

NYG&B

NEW YORK
Researcher

NEW YORK GENEALOGICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY | VOLUME 33 | ROOTSTECH 2023

RootsTech 2023 Special Digital Edition



NYG&B

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The New York Genealogical and Biographical Society is the most authoritative resource for research on families with New York connections.

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- Membership supports our mission to preserve and provide access to New York's records. Our dedicated staff and volunteers work tirelessly to make **collections more accessible** through our online and printed resources.
- The **NYG&B Online Collections** enable members to uncover their own New York stories, while also safeguarding collections for future generations.

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I. Population. CENSUS of the Inhabitants in the District of the 17th Ward, City of New York, on the 1st day of June, 1855.

THE NEW YORK GENEALOGICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL RECORD

NEW YORK Researcher
NEW YORK GENEALOGICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY | SUMMER 2017 | VOLUME 28 | NUMBER 2

**Reversing the Course:
Tracing My Family's Migration from
Virginia to Upstate New York**

Oswego County

NYG&B

Explore Our Online Records

- The NYG&B Record**
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Learn about the many collections we have to offer.
- Get Help**
Video tutorials, FAQs, and ways to get in touch.
- What's New**
We're publishing new records all the time. See our latest additions.

Since 1869, the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society has been preserving historical records that are useful to family history researchers investigating people from New York State.

Much of this material is now available to search and view on the web, and we're adding new online records all the time.

Explore All Online Collections

Below you will find a complete list of each online collection. Click the title of each collection to view a full description and search the collection individually.

Collection Title	Collection Category	Location	Collection Type	More Info
Account Journal of Dr. Amariah Church Sherrard	Account Books	Tompkins County	Image Browse	View description
Albany County Cemeteries Records	Cemetery	Albany County	Image Browse	View description
Albany County Religious Records	Religious Records	Albany County	Text & Images	View description
Allegany County Cemeteries Records	Cemetery	Allegany County	Image Browse	View description
Bible Records from the American Bible Society	Religious Records	All NY Counties	Indexed	View description
Broome County Histories and Directories	County Histories	Broome County	OCR	View description
Cattaraugus County Cemeteries Records	Cemetery	Cattaraugus County	Image Browse	View description

NEW YORK Family History Research Guide and Gazetteer

NYG&B NEW YORK GENEALOGICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY

PART ONE

Dear friends and fellow researchers,

In celebration of RootsTech 2023, we put together this special edition of the *New York Researcher*, the quarterly member magazine of the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society (NYG&B). We bring you articles and columns to help with your New York research, and I have the privilege of working with genealogists, librarians, county historians, and NYG&B members to share their knowledge and expertise.

Articles in this magazine inform our community about records available for research, and some tell the story of New Yorkers. Reading an article that seems out of the ordinary for your personal research can broaden your perspective, opening new possibilities and paths of research. This special issue contains five of those articles published in the last year.

- Obtaining New York State Birth Records: Insights from the Experts (page 5)
- New York City Public Digitized Vital Records: Now Online for Free! (page 9)
- County Board of Supervisors Proceedings: A Genealogy Source Revealed (page 12)
- Sojourner Truth’s Newly Rediscovered 1828 Court Record (page 16)
- Special Collections and Archives at Hamilton College (page 19)

Each issue contains regular columns in addition to the articles pertaining to research. They include a column called “New Access and Databases,” designed to keep you up-to-date on newly released or digitized collections. The “Five Next Steps” column, often written by an NYG&B member, helps researchers plan the pathway forward in their research. A featured county column provides history and resources for that county as well as images—check the source of the pictures for more images for that county or look for a similar source for your county of interest. Two other regular columns, “Latest Online for NYG&B Members” and “Highlights

of The NYG&B Record” keep members in the loop in case they missed the eNews or email informing them of recently released content. And finally, “In Other Lines” introduces our community to one of our members, their research interests, and how the NYG&B has helped them.

Finally, in each issue we share news and events happening at the NYG&B. In this special issue, you can learn about our new Digitization Center, the initiatives to locate and digitize records, and our volunteers who contribute to making records more accessible for all of you. Plus we share information about learning experiences and programs brought to you by the NYG&B.

We hope you enjoy this issue and will want to learn more. Members access the entire archive of the *New York Researcher* in our NYG&B Online Collections. And we send a link to all our members for each new issue released. Join the NYG&B as a member for that access and more (newyorkfamilyhistory.org/join). Or check with your local or regional genealogy library, as they may subscribe to the *New York Researcher* and *The NYG&B Record*, our quarterly journal (see page 32 of this digital issue for “Highlights of The NYG&B Record”).

Happy researching,



Susan R. Miller, Editor
NYG&B Director, Publications

NEW YORK RESEARCHER | VOLUME 33, NUMBER 5 | ROOTSTECH 2023—SPECIAL DIGITAL EDITION

Susan R. Miller, Editor

CONTENTS

About the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society4	Sojourner Truth’s Newly Discovered 1828 Court Record, by Stanton F. Biddle, PhD..... 16	Latest Online for NYG&B Members.....26
Obtaining New York State Birth Records: Insights from the Experts5	Special Collections and Archives at Hamilton College, by Jeremy Katz, MA, CA..... 19	New Access and Databases28
Five Next Steps—When You Find that Birth Record, by Christy Vogt Dolan, MA....8	NYG&B’s New Digitization Center: Expanding Our Capabilities and Services21	Featured New York County: Tioga County (formed 1791).....29
New York City Public Digitized Vital Records: Now Online for Free!9	NYG&B’s Upstate Initiative.....23	Highlights of <i>The NYG&B Record</i>32
County Board of Supervisors Proceedings: A Genealogy Source Revealed, by Rhonda Hoffman, MLS..... 12	Volunteers of the NYG&B24	Exploring Our Past: The NYG&B Visits Northern Ireland33
		In Other Lines: Charles and Rose Lankford.....34
		NYG&B Learning Experiences36

About the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society

Since 1869, the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society (NYG&B) has been preserving, documenting, and sharing the stories of families across the state of New York. Through our programs, resources, publications, and services we actively engage with genealogists, biographers, historians, and organizations to establish the broader contexts of New York's past and foster connections between New York's past and the present.

The NYG&B publishes the *New York Researcher* and *The NYG&B Record*; both are quarterlies. Subscriptions to each are among the many benefits of Membership. The NYG&B warmly welcomes new members; information on Membership and benefits may be found on our website, newyorkfamilyhistory.org.

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ON THE COVER

Prospect Park, designed by Frederick Law Olmstead and Calvert Vaux, is Brooklyn's second largest park. It was substantially completed by 1873, a year for which 5,502 birth records were recorded by the City of Brooklyn. William Merritt Chase (1849–1916), *Terrace, Prospect Park* [Brooklyn]. Smithsonian American Art Museum, Gift of John Gellatly ca. 1887 (si.edu/object/terrace-prospect-park%3Aasaam_1929.6.12).

New York State Department of Health
DIVISION OF VITAL STATISTICS
CERTIFICATE OF BIRTH 25467

PLACE OF BIRTH (To be inserted by Registrar)
 County *Suffolk*
 Township *Brookhaven*
 Village *Center Moriches*
 City *Center Moriches*

Registered No. *14*

No. *14* FOR GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH ONLY
 St. *14* Ward *14*
 If birth occurred in a hospital or institute, give its NAME (instead of street and number)
 If child is not yet named, make supplemental report, as directed

2 Full name of child *Lloyd Hawkins Wilcox*

3 Sex of child *Male*
 4 To be answered ONLY in event of twins, triplets, etc.
 5 Number, number of twin *yes*
 6 Legitimate? *yes*
 7 Date of birth *March 31 1922*

8 FATHER *Walter D. Wilcox*
 14 Full maiden name *Ella Starkins*
 15 Residence *Brookhaven, Suffolk County, N.Y.*
 16 Color or race *white*
 17 Age at last birthday *25* (Years)
 18 Birthplace (city or place, State or country) *C. Moriches*
 19 Occupation *Home wife*
 20 Number of children born to this mother, including present birth *4*
 21 Number of children of this mother now living *4*

I hereby certify that I attended the birth of this child, who was *alive* at *5 A. M.* on the date above stated.
 (When there was no attending physician or midwife, then the father, householder, etc., should make this return. A stillborn child is one that neither breathes nor shows other evidence of life after birth.)
 Given name added from a supplemental report (Month, day, year)

(Signature) *John S. Training*
 Dated *April 1 1922*
 Address *Center Moriches*
 Filed *Jan 3 1923*
 This certificate must be FILED with the Local Registrar within FIVE (5) days after birth.

New York State Department of Health
BUREAU OF VITAL STATISTICS
CERTIFICATE OF BIRTH 5733

PLACE OF BIRTH (To be inserted by Registrar)
 County of *Onondago*
 Town of *Syracuse*
 Village of *Syracuse*
 City of *Syracuse*

Registered No. *333*

No. *916* FOR GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH ONLY
 St. *1* Ward *1*
 If birth occurred in a hospital or institute, give its NAME (instead of street and number)
 If child is not yet named, make supplemental report, as directed

2 Full Name of child *William Gilbert Sammons*

3 SEX OF CHILD *male*
 4 To be answered ONLY in event of twins, triplets, etc.
 5 Number, number of twin *yes*
 6 Legitimate? *yes*
 7 DATE OF BIRTH *Jan. 28 1918*

8 FATHER *Bert F. Sammons*
 14 FULL MAIDEN NAME *Fenne Pooler*
 15 RESIDENCE (ADDRESS) *1038 Montgomery*
 16 COLOR OR RACE *white*
 17 AGE AT LAST BIRTHDAY *20*
 18 BIRTHPLACE *Syracuse*
 19 OCCUPATION *express man*
 20 NUMBER OF CHILDREN BORN TO THIS MOTHER, INCLUDING PRESENT BIRTH *2*
 21 NUMBER OF CHILDREN OF THIS MOTHER NOW LIVING *2*

I hereby certify that I attended the birth of this child, who was *alive* at *6 A. M.* on the date above stated.
 (When there was no attending physician or midwife, then the father, householder, etc., should make this return.)
 Given name added from a supplemental report (Month, day, year)

(Signature) *W. F. Clark*
 Dated *Jan 29 1918*
 Address *1411 Paul St*
 Filed *Jan 29 1918*
 This certificate must be FILED with the Local Registrar within FIVE (5) days after birth.

Two New York State Department of Health issued Birth Certificates for Lloyd Hawkins Wilcox (b. 1922), Brookhaven, Suffolk County, [research collection of Jane Wilcox, author of the forthcoming NYG&B book, *New York State Archives* (2022)] and William Gilbert Sammons (b. 1918), Syracuse, Onondaga County [research collection of Holly Sammons].

Obtaining New York State Birth Records: Insights from the Experts

One of the initial questions we encounter in our genealogy is when and where an ancestor was born. New York’s unique record-keeping history often presents a challenge in answering this question. This article will guide the process to find and retrieve records—when they exist. This article focuses on records for all areas of New York outside of New York City.

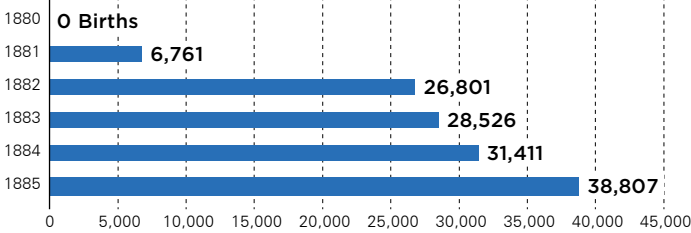
The subject of vital records in New York is unusually complicated for several reasons:

- New York is the only state accommodating two entirely unconnected vital records systems, one for New York State and one for New York City. In addition, some cities of New York State independently kept their own vital records.
- Though New York vital records began to be broadly recorded in the 1880s, neither New York State nor New York City kept vital records completely and systematically until 1913, when new legislation went into effect.
- For a fuller understanding of vital records, please see chapter 2 of the *New York Family History Research Guide and Gazetteer* (NYFHRGG).

First steps: Does a birth record even exist
 In the present day, the process of recording a child’s birth is a commonly accepted practice. However, it is key to remember this practice only began in earnest in the late 1800s in most of New York State. While a few cities began keeping records prior to the state-wide laws of 1880 and 1881, they were not at all complete or consistent (see

NYFHRGG for laws and chapters). In addition, compliance with the law took some time as seen in figure 1.

Figure 1: Recorded Births in New York State (Analysis based on the number of indexed records and does not include certain cities)



Am I legally able to obtain a copy?
 Access to New York birth records is restricted by law. Generally, records of births in New York State are available for births that occurred more than 75 years ago, provided that the individual is deceased. Direct-line descendants may qualify for exceptions to the rules, as detailed online by the New York State Health Department (NYSHD), see health.ny.gov/vital_records/genealogy.htm. This article focuses on those publicly available records.

Locating the record: Indexes to New York State Births

In theory, any birth occurring in New York State in 1881 or later should have been recorded in an official governmental record. However, not all events were recorded, specifically in the years immediately following 1881. (Figure 1 illustrates the low compliance in 1881 and increased compliance and birth rates in subsequent years.) Indexes to these records are available. To begin, visit the NYG&B's free subject guide at nygbs.org/new-york-birth-marriage-death-vital-records#Accessing. The New York State Health Department (NYSDH) indexes were obtained and published by Reclaim the Records on Internet Archive (free) where they can be freely browsed. In addition, Ancestry.com (\$), has placed the index into a name-searchable database (ancestry.com/search/collections/61667); Ancestry's database also contains births in Yonkers not covered by the NYSHD.)

Using the information from the index

Once the person—or probable person—is found in the index, the next step is to obtain a copy of the record. The primary agency holding the records is the New York State Health Department, health.ny.gov/vital_records. Requesting the record from the NYSHD is taking quite some time currently (estimated wait time as of February 2022 is more than two years). Therefore, we recommend an alternative.

Excerpt from the NYFHRGG:

While the New York State Department of Health is the central repository for New York state vital records, it is not the only one. Records of births, marriages, and deaths are also filed with the municipality where the events occurred.

Sometimes the originals went to Albany, and copies were kept locally, as is the case today. However, some statutes required the originals to be retained locally, with copies to the New York State Department of Health in Albany.

Local governments created birth records which were sent to the NYSHD in Albany. That local government

would be the town, city, or village (incorporated villages). Individual town or city clerk's offices provide directions to obtain vital records held at the local level, especially for cities (other than New York City as noted above). Check the website of the local government for information and follow their process to request a copy of the record. If the process is not noted, email or phone the Clerk's office. Note that some villages cede the duty of creating birth records to the town of which they are a part. This is often the case in downstate/Long Island areas that have many incorporated villages.

Four Counties: Consolidated Districts

Four New York counties are “consolidated districts” where vital records are kept at the county level: Chemung, Monroe, Onondaga, and Tompkins

While we recognize the long wait time for obtaining copies from the NYSHD is frustrating, researchers should consider making an application to the NYSHD anyway. It is possible the local record may come in the form of transcription or might not contain all the details found on the State's official copy.

If an entry in the index is not found

When the person of interest is not found in the major indexes, it is possible the event was not formally recorded. In this case, it is essential to search for substitutes (see below). Also, consider whether the birth occurred in certain cities before 1914, namely Albany, Buffalo, or Yonkers (as noted above New York City is not included in the scope of this article). These cities began keeping vital records before the state mandates in 1880 and 1881. They did not fully participate in the move to consolidate vital record keeping at the state level and instead continued to keep their own records exclusively at the municipal level (see table 1). Birth records issued between 1881 and 1913 in Albany, Buffalo, and Yonkers are kept locally and not with the NYSHD. Many counties provide dates for the earliest records in that county, for example, Chemung County, chemungcountyhealth.org/vital-records-genealogy.

Table 1: Birth Records Held by Selected Cities from 1852 to the Present
(Former City of Brooklyn and New York City excluded from this table.)

City	Local Records; Location URL	State-held records
Albany	Births: 1870–present; City of Albany, City Clerk AlbanyNY.org	Births: 1914–present New York State Department of Health health.ny.gov/vital_records
Buffalo	Births: 1878–present; Buffalo, City Clerk ci.buffalo.ny.us	
Yonkers	Births: 1875–present; Yonkers City Clerk cityofyonkers.com	

* Directions for obtaining records from these three cities are on the Health Department website at health.ny.gov/vital_records/genealogy.htm

Always search for a substitute

If a birth certificate would not have been created for a place or time of your search, other records may identify some of the same information. Locating religious records where a baptism or bris would have occurred close in time to birth provides reasonable information. Family Bible records may also detail a family structure with dates. Some cemeteries recorded the decedent's age in years, months, and days, allowing a calculation of the implied birth date. If the person was involved in a court case, they may have had to provide information about their exact age or birth date. Additionally estimates or more exact information may be gleaned from census, immigration, and naturalization, institutional, military, and probate records.

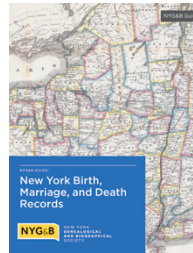
For births occurring in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century New York, we recommend NYFHRGG's chapter 1, Colonial Era and the Early Records section of chapter 2.

Finally, it may be that estimating a birth year from an age when an event was recorded may be as exact as we

can get. The person lived, and hopefully well, even if we cannot determine a more exact date.

Where to Learn More

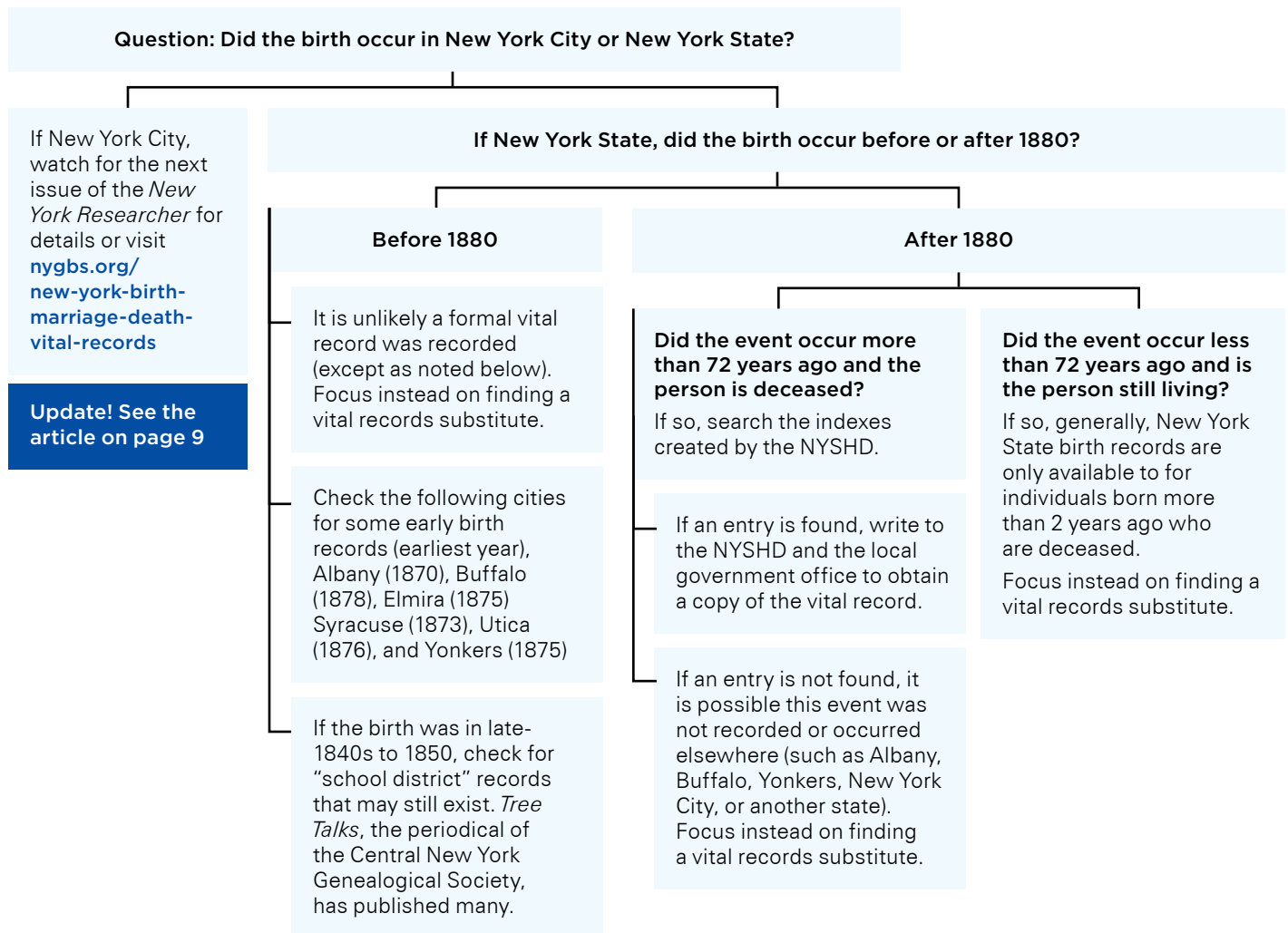
The NYG&B provides multiple resources on the topic of birth records, including the online article mentioned above, *NYFHRGG* (in particular chapter 2), *New York Birth, Marriage, and Death Records* (extracted from *NYFHRGG*), and on-demand videos (nygbs.org/webinars).



New York Birth, Marriage, and Death Records (D)

Need more information on New York's vital records? Purchase *New York Birth, Marriage, and Death Records* in digital form (and have it on-the-go) at the nygbs.org/store.

Figure 3: Pathway to Determine Where to Start in Finding a New York Birth Record



Five Next Steps—When You Find That Birth Record

By Christy Vogt Dolan, MA

Following the articles about finding a New York birth record which appeared in the spring and summer issues of the *New York Researcher*, you may find yourself with a copy of your ancestor's birth details—and lucky you! With a little digging, birth records can help you find all sorts of new things about your ancestor and their relatives.

1) Find siblings!

If you did not know the names of the parents before, or they used a different variation or spelling of their name(s) on the record, you can now use the names listed on the birth certificate to look for other children of those parents. Also, as many children unfortunately died in childhood, you may discover siblings you did not know about—and who may have had the same name as a child born later.

Using the combination of names in a family group can help you as you follow people and families through time and help confirm that you have the right “John Smith” for example, if they are listed with the other family members or living nearby.

2) Look for extended family nearby

Chances are often good that other family may be living near the place where a person was born. If the home address of the family is listed, look up the location of their house on a period map—some maps even list the owners of each property. Look closely at the names around the location and on census schedules to see if those names also show up in the family tree. You may discover grandparents, aunts and uncles, and near-cousins right in the neighborhood!

Many birth records also list the birth places of the parents to the town or county level—which can give you new insight to where they grew up, whether nearby, in another state, or in a different country.

3) Explore online collections for images and maps of where they lived

Looking beyond family members, get to know the neighborhood in more detail. Images and maps are available on sites such as New York Heritage (nyheritage.org), the New York State Archives (archives.nysed.gov), the Library of Congress (loc.gov), and local libraries and societies in the town or county where your ancestor lived.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, plat maps, and topographic maps can be used to glean information about the area and what the townscape might have been like. Some maps show the materials buildings were made from as

well as the location of businesses, industry, houses of worship, trolley lines, social clubs, schools—all places to look for clues about life there. County and town histories can help you understand more about how our ancestors might have lived and the places they lived in. (While not always accurate, and sometimes embellished, they are still valuable resources.)

In addition to the traditional repositories, auction sites such as eBay often offer postcards, old photographs, or local historical books (and provide decent images or scans to download—even if you do not win an auction). Set up an alert on the site with the place(s) and/or family name(s) to receive email alerts for new items that match those keywords.

4) Reach out to local experts

The local historian, town clerk, or local historical or genealogical society might be able to tell you more about the place's history, what it might have been like in a particular time-period, schools and community, or even about an industry or an occupation important to an area. This can help you understand more about the life your ancestors might have lived—in far more detail (and a lot more fun) than just reading about it. Many societies also have local history collections comprised of small-run publications and pamphlets, photos, manuscripts, ephemera, and documents not found online.

5) Explore the parents' occupations

Birth records often also list the occupation of the father, and when appropriate, the mother. This occupation may be different than one a person held later in life as young people, and especially recent immigrants, often started at the very bottom of the job ladder. Some occupations may also have different names and contexts than we know today and may also overlie other important clues to education level, ethnicity, and family professions.

Women, especially in poorer households or when widowed, may have occupations, too—whether working outside the home in a trade or inside the home as a landlord, taking in sewing or laundry, or in other “cottage” industries.

New York City Public Digitized Vital Records Now Online for Free!

The largest collection of publicly available New York City birth, marriage, and death records is now online and free to access!

The New York City Municipal Archives has been working to digitize the millions of birth, marriage, and death records it holds since 2013. With the project now 70% complete, 9,318,625 digitized records from the late 1800s to the early 1900s are now available online as of March 2022 at <https://a860-historicalvitalrecords.nyc.gov>.

A complete listing of records available online can be found at New York City's Historical Vital Records website, <https://a860-historicalvitalrecords.nyc.gov/digital-vital-records>.

A Few Things to Know

While we know births and marriages happened, not all events were recorded in the official records. The earlier the birth, marriage, or death occurred, the higher the likelihood it was not entered into city records. And sometimes not all children in a family were recorded.

The good news is that about 70% of extant records are online for free, and you can download the digitized color copies. While you may have a copy from the older microfilm, these digitized records are clear and easier to read. See the Coverage Charts and Tips section below if you cannot find the record.

How Can I Start Using the Records?

View by Certificate Number—Recommended Method

If you know the certificate number and year, it is easy to search, view, and download the color copy. Simply enter that information into the “By Certificate Number” section of the search page. If you need to find a certificate number, see the **Using Indexes** section.

Search by Name

Search by name is also available if you know the exact name on the record and year (please note, the site does not account for spelling variations of names).

An important note: Some records available on the site do not have any name attached (see the following **Tips**). And at least a few are indexed incorrectly. Some records are still in the process of digitization, so are not yet included in digitized access. (For more details see the **Coverage Charts** section.)

Search by certificate number or name at <https://a860-historicalvitalrecords.nyc.gov/search>

Browsing Records

To search the records in the browse mode, enter the record type (birth, marriage, or death), borough

[Manhattan, Kings (Brooklyn), Queens, Bronx, Richmond (Staten Island)], and year.

A slider bar makes it easy for you to search for a year or a range of years. Only 500 results (50 per page, 100 pages) are available in the browse mode, so narrow your search as much as possible. If needed, perform a narrow search, and then delete some variables to get a larger number of results.

nyc.gov | DDORIS 311 Search all NYC.gov NYC

Historical Vital Records
The New York City Municipal Archives

Browse All Search Digital Vital Records About

Search

By Certificate Number
The fastest way to locate a vital record is by using the certificate number. Note that certificate numbering restarts at 0000001 annually for each borough and you must limit by borough and year to retrieve a unique record.

Certificate Type:* Certificate Number:* Borough: Year:

Birth Certificate ##### Kings (Brooklyn) ###

Search

Finding Certificate Numbers
Indexes of the birth, death, and marriage records contain certificate numbers, and can be searched on:

- Ancestry
- German Genealogy Group
- Italian Genealogical Group
- FamilySearch

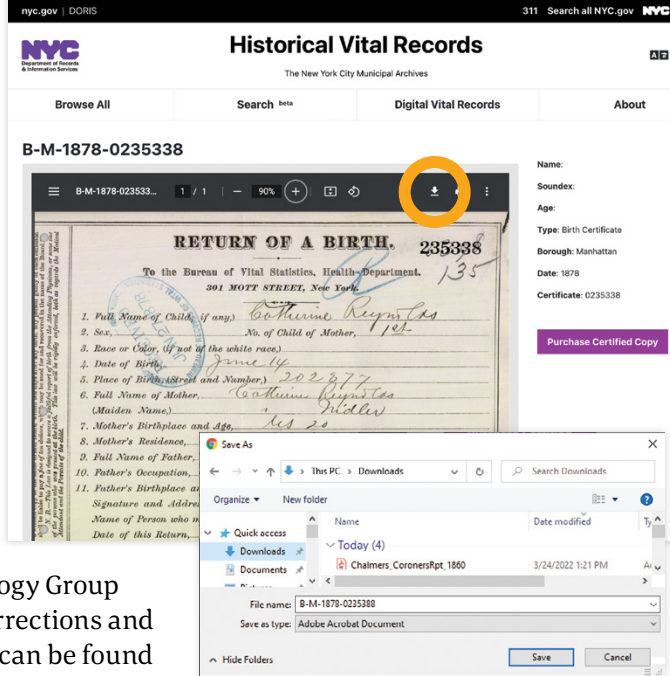
By Name
Searching by name is in beta mode, and may not produce accurate results. Because marriage licenses are not yet indexed by name, marriage licenses will not be returned in name search results. Further guidance on researching City Clerk marriage license records.

The searchable index used on this site was created by the Long Island Genealogy Federation by transcribing original hard-copy indexes (which may have been inaccurately transcribed from original certificates). Future phases of the *Historical Vital Records of NYC* project may include opportunities for crowd-sourcing to improve and correct the index.

Certificate Type:* Last Name:* First Name: Borough:

Birth Certificate [] [] Kings (Brooklyn) []

Year: []



Using Indexes

If you are unable to find the materials you need using the name search, other indexes exist to help you identify the certificate number. The new New York City Historical Vital Records index is based on an index created by the Genealogical Federation of Long Island (GFLI) who used the micro-filmed card file to create the indexes. The Germany Genealogy Group (GGG) has, over time, made corrections and additions to this index, which can be found at germangenealogygroup.com (free). The GGG also recently added a link on each search page so records missing from their database can be entered.

You can also search the indexes at FamilySearch.org (free). FamilySearch's index has some certificate numbers missing from the GGG database and goes beyond certificates, including ledger entries, as well.

Search the *FamilySearch* birth index, familysearch.org/search/collection/2240282

Search the *FamilySearch* marriage certificate index, familysearch.org/search/collection/2143225

Search the *FamilySearch* death index, familysearch.org/search/collection/2240477

If you are still having trouble finding the records, you can search the indexes at Ancestry.com (\$\$). Ancestry's indexes include records generated by the NYC Health Department.

Search the *Ancestry* birth index, ancestry.com/search/collections/61779

Search the *Ancestry* marriage index, ancestry.com/search/collections/9105

Search the *Ancestry* death index, ancestry.com/search/collections/61778

In addition, marriage license files from the City Clerk's office are being digitized, see the index at ancestry.com/search/collections/61406. This index contains many more records than are publicly available from the New York City Historical Vital Records site. A free online copy of the index, obtained by Reclaim the Records,

Learn about NYC Marriage Licenses

Read about the marriage licenses from NYG&B Fellow Leslie Corn, CG®, FGBS, at nygbs.org/knowledgebase/city-clerks-marriage-licenses-new-york-city-1908-1937-one-20th-century-genealogys-best or in the *New York Researcher* (then *The NYG&B Newsletter*), vol. 10, no. 2: 23–27.

is available to browse at archive.org/details/nycmarriageindex (free).

Downloading Records

As you download a record, the file name provides some key information. Files are named like this: **M-K-1894-0005326** or **B-M-1878-0235338**.

– The first letter is the type of record: **B** for birth, **M** for marriage certificate, **L** for marriage license, **D** for death.

– The second letter is

the borough: **B** for Bronx, **K** for Kings (Brooklyn), **M** for Manhattan, **Q** for Queens, **R** for Richmond (Staten Island).

– The first four numbers are the year: e.g., 1894 in the first example above.

– The last numbers are the certificate number.

Tips

We are all still learning about the records released and the indexes that make the records findable. At the time of publication, the New York City Municipal Archives (MUNI) does not have an index correction system in place for the public to submit updates. Therefore, if the record is not appearing in your search, follow these steps.

1. Do a name search on the Historical Vital Records site, including the year (this is where success does not always happen).
2. Perform a name search on the GGG database first, using the wildcard option if needed.
3. Perform a name search in the *FamilySearch* index.

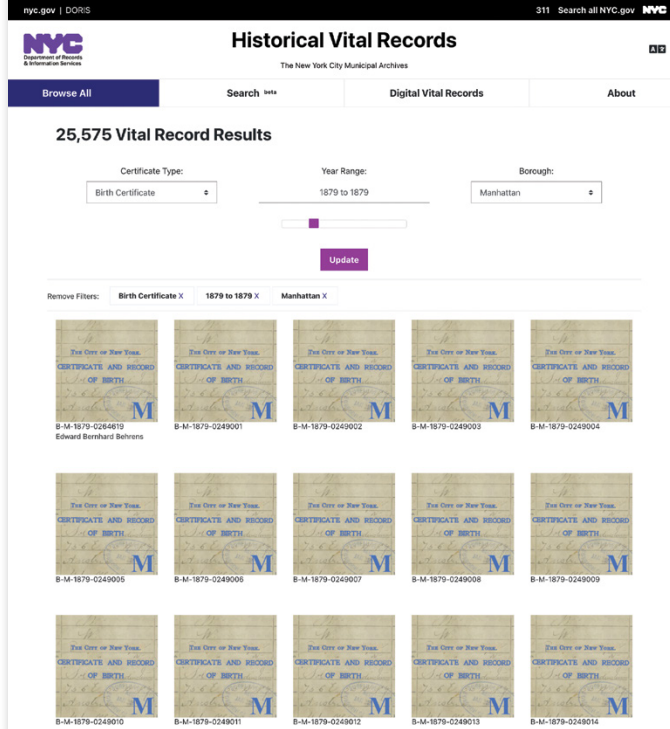
If either of those do not yield results, then

4. Perform a name search on *Ancestry*.

If that does not yield results, it is unlikely the record of interest is indexed, therefore the final option is to browse as many of the certificates as possible.

5. Use the method above in Browsing Records.

If you get a sad face or other error when retrieving a certificate, it may be that the server is busy. Wait for a few minutes and try again.



An example of extant but unindexed 1879 Manhattan birth certificates (<https://a860-historicalvitalrecords.nyc.gov/>).

How to Use Coverage Charts

To see if a record is digitized, use the site tab “Digital Vital Records” <https://a860-historicalvitalrecords.nyc.gov/digital-vital-records>, and then select the tab for Birth, Deaths, or Marriages.

We have received reports of images being online even if the years are marked as “not digitized” on the charts. One example is death records for Manhattan, 1876–1919, show as not digitized, however 166,600 records appear (browse search for Manhattan death certificates, 1876–1919). And yet, those records sometimes do not appear as results when searching by first and last name—try searching by last name only.

Another challenging point is that many records do not have the name indexed on the Historical Vital Records site, e.g., births for Manhattan for 1866 to 1878. If the name is not in the German Genealogy Group’s index, try the indexes on FamilySearch and Ancestry.

Remember that marriage records between 1908 and 1937 come in two different record collections, certificates and licenses, and you should check both series. The website has an explanation of these materials, and you can also see the NYG&B guide by Leslie Corn, CG, FGBS, at nygbs.org/knowledgebase/city-clerks-marriage-licenses-new-york-city-1908-1937-one-20th-century-genealogys-best.

When You Cannot Find an Image that is Indexed

With the project ongoing, don’t give up if you can’t find an image. The New York City Municipal Archives (MUNI) stated that when you can’t find a record. “Fill out the Vital Records Order Form, and we will conduct a search. If the record is located, we will digitize on demand. If not, we will provide a certified not found letter.” That means if they can find it, you can obtain a copy (\$). Stay tuned for further updates!

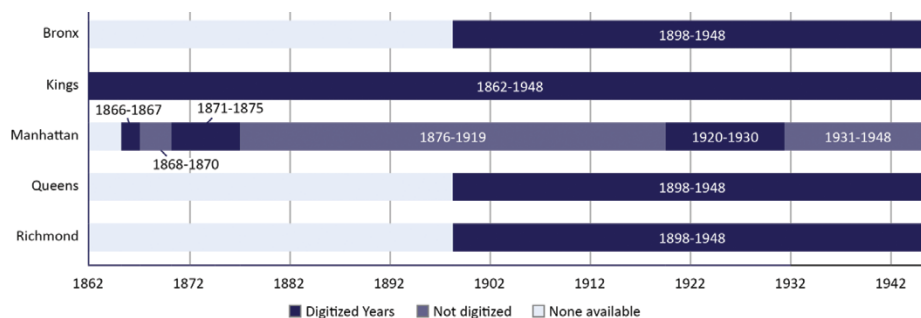
Digitized Birth Records

Bronx	1872 to 1873, 1876, 1888 to 1891, 1895 to 1909
Kings (Brooklyn)	1866 to 1909
Manhattan	1855, 1857 to 1861, 1863 to 1865, 1866 to 1909
Queens	1866, 1876, 1883, 1886, 1888 to 1909
Richmond (Staten Island)	1898 to 1909



Digitized Death Records

Bronx	1898 to 1948
Kings (Brooklyn)	1862 to 1948
Manhattan	1866 to 1867, 1871 to 1875, 1876, 1920 to 1930
Queens	1898 to 1948
Richmond (Staten Island)	1898 to 1948



See <https://a860-historicalvitalrecords.nyc.gov/digital-vital-records> for more information on Birth and Death Records and instructions on how to access them as well as information on Digitized Marriage Certificates and Digitized Marriage Licenses. (Text and graphs, NYC Municipal Archives.)



County Board of Supervisors Proceedings: A Genealogy Source Revealed

By Rhonda Hoffman, MLS

An in-depth examination of historical Western New York supervisors' proceedings was carried out for this article.

Background

A county board of supervisors consisted of the town and city supervisors within a county's boundaries. Boards were required to meet at least once a year. Because many town representatives were farmers, they would usually meet for several days in the fall, after the harvest, until their business was complete. Special sessions were held if an important matter came up outside their selected meeting timeframe.

Supervisors' proceedings record actions taken by the board and reports given to the board by committees, institutions, and county government departments. Proceedings in book format can be found by the mid-1800s, and they were sometimes published in local newspapers. Handwritten proceedings may be seen as

early as a county's formation. Their main concerns involve financial responsibility, carrying out local and New York State directives, recording county law, and monitoring county property and institutions. New York and United States law dictate county government powers and responsibilities.¹

Substantial changes happened to some New York county governments beginning in 1936. As a result of these changes, county government legislative bodies may nowadays be called Board of Supervisors, Board of Representatives, Board of Legislators, or County Legislature. For a more in-depth explanation of this complex topic, see *Local Government Handbook*, written by the Division of Local Government Services.²

What Might They Tell You?

At first glance, supervisors' proceedings appear to be stodgy volumes of local government actions. However, if you look closely, they may add texture to your ancestors' lives, rebuild lost records, or provide key evidence for a genealogical case study. Financial accountability was of utmost importance in supervisors' proceedings. Your ancestors might be named in proceedings if county funds were put toward any aspect of their lives.

Care for the Poor

Poorhouses (or almshouses) existed in all New York counties at one time. County poorhouse reports are featured in proceedings, and their detail may be so great that reconstruction of lost poorhouse records is

possible. Keep in mind that examination of two years of proceedings may be needed to recreate a whole year because while proceedings are a twelve-month report, they do not cover a traditional calendar year. A poorhouse resident's entry may provide their name, gender, age,

TOP: (Possibly) the Orleans County Almshouse, taken by George F. Gueff (1870–1958, image date unknown), showing the almshouse and adjacent farm which inmates worked to feed themselves as well as supply supplemental income for the facility. "The almshouse was built in 1878 [demolished in 1962] on County House Road in Albion, New York, and a hospital was added in 1903." (Image and caption courtesy of SUNY at Brockport, Drake Library, Brockport Village Glass Plate Negatives Collection, nyheritage.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p277601coll4/id/4248/rec/1.)

town of residence, nationality, admission and discharge dates, and the number of days in the almshouse. If a resident died at the poorhouse, their date of death, cause of death, and burial place might be reported.

The financial responsibility of supporting the poor was determined by state law and may have fallen to the city, town, county, or state. Determination was usually based on the length of residence in a city or town. For example, in 1899, an adult who had established their own "settlement" was chargeable to a municipality if they lived in a city or town for at least one year. A married woman's residence was based on her husband, and a child's residence was based on their father (or mother if the father was deceased).³ This can help confirm places of residence for persons who lived in locations without city directories and for individuals who would not be recorded in directories. Martha Branscombe's *The Courts and the Poor Laws in New York State, 1784-1929*, provides a good overview for those looking to learn the intricacies of New York's historical poor laws.⁴

Some almshouse residents may have been transferred to another institution for specialized care. One example of this is a person living with a mental illness. Children, both orphans and non-orphans, may have been moved

SCHEDULE "B." Showing indictments found during past year, which have been "disposed of." 1-Frank Thompson, larceny, second degree, conviction. 2-John Chadwick, assault, second degree, conviction. 3-Joseph Burns, assault, second degree, conviction. 4-Soph'a Harlock, burglary, third degree, conviction. 5-Lena Schultz, receiving stolen property, conviction. 6-Andrew Schifferle, receiving stolen property, conviction. 7-Minnie Schifferle, receiving stolen property, conviction. 8-Catherine Kopp, receiving stolen property, conviction. 9-Gustave Morganfeldt, larceny, second degree, acquittal. 10-William J. O'Connell, assault, second degree, conviction. 11-George Pierce, assault, second degree, conviction. 12-Michael Cassidy, attempted burglary, burglary, second degree, conviction. 13-Herman Thiele, common gambler, conviction. 14-Frederick Bretz, common gambler, dismissal. 40-James Jefferson, larceny, second degree, conviction. 41-Clearance Robinson, murder, first degree, conviction. 42-Sarah A. Robinson, murder, first degree, conviction. 43-Louisa Rausch, abandoning child, conviction. 44-Robert J. Stephenson, perjury, conviction. 45-Adolph Delling, larceny, second degree, conviction. 46-Edward Cunningham, burglary, third degree, conviction. 47-James Coyle, assault, second degree, conviction. 48-George Mullenhoff, seduction, acquittal. 49-Michael Ryan, larceny, second degree, conviction. 50-William Fortier, burglary, third degree, conviction. 51-Frank Beller, manslaughter, second degree, conviction. 52-Matthew McKay, larceny, first degree, conviction. 53-John Lyon, burglary, third degree, conviction. 54-Thomas Gotob, burglary, third degree, conviction. 55-James Stanton, common gambler, conviction.

Erie County District Attorney report showing "Disposed of" cases and detailing crimes and results of trial, Erie County Board of Supervisors report for 1895. Erie County, NY Board of Supervisors. Proceedings of the Board of Supervisors of Erie County, NY: Annual Meeting of 1895. Buffalo, NY: The Courier Company, 1896.

from poorhouses to orphanages or foster care. After 1875 most children were not allowed to live in poorhouses any longer.⁵ These transfers and costs associated with the care of these individuals were sometimes published in proceedings. An individual's name, age, institution of transfer, and date of transfer were often

recorded. In rare cases, date and place of birth, the town of residence, ethnicity, and the location of a child placed out of the area also appear. Lists of foster families (not including the foster children's names) were sometimes published.

At the turn of the twentieth century, poor law called for counties to incur the cost of burying the military poor. This included soldiers, sailors, and marines who fought for the United States in the Civil War or Mexican War. Burials required a headstone inscribed with the soldier's name and, if possible, the military organization.⁶ These soldiers may be named in proceedings.

Crime

Finding information on an ancestor who committed a crime can be difficult, especially if a crime did not warrant a headline. Proceedings may include annual county jail reports. Prisoner names, commitment and

LEFT-TO-RIGHT: Orleans County Almshouse Deaths, Orleans County Board of Supervisors Report for 1901; Orphans placed in the asylum and almshouse deaths, Orleans County Board of Supervisors report for 1881; Poorhouse and hospital inmates, Chautauqua County Board of Supervisors report for 1926.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS. Discharged during the year... 23 Remaining in Alms House Nov. 15, 1901... 78 Total... 108 NATIONALITY. Males Female American... 27 8 Irish... 12 7 German... 9 1 Polish... 1 1 Negro... 1 0 Scotch... 1 0 Total... 58 20 CAUSE OF PAUPERISM. Males Female Intemperance... 9 0 Old Age... 18 10 Silliness... 8 1 Sickness... 8 1 Crippled... 6 2 Idiots... 5 5 Deafness... 5 5 Blind... 1 4 Feeble minded... 1 4 Total... 58 20 Statistics relative to death of inmates of the County Alms House. Date Name and Age Cause of Death Where Inter'd Jan. 27 Wm Burton, 98 Old age County farm Jan. 30 A. W. Potter, 79 Old age Albany Feb. 3 Maria Sutherland, 64 Dropsy Rochester Feb. 3 Charles Cross, 67 Old age Albany March 1 John Cox, 44 Consumption County farm March 2 George Slickner, 88 Old age Albany May 2 William Barber, 76 Old age Clarendon May 10 Saphro'a Pangburn, 63 Old age Carlton May 15 George Edinburg, 81 Old age County farm July 30 Jeremiah Leshner, 80 Consumption Shelby July 25 Arthur Shoemaker, 17 Epilepsy County farm Oct. 6 Edward Sweeney, 65 Old age Albany List of inmates in Alms House from November 15, 1900 to November 15, 1901, and the number of days each inmate.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS. In asylums. But only those placed in the asylums since January 1st, 1881. Children placed in orphan asylums since January 1st, 1881, and towns to which the same should be charged. Jan. 25 Jesse W. Holley, Rochester, Barrs, 9 years. Jan. 25 Rufus Holley, Rochester, Barrs, 9 years. Jan. 25 Mary Holley, Rochester, Barrs, 9 years. Jan. 25 Parod Holley, Rochester, Barrs, 9 years. Jan. 25 Willie Danolds, Rochester, Barrs, 9 years. Feb. 31 Susan A. Cummings, Murray, 11 years. June 9 Michael Butler, St. M., Albany, 7 years. Aug. 16 John Butler, St. M., Albany, 7 years. Aug. 16 Kate Raymond, St. V. Buffalo, Albany, 7 years. Oct. 27 Charles Raymond, Albany, 7 years. Nov. 1 Frank Sampson, Rochester, Gaines, 2 years. James Summers, Albany, 6 years. The above list does not include all the children in the orphan asylums, but includes only those placed in the asylums since January 1st, 1881. Children bound out since January 1st, 1881. John Apelin, to Frank S. A. Cook. Emma Bellin, to Merritt and Jane Cook. Sarah Botta, to Merritt and Jane Cook. Olive Williams, to Daniel Gillett. Minnie Morgan, to Phoebe Ferritt. Several children have been placed with families upon trial, and if all things are satisfactory, and all parties suited, these children will be permanently bound. DEATH IN THE ALMSHOUSE SINCE LAST REPORT. DATE NAME CAUSE OF DEATH WHERE BURIED 1880. Nov. 21 James Kirby, Cancer, County Cemetery. 1881. Feb. 7 Harriet Johnson, Epiletic Fits, County Cemetery. Feb. 17 John R. Barrett, Bright's Disease, County Cemetery. Feb. 31 Mary A. Buck, Consumption, Jeddo. May 10 Hannah Stafford, Syphilis, County Cemetery. May 14 William Repper, Epiletic Fits, County Cemetery. May 20 Erastus P. Stafford, Syphilis, Barre. May 21 Jolanna Hanuifier, Consumption, Medina. July 5 Elizabeth Russel, Consumption, Kendall. Aug. 19 Barney Couzel, Syphilis, County Cemetery. The graves of those buried in the cemetery on the county farm, are marked with stones numbered, and a record kept in a book for that purpose. Those buried at other places are taken charge of by friends. PROTESTS. During the year I have received the following protests to decisions I have made relative to the settlement of paupers. These I submit to you that you may act thereon as may be best. To John Gates, Superintendent of the Poor, and Clark D. Knapp, Clerk: Please take notice that the town of Bridgeay, by its Overseer of the Poor, hereby protests against Michael Cox, Frank Hill, Miles Gillit, Johanna Hanuifier, Mary Murry, Hugh Hill, Wil-

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT. 125 Danielson Grocery Co., Jamestown, N. Y. 12.32 Dewittville Garage, Dewittville, N. Y. 7.40 Harry G. Lyons, Jamestown, N. Y. 204.47 Alms Implement Co., Jamestown, N. Y. 2.99 Geer-Dunn Co., Jamestown, N. Y. 2.75 Gerry W. Colgrove, Supt. Freight, Etc. 288.25 \$ 4,977.37 INMATES IN THE ALMSHOUSE AND HOSPITAL AT THE DATE OF LAST REPORT, OCTOBER 1, 1925. Name Age Town Hart, Geo. 77 Arkwright Nichols, Wealthy 85 Arkwright Hogan, Asa 85 Busti Peterson, Andy 62 Busti Haskins, Elmer 60 Carroll Cox, Hannah 50 Carroll Andrews, Chas. 50 Chautauqua Clackner, Joe 69 Chautauqua Doerr, Chas. 78 Chautauqua Madellen, John 73 Chautauqua Gumb, Clark 73 Chery Creek Sheffield, Lowell 77 Chery Creek Walker, C. R. 73 Chery Creek Sanford, Inez 44 Chery Creek Kees, Morris 63 Clymer Maxwell, Myron 63 Clymer Bronson, Louis 72 County Green, J. W. 37 County Hammond, Chas. 45 County Marlin, Chas. 71 County Nord, Chas. 62 County Tew, Fordyce 63 County Gosselin, Margaret 68 County Gouley, Adelle 68 County Sinclair, Martha 72 Dunkirk Crowe, Michael 78 Dunkirk Demer, Peter 65 Dunkirk Heyl, Walter 68 Dunkirk Kusey, Thos. 68 Dunkirk Murphy, Thos. 67 Dunkirk Milner, William 65 Dunkirk Platt, Fred 79 Dunkirk Roloff, Chas. 51 Dunkirk Ready, Edward 78 Dunkirk Stryzalski, Steve 51 Dunkirk Sloan, Young 29 Dunkirk Walters, 80 Dunkirk Walters, Andrew 83 Dunkirk Warner, Arthur 42 Dunkirk Brucher, Hannah 100 Dunkirk Demer, Ellen 65 Dunkirk Miller, Margaret 27 Dunkirk Loomay, Mary 75 Dunkirk Fowberg, Nels 49 Elliptott Irving, James 60 Elliptott Lindquist, Chas. 60 Elliptott Rodgers, Carl 66 Elliptott Peterson, John 75 Elliptott

discharge dates, town, and offense are often given. Inmate death reports may provide a prisoner's age, cause and date of death, and place of birth. Sheriff reports may list prisoner transportation, including the prisoner's name and the institution they were transferred to. District Attorney reports may list criminals indicted, their crimes, and case outcomes.

To add texture to your ancestor's life, proceedings often contain inspection reports of county institutions. There is a possibility of bias because there may have been motivation to ignore improvements needed to keep county costs low. Chautauqua County's 1911 proceedings include the following description of the county jail in Mayville:

The jail contains 34 cells, each six feet wide by eight feet long. Every cell is equipped with sanitary closet and lavatory and two beds. Each bed has a mattress... and white sheets and pillow slips...The corridors are lighted by few electric lights which do not light up the cells sufficiently so that inmates can read after dark.... There are four bath tubs...no hospital room...all sick are removed to the county hospital... The women's quarters consist of a large room which does not contain cells, the women sleeping on cots...The provision for the confinement of minors... consists of only two cell...There is no work for the prisoners and no yard for exercise.⁷

Directory Substitutes

Supervisors' proceedings often record lengthy name lists, which could serve as city directory substitutes. Grand jury lists name jurors, professions, and town of residence. Excise commissioners may report those who received liquor licenses and specify the establishment type. Orleans County school tax lists are in order by municipality, provide addresses, and

Neff, Patton, Roedel, Ryan, Savage, Schoepflin, Scully, Staffen, Steiner, Stock, Tilson, Underhill, Veeder, Wende, Wilson, Wolf, Young—18.

Absent—Behling, J. C.; Duerstein—2.
Present—Clerk, Sergeant-at-Arms, and Messenger.

The CHAIRMAN presented the following report of John R. Kenney, which was ordered printed and referred to Committee on Coroners' Accounts when appointed.

To the Honorable, the Board of Supervisors of Erie County:

Gentlemen—I hereby submit my report for and during the first nine months, commencing January first, 1895, and ending September thirtieth, 1895.

I have held two hundred and sixteen (216) inquests. The inquisitions in the above cases have been filed in the County Clerk's office. Accompanying this report is a statement of all the property and money found by me upon or belonging to persons upon whom inquests have been held for and during the first nine months, commencing January first, 1895, and ending September thirtieth, 1895. Also a list of jurors summoned by me, the time of service of each juror, and upon what inquest such services were rendered as required by law.

Respectfully submitted,

JOHN R. KENNEY,
Coroner.

Statement of all moneys or other valuables found with, or upon, all persons upon whom inquests have been held by me, the undersigned, one of the Coroners in and for the County of Erie and State of New York, for and during the first nine months, commencing January first, 1895, and ending September thirtieth, 1895.

January 16, 1895—Michael Franz. One trunk and clothing, 1 overcoat, 1 silver watch and 2 brass chains, 1 revolver, 1 pocketbook, \$22.15 cash. Delivered to Edward Franz.

January 23, 1895—Robert W. Robinson. Cash \$30.75, 1 silver cornet, 1 gold watch and chain, 1 music stand, 1 satchel and clothing, 2 pocketbooks, 1 brass watch, 1 band uniform. Delivered to Edward Fox.

January 25, 1895—O. M. Underhill: One note \$220.00, receipts for \$80.00, \$70.00, and \$20.00; railroad ticket, 1 pocketbook. Delivered to C. M. Underhill, Sr.

February 28, 1895—Meritz Huene: One gold watch, 3 pair glasses, 1 match safe, 1 knife, 1 railroad ticket, 2 gold rings, cash 69 cents. Delivered to Frank C. Harter.

March 21, 1895—L. T. Halliday: One pair opera glasses, 1 memorandum book, 1 knife, 1 pocketbook, cash 4 cents. Delivered to H. H. Hill.

Erie County Coroner inquests between January 1 and September 30th, 1895, and listing property belonging to the decedents. Erie County Board of Supervisors report for 1895. *Erie County, NY Board of Supervisors. Proceedings of the Board of Supervisors of Erie County, NY: Annual Meeting of 1895.* Buffalo, NY: The Courier Company, 1896.

April 1, 1895—Maurice Minter: Cash \$10.00, 1 pocketbook, 1 silver watch and chain, 1 bank book, 1 trunk, 3 valises, clothing, boots, shoes, etc. Delivered to George Baltz, County Treasurer.

April 4, 1895—John Grant: Cash, \$1.75. Delivered to George Baltz, County Treasurer.

April 12, 1895—William Schneider: Cash \$2.30, 1 knife, 1 lot of keys. Delivered to Richard Schneider.

April 12, 1895—M. E. Meahan: Cash 38 cents, 2 gold rings, 2 silver thimbles, 1 trunk and clothing, deposit in Erie County Savings Bank \$340.20. Delivered to W. F. McShane, administrator.

April 16, 1895—George Woffel: Cash \$17.12, 1 silver watch, 1 seal ring, 1 gold badge. Delivered to Henry Schessel.

April 20, 1895—A. Talty: One gold watch, 1 gold ring. Delivered to Michael Talty.

April 25, 1895—George A. Nason: One gold watch, 1 gold badge, 1 seal ring, cash \$2.15. Delivered to E. N. Nason, per N. S. Davis.

May 6, 1895—G. Garret: One watch, 1 looking glass, cash 10 cents, 1 lot clothing. Delivered to J. N. Adam & Co.

May 7, 1895—J. L. Lindholm: One silver watch and chain. Delivered to Mrs. Gattie.

June 2, 1895—A. Knotson: One silver watch, 2 chains, 1 lot clothing, deposit in Erie County Savings Bank \$30.00. Delivered to F. O. Knotson, administrator.

June 10, 1895—Frank Beamer: One silver watch, cash \$1.30, 1 knife and 2 keys. Delivered to Emma Beamer, per E. E. Beamer.

June 15, 1895—Edward Roberts: Cash \$5.38, pawn ticket for 1 gun. Delivered to W. P. Tompkins.

June 28, 1895—T. W. Whitwell: Cash \$1.00, 1 ring, 1 knife. Delivered to Mrs. Whitwell.

August 19, 1895—J. A. Moran: One gold watch and chain, 1 bank book, cash \$2.70. Delivered to John Moran, per Mary A. Moran.

August 21, 1895—C. Gillig: Cash \$23.80, 1 bunch keys. Delivered to H. J. Gillig.

August 21, 1895—L. Duval: One bank book, F. N. of Athens, Pa. Delivered to George Baltz, County Treasurer.

August 21, 1895—A. Staffeld: Two silver watches and 1 chain, 2 shirt studs, cash \$2.85. Delivered to B. Staffeld.

August 21, 1895—F. Cudney: One gold ring, 1 knife. Delivered to Ferris Cudney.

August 22, 1895—J. Bauman: Cash 64 cents, 1 bunch keys, 2 pocket knives. Delivered to Mrs. Bauman.

August 22, 1895—Frank Bugman: Cash 65 cents, 1 silver watch and chain. Delivered to Kate Bugman.

August 22, 1895—T. Cannon: One gold watch and chain, 1 diamond stud, 1 gold ring, cash \$3.01. Delivered to Mrs. A. Cannon.

may include property acreage. Accounts audited by the supervisors record the names of those who provided goods or services to the county, the service or goods provided, and the amounts claimed and allowed.

Medical Examiner Reports

Medical examiner reports are a regular feature of late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century proceedings. Names of the deceased, their cause of death, date of death, and date of inquiry may be found. Coroners may have been required to account for the deceased's personal effects. Lists of these items, who claimed them, and less frequently, their relationship to the deceased, were published in Erie County proceedings for several years. Autopsies were not performed

on everyone who passed away. An inquiry would have been performed on those who died suspiciously or unexpectedly such as due to sudden death, an accident, suicide, or homicide.

Published vs. Original Records

A comparison of select Erie County original and printed proceedings indicates that published proceedings are not necessarily an exact transcription of original records. Formatting changes such as the use of headings and punctuation were common, though this improved readability. Minor wording changes were also typical. This generally enhanced comprehension, but sometimes given names were not recorded, or initials were used in their place. Occasionally, more information was published than was included in the original records. For example, the 1852 published proceedings contained a list of accounts audited, but it was not included in the handwritten proceedings.

To find out if original records exist for a county of interest, start by contacting the county clerk's

You can learn more about these records at the 2022 New York State Family History Conference, see nysfhc.org for more details.

office and then try the institutions listed in the Access section (following).

Arrangement

Proceedings are arranged in chronological order by meeting date. Sometimes reports from agencies and institutions are placed at the end, after the meeting minutes. An index should be at the beginning of a volume, but proceeding indexes are more like a table of contents than the indexes we are used to today. They list main topics and subtopics. For example, a main category may be “Medical Examiner,” and its subtopic may be “Monthly statement for December, 1909.” A name may be a subtopic, but this does not frequently occur except in select topics such as “warrants.” If keyword searching online proceedings is not fruitful, browse the index and consider where your ancestor may fit in.

Access

The largest online collections of historic New York supervisors' proceedings can be found on HathiTrust ([hathitrust.org](https://www.hathitrust.org)) and Google Books (books.google.com). Most online proceedings date from the mid-1800s to the 1920s.

County clerks and historians, genealogical and historical societies, colleges and universities, and public libraries generally hold the proceedings for the area in which they are located. The Grosvenor Room at the Central Library in downtown Buffalo carries most Erie County proceedings from 1840 to 1988.

Statewide Collections

The following institutions have significant but not necessarily complete collections of published New York county board of supervisors' proceedings. It is best to check the catalog or contact the repositories before visiting to verify record availability, access, and collection policies. Supervisors' proceedings are often kept off-site or in storage areas and may need to be requested in advance- arrival.

Cornell University

Library Annex, 209 Bookbank Drive, Ithaca, NY 14850
607-253-3431 | libannex@cornell.edu
annex.library.cornell.edu
Online catalog: newcatalog.library.cornell.edu

New York Public Library

Stephen A. Schwarzman Building
Fifth Avenue and 42nd Street, New York, NY 10018
917-275-6975 | nypl.org/locations/schwarzman
Online catalog: nypl.org/research/research-catalog
Collection and access notes: The NYPL holds microfilm not only for New York State, but other locations as well.

New York State Library

Cultural Education Center
222 Madison Avenue, Albany, NY 12230
518-474-5355 | nysl.nysed.gov/contact.htm
Online catalog: nyst.sirsi.net

New York State Archives

Cultural Education Center
222 Madison Avenue, Albany, NY 12230
518-474-8955 | archref@nysed.gov
archives.nysed.gov/directories/index.shtml
Online catalog: nyst.sirsi.net

Interlibrary loan: archives.nysed.gov/research/res_serv_loan.shtml

Collection and access notes: The NYS Archives carries supervisors' proceedings for the following counties: Fulton, Jefferson, Livingston, Orange, Putnam, Schuyler, Tioga, and Washington. Some of the records are original handwritten proceedings and others are published volumes. Many are available on microfilm and may be borrowed through interlibrary loan.

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

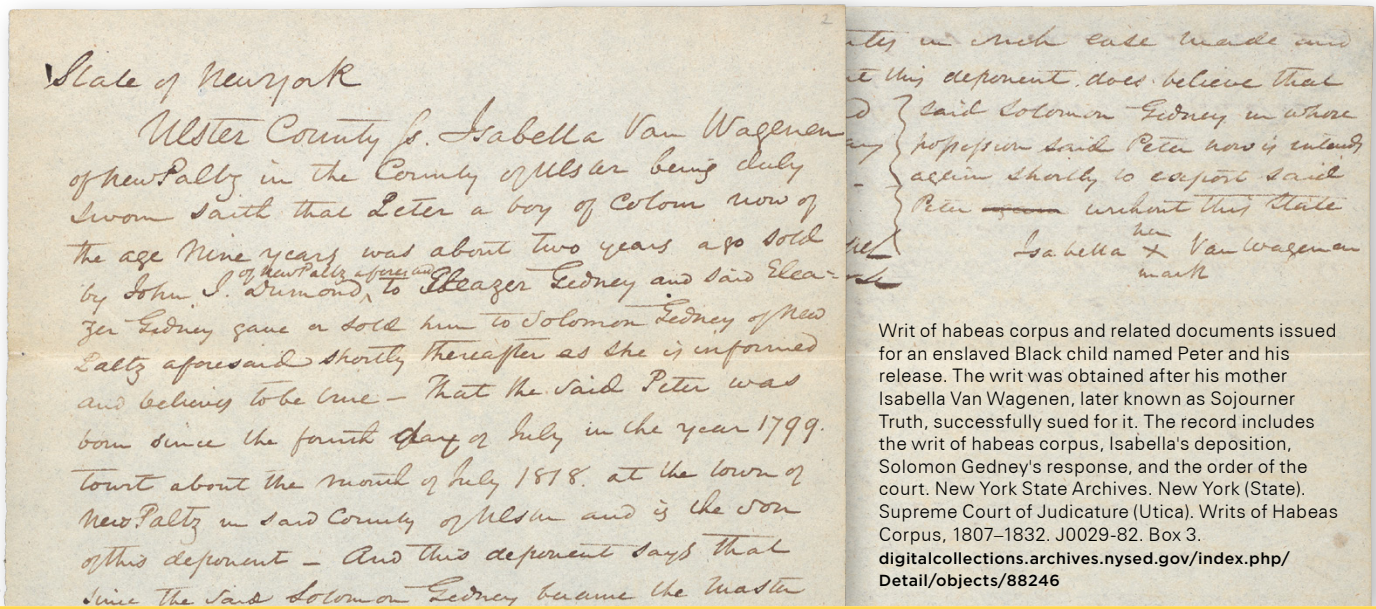
Oak Street Library
809 South Oak Street, Champaign IL 61820
217-265-9476 | cmservices@library.illinois.edu
library.illinois.edu/oak
Online catalog: search.grainger.illinois.edu/searchaid2/searchassist.asp



Rhonda Hoffman, MLS, is the content editor of the *Western New York Genealogist*. She has a Bachelor of Arts in History and twenty years of experience as a genealogy librarian. Rhonda is the genealogy specialist in the Grosvenor Room, the special collections department of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library in New York State.

Endnotes

- 1 Division of Local Government Services, *Local Government Handbook*, (https://dos.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2021/10/localgovernmenthandbook_2021.pdf : accessed 31 March 2022), p. 33–43.
- 2 Division of Local Government Services, *Local Government Handbook*, p. 46–57.
- 3 *Proceedings of the Board of Supervisors of Orleans County for the Year 1899*, (Albion, NY: A.M. Eddy, 1899), p. 255.
- 4 Martha Branscombe, *The Courts and the Poor Laws in New York State, 1784–1929*, Thesis, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, [1943]).
- 5 Branscombe, , p. 154–155.
- 6 *Proceedings of the Board of Supervisors of Orleans County for the Year 1899*, p. 267–268.
- 7 *Journal of Proceedings of the Chautauqua County, New York Board of Supervisors...*, (Dunkirk, NY: Dunkirk Printing Co., 1911), p. 9–10.



Writ of habeas corpus and related documents issued for an enslaved Black child named Peter and his release. The writ was obtained after his mother Isabella Van Wageningen, later known as Sojourner Truth, successfully sued for it. The record includes the writ of habeas corpus, Isabella's deposition, Solomon Gedney's response, and the order of the court. New York State Archives. New York (State). Supreme Court of Judicature (Utica). Writs of Habeas Corpus, 1807-1832. J0029-82. Box 3. digitalcollections.archives.nysed.gov/index.php/Detail/objects/88246

Sojourner Truth's Newly Rediscovered 1828 Court Record

By Stanton F. Biddle, PhD

At the core of genealogy and family history research is the quest to find documentation of events that shape and define a family's past. In February 2022 the New York State Archives (NYSA) announced the rediscovery of a nearly two-hundred-year-old New York court record documenting a formerly enslaved African American woman's effort to recover her nine-year-old son from her former owner [enslaver].¹ The re-discovery was made by James D. Folts, PhD, FGBS, head of research services at the NYSA, while he was searching for examples of early records for a book on the history of New York courts when he recognized a name on the document.²

The announcement received unusual attention in the contemporary media including CNN, Fox News, the Associated Press, and a number of National Public Radio outlets.³ The robust media response was triggered by three major factors.

First, many Americans are unaware that slavery still existed in the north less than two hundred years ago. In New York State, slavery was not fully abolished until the terms of the *Gradual Emancipation Law of 1799*, along with a number of statute revisions, went into effect in 1827. Before that date, enslaved children born after July 4, 1799, would remain in bondage until age 28 for males and 25 for females.⁴

Second, experts suggest that this may have been the earliest case in U.S. history in which a Black woman had successfully sued a White man for a family member's freedom.

The final reason was the identity of the woman. She would go on to take a unique place in African American history, women's history, and American history as perhaps the most famous Black woman of 19th-century America. Her name on the documents is Isabella Van Wageningen—but she would be later known as Sojourner Truth.

Sojourner Truth was born as Isabella Brumfield⁵ in 1797 in the Hudson River Valley region of New York. She was the daughter of an enslaved couple, James and Elizabeth (Mau Mau) Brumfield. In 1810 after having several owners as a child, she eventually became the property of John Dumont of New Paltz, New York. During her time with Dumont, Isabella had five children—James, who died in childhood; Diana, from Dumont; and Peter, Elizabeth, and Sophia with her husband, Thomas, an older man also enslaved by Dumont.⁶

NYSA described the re-discovered documents as an eight-page writ of habeas corpus sworn out by Isabella against her former enslaver John L. Dumont. By 1828 Dumont was Isabella's "former" enslaver because, according to her *Narrative* published in 1850, she had negotiated an early release from his service in 1826—one year before the complete implementation of New York's statewide emancipation. When Dumont defaulted on the agreement, Isabella left the Dumont farm, taking her infant daughter, Sophia, with her. Her only surviving son, Peter, two older girls, and her husband remained Dumont's property, and she was forced to leave them behind. She found refuge with the Dumont's neighbors

Isaac and Maria Van Wagenen. The Van Wagenens did not support slavery, but they paid-off Isabella's final year of service and purchased her infant daughter from Dumont. Shortly thereafter, the Van Wagenens freed them both, and Isabella assumed the surname Van Wagenen.

A short time after she was emancipated, Isabella learned that Dumont had sold Peter to Dr. Eleazer Gedney of New Paltz, and Dr. Gedney had planned to use Peter as a body servant and to take him to England. But when plans fell through, Dr. Gedney sold Peter to his brother Solomon, who in turn sold him to the new husband of their sister, Eliza Fowler, and the Fowlers took Peter with them when they relocated to Fowler's home in Alabama. This action violated New York State law regarding the interstate sale of enslaved persons and also circumvented the New York State *Gradual Emancipation Law*.⁷

When Isabella learned of Dumont's treachery, she first confronted his wife, then Dr. Eleazer and Solomon Gedney's mother. But their mother was not sympathetic as she was too upset about her daughter being carried off to Alabama. Further outraged by this new information, Isabella set out to recover her son. The *Narrative* is rather circumspect about what assistance and contacts Isabella was able to receive—except to say that Quakers directed her to the Court House in Kingston, New York.⁸ There, she was able to get the support and guidance she needed to petition the Grand Jury for the writ of habeas corpus from the Supreme Court of Judicature. The writ was served on the Gedney brothers in New Paltz and the March 1, 1828, court order rediscovered by Folts in the State Archives demanded the return of the child:

The People of the State of New York by the Grace of God free and independent — To Solomon Gedney Greeting

We command you that you have the body of Peter, a boy of Colour, detained in your Custody and by you falsely and unjustly imprisoned as it is said by whatever name he may be called together with the day and cause of the taking and detaining the Said Peter before our trusty and honorable Abraham Bruyn Hasbrouck a Commissioner to perform Certain duties of a Judge of the Supreme Court be at his Office in the town of Kingston in the County of Ulster, immediately after the receipt of this our writ to do, Submit to and receive all Singular those things which shall then and there be considered of him in this behalf.

Witness John Savage Esquire Chief Justice at the City of Albany the first day of March in the year of our Lord One thousand Eight hundred and twenty eight.

Fairlie Paige L. Hubbard Clerk

Romeyn Van Buren, Attorney⁹

The document further describes Isabella's presentation to the court as to why the son's abduction was illegal—based upon his age and applicable laws regarding his legal status. Additionally, he had been removed from the state which violated State law on the interstate sale of enslaved persons. Isabella charged that Gedney was responsible for this situation and needed to be held accountable.

The People vs. Solomon Gedney

Habeas Corpus

Romeyn Van Buren, attorney

By the Statute allowed 10th March 1828

A Bruyn Hasbrouck Commissioner to perform certain duties of a Judge of the Supreme Court

Charges of bringing the xxx named Peter Van Wagener and a half Cents for Van Wagener

A Bruyn Hasbrouck Commissioner

State of New York

Ulster County ss. Isabella Van Wagenen of New Paltz in the County of Ulster being duly sworn saith that Peter a boy of colour now of the age nine years was about two years ago sold by John L. Dumont of New Paltz xxx to Eleazer Gedney and said Eleazer Gedney gave or sold him to Solomon Gedney of New Paltz aforesaid shortly thereafter as she is informed and believes to be true — That said Peter was born since the fourth day of July in the year 1799 to wit about the month of July 1818 at the town of New Paltz in said county of Ulster and is the son of this deponent — and this deponent says that since the said Solomon Gedney became the master of said Peter he the said Peter has been absent since last spring from said town of New Paltz until within five or six weeks past and during that time has been constantly absent from the said town of New Paltz where said Solomon Gedney resides and has resided during the time aforesaid and has as this deponent is informed and believes been during all that time in some of the Southern States with the knowledge of said Solomon Gedney and in places without this state—and this deponent says that she is informed and believes and expects to be able to prove that the said Peter has been exported to some place or places without the State of New York for all the time aforesaid and that said Solomon Gedney did himself exported him at the time of aforesaid or aided or consented to such exportation contrary to the provisions of the Act of the Legislature of the State of New York entitled "An act concerning slaves" and contrary to the laws of said State of New York and the statutes in such case made and provided and that this deponent does believe that said Solomon

Gedney in whose possession said Peter now is xxx
again shortly to export said Peter xxx this state.

Her X Mark Isabella Van Wagener

Subscribed and sworn this 10th day of March 1828
before me A Bruyn Hasbrouck

Commissioner¹⁰

The documents reveal that when Gedney's brother-in-law, Fowler, was prosecuted for kidnapping, he returned Peter—beaten and severely abused—to New York to avoid indictment. The documents also included a response from the Gedney brothers indicating that neither of them retained further interest in Peter's services. Therefore, the Supreme Court Commissioner ordered him free as of March 15, 1828. (Digital copies of the eight-page document are available on the New York State Archives website. A transcription has been posted on *New York Almanack*.)¹¹

Since Sojourner Truth was not literate, much of the information about her and this incident is derived from *The Narrative of Sojourner Truth*, a book based on her conversations over a number of years with Olive Gilbert, a white colleague in the abolitionist movement. The Narrative was first published in 1850 and was reissued in 1875 (see note 8).

But one of the unanswered questions raised from this case is, "How did a recently emancipated woman who was uneducated and illiterate gather the wherewithal, resources, and contacts to bring the full weight of the government to her aid in regaining her son who had been removed from New York and, presumably, taken south?" Several of Sojourner Truth's biographers have addressed this issue over the years.

Truth's *Narrative* falls within a genre of ex-slave narratives—autobiographies or stories "as told to" friends and associates—and where the "authors" were continuously under suspicion about the truth of their stories.

According to historian David W. Blight, "the sixty-five to seventy slave narratives published in America or England between 1760 and 1860 were windows into the nature of slavery itself; they were the first-person witnesses to the will to be known and the will to write something among a people so often set apart and defined out of the human family of letters..." Many of their publications were accompanied by testimonials and endorsements by well-known white abolitionists.¹²

It is noteworthy that nearly two centuries after the fact, American scholars are still able to unearth original documents supporting the contents of a formerly enslaved black woman's story of her life. Thanks to the diligence and alertness of one archivist, Jim Folts, scholars today can compare Sojourner Truth's description of her quest to retrieve her son with the actual documents she swore out against John L. Dumont and the Gedney brothers back in 1828.

The re-discovery of these documents, after 194 years, is an important contribution to the legacy and legitimacy of Isabella Van Wagenen. It demonstrates that even before Isabella Van Wagenen walked into the pages of history as the abolitionist, religious leader, and women's rights advocate Sojourner Truth, she was a formidable force to be reckoned with. She had a profound effect on those around her, and she remains a source of inspiration to younger generations as they learn of her exploits. And as recently as 2021, a group of her descendants gathered together at the Sojourner Truth Center for Liberation and Justice in Battle Creek, Michigan, to rekindle the flame and to rededicate themselves to preserving her memory.¹³



Stanton Biddle, PhD, is a 25-plus year member of the NYG&B and a member of our corps of volunteers. He is a retired professor and former chief librarian at Baruch College. He earlier held senior administrative positions at SUNY Buffalo, at Howard University Libraries, and at NYPL's Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture.

Endnotes

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- 3 Hill; Rhoden; "Documents show Sojourner Truth's Fight to Free Son from Slavery," Fox 5 TV New York, June 16, 2022 (youtu.be/WuAYOj-RfqE); and "Sojourner Truth court documents found 194 years after legal battle to free enslaved son," *Here and Now*, WBUR, June 20, 2022 ([wbur.org/hereandnow/2022/06/20/sojourner-truth-court-documents](https://www.wbur.org/hereandnow/2022/06/20/sojourner-truth-court-documents)).
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- 5 May also be noted as Baumfree or Bomfree.
- 6 Nell Irvin Painter. "Sojourner Truth, 1797–1883—Abolitionist, women's rights activist, lecturer, religious leader." *Notable Black American Women*, edited by Jessie Carney Smith, Detroit: Gale Research, Inc., 1992, pp. 1147–51.
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- 11 Note 9. And Alan J. Singer. "Documents Reveal Sojourner Truth's Battle to Free Her Son From Slavery," *New York Almanack* ([newyorkalmanack.com/2022/03/documents-of-sojourner-truths-battle-to-free-her-son-from-slavery](https://www.newyorkalmanack.com/2022/03/documents-of-sojourner-truths-battle-to-free-her-son-from-slavery)).
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A Son of Jonathan Goss Dec	James	1802	Sarah Yale Curtis	2
A Child of Luther Eastman		14	Eliza Daughter of Chasmy Guidley & Wife August	7
A Child of Nathan Marsh		15	Mary Daughter of Jonathan Wood & Wife	7
		1803	The Wife of Simon Meachum	14
A Child of Oliver Cattin - January		5	Prose & Verse Born on	18
A Child of Levi Barber March		11	A Child of John Jacobini	18
Widow Mizail Hawley		20	A Child of Jonathan Goss - Sept	4
A Child of Peter Peppy		28	A Son of Wm Lucas	9
			Mary Norton - October	9

Special Collections and Archives at Hamilton College

By Jeremy Katz, MA, CA

Originally and affectionately known on campus as the “Treasure Room,” the Special Collections and Archives at Hamilton College house records documenting the rich history of the third oldest institution of higher education in the State of New York and items of enduring historic value gifted to the school throughout its more than 200-year existence. Students, faculty, and outside researchers from all over the world frequently utilize the resources found in this unique repository located in central New York.

Hamilton College

Samuel Kirkland founded Hamilton College in 1793 as Hamilton-Oneida Academy. Alexander Hamilton supported the school’s mission of an integrated education for Oneida Indians and white settlers, becoming a founding trustee and lending his namesake to the academy. In 1812 the school was chartered as Hamilton College by the State of New York. Unfortunately, neither Kirkland or Hamilton lived to see the fruits of their labor as Hamilton died by duel in 1804 and Kirkland passed away from natural causes in 1808. Special Collections and Archives care for the founding documents of the college, as well as the papers of Samuel Kirkland and the table top writing desk of Alexander Hamilton that was used to write his essays for *The Federalist Papers* and George Washington’s Farewell Address.

Hamilton Libraries and “Treasure Room”

When Hamilton College was chartered in 1812, the campus possessed 223 volumes. The collection was originally maintained in the Academy building before moving to the third floor of the Chapel. In 1826 the library

got its first printed catalogue, which recorded 1,600 titles. The books that comprised the 1826 Library have been reassembled and are still available today through Special Collections and Archives.

The first dedicated building, the H. Perry Smith Library, was erected in 1872. It was succeeded by the James Library in 1914 and its current home, the Burke Library, in 1972. All the while, the library collection has grown alongside its Special Collections and Archives, or as it was known in the James Library, the “Treasure Room.”

Alumni Materials

Throughout the centuries, Hamilton College has produced distinguished alumni such as biblical scholar and cartographer, Edward Robinson (Class of 1816); Secretary of State and Nobel Peace Prize recipient, Elihu Root (Class of 1864); Vice-President of the United States, James Sherman (Class of 1878); controversial and notorious poet, Ezra Pound (Class of 1905); and authors Samuel Hopkins Adams (Class of 1891), Terry Brooks (Class of 1966), and John Nichols (Class of 1966). Special Collections and Archives house publications



TOP: Asahel Strong Norton (1765–1853), Record of burials, Clinton, New York, 1802–1839. Hamilton College Special Collections (General), <https://sparc.hamilton.edu/islandora/object/hamLibSparc%3A12354625#page/4/mode/1up>. ABOVE: Hamilton-Oneida Academy Building, c. 1799. BOTTOM: Alexander Hamilton’s Table Top Writing Desk (Gift from Mrs. Helen Hamilton Woods, photo by Nancy L. Ford).

and original manuscript materials documenting the works and lives of alumni, which are frequently accessed by internal and external patrons.

Special Collections

In addition to documenting the college's significant history, Special Collections and Archives also house materials that reflect the growing and evolving teaching, learning, and research needs of Hamilton College and the broader communities it serves. This effort led to Special Collections and Archives becoming the home of the world-class Beinecke Lesser Antilles Collection (see below), the Fillius Jazz Archive, and the largest and broadest collection of materials documenting American communal societies.

Efforts to evolve the collection also led to the inclusion of cultural artifacts such as cuneiform tablets, Roman-Egyptian papyri, and rare books including incunabula [usually pre-1500s printed book and pamphlets]. These world-renowned collections are heavily requested by faculty to aid instruction, students for their class work, and patrons of all backgrounds with wide-ranging research goals.

Communal Societies Collection

Of special interest to family historians may be the Communal Societies Collection documenting groups of people who intentionally separate themselves from general society and live together according to a shared set of principles, whether religious or secular, in common ownership of property. The collection houses documents, photographs, and ephemera from the Shakers, House of David, suffragists, and many other communal societies that extend beyond New York to states across the country. Items of special note are agricultural and homestead products created by the Shakers, imprints from the Rogerenes, and periodical literature related to Robert Owen. Explore these collections at communalsocieties.hamilton.edu.

Lesser Antilles (Beinecke) Collection

Researchers of colonial and state-period New York may find the Lesser Antilles collection of interest given the



Nuremberg Chronicle, 1493, an example from the Incunabula Collection (photo by Nancy L. Ford).

extensive trade between these Caribbean islands (including the now U.S. Virgin Islands) and the New Netherland and New York colonies, as well as the European nations of Great Britain, The Netherlands, France, and Spain. One of the preeminent collection of

materials from these smaller Caribbean Islands, the Lesser Antilles Collection includes approximately 1700 manuscripts dating from the 17th through the 19th century, as well as printed materials, maps, and artwork. In 2019 Hamilton College embarked on a partnership with the Nevis Historical and Conservation Society to digitize historical materials about Nevis, the birthplace of Alexander Hamilton.

Access to Collections

To provide a high level of access, Special Collections and Archives meticulously inventory and catalog collections, which can be searched online via its website. The department also boasts a robust digitization program that preserves its collections in a computer-generated format and allows greater access online. Materials available online include the correspondence of Samuel Kirkland, the Beinecke Lesser Antilles Collection, the Edward Robinson Collection, and significant amounts of materials from the Ezra Pound Papers and Communal Societies Collection. To explore these collections online, please visit SpArc.hamilton.edu.

The Special Collections and Archives reading room, located on the third floor of Burke Library, is open during normal business hours Monday through Friday. Appointments made in advance are highly encouraged so staff can best serve patrons. To learn more, please visit hamilton.edu/offices/lits/special-collections.



College Archivist **Jeremy Katz** holds a BA in History from The Ohio State University, an MA in Public History from Wright State University, and certification from the Academy of Certified Archivists. Prior to joining the Special Collections and Archives staff at Hamilton College, he served as Senior Director of Archives at the William Breman Jewish Heritage Museum. He is the author of *The Jewish Community of Atlanta* (Arcadia Publishing, 2021).

NYG&B's New Digitization Center: Expanding Our Capabilities and Services

A dedicated space to preserve and make New York's records accessible for all.

The preservation of New York's records is central to our role in empowering the community to preserve, research, and share their New York stories. In 2021, 97% of our community reported that the preservation of New York's records was very or extremely important to them. To that end, the inclusion of a Digitization Center in our office enhancement plans was an absolute necessity.

As you enter the new Center the item that catches your eye is the new CopiBook OS A2 scanner equipped with LIMB Suite software, which is currently used by organizations such as FamilySearch to capture millions of images each day. Volunteers both new and old exclaim over the ease of using this scanner to quickly take high-resolution images. **This new equipment and**



Volunteer Stacey Bell joined the NYG&B 24-hour scan-a-thon and here is capturing images of a scrapbook that her mother made for her when she was a child.

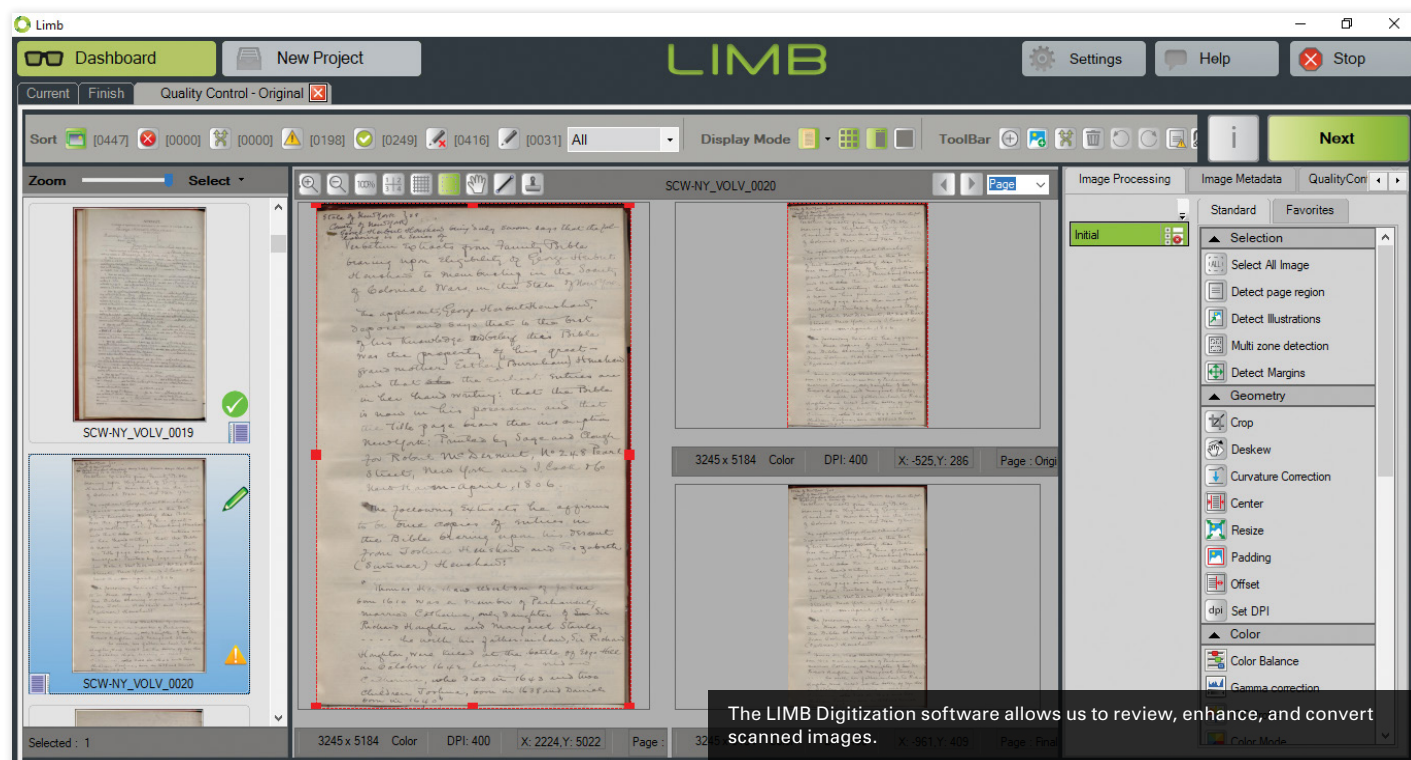
technology have bolstered the NYG&B's digitization capability by more than 50%.

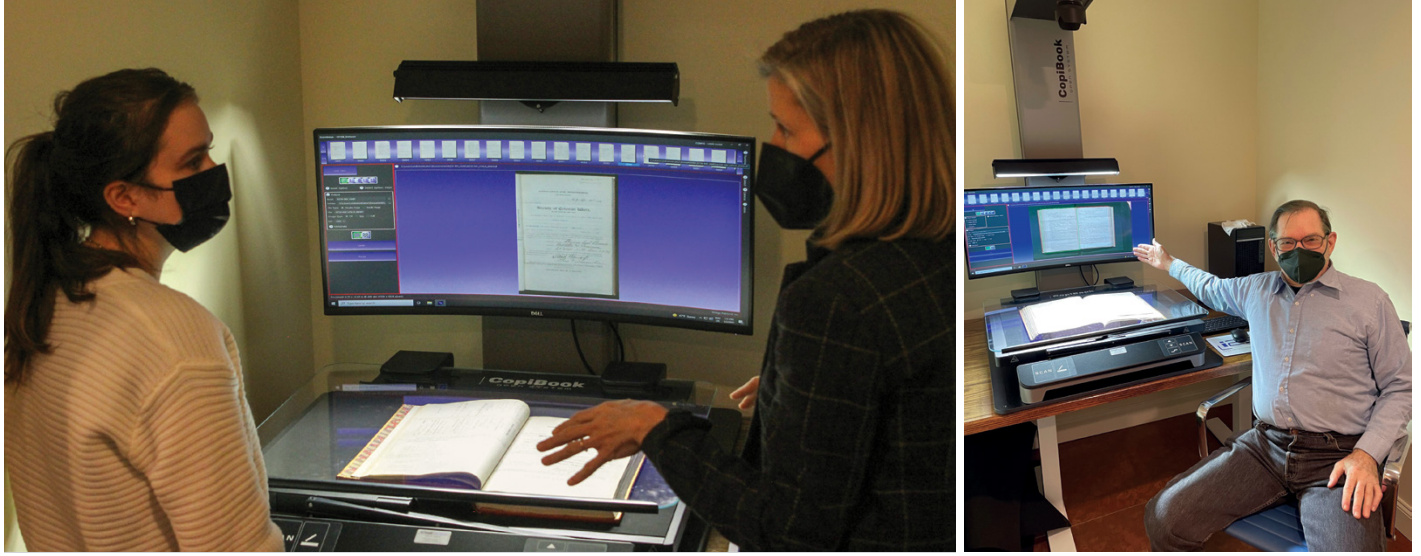
This exponential increase in our digitization capabilities enables us to pursue new collections that will be preserved for all New York researchers. Our ability to do this was so important to James D. Laur, member of the NYG&B Board of Trustees, that he decided to fund the new Digitization Center.

"There are thousands of records awaiting digitization, representing millions of pages and countless New York stories," says Mr. Laur.

"I want to do my part in making these stories come alive by making them accessible to online researchers."

The Center has become a place where volunteers and team members can work together to preserve New York





Office Administrator Anna King coordinates the NYG&B volunteer program and trains new volunteers like Ava Zins. Volunteer William Strachan was happy to learn how to scan images on the new CopiBook OS A2 scanner.

documents by imaging, assessing, and indexing New York records that need to be preserved. Volunteers are enthusiastically capturing images at the CopiBook scanner every day of the week. While one person scans, another is sitting at a nearby computer, running the images taken the previous week through the LIMB software to automatically correct borders and other issues. A third volunteer is working on indexing the information that has been captured to make it accessible when it is uploaded to the website. A team member walks between the desks, answering questions and guiding the process.

Last year 94% of our members felt that continuing to digitize unique New York records for online access should be a high priority for the NYG&B. We are grateful to Mr. Laur for his gift that allows us to open a Digitization

This new equipment and technology have bolstered the NYG&B's digitization capability by more than 50%.

Center that will do just that—save and protect pieces of New York stories that have not been seen before.

To kick off our first full year of the Digitization Center, we held a 24 hour scan-a-thon in January. Volunteers signed up for two hour “give one, get one” shifts in which they scanned NYG&B materials for one hour and their own family history materials for the second hour. More than 2,500 images were captured over those 24 hours, with volunteers scanning scrapbooks, family photos and other precious documents to be preserved. We look forward to more events in this community space throughout the year and into the future.

This Digitization Center is open to families, individuals and organizations that seek to preserve materials.

D. Joshua Taylor Awarded FUGA (Fellow of the Utah Genealogical Association)

The Utah Genealogical Association Fellow Award is given in recognition of those living individuals whose distinguished contributions and ongoing commitment to the field of genealogy are of national or international scope. This may be evidenced by any combination of publications, teaching and speaking, or leadership of major genealogical organizations over a significant period of time.

The latest recipient of the UGA Fellow Award is D. Joshua Taylor, the president and CEO of the NYG&B. Joshua is well-known nationally as a researcher, speaker, author, and leader of genealogical organizations.

Previously, Josh worked on staff with Genealogy Roadshow, FindMyPast, and the New England Historic Genealogical Society. He is a past president of the Federation of Genealogical Societies.

NYG&B's Upstate Initiative

Last year the NYG&B embarked on the Upstate Initiative; a program to reach out to churches, libraries, local historians, archives, cemeteries, historical societies, and others and assist them with digitizing records they hold. This program is in alignment with the NYG&B's mission to preserve New York's records by locating and digitizing materials throughout New York State.

Thanks to a generous grant from the William G. Pomeroy Foundation, the NYG&B enlisted the talents of Bridge & Case to begin the pilot phase of the project. Research into appointed historians (town/village, city, county), historical and cultural organizations, and cemeteries that might have pre-1880 records led to a Central New York Target List. Outreach began to these organizations, engaging them in an application process, asking them to describe items from their collection, and apply for digitization assistance. Options include sending records to NYG&B to be digitized in our Digitization Center or sending a digitization kit to the location for scanning on site.

Materials sent to the NYG&B to digitize are scanned in the Digitization Center; the resulting images and indexes will be shared with the organizations and uploaded to the NYG&B's Online Records Collections.

For those organizations that prefer to digitize at their own sites, we provide a digitization kit, which includes a portable table-top scanner, laptop, monitor, and other tools necessary to successfully scan and index images.

Training videos and virtual sessions provide instructions, as does email assistance. Once completed, these materials will be accessible for the NYG&B community at newyorkfamilyhistory.org.

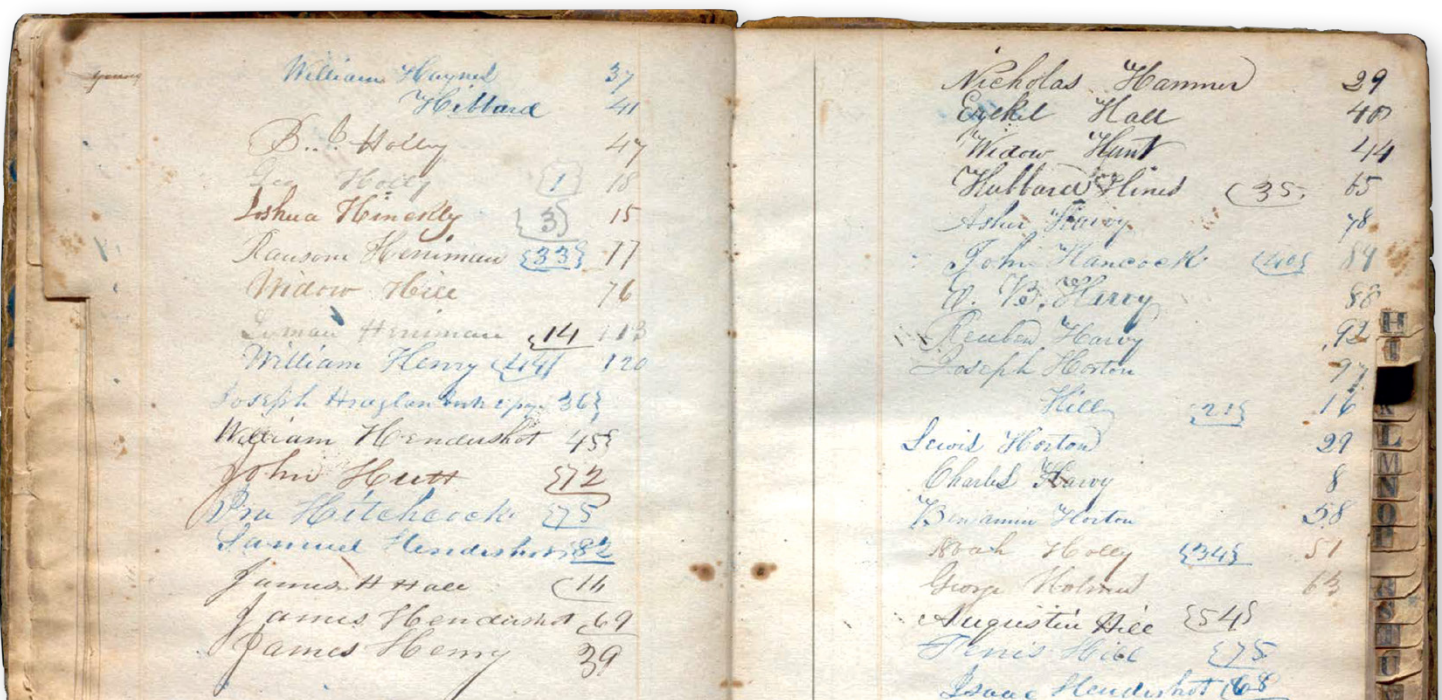
Organizations can send materials to the NYG&B's Digitization Center or receive a kit to digitize on-site.

Phase 1 of the project resulted in fourteen projects from Cato, Onondaga, Sterling, and other Central New York locations.

The records include tax assessment books, cemetery plot information, court cases and transactions, and church

records. The first project completed was the account book of a physician, Dr. Amaziah Church Sherwood of Tompkins County (below), which our volunteers digitized and returned to its owner in 48 hours!

As we move into the second phase of this Initiative, our focus expands beyond Central New York to other parts of the state. We are grateful to the William G. Pomeroy Foundation for recognizing the need for this program and giving us the opportunity to make these connections and help record-holding organizations around the state. Everyone at the NYG&B is excited to see where the next phase of this initiative will take us!





Volunteers of the NYG&B

By Anna King, Manager, Office and Volunteer Engagement

In 2022 we saw the return of volunteers to the enhanced NYG&B headquarters. With a special focus on the Digitization Center, we trained dozens of volunteers to capture thousands of high-quality images of documents using our CopiBook scanner, refine these images using LIMB processing software, and index the files so that they can be used effectively in research. High school students from New York City public schools discovered our Volunteer Match post online and have been signing up to fulfill their service commitments. They have contributed to our success of getting numerous volumes of lineage society applications scanned and indexed. The students are joined by volunteers who have been with us for many years, such as Deborah Barber, Lynne Hayden-Findlay, and Jack McQuade, as well as others who are new to us this year, like Neena Abraham, Emily Henry, Ben Farber, Steve Losie, Kali Norris and Denise Stephens.

Digitization Center

The Digitization Center is open while we are open, Monday through Friday, 9 am–5 pm. Our goal is to make it a productive place to make more records accessible to more people, but it also serves as a place to foster community. First-time volunteers often start with one of our monthly Digitization Friday events with experienced volunteers providing assistance. During these and other events, like our 24-hour digitization and indexing events, we welcome volunteers to scan our material and to bring their own material to scan. Our scanner creates amazing quality images, and we want our community to benefit from it. The more people see what can be accomplished, the more word will get around that we have this tool to preserve all types of New York records.

NYG&B Digital Collections Manager Kalyn Loewer oversees the work our Digitization Center volunteers

undertake. She coordinates numerous projects simultaneously and is always pleased when records are ready to be published on our website so that our volunteers can see the results of their efforts and our community can access them.

New Projects

In addition to working with volunteers in the office, Kalyn is facilitating a project at the Church of the Transfiguration, also known as “The Little Church Around the Corner.” Volunteers, including Deborah Barber, index their fragile card catalog containing data on marriages. The marriages noted in the index are in volumes that will be scanned at the NYG&B’s Digitization Center.

Organizations across New York, such as the Cato Union Hill Cemetery, Sterling Town Hall, and Onondaga Historical Society are part of our community helping us

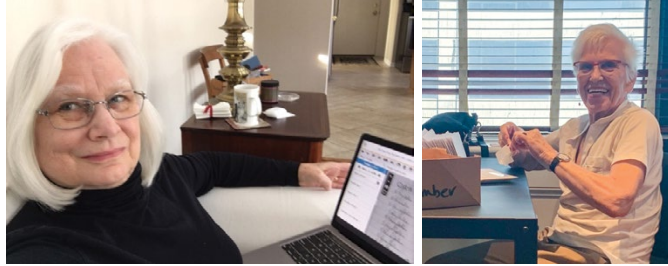


TOP: Sara Zagrodsky, NYG&B Digital Collections Manager Kalyn Loewer, and Elaine Hirschberg; Deborah Sampson, Loewer, and Ben Farber; Michelle Mattis and Loewer.
LEFT: Ella Turrentine, Theresa Martin, and Vivian Schwerner.

achieve our preservation goal. Working closely with partners at these organizations, we identified records sets for digitization. The NYG&B sent portable scanners specifically for this purpose, and in some cases, has identified local volunteers to do the actual scanning. We were lucky to find volunteer Steve Izzo who goes onsite at both Cato Union Hill Cemetery and the Sterling Town Hall. His quick grasp of each organization's needs and the scanning equipment made the project possible. Now we have digital files of materials that perhaps would not have been preserved otherwise, such as interment books, school and tax records, and census records in parts of New York in which our members have interest. This is just a sample of initiatives we are undertaking in the name of preservation. We continue to seek organizations that can use our help with this important mission.

Indexing

It is not just the Digitization Center that sees the impact of our volunteers. Our own Sue Miller, who in addition to running our education programs and editing the *New York Researcher*, among other publications, is an avid indexer and indexing expert. She engages our remote volunteers by providing indexing tutorials. Over the past year, she has shown dozens of remote volunteers how to get involved in the New York Land Records Indexing Project on *FamilySearch*. Sue has provided demonstrations to new indexers and has answered questions from experienced indexers like Ruth Huggler. The part played by NYG&B volunteers, including Barbara Bodden who has indexed thousands of records, in this massive indexing project gets it closer to the finish line (see next page).



CLOCK-WISE FROM TOP-LEFT: Lucinda Lamme participating in one of our indexing marathons from home; Gail Frank assisting with preparing NYG&B's mailings; Lynne Hayden-Findlay leading a tour of Governors Island for NYG&B's volunteers.

Office and Membership Assistance

As the office manager, I personally benefit from the help so many provide whenever we have book orders to pack and ship. And Jen Davis counts on these same volunteers—such as Gail Frank, Earl Miller, and Jack McQuade—to assist with mailings each month.

Volunteer Appreciation

To show our thanks, we host occasional appreciation events. This year, our

volunteers were invited on a tour of Governors Island provided by Lynne Hayden-Findlay, who in addition to being a volunteer tour guide for Governors Island, is a dedicated weekly volunteer with the NYG&B. Lynne is a research and history enthusiast, both of which have great bearing on the intricacy and quality of work she does for us as well as for Governors Island.

This year, we were thrilled to be able to award NYG&B volunteer Deborah Barber with our annual service award in person at NYSFHC in Albany. Deborah has been volunteering on a weekly basis for many years. She scans, indexes, does research for us at the New York Public Library, and can answer all of the questions that our new volunteers have, and even some that Kaly and I have about historical records. (See "In Other Lines" on page 111.)

Our valuable volunteers accomplish a great deal with the enhanced office space—bringing even more records and value to you, our members. This is a time of year to reflect and be thankful. And we are. We are grateful for the work our volunteers do and for the warmth, generosity of spirit, and joy with which they do it.

If you are interested in volunteering for the NYG&B, email volunteer@nygbs.org to reach me.

In Memoriam: Don Eckerle (1936–2022)

Don Eckerle, founding member of the German Genealogy Group, died 22 November 2022. He was born 11 February 1936, growing up in Ridgewood, Queens County, New York.

In 1996 Don attended the first meeting of the German Genealogy Group (GGG) going on to spearhead the database project that now contains more than 23 million records. Don's contributions to the family history community have been honored by the National Genealogical Society, and 11 times by the National Archives. He told some of his story in an oral history project by the Italian Genealogical Group (IGG) in 2020. The GGG shares his genealogical contributions and the IGG video here, germangenealogygroup.com/about-us/Don_Eckerle-InMemoriam.php.

Discovering One's Scottish Past Through Storytelling and Oral History (Three Part Series)

In hearing the stories and tales of the past from those who remember, we can discover our Scottish past. Learn from leading projects underway in Scotland that help bring color to people and history.



nygbs.org/video/tartan-day (Part 1)

Donald Smith he talks about the Edinburgh Scottish Storytelling Festival—and tells a tale. John Copeland's describes Orkney's history and traditions.



nygbs.org/video/scottish-stories (Part 2)

Carenza Murray walks us through the ongoing project at Inverness Castle and Fiona Mackenzie's shares her story of the Canna House Project.



nygbs.org/video/scottish-past (Part 3)

As we travel to the Outer Hebrides, Donnie Steele tells the story of South Uist and Flora McDonald. Finally, Dr Andrew Jennings tells the history of the Shetland Islands north of the mainland and how to find family there.

Exploring the NYG&B Online Collections

nygbs.org/video/exploring-nygb-online-collections

Join Fred Wertz, the NYG&B Director of Digital Services, for a look at the online records you can find on our website. Fred reviews some of our most popular and essential online records, which cannot be found anywhere else.

Navigating the 1950 US Census (pre-release program and post-release update)

nygbs.org/video/1950-census (March 28, 2022)

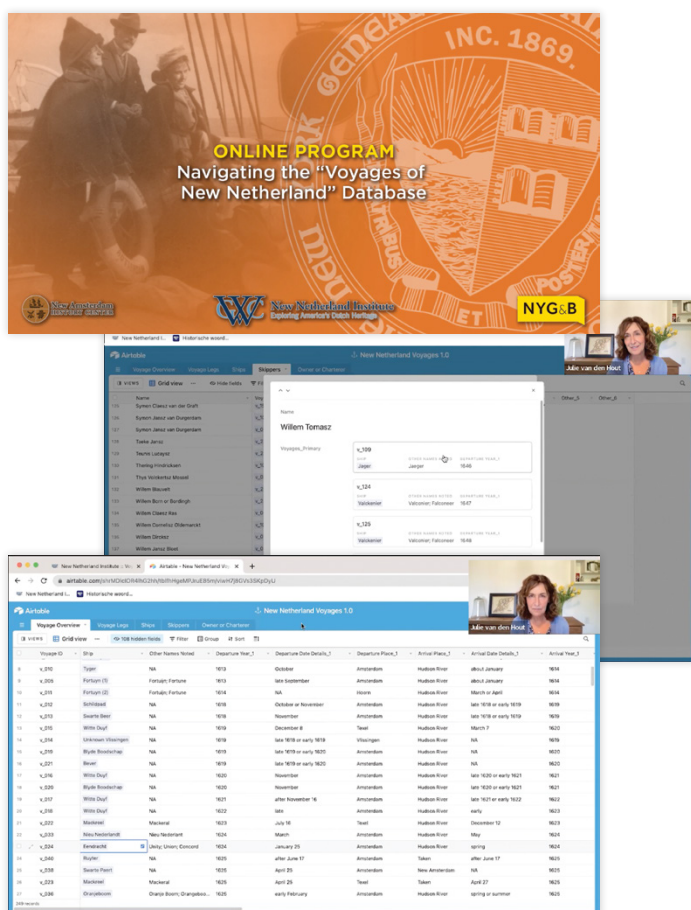
nygbs.org/video/1950-us-census (update, April 27, 2022)

The 1950 census is here! NYG&B Director of Programs Susan R. Miller helps members learn more about exploring these new records, finding yourself and family members, or locating some of your favorite celebrities!

Navigating the "Voyages of New Netherland" Database

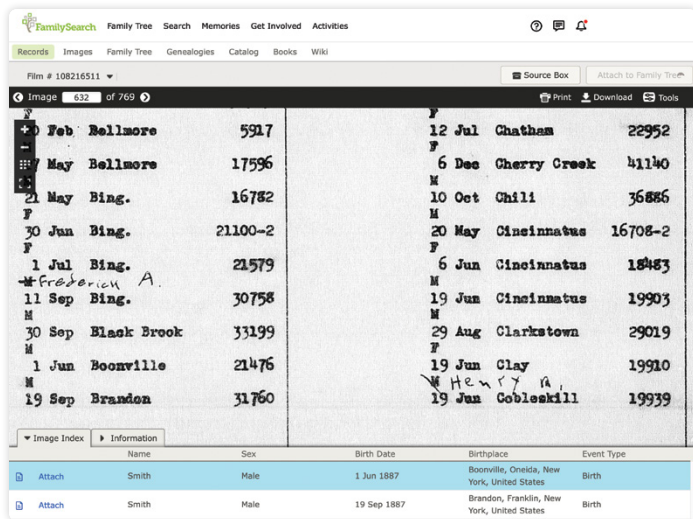
nygbs.org/video/voyages-database

The Voyages of New Netherland project has created a database that captures the activities of ships that undertook voyages between the Dutch Republic and the colony of New Netherland and aims to integrate them into the larger story of the colony. The database's creator, Julie van den Hout, reviews its features and demonstrate the best methods for searching, extracting, and interpreting the data. Learn all about this fascinating database and how you can use it in your own research.



New Access and Databases

When you see a new record set for New York, please let us know by emailing education@nygbs.org.



New York, Birth Indexes outside of New York City, 1881-1942

familysearch.org/search/collection/4460198

This collection (above) was secured by Reclaim the Records, which hosts the microfilm images at the Internet Archive (<https://archive.org/details/nybirthindex>).

FamilySearch's collection provides the microfilm images and a searchable database (not yet complete as the indexing effort is ongoing). Transcribed information includes the typewritten entries as well as additions to the indexes handwritten in later—which may include names of children where they were initially recorded as unknown in the typed index.

Death registers for United States soldiers serving in Cuba and Puerto Rico, 1898-1900

https://a860-collectionguides.nyc.gov/repositories/2/archival_objects/900710

A newly microfilmed, but not digitized, collection from MUNI is accessible in their research room.

U.S., Carded Birth Records in Military Hospitals, 1884-1916

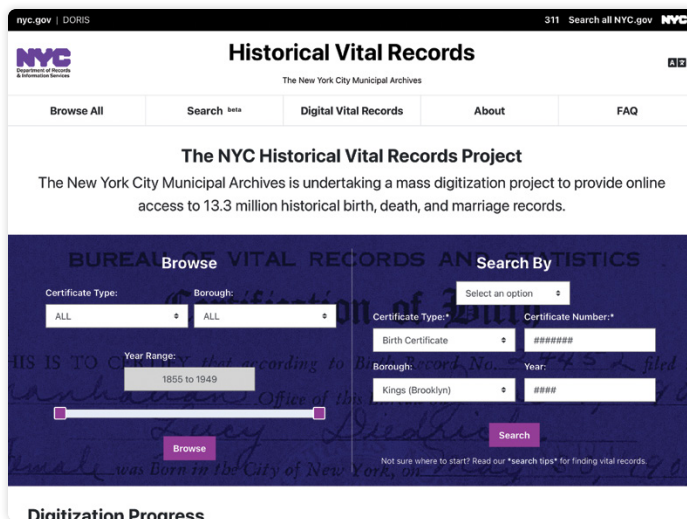
ancestry.com/search/collections/62370

Nearly 1,500 New York births recorded by the Adjutant General's Office show parent and child names and place of birth. The Military Hospitals were located across the U.S. and its territories, therefore families of New York origin in various locations depending on the service person's posting.

Carded Birth Records, 1844-1912, U.S. National Archives Record Group 94

Images of the cards described are also accessible on the National Archives website, although not through a name searchable database.

<https://catalog.archives.gov/id/655727>



More than 710K Records Added to NYC Historical Vital Records

<https://a860-historicalvitalrecords.nyc.gov>

Since the initial release in March 2022 (above), the NYC Municipal Archives has completed its first quarterly update by adding more than 710,000 records, including:

- **Manhattan (New York County) Death Records, 1930-1945**—437,303 new records
- **Queens Death Records, 1881-1892**—2 new records
- **Queens Marriage Licenses, 1940s**—12,087 new records
- **Staten Island (Richmond County) Marriage Licenses, 1947-1949**—4,789 new records

We will continue to identify the additional records added.

New York Heritage Digital Collections—New York Historic Newspapers

nyshistoricnewspapers.org

Baldwinsville has been busy adding five newspapers now available online. Searches may be performed for a county or town/city within that county. Updated and new titles include:

Onondaga County

The Baldwinsville Gazette, 1878-1882

The Baldwinsville Gazette and Farmers' Journal, 1883-1891

The Gazette and Farmers' Journal, 1891-1965

The Messenger, 19??-1965

Onondaga Gazette, 1846-1877

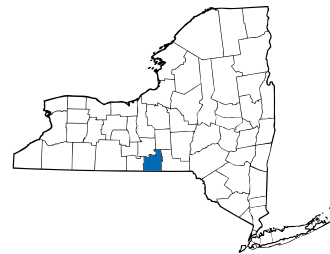
Updated collections include:

Oneida County

The Utica Observer, Jan. 1831?-Dec. 1852? (updated)

Featured New York County

Tioga County (formed 1791)



History

The area that is now Tioga County was once inhabited by the Cayuga and Onondaga tribes (members of the Iroquois Confederacy). Its location in Southern Tier borders Chemung, Tompkins, Cortland, and Broome counties and Pennsylvania.

In August 1779, the contingents of John Sullivan's army burned the Iroquois villages in the county, becoming the first permanent white settlers there. It was officially formed as a county on February 16, 1791, from Montgomery County (though it was later split to form Onondaga, Chenango, Broome, and Chemung counties).

The county seat is the village of Owego, and the county's name means "at the forks" in the Iroquois language. Early industries in the county include farming, logging, and the fur trade. After railroad tracks were built in the mid-1800s, manufacturing of butter and wooden products flourished.

A notable native of Tioga County, Esther Hobart Morris, was the first American woman in an official government position. In 1870 she was appointed justice of the peace for South Pass City, Fremont County, Wyoming.¹

New York State Census Records

County originals at Tioga County Clerk's Office: 1835, 1855, 1865, 1875, 1892, 1905, 1915, and 1925 are digitized on *FamilySearch*, which provides indexes and images.

For the 1825 census abstract and index, see Barnello, et al., in "Abstracts, Indexes, and Transcriptions," below.

The 1845 census is lost. For a transcription of the Factoryville census, see Miles and Anderson in "Abstracts, Indexes, and Transcriptions, Other Resources," below.

State originals at the NYSA: 1915, 1925; digitized by Ancestry.

Note that most of the 1855 New York state census for Clinton County is lost but the information for the Town of Clinton was published in *The Capital*, vol. 4, no. 2, 1989 [NYGB Online Collections, nygb.org/online-records/capital-periodical/208-030/2].

Countywide Repositories and Resources

Tioga County Clerk

16 Court Street, PO Box 307, Owego, NY 13827
(607) 687-8660

tiogacountyny.com/departments/county-clerk

Land records; court records; naturalization records 1854–1955; and the New York state census for Tioga County 1825, 1835, 1855, 1865, 1875, 1892.

County deeds 1790–1835 held by Chemung County Clerk. Historic land records in *FamilySearch*'s United States, New York Land Records, 1630-1975 under Tioga (familysearch.org/search/collection/2078654). Deeds and mortgages

1970–2022 online at clerk.tiogacountyny.gov/Esearch/User/Login.aspx.

Tioga County Surrogate's Court

20 Court Street, PO Box 10, Owego, NY 13827
(607) 689-6099

nycourts.gov/courts/6jd/tioga/surrogate/index.shtml

Holds probate records from the early 1800s to the present. See many but not all probate records digitized from microfilm on *FamilySearch*'s collection, familysearch.org/search/collection/1920234 (1800 to early 1900s) and indexed records on *Ancestry*.



Owego—The County Seat of Tioga Co. NY, from Cemetery Hill, 1869, by Charles Hart, after John Moray. Yale University Art Gallery (artgallery.yale.edu/collections/objects/47563).

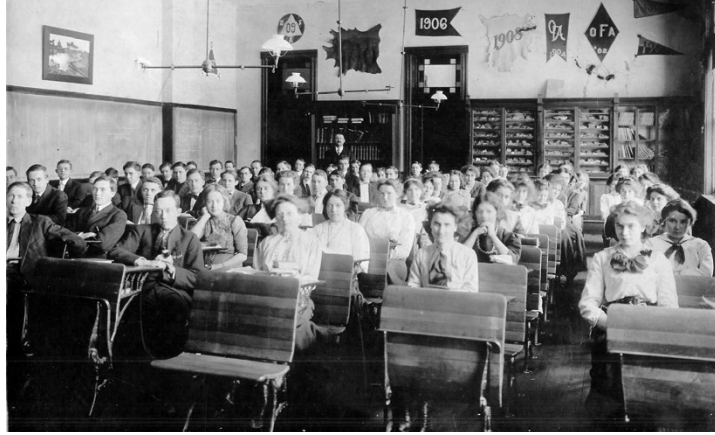
Tioga County Historian

56 Main Street, Owego,
NY 13827
(607) 687-8646
[tiogacountyny.com/
departments/historian](http://tiogacountyny.com/departments/historian)

Website includes history, stories, and biographical sketches of notable women.

Tioga County Public Libraries

Tioga is part of the Finger Lakes Library System; see fls.org to access each library. Many libraries hold local history books or genealogical materials. See listings



Students at the Owego Free Academy, circa 1910. The school was built around 1883 and located at the southwest corner of Main Street and Academy Street. A new school was built in the 1920s and this school building was then razed. (Tioga County Historical Society, tiogahistory.org.)

below for Berkshire Free Library, Candor Public Library, and Coburn Free Library.

Tioga County Historical Society Museum

110-112 Front Street,
Owego, NY 13827
(607) 687-2460
museum@tiogahistory.org
tiogahistory.org

Holds local and family histories, microfilm, and a 300,000 surname index compiled from censuses, newspapers, family Bibles, and family folders.

Local Repositories and Resources (Alphabetized by location)

Berkshire Free Library and Berkshire History Museum

12519-1 State Route 38, PO Box 151, Berkshire, NY 13736
(607) 657-4418 | berkshirefreelibrary.org

Holds local and family history books. Library houses and operates the museum, which includes photographs and ephemera.

Candor Public Library

2 Bank Street, PO Box 104, Candor, NY 13743
(607) 659-7258 | candorfreelibrary.org

Family histories, Candor Chronicle 1800s–1950s, New York civil war records, and local history books.

Coburn Free Library

275 Main Street, Owego, NY 13827
(607) 687-3520 | coburnfreelibrary.org

Family and local histories, including materials relating to the Daughters of the American Revolution and Mayflower descendants.

Spencer Historical Society

22 Spencer Street, PO Box 71, Spencer, NY 14883
(607) 589-6134

Local collection of census records 1825, 1835, 1855; birth and death records 1880s–1915; newspapers 1888–present; and family files. Quarterly newsletter.

Selected Print and Online Resources

Abstracts, Indexes, and Transcriptions

Barnello, Kathleen, Harriet Hall, Joan Green, Joyce Mason, and Harold Witter. Abstract of the 1825 New York State Census of Tioga County, New York. Syracuse: Central New York Genealogical Society, 1996. Originally published in *Tree Talks*, vol. 37, no. 4 (1996): 1–57. Index: 58–78, introduction: iii, maps iv–v.

Canfield, Amos. “Abstracts of Wills Taken from the Probate Records of Tioga County, New York.” *NYG&B Record*, vol. 57 (1926) no. 4: 381–386; vol. 58 (1927) no. 1: 67–76, no. 3: 277–287. [NYG&B Online Collections]

Cemetery Records of Owego, Tioga County, New York.” Manuscript, 1966. Filmed by the Genealogical Society of Utah, 1966 (familysearch.org/search/catalog/261728, item 2).

Cemetery Records of Tioga County, New York. Manuscript, 1966. Filmed by the Genealogical Society of Utah, 1971 (familysearch.org/search/catalog/2617810, items 1 and 2).

County of Tioga Abstracts. Syracuse: Central New York Genealogical Society, 2000. Abstracts for a range of genealogical records originally published in the quarterly *Tree Talks*.

Kelly, Arthur C. M. Index to Tree Talks County Packet: Tioga County. Rhinebeck, NY: Kinship, 2002.

Miles, Ernie. “1845 Census of Factoryville, N.Y.” NYGenWeb Project. tioga.nygenweb.net/factory.htm. Information abstracted from the *History of Waverly, N.Y. and Vicinity* by Albertson, below.

Other Resources

Albertson, Charles L. *History of Waverly, N.Y. and Vicinity*. Waverly, NY: Waverly Sun, 1943. [NYSL and Ancestry.com]

Beers, F. W. *Atlas of Tioga Co., New York: From Actual Surveys by and under the Direction of F. W. Beers, Assisted by Geo. P. Sanford and Others*. New York, 1869. [tcpl.org/node/3640]

Child, Hamilton. *Gazetteer and Business Directory of Broome and Tioga Counties, New York, for 1872–3*. Syracuse, 1872. [tcpl.org/node/5062]

Gay, W. B. *Historical Gazetteer of Tioga County, New York, 1785–1888*. Bowie, MD: Heritage Books, 1991. Index available from Berkshire Family History Association. [archive.org/details/cu31924024792420]

Hoiland, Doris R. *Pioneers of the Southern Tier: Schuyler and Tioga Counties*. Elmira, NY: The Author, 1977.

Hunt, Joan; Ray Hunt; and Linda Williams. *History of Tioga Schools*. Tioga, NY: Tioga County Historical Society, 2010.

Kingman, LeRoy W. *Our County and Its People: A Memorial History of Tioga County, New York*. Elmira, NY, 1897.

[archive.org/details/ourcountyitspeop00kin]

Kingman, LeRoy W. *Owego: Some Account of the Early Settlement of the Village in Tioga County, NY, Called Ah-wa-ga by the Indians, Which Name was Corrupted by Gradual Evolution into Owago, Owego, Owegy, and Finally Owego*. Owego, NY: Owego Gazette, 1907.

[archive.org/details/owegosomeaccount00king]

McEnteer, Thomas C. *Seasons of Change: An Updated History of Tioga County, New York*. Owego, NY: Tioga County Legislature, 1990.

New York Historical Resources Center. *Guide to Historical Resources in Tioga County, New York, Repositories*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, 1981. [[books.FamilySearch.org](https://books.familysearch.org)]

Peirce, Henry B.; and D. Hamilton Hurd. *History of Tioga, Chemung, Tompkins and Schuyler Counties, New York: With Illustrations and Biographical Sketches of Some of Its Prominent Men and Pioneers*. Philadelphia, 1879. See also Ancestry, ancestry.com/search/collections/12105.

Quest, Richard. *Tioga County, New York*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia, 1999.

Sexton, John L. *An Outline History of Tioga and Bradford Counties in Pennsylvania; Chemung, Steuben, Tioga, Tompkins and Schuyler in New York: By Townships, Villages, Boro's and Cities*. Elmira, NY, 1885. [archive.org/details/outlinehistoryof00sext/page/n3/mode/2up]

Washburn, Raymond Secord. *Cost of production of an acre of potatoes in Tompkins and Tioga counties*. Ithaca: Cornell University Library, 1913. [archive.org/details/cu31924013943273/page/n7/mode/2up]

Watrous, Hilda R. *Owego Reflections, 1887–1987*. New York: Tioga County Historical Society, 1994.

Additional Online Resources

FamilySearch

A [catalog search for Tioga County](#) produces many results, including:

- 1825 and 1835 state censuses (familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS4Y-L326-6)
- Multiple cemetery records (link to one in the book view familysearch.org/library/books/viewer/869982/),
- typescripts of early court recordings (familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSK7-53SM-L)

Tioga County GenWeb

tioga.nygenweb.net

The Tioga county site included abstracts of several churches' records, an 1887–1888 directory, an 1856 business directory, and several newspapers.

Further Reading

Hurd, D. Hamilton. *History of Clinton and Franklin Counties, New York. With Illustrations and Biographical Sketches of its Prominent Men and Pioneers*. Philadelphia: J.W. Lewis, 1880. archive.org/details/historyofclinton00hurd/page/n7/mode/2up

New York State Department of Education. *Canadian & Nova Scotia Refugee Tract*. Historic Maps Exhibit Archive. empirestateplaza.ny.gov/historic-maps-exhibit-archive

Tioga County, New York

Formed: February 16, 1791

Parent County: Montgomery County

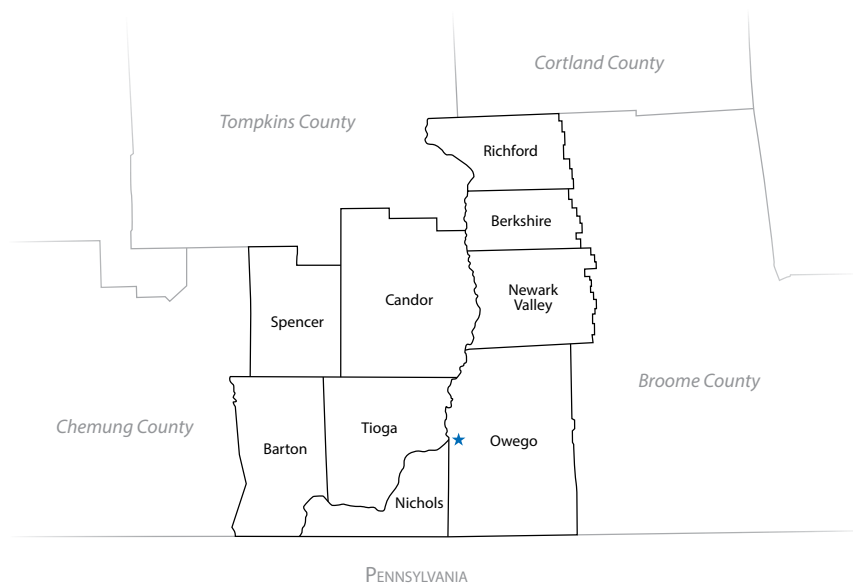
Daughter Counties: Onondaga 1794; Chenango 1798; Broome 1806; Chemung 1836

County Seat ★: Village of Owego

Major Land Transactions: Boston Ten Towns 1787; Watkins and Flint Purchase 1794

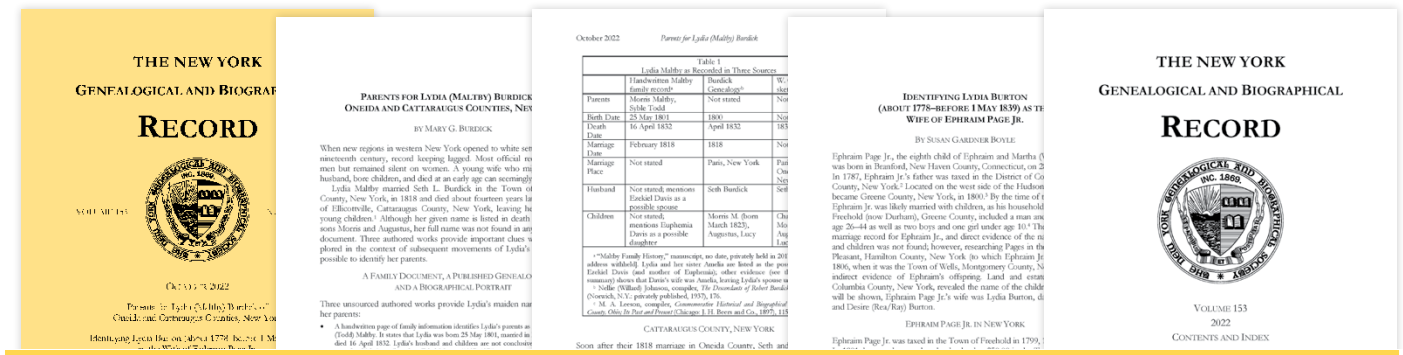
County Cities, Towns, and Villages:

Barton	Owego
Berkshire	Richford
Candor	Spencer
Newark Valley	Tioga
Nichols	



Endnotes

1 Robert McHenry, ed, *Famous American women : A Biographical Dictionary from Colonial Times to the Present*, New York: G & C Merriman Co., 1980, (archive.org/details/famousamericanwo00mche/page/292/mode/2up?q=McQuigg)



Highlights of *The NYG&B Record*

Read the full issue at newyorkfamilyhistory.org/online-records/nygb-record-full-text/566-763

The Editor's View—September 2022

Family history has always fascinated me. My paternal grandparents' accents were steady reminders of their decision to leave County Louth, Ireland, and to settle in New York City with dreams of their future. They worked diligently to achieve those dreams. My grandfather was a laborer for Consolidated Edison, just a few blocks away from the family's flat in Manhattan's Gas House District. My grandmother baked, cleaned, sewed, and cared for their four children. Intrigued by my grandparents' lives even as a child, I often spoke with my grandmother about Ireland, her voyage to America, and her experiences in her new home. Little did I know that my childhood curiosity would lead me to genealogical research—and to the remarkable opportunity to edit *The New York Genealogical and Biographical Record*, helping others tell stories of New Yorkers from all walks of life.

During my time at *The Record*, I have had the chance to work with dozens of authors, insightful peer reviewers, an exceptional and dedicated editorial board, and the creative, hardworking NYG&B staff. New York genealogists—and those who research families with New York roots—are consistently generous with their time and knowledge, committed to the goal of outstanding genealogical scholarship. What a priceless gift it has been to learn from them!

As guest editor of the January 2011 issue, I expressed hope that articles in this journal would inspire readers to research and to write about their conclusions. Today, as I finish my term as editor, that hope endures.

And so I will close as I began: "Are you ready? Turn to the next page. Let the inspiration begin."

—Gratefully, Laura Murphy DeGrazia, CG®, FGBS, Editor

Article Summaries

Parents for Lydia (Maltby) Burdick of Oneida and Cattaraugus Counties, New York

By Mary G. Burdick

Published local histories, unsourced genealogies, and handwritten (or scribbled) family notes provide clues for further research as the author demonstrated in this article. The use of tables to correlate information demonstrates the usefulness of the technique. This article continues in the January issue.

Time period: 1800s, 1900s

Location: Cattaraugus, Herkimer, and Oneida counties, and Michigan, Ohio, and Texas

Sources: Unsourced authored works, census records, land company records, county land records, a family manuscript, a family letter, probate files, religious records, and newspapers (among others)

Identifying Lydia Burton (About 1778–Before 1 May 1839) as the Wife of Ephraim Page Jr.

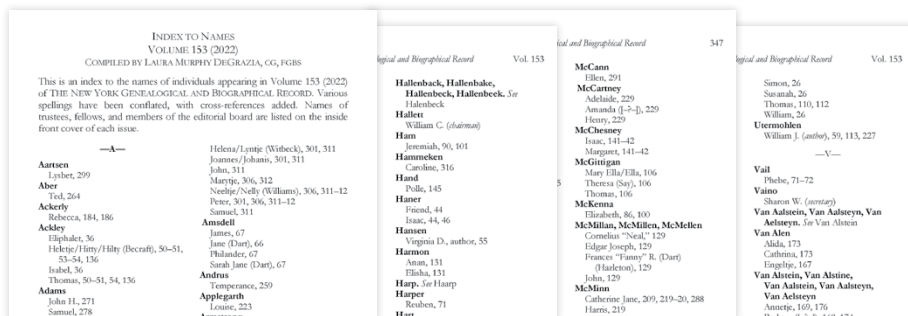
By Susan Gardner Boyle

The author uses deeds and estate records, as well as Connecticut town records to link family members, allowing careful analysis of the information to come to a conclusion. This article continues in the January issue.

Time period: 1700s, 1800s

Location: Greene, Fulton and Hamilton (then Montgomery) and Columbia counties, and Connecticut and Texas

Sources: Tax records, town records, census records, published county histories, county land records, gazetteers, probate files, religious records, and pension files (among others)



October Issue Extras

The October issue also contains Additions and Corrections, and a book review.

The annual article and name indexes are included in this issue.



Exploring Our Past: The NYG&B Visits Northern Ireland

The NYG&B's first heritage trip to Northern Ireland was a fascinating and enriching experience, including record repositories, historical locations, and the enchanting local scenery. Participants on the tour were aptly guided by members of the Ulster Historical Foundation, who joined Jen Davis, NYG&B VP, Advancement and Membership.

Our visit was anchored in Belfast, where we began to learn the city's history. A visit to Titanic Belfast, a modern museum that tells the story not only of the famous ship, but of the city and people who built her. The group then explored Clifton House, once the home of the Belfast Charitable Society, established in 1752 to aid Belfast's poor. Our private tour gave us insight into the history of poor houses in the 1700s and 1800s. A tour of the Crumlin Road Gaol, a prison that opened in 1846 and was in operation until 1996, followed. While there we learned the stories of people who were imprisoned there and the conditions they faced.

The next day began at the Public Records Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI). The team at PRONI welcomed the NYG&B, as we learned about the collections kept there. PRONI opened in 1924 and is one of the best regional archives in the world. The group had a first-hand look at PRONI's work to conserve documents in their impressive conservation lab [A](#) and learned more about their impressive storage space. Next the group visited Linen Hall Library, the oldest library in Belfast. This beautiful building has a huge genealogical collection in addition to the Burns Collection, the largest collection of material relating to Scottish poet Robert Burns outside of Scotland. The day concluded with a return to Clifton House for dinner and live Irish music.

The tour's third day saw our group venture out of Belfast, driving along the beautiful Antrim Coast and through the Glens of Antrim on our way to the Giant's Causeway. The coast is dotted with small villages and fishing sites and the amazing panoramic views, including Dunluce Castle [B](#) on the Causeway Coast. The Giant's Causeway is Northern Ireland's first UNESCO World Heritage Site, made up of 40,000 basalt stone columns formed by volcanic eruptions over 60 million years ago. Seeing these stones as they cascade down the mountain into the ocean was breathtaking.

Thursday was a day of libraries, beginning with a visit to Benburb Priory [C](#), which was originally a fortified castle. A manor house was built on the estate in the late 19th century which was used as a military hospital during the World War II. The Servite Order took over the home in 1948 and now it houses an archive and library with books dating back to the early 1500s. After lunch, the group visited the Cardinal Tomas

O'Fiaich Memorial Library and Archive, which holds a collection of 50,000 published works on various aspects of Irish history, language, and culture. The library also has a unique archive of Irish sports records. The librarian was excited to show us the program from the first all-Ireland football tournament held outside of Ireland, in 1947 at the Polo Grounds in New York City.

The day concluded with a visit to the town of Armagh, where the group toured St. Patrick's Cathedral and its museum. We then went to our final library of the day, the Armagh Robinson Library [D](#), which has, among

its prized possessions, Jonathan Swift's personal copy of *Gulliver's Travels*, with amendments and corrections in his own handwriting. The library staff shared a beautiful book of maps of the counties of Ireland, as well as an atlas of the United States, created in the 1770s.

Our last day found the group journeying to Omagh and West Tyrone and exploring the incredibly beautiful countryside. We began our day at the Mellon Centre for Migration Studies, based at the Ulster American Folk Park. The Centre was established in 1998 for the study of human migration, focusing on the peoples of Ireland world-wide. The organization's Irish Emigration Database contains some 32,500 primary source documents on all aspects of Irish emigration from the early 1700s to the 1900s. Although it was difficult to leave the Centre and its fantastic collection, we crossed the road to the Ulster American Folk Park. The Park tells the story of what life was like on both sides of the Atlantic through reconstructed buildings and exhibits. These buildings bring to life what it was like living in Ireland in the early 1800s, the experience of boarding a ship to America, and then the American experience.

Our final stop of the day was a very special one. Baron's Court [E](#), home of the Duke of Abercorn, was built in the 1770s. It has been extensively modified over the years but remains a grand estate. The house is the private residence of the present Duke of Abercorn, who graciously allowed us to visit his home and grounds. We are grateful to the Duke for allowing us this privilege.

The history of Ireland is a complex and fascinating, and we are grateful to everyone at the Ulster Historical Foundation for guiding and educating us through a wonderful week.

Join us walking in the footsteps of your ancestors in 2023!

Palatine Region of Germany,
September 17-23, 2023
Scotland, October 1-7, 2023
The Netherlands, Spring 2024

In Other Lines

A column in which we ask NYG&B members to tell us their own stories.

Charles and Rose Lankford | Colorado | Member since 2020

What is your earliest genealogical recollection?

My grandmother was a colorful, self-reliant person who loved to tell stories about our family. I always enjoyed listening to her stories and it always made me want to learn more about them and where we came from.

How did you get started in genealogy?

Rose's family history is fairly straight forward being Germans from Russia. A significant amount of research has been accomplished over the years. A book published about their family tree describes a rich but tragic history and details their family struggles and where their family came from.

Whereas, although my family had collected a considerable number of family photographs and some artifacts along with a few family stories, little was passed along about our roots. I have Rose to thank for collecting as much as possible from my side of the family while I was extremely busy with my demanding project management career with a major oil company. She interviewed relatives, collected photographs, and welcomed any family heirlooms they passed along. If it was not for her, we would not have much to start with. Then, when I retired, we were able to begin making sense of all she had collected and fill in the gaps with detailed genealogy research.

Tell me about your hobbies?

We have both been retired for some time but have several hobbies that keep us busy along with traveling abroad and enjoying our grandkids. Our primary hobbies being family genealogy, BBQ judging, and owning a small cemetery. We are KCBS certified BBQ judges with more than 110 contests judged. We have been all over the United States judging events. Surprisingly, we have been able to meld BBQ judging together with researching Charles' family tree. There always seems to be a contest near where we are researching. So, we combine the two on every genealogy trip. Also, we were fortunate enough to be asked by the owner of the Colorado Rockies to organize and put on two BBQ contests for him during baseball season. We really enjoyed working with his



The Lankfords at cooking school on the Amalfi coast.

group. The Rockies owner, Mr. Monfort, has even been to our home for BBQ. The BBQ community is made of a lot of great people that enjoy getting together. Great food and great times.

Maybe the other unusual "hobby" is that while tracing Charles' father's family line back into Missouri, we found a small country church

cemetery where his 2-time great grandparents were buried. It was a Presbyterian Church, school and cemetery established in 1836 in the countryside of Missouri. The Church building had long been torn down, but the one room school building that they stopped using in the early 1940s still stands and is used as a private home today. Unfortunately, the cemetery with more than 100 grave sites was allowed to degrade. Several decades ago, the descendants had cleaned it up and made some repairs, but no significant work had been done in more than twenty-five years. Charles' ancestor's headstones along with a number of the others in the cemetery had been lost or destroyed. A previous landowner's intent was to return the land to agriculture. The cemetery the remaining headstones needed care or repairs. After a couple years of "whining," Charles finally convinced the present landowner to sell us the cemetery. We cleaned up the cemetery removing the underbrush and seedling trees. Since then, we go back a couple times a year for cleaning and repairs. Also, we have had a professional company come out and repair some headstones. We installed a single headstone listing Charles' 2-time great grandparents and their children who were recorded as buried in the cemetery. A landscaper maintains the cemetery for us.

Have you held a family reunion?

We have not. We were going to attend two significant family reunions associated with our ancestors, but Covid shut both of them down. Hopefully, they will be resurrected this year or next and we will be able to attend.

What brought you to the NYG&B?

The NYG&B is now my go-to for anything New York as well as the New England area. Our Dutch branch passed through New York and left their mark in NYG&B records.

I hadn't been familiar at all with NYG&B, but a local New York county genealogist recommended your website for what was available. I found not only a large amount of information but great assistance from professionals there, which has made my research significantly easier. We recently joined a group on a research trip to Albany which was a very productive trip.



“...Charles finally convinced the present landowner [in Missouri] to sell us the cemetery. We cleaned up the cemetery... [and] we go back a couple times a year for cleaning and repairs.”

save the money to pay their way. I followed their lives from the time they came over until their death. The siblings stuck together. Lived near each other and worked near or with each other. Only my great grandfather and one sister married and raised families. The others did not. They all purchased cemetery plots together and are buried together. They

stuck together in tough times and wanted to be together forever. It goes without saying the life lessons that could be learned.

I firmly believe the children of today should spend time learning about their ancestors and what they went through to give us the opportunities we have today.

What do you think are the five best things about being a NYG&B member?

It is not only the amount of research materials but the experienced team members available to assist you in accessing and interpreting the material. To us this is one of the most significant draws to being members. On some sites you may never know a pertinent piece of information is available or exists because you may not realize how or where to access it. But, at NYG&B there is always someone, an article, or a guide to help.

NYG&B is not a static repository. It is always growing and changing. We are always interested in what is new when the latest *New York Researcher* and *The NYG&B Record* edition arrive.

Record organization is really great. For me, the breakdown by County is of great value. Since my ancestors were only located in a couple counties, it allows me to concentrate in a couple different counties and reduce the amount of information to go through. Which in turn reduces my research time.

Along with the other resources are webinars and other educational resources. I look forward to taking advantage of the DNA series in particular. There are so many DNA courses and so-called experts available on the internet. I am glad to see webinars from a reputable provider such as NYG&B. Where I can count on a quality product.

Organized research trips such as the Albany trip that we were on last year really helped my New York research. There were genealogists along with us to not only guide us and answer questions, but they helped me keep my focus on the most important research issues.

Have you always had an interest/a passion in genealogy?

Genealogy was always a backburner type subject. Something I thought I was mildly interested in. However, once I began to accumulate details about our family tree and see how many stories there were associated with so many family members, the bug really bit me. Now, we take at least four genealogy trips per year.

What is the most surprising thing you found in your research?

Two stories come to mind. The first is that NYG&B research revealed that Charles' 4-time great grandfather, Jacob Janszen "Flodder" Gardenier, owned six lots on Wall Street in New York City. He subsequently sold them, but it would have been nice if he would have passed them down through the family. Imagine what they are worth today.

The other surprising family story concerns a 2-time great grandfather of Charles from England—probably a life lesson for us all. In 1866 after his mother died of cholera, his father took two sons, 11 and 15, and immigrated to the United States, where he and the sons are employed for approximately 4½ years. His father had to leave behind his youngest son, Charles' 2-time great grandfather, age 13, and four daughters in the County Workhouse. The two eldest daughters 22 and 11 lived as full-time servants in private homes, while the two younger daughters 8 and 9 were students living in the Workhouse. Recorded minutes of the Workhouse show that their father sent a request that they be sent to the United States, but the Workhouse denied providing him the funds to do so. So, it appears that the family had to save for four and a half years to pay for passage. Imagine children of that age first losing their mother and then having their father place them in a Workhouse with the promise that he would be back for them once he could



NYG&B Learning Experiences

Research with the New York Experts—In-Person and Online!

In-Person Research Trips

Our research tours are an ideal setting for those just beginning their search and those seeking answers to longstanding New York questions. Registration includes a pre-consultation with a professional genealogist and lectures to prepare you for the onsite guidance offered throughout the program. **Register early, as a limited number of spaces are available for each tour and often sell out quickly.**

Research in New York City

Manhattan, New York

Explore New York City’s vast repositories under the careful guidance of the NYG&B. This program is based in-person at the NYG&B’s headquarters.

Research at the Allen County Public Library

Fort Wayne, Indiana

Dive into the incredible collections at the nation’s largest public library for family history. In addition to consultations and sessions to help prepare you for your time, dedicated genealogists will be on-hand to assist you as you explore The Genealogy Center’s collections.

Research in Albany

Albany, New York

Join the NYG&B for three days of research in Albany at the NY State Library and NY State Archives. Online orientation sessions and advance consultations prepare you for research onsite.

Online Learning with the NYG&B

Learn from the comfort of your home through guided, online sessions and engage with others.

The New York Family History School

Learn at your own pace through guided, on-demand sessions focusing on a specific family history topic. Tuition includes access to five sessions for 60-days, two live group sessions, syllabus materials, a certificate of completion, and an invitation to the annual online NYFHS alumni reception.

- **Tracing Immigrant Ancestors to New York, 1780s to 1924: Part A—The Records**
- **New York State Research Fundamentals, First Run**
- **New York City Research Fundamentals**
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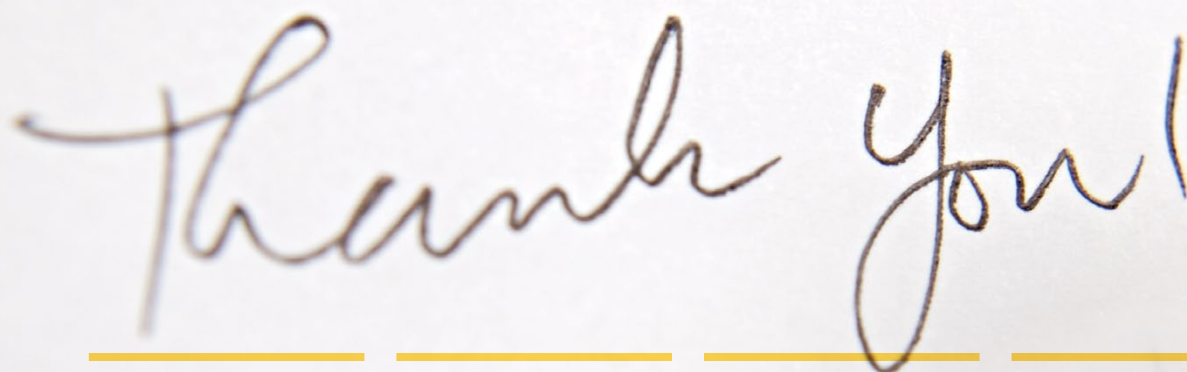
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Learn more at newyorkfamilyhistory.org/events or call 212-755-8532.

See our website also for upcoming webinars, talks, workshops, and other events.

Image: Thomas Gainsborough, On the Hudson The Met Museum (metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/10768).



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supporting the
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Annual Fund

For being a
member of the
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For taking part
in programs and
other activities
all year.

For speaking
out to protect
access to New
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