as the Covid-19 pandemic is first appearing in the U. S. I have to admit that I wasn't sure what to expect with **The Chester Creek Murders**, the first book in a new genetic genealogy mystery series – **A Venator Cold Case**. [Venator is Latin for 'hunter'.] I have grown quite fond of Morton Farrier, forensic genealogist, the star of most of Nathan's previous novels.

The main character in Chester Creek Murders is Madison Scott-Barnhart, or Maddie as she is known, who lives in Utah and takes on difficult-to-solve genealogical mysteries. Maddie's specialty involves the use of modern DNA techniques to solve criminal cold cases. Venator, the company founded by Maddie, is based in Salt Lake City to undertake cold cases referred by police departments from around the U. S.

Maddie has a multicultural team working with her – Becky, Hudson, Kenyatta and Ross, each with specialized skills in the field of investigative genetic genealogy.

We are introduced to Maddie and her team through Detective Clayton Tyler of Delaware County, located in the southeastern corner of Pennsylvania, not far from Philadelphia. [This reviewer lived in Delaware County from 1963 to 1971.]

Maddie has agreed to take on this early 1980's cold case involving the murders of three young women whose bodies were found dumped in Chester Creek.

The general format and structure of **The Chester Creek Murders** is similar to the author's other stories, with important case details being explained to the reader through the use of flashbacks.

Suffice it to say that Venator brings the murder

case to a successful conclusion.

This tale provides a fascinating tutorial for professional DNA analysis. As an added bonus the author includes a subplot as a simpler scaled down tutorial for less demanding research needs. The Venator team-mates are professional genealogy hunters who access a wide selection of subscription databases:

Classmates.com, GenealogyBank, MyHeritage, Newspapers.com; Obituaries on Legacy.com, DNAPainter, FamilyTreeDNA, Google maps; Social media, Twitter, Flickr; Background Check sites: BeenVerified, MyLife, Spokeo, TruthFinder, WhitePages.com, etc.

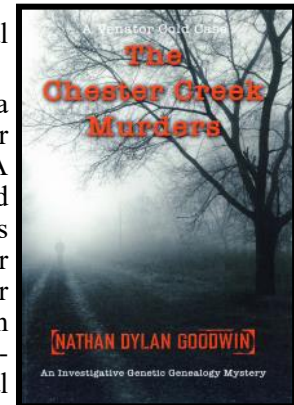
When the online sites are insufficient team members walk down the street to the Family History Library. Author Goodwin expertly leaves the reader hanging at the close of most chapters with a hunger to resume.

What I really liked about the story was that it provides a realistic view of the detailed analysis and plain old slogging work that goes into solving a cold case through genetic genealogy.

It is a fascinating look at how investigators like CeCe Moore, *The Genetic Genealogist* on ABC would solve real life cases.

DNA evidence alone doesn't solve cold cases. Investigators must combine that evidence with genealogical research, building trees up and down generations to find relatives in common with suspects. Serious genealogists will learn worthwhile research techniques. The Chester Creek Murders illustrates alternative research techniques when, for example, a state blocks access to birth records for over 100 years.

A foundation of knowledge about genetic genealogy has been established in this story and, as this is the first book in a new series, future readers who don't understand the basics about how this type of research happens should read this book to stay up to speed on the progress of future cases.



The Chester Creek Murders cover

Future General Meetings - via Zoom

Zoom is a web-based video conferencing tool.

Join the L-AGS meeting through a L-AGS email invite.

First time **Zoom** participants Learn How at YouTube.com:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9isp3qPeQ0E>

Visitors are always welcome.

Monday June 13, 7:00 p.m. - via **Zoom** - site opens 6:30 p.m.

Karen LaDuca *How to research your ancestors in Italian records*

Monday July 11, 7:00 p.m. - via **Zoom** - site opens 6:30 p.m.

Gena Philibert-Ortega *The WPA: Sources for Your Genealogy*

Monday August 8, 7:00 p.m. - via **Zoom** - site opens 6:30 p.m.

Glen Holstein, PhD *The Geography of American Genealogy*

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