

EDITOR'S PREFACE

Genealogical research often results in surprises—some felicitous, some disappointing. We have all experienced or heard stories about how DNA results connect us to newly discovered relatives. Having submitted my DNA to the major companies for analysis of Y-DNA, mtDNA, and autosomal DNA, I have reaped benefits from this popular tool. My mother's willingness to join in this endeavor has been enormously helpful because some autosomal DNA relationships, particularly among fourth, fifth cousins, and beyond stop at her generation. Prior to the advent of DNA research, I thought I had missed out on Vermont ancestors or descendants even though my great-great-grandfather William H. Rhodes, a stone mason, passed through Barre and South Ryegate where three of his children were born, but not my great-grandfather, born in Mason, New Hampshire.

Thus, it came as a revelation to me when Margo Masterson of Brandon was listed among my mother's autosomal DNA matches with 37cMs across two segments. I first met Margo over twenty years ago when I was her daughters' high school teacher. As posted in her online family tree, Margo's Vermont-born ancestors seemed to have no connection to my mother's ancestors, who were largely from Maine, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts. Nonetheless, the relationship puzzle took hold of me, and I worked on it for six months. This was my first experience in triangulation, the attempt to find the common ancestors among three or more people. Many people seeking answers from DNA matches must understand that someone's contribution of a DNA sample does not always equate with any deep understanding of their forebears. Chasing down many rabbit holes, I eventually found a common denominator among several people who descended from Cephias Kemp who married Eunice Freeman in Pomfret, Vermont, on 28 January 1828. Eunice was the daughter of Elisha Freeman and Hannah Tupper, both born in Sandwich, Massachusetts.

In eighteenth-century Sandwich, my Freeman *and* Tupper ancestors entwined with those of Margo and other descendants of Cephias Kemp. Our ancestral couples were seven generations distant from my mother's generation; but due to the consequence of several consanguineous marriages among these Sandwich families, we inherited more autosomal DNA than one would have expected. Solving this puzzle of a mystery cousin has broadened my horizons in tracing distant Vermont kin and their migration patterns. Of course, we anticipate that readers of this journal may have similar stories to tell.

Researching family history through traditional means occasionally results in confoundment when family stories do not match facts in written records. **Names of French Canada Lost in Vermont: Esau Morris of Shoreham** started as an investigation of his Mohawk ancestry, which his descendants fervently believed. While my ensuing study of the Morris family dispelled that claim, instead a remarkable story unfolded about Esau's father whose extraordinary biography was not passed down to descendants. One of the resources invaluable to unlocking Esau's origin was

the published marriage and baptismal repertoires of Vermont Catholic Churches. At a time when not all births or marriages were recorded with town or city clerks, these abstracted records fill that void. If it were a French-speaking priest who recorded the sacramental event, he often wrote the original French name *Lavoie*, not its Vermont variant, *Lowell* or *Morris*.

Experienced researchers know it takes years of patience and persistence to complete a fully documented ancestral family sketch. Carole Gardner's first contribution to *Vermont Genealogy*, **Identifying the Family of Elisha Drew of Barnston, Québec, and Vermont**, takes us on a complex migration from Maine to Québec, and then to Vermont, back to Québec, and points west. Once again, we see how fluid families were in crossing the border from northern Vermont into the Eastern Townships. With two wives and children from each marriage, Elisha Drew, born in 1806, became the progenitor of an exceptionally long generation: his eldest daughter was born in 1827; his youngest son was born in 1872 and died in 1962! Elisha's descendants today span the continent.

Ruth Burt Ekstrom and Avis Conley Hayden employ rich source material in the form of family letters that help tell about the unusual move in **From Vermont to Kentucky, Then to Texas: Newton and Almira (Burt) Gould**. The authors reveal motivations why this Bennington couple moved south before the Civil War yet maintained their ties to home.

Robert M. Murphy has been working on his Crown family ancestry for years and still seeks answers. The first installment of **Vermont Families in 1791: John Crown of Newbury, Vermont, and His Descendants**, underscores how some individuals and families manage to elude records, even when they stay in the same community throughout their lives.

Scott Andrew Bartley takes us back to the time before the establishment of Vermont, when border and boundary disputes took bloodshed to resolve in **The Connecticut River Valley Before Settlement and the Soldiers of Fort Dummer**. He presents an overview of the colonial wars relevant to the establishment of Fort Dummer and provides an abstract of muster rolls of soldiers garrisoned there from 1724 through 1757. This list, which has not appeared in print before, represents an important source for the study of early Vermont.

Our thanks to Bob Murphy again for his investment of time in compiling the **Name Index to Volume 24**. Back issues of *Vermont Genealogy*, to within the last five years, will be available on the *American Ancestors* website in 2020. Besides bringing *Vermont Genealogy* to a wider audience, our subscribers will have the opportunity to use a master index will facilitate locating names within the fine compilations of past authors.

Michael F. Dwyer, FASG
Pittsford, Vermont