



Newsletter of the Genealogical Society of Vermont

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President's Message

Bob Murphy

First things first. I want to welcome Deidre Dagner, our new Newsletter editor, to the GSV team. Deidre calls Virginia home, but she has many ties to Vermont, and will, I am sure, bring new insights and new ideas to bear in her work with this very important medium of communication with and between members. I look forward to her participation, and encourage every one of you to consider sending something to Deidre for publication in the Newsletter. Editorship of a newsletter such as ours can be a labor of love for just so long unless support is given in terms of member submittals. So help her make the Newsletter of great continuing interest to all members, and get involved! If you have ideas for how the Newsletter could be improved, share them with Deidre. Thanks.



I hope many of you take the time to prepare a submission for the next volume of *Vermont Families in 1791, Vol. 3*, which Jonathan Stevens is preparing for publication. I am working on three families in northwestern Vermont, and although it is challenging to fill in details on families from that time period, it is immensely satisfying when pieces begin to fall into place. One thing I have learned is that vital records are few and far between; so it is necessary to rely on a wide variety of other resources. Those include church records, probate records, newspapers, and (yes) published genealogies. Sometimes the only clue you can get lies within the work of those who came before us and assembled those immense tomes on various families. So get to work be included in this next volume of this important work. Guidelines can be found on our website

(Continued on page 2)

Quick Tips

Is there never enough time for your genealogy? Turn your long commute or driving trip into learning time. Genealogy podcasts are free, informative, and fun!

Podcasts are a type of radio show that you download from the internet and play back on an MP3 player—or iPod— or even your computer. My commute to town here is over thirty minutes long with poor radio reception, and my research trips entail many hours of highway driving. I listen to genealogy, history and science podcasts while I drive (with only one earplug in place, though, for safety) and I no longer feel I'm wasting all that time.



Your Ancestors' Words



You may think the topic of Revolutionary War pensions has been exhaustively covered by now. Every major genealogy convention offers a lecture or class about the information you can mine from these records. I have transcribed thousands of pension file applications, but I still discover something new and fascinating about the history or people of that time regularly.

My fifth great-grandmother stated her first child was born "on the Dark Day" in her widow's application. That term was a new one for me — what the heck was the "Dark Day"? To my surprise, I easily found the topic when I searched the Internet. Many New England scholars and history buffs have written about it, and I subsequently discovered references to it in other pension files. My ancestor's child was born on May 19, 1780 — the Dark Day. *(see page 4)*

As you read the faded script on documents over two centuries old, you feel transported in time. There is a sense of reverence and awe, as if you are in the presence of your ancestors. These are the words they uttered, the stories they told about themselves, their friends and family. Their accounts reveal their humor, courage, and frailties — and sometimes their secrets.

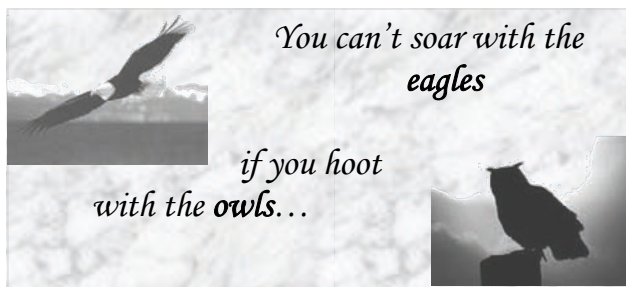
There are many accounts of more than one widow coming forth to apply for the same soldier's pension, as well as indications of family feuds. Thomas Hughes, the son of a Revolutionary War soldier, declared himself the sole surviving child and heir to the benefits due his father. He was granted his father's pension in 1850. However, there is also a letter in the same file, dated 1851, from the attorney for Joseph Hughes, *(Continued on page 4)*

(Continued from page 1)

(www.genealogyvermont.org) or by contacting Jonathan (stevens@vermontel.net).

Although you will be reading this long after the New Year has begun, this is being written on Christmas day 2009 and I want to wish all of you a very happy and prosperous New Year.

Bob Murphy
rmm@sover.net



Spring Meeting Notice

Preliminary Details -- Joint Meeting with the New Hampshire Society Of Genealogists

The GSV meeting announcement published in the November 2009 Newsletter was in error. Our Spring Meeting, held jointly with the NHSOG, will be on **Saturday, April 24, 2010**, at the **Howe Library in Hanover, NH**. Program details have yet to be worked out. As soon as the details are available, they will be posted on our website, www.genealogyvermont.org and members will be notified by email or mail.

Never Trust a Tombstone ...

Just a warning. As you peruse the cemetery and find that ancestral gravestone, all may not be as it first seems. Here are three cases in point from my own experience.

As I was researching the Hall family of Fairfield, Vt., for inclusion in Vermont Families in 1791, I came across an Orange Hall. According to a gravestone transcription, Orange died on 2 Jan 1791 at the age of 25. That information gave me a death date and a presumed birth year – ca. 1766. Sounds good, right?



Because in that time period it is often difficult to nail down anything – birth, marriage or death! Later in my research, however, I found the probate record for Orange Hall's estate. The process began on 12 Jun 1794, on which date Edmund L. Hall requests the court's permission to be the administrator of his brother's estate. Quite a bit of time between the death and the beginning of the probate process! It got me thinking: did the transcriber confuse a "4" for a "1" on that old [presumed] slate tombstone, and was it really "Jun" rather than "Jan"? Later on, further evidence concerning Orange's death arose when I uncovered a deed dated 13 Nov 1793. Orange was a witness to the deed! I have not been to Fairfield yet to view the tombstone myself, so I don't know if it is in error or if it was

simply misread, but my assumption is that Orange probably died sometime in early Jun 1794. Now I am also unsure of his age at death.

A second example concerns the second wife of the above-mentioned Edmund Hall. His first wife Chloe died in 1819. Edmund's subsequent marriage to a Mrs. [Betsey] Gould in 1822 is documented in Fairfield vital records. A gravestone in a local cemetery identifies Betsey Hall as the wife of Edmund Hall and gives her date of death as 24 Aug 1827 at the age of 60 years. Imagine my surprise when I ran across the following advertisement in a 23 Oct 1828 issue of The Repository of St. Albans:

Notice: Whair as my wife Betsey hais Conducted in such amanner that I for bid all Persons harboring or trusting hur on my accounte as I will not pay any deat of hir contracting after this date. Fairfield, 22th. A 1828. Edmond L. Hall.

Now I'm not entirely sure what the "A" in the "date" means – could be either April or August, I suppose, but the point here is that Betsey was apparently alive and misbehaving (according to Edmond) in 1828, a year after the death date given on her tombstone. I have yet to find any other evidence indicating her actual date of death.

(Continued on page 3)

Editor's Note

My sincere thanks to the GSV Board members, and especially to Bob Murphy, for their help and support as I prepared this issue of our Newsletter. My first priority is learning more about you, my fellow GSV members, and the topics you would like to read about. Please send me your suggestions, by email or letter, for future issues.

I would also love to hear about your genealogy triumphs or "brick walls." For those of you lucky enough to live in Vermont, the information you need may not be difficult to find, but for almost 75% of our members, researching Vermont families can be problematic. The best part of genealogical research, though, is forming relationships with other genealogists, who just happen to be the most generous, interesting and thoughtful people in the world. Please get involved with offers of help or requests for guidance. We all have one or the other!

You can contact me either through the GSV addresses, or directly at: deidreanne5@gmail.com or 462 Shannon Glen Dr, Louisa, VA, 23093.

Deidre Burrige Dagner



(Continued from page 2)

My own dear departed great-grandfather, James Murphy, died at Lowell, Vt., on 19 Oct 1901. His reported age at death was 76 years, yielding a presumed birth year of 1825. His tombstone in St. Ignatius Cemetery at Lowell states that he lived from 1825 to 1901. Nice agreement. It was many years after viewing the death record and tombstone that I learned the truth. All records and family sources indicated that James had been born in Montreal. An exhaustive search of the card file that used to exist at the Quebec National Archives in Montreal finally uncovered his baptismal record on 12 Nov 1830, at Notre-Dame-de-Montreal. It very clearly stated that he had been born the previous day, the 11th. The tombstone birth date was off by 5 years!

So the moral to this story is to take all gravestone information with a grain (indeed, a box) of salt. The stone may have been erected in the loved one's memory long after his/her passing, and may have been the best information that was available to those who were then surviving. Here's hoping the tombstone dates for your family members are more reliable than are some of mine.

Bob Murphy



Technically Speaking

If you haven't explored *Google* yet, it is well worth your time to get acquainted with it. *Google* (www.google.com) is much more than a website for searching the Internet or a free mail account that won't have to change every time you change your Internet provider. You can look at a satellite image of almost any place on *Google's* maps, sometimes down to the street level view. This feature helped my mother remember the exact locations of important places in her hometown. *Google* has a Time Line feature and 7 million books online.

Online books alone are worth the price of an Internet connection. Old, out of print books are not only difficult to find, but are also very expensive. Additionally, you may not even be aware that an obscure genealogy manuscript or town history exists. Your search through the millions of books for a name or location could yield quite a few surprises. You can even download the entire book and print it out if prefer to read a paper copy. (You may need a faster printer and more bookshelves for many of the books, though!)

Several other websites offer books online, also. Many libraries have a HeritageQuest subscription. (My library system even allows internet connections from a home computer, so you may have that option as well.) HeritageQuest has online books, city directories, and books that may still be under copyright. There is a limit to the number of pages you can download at one time, but it is a large amount.

The BYU Family History Archive (www.lib.byu.edu/fhc) has 30,000 digitized books so far. Like *Google*, access is free. Some other free websites with book collections or indices to where you can find a particular book online are

- Online Books Page (www.onlinebooks.library.upenn.edu)
- Internet Archive (www.archive.org)
- Access Genealogy (www.accessgenealogy.com)
- Classics of American Colonial History (www.dinsdoc.com/colonial-1.htm)
- Free History and Genealogy Books Online (www.genealogysearch.org/free/digitalpublications.html)

Happy hunting!



?? Mystery Photo ??

Please take out your magnifying glass and examine the picture on page 8. The words "Marche" and "Beauchamp" can be seen on the side of a delivery truck. This was taken somewhere in Vermont, about 1940, I believe. Can you identify the location? Let me know at deidreanne5@gmail.com

(Continued from page 1)

another son of the soldier. It informs the War Department that Joseph Hughes is still alive and is suing his brother Thomas for half of his father's pension.

There are statements from soldiers who deserted from the British forces that are immensely important to genealogists. These deserters enlisted in the American army under an alias. They knew if they were captured by the British in battle and identified as a deserter, they would be shot. I have found a few cases in which the soldier revealed his original name as well as his new name. (Unfortunately, my fifth great-grandfather was not one of them.)

Some soldiers' stories have a powerful impact, regardless of its personal connection to the reader. Firsthand accounts of the disastrous Siege of Charleston are especially poignant:

Our army was completely defeated. More than half of our regiment was killed or wounded. The sick and wounded was put on board of some small vessels for Charleston, SC. The vessel that I was aboard after leaving the Land sprung a leak. We fired signals for relief from the other vessels their being 5 or 6 in number. One of these boats returned. Our own boat with that was laden with men and was to have returned for the balance but night coming on, storm and rain, the boats never returned. The captain threw out his anchor with hopes of getting relief from the French fleet but the storm raged so during the night that our cable [cable] was broken and in the morning we were out of sight of land on the ocean. The storm continued to rage for 4 or 5 days and we expecting every moment to be lost. Every thing belonging to the vessel was torn in pieces and it was with great difficulty that [it] could be prevented from sinking. The 5th day at night we ran aground. We all gave up for death but that God who doeth all things well was with us. The vessel was so near the land that by laying plank we could walk to the shore. There was great rejoicing on the little Island that night although we had nothing to eat but our lives were spared. In the morning we found ourselves on a little Island inhabited alone by wild beasts. We remain[ed] there some 6 or 7 days and then we buried some 4 or 5 of our poor fellows who starved to death. We were cast away about 50 miles south of St. Augustine in West Florida which at that time was in the possession of the British. They heard of us and send for us claiming to be brought to St. Augustine claiming us for prisoners of war. They sent horses for all those who could not walk. We remained prisoners at St. Augustine 4 months and were then filed out and sent to Charleston to be exchanged." [Note — after the exchange, they discovered the British were laying siege to Charleston. The entire American force surrendered to the British and the soldier

Welcome New Members!

Julie Foster Van Camp

2089 Baker View Rd
Lopez Island, WA, 92861
Interests: **Foster - Walker - Carr - Stone - Hopkins**

Donna Robinson

1860 Lake Wildwood
Varna, IL 61375
Interests: **Robinson - Smith - Marsh**

Gary Keyser

11324 SE Bush St
Portland, OR 97266
Interests: **Marshall**

The Dark Day — May 19, 1780

According to contemporary journals and newspaper accounts, shortly before ten on the morning of May 19th, 1780, the sky was "attended with a gloom nearly resembling that of an Eclipse of the Sun." "Fowles retired to their Roosts" and cows returned to their stalls. All of New England lit candles to eat their noonday meal, and many of them sought refuge in their churches, fearing Judgment Day had come. The mysterious gloom lasted the entire day. Most modern scientists believe smoke from the huge forest fires burning in New Hampshire, started by new settlers clearing their land, combined with a stalled weather front from the opposite direction. The smoke and fog and cloud cover remained stationary, neither strong enough to dislodge the other. Whatever the cause, it was unique to that one day in history, and was never reported again.

was again taken prisoner. The prisoners kept escaping from the barracks there, so they were put aboard a prison ship where many of the men "enlisted in the British service with the hope of getting clear." The soldier received two dollars from the government after being held prisoner nine months.] Extracted from the pension application of James Hughes, Virginia Line, number S-7046 . *NARA micro publication M-804.*

If you have ancestors who lived in this country during the Revolutionary War, I urge you to search the pension files even if they did not serve in that war. You can see digital images of the complete application files from the NARA M-804 microfilms on the website, *Footnote* (<http://www.footnote.com>). You can search the pages for *all* the names in the files, not just the soldiers' names. One of your ancestors may be mentioned in these files. He or she may have been a neighbor, or a witness for a soldier. *Footnote* has a free 7 day trial, or you can pay a per page fee. Monthly and annual memberships are also available.

Deidre Burrige Dagner





2010 Events Schedule



Date	Sponsor	Location	Title		Time	More at:
Feb - Mar	CA Genealogical Society	Oakland Regional Family History Ctr, 4766 Lincoln Ave, Oakland, CA	Weekly – Intermediate Genealogy Classes	Cost \$15 for materials	Tues 7pm – 8:30pm	http://www.oaklandfhc.org
Feb 20	Ancestry.com & New England Historic Genealogical Society	Westin Copley Place Hotel, Boston, MA	Family History Day	Cost: \$30 (includes parking)	9:00am – 4:00pm	http://www.newenglandancestors.org/9278.asp
Feb 27	CGS Hosts CSGA Meeting	CGS Library, 2201 Broadway at 22 nd , Ste LL2, Oakland, CA	Full Day Event Open Meeting	Registration req'd	9:00am – 4:00am	http://www.csga.com
Mar 27	New England Family History Conference	91 Jordan Rd, Franklin, MA			8:30am – 4:00pm	http://www.nefamilyhistory.com
Mar 27	VT-French Canadian Genealogical Society	VT-FCGS Library, 123 Ethan Allen Ave, Colchester, VT	Organizing Your Genealogy	Open to the public	10:30am – 12:00am	http://www.vt-fcgs.org
Apr 10	VT-French Canadian Genealogical Society	VT-FCGS Library, 123 Ethan Allen Ave, Colchester, VT	Brick Wall Advice”	Open to the public	10:30am – 12:00am	http://www.vt-fcgs.org
Apr 24	VGS/NHSOG Joint Spring Meeting	Howe Library, Hanover, NH				http://www.genealogyvermont.org , http://nhsog.org
Apr 28-May 1	National Genealogical Society	Salt Lake City, UT	2010 Family History Conference			http://www.ngsgenealogy.org
Aug 5-8	Sheldon Family Association	Holiday Inn, Grand Rapids, MI	72nd Annual Gathering for Genealogy & Friendship			http://www.sheldonfamily.org



GSV Publications

The society offers the following publications for purchase by our members and readers. GSV members receive a 10% discount on the purchase price. Postage and handling is extra—please add \$3.50 for the first item and \$1.00 for each additional item in the same order to the same address. Mail your checks, payable to GSV, to:

Genealogical Society of Vermont, P. O. Box 14, Randolph, VT 05060-0014

Vermont Families in 1791, Vol. 1 is out of print.

Vermont Families in 1791, Vol. 2. Scott A. Bartley, ed., 1997, 304 pp., hardbound. Item No. GSV 5; \$27.00 members, \$30.00 non-members. This second volume covers 107 families, has improved formatting and more complete information on the third generation of early Vermonters.

Vital Records of Putney, Vermont to the Year 1900. Compiled and edited by Ken Stevens, 1992, 406 pp. Item No. GSV 2; \$27.00 members, \$30.00 non-members. This is a complete compilation from all primary sources available in the town. This is augmented by the ministerial records of the pastors who served as early as 1776.

Vital Records of Rockingham, Vermont and the Records of the First Church of Rockingham. Reprinted from the 1902 and 1908 first editions, newly indexed by Chris-

topher T. Norris and Scott A. Bartley, 323 pp., hardbound. Item No. GSV 3; \$27.00 members, \$30.00 non-members. Reprinted from the first editions of 1908 and 1902, this is an important source of one of Vermont's oldest towns. The town records extend to 1845 and church records from 1773 to 1839. New is an indispensable index of nearly 1,000 names.

Georgia, Vermont Vital Records. Peter S. Mallet, ed., 1995, hardbound. Item No. GSV 4; \$27.00 members, \$30.00 nonmembers. This volume presents all births, baptisms, marriages, deaths and burials recorded in the town. All the civil books were transcribed as well as the records from the Georgia Plains Baptist Church, Congregational Church, and Methodist Church of Georgia and North Fairfax.

Windsor County, Vermont Probate Index, 1778-1899. Scott Andrew Bartley and Marjorie-J. Bartley, compilers,

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Please include your membership number for renewals and member discounts.

Want To Contact Us?

Our website is at

<http://www.genealogyvermont.org/>

News, articles and comments for the newsletter should be mailed to:

Deidre Dagner, Newsletter Editor
462 Shannon Glen Drive
Louisa, VA 23093
deidreanne5@gmail.com

Newsletter deadlines are:

Dec 15 — February issue
Mar 15 — May issue
June 15 — August issue
Sept 15 — November issue

Bob Murphy, President
PO Box 14,
Randolph, VT 05060-0014
rmm@sover.net

Vermont Genealogy, the GSV Journal
contact information:

Scott Andrew Bartley, Editor
Vermont Genealogy
20 March Avenue

West Roxbury, MA 02132-2604

E-mail: drew@yourgenealogist.com

Send copies of relevant books for journal review to:

John A. Leppman
Book Review Editor
20 Thwing Lane
Bellows Falls, VT 05101-1640

Moving? Let Us Know

Please inform GSV if you move. Send notices to:

Diantha Howard
57 East Shore North
Grand Isle, VT 05458

Advertising Policy

The newsletter accepts paid advertising at \$3.00 per column inch. It must relate to genealogy, preferably Vermont, and must be received before the deadline listed above. Checks made out to GSV are sent to the newsletter editor along with the *exact* wording for the ad. *GSV offers no warranty on the services of advertisers.*

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2000, 560 pp., hardbound. Item No. GSV 6; \$45.00 members, \$50.00 nonmembers. This is a comprehensive index of all files in the Windsor County Probate Court Districts —Windsor and Hartford. The records cover the period from the earliest 1778 records through the end of the nineteenth century, more than 20,000 probate files. The files are indexed by the name of the major party in the case, place of residence, probate district, type of record, year, and probate record volume.

Index to Branches & Twigs, 1972–1995. Robert M. Murphy, ed. 2000, 572 pp., hardbound. Item No. GSV 7, \$58.50 members, \$65.00 nonmembers. This is the every-name index to GSV's *Branches & Twigs*, published for 24 years in 96 issues. The 180,000 entries include every genealogically important name mentioned in every issue. Separate sections of this work list the coverage of each Apple Orchard installment, and provide a full author and title index to book reviews. *Branches & Twigs* included large quantities of information of interest to family historians.

Sudbury, Vermont: Transcription of Vital Records and Genealogies of Residents. Mary Ann Z. Wheeler, 2000, 416 pp., hardbound. Item No. GSV 9; \$44.55 members, 49.50 nonmembers. This book is a comprehensive transcription of census and vital records for Sudbury, plus carefully compiled genealogies of families. This book is among the very best genealogical resources about a Vermont town. This is a cooperative publication between GSV and Picton Press.

A Bibliography for Vermont Genealogy, 2nd edition. John A. Leppman, 2005, softbound. Item No. GSV 10, \$9.00 members, \$10.00 nonmembers. (Mail orders should add \$1.50 for postage and handling, not the \$3.50 normally charged.) This is a new edition of *A Bibliography for Vermont Genealogy* was released in April 2005. It includes more listings than the first edition, most published since 2000. It is keyed to Drew Bartley's *Genealogies Found in Vermont Histories* (Vol. 10, no. 1 of *Vermont Genealogy*, also designated GSV publication number 10).

Orphaned Genealogy Collections



I get many solicitations to donate my genealogy collection and papers to historical and genealogical societies when I die. I will certainly make sure they are passed along to a society versus being tossed out, but I still hope that one of my children or grandchildren will catch the genealogy bug and place "dibs" on it. There is nothing more alarming, and sad, than to peruse auctions, garage sales, or antique shops and see an old bible, photo albums, or manuscript collecting dust. (Unless they pertain to a family you are interested in, of course.)

I take that back. The only thing more alarming is the destruction of these items. As you know, genealogists find gems in the most mundane articles. Non-genealogists often see old passports, military papers, recipe and phone books, even bibles, as useless items that take up valuable, usually limited, storage space. The list of items we value, but have no market value, is enormous.

When you feel some items in your collection are no longer needed or pertinent to your research, what do you do with them? Today, a lot of people are putting them up for sale on internet auctions or booksellers. There are *thousands* of genealogy related items for sale on eBay, for instance. I have posted some of the books I no longer use on Amazon's website (www.amazon.com). Some websites will charge a small percentage of the sale price as a listing fee, others are free. If the article is surname or location specific, an announcement on a genealogy forum specific to that subject could turn up an interested buyer.

Those who do not use or have access to a computer can always send a letter to a newsletter that targets a surname or location, such as this one. I will gladly post an announcement if you provide contact information, as space permits.



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Membership includes our journal *Vermont Genealogy* and four issues of our newsletter. These publications will keep you abreast of genealogical news and present current articles on genealogical source material, conferences and meetings, techniques and queries. If you would like to receive a membership card, please include a self addressed stamped envelop with your dues. Send membership dues and applications to:

GSV Membership Chairperson
57 East Shore North
Grand Isle, VT 05458

All other correspondence, except for submissions and queries to *Vermont Genealogy* and items for the *Newsletter*, should be sent to

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Randolph, VT 05060-0014.



?? Mystery Photo ??