



RAMBLERS' RAMBLINGS

Volume XX Number Four Winter 2010



Happy 20th Birthday, Rambler's!

This newsletter closes out the 20th year of the Texas Research Ramblers organization.

Texas Research Ramblers was organized in 1990 by Mary Collie Cooper along with some of her former students. Mary taught Genealogy classes through A&MCISD Community Education Program on Timber street, as early as 1977 and later taught classes at her home. Her records indicate she taught 18 Genealogy classes and a total of 231 students from 1989 through 2002 class lists have been found before 1989.

NEW OFFICERS

In July the Ramblers elected new officers, *Shelia May* as recording Secretary,



Georgianne Bigam as Treasurer



and *Jane and Eugene Voekel* as Vice President and Chairpersons of the Program Committee.



My NORWEGIAN RESEARCH

BY JOYCE LOUIS

There's good news and bad news. I went , I saw, I did not conquer. But I got a bit closer to finding the family of a Trondheim seaman who took the name of James Johnson in America.

I went to 4 cities in Norway, hemorrhaging money along the way; I saw the lovely culture and port in which he lived, I conquered enough language to direct a lady to the "sykehus," but found that Norwegians speak English well. I did not identify James' family of origin.

By Norwegian law, 100 years of privacy separate the public records from living people. There is a countdown clock now on the Digitalarkivet, the state operated genealogy site, showing how many days, hours, minutes and seconds until

the 1910 Census will go public. Even the Norwegians are waiting with bated breath.

Because of the privacy gap, I went to the living Hegstad, calling every Hegstad in the Trondheim phone book. I got one hang up, several "don't knows" and a masculine voice who finally pleaded, "I'm only 16 years old." The young man did put me in touch with his uncle who concluded that we are probably not of the same family.

Mostly I found people who did not know their own great grandparents' names. One lovely lady, Torve Hegstad, arranged, for a librarian at Kulturbunker, Dora, to meet with us and drove us there.

The Kulturbunker was a German submarine base in WWII with reinforced cement walls from 3 to 10 meters thick. Since it could not even be dynamited, they gutted it to use as a space for an archive.

Even the Kulturbunker librarian cannot bridge that 100 year privacy gap, but he helped as much as he could with information about a family from the 1865 and 1875 censuses that I think might be mine. I realized I have grown fond of this particular family and will be disappointed if they turn out not to be mine.

This family has 7 facts in common with my great grandfather and his

offspring: 5 names, occupations as seamen, and their location. Hegstad was the middle name of James' first son.

Torve also put me in touch with Gerd Hegstad, a lady in Oslo who is researching the Hegstad genealogy. We talked by phone and she was interested, but had not responded to email, so perhaps there is an email problem. I got Gerd's street address from the internet phonebook and will mail what didn't get there by email. I saw that she lives on a street I had walked on when I was in Oslo.



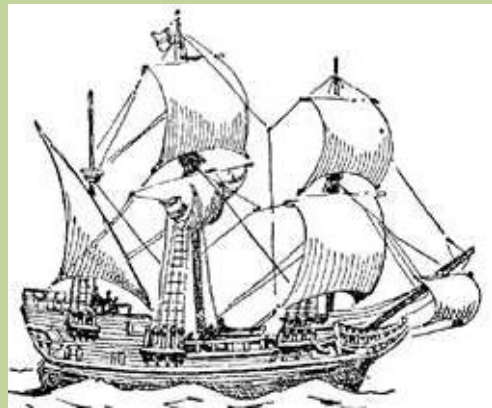
I keep chipping at the brick wall. It was worth my effort to see the lovely country of my ancestor's heritage. Meanwhile, I subscribe to Rootsweb's Norwegian query site for useful tidbits about research in Norway and for input from knowledgeable people when I have questions. I feel that this wall is about to fall.

Merry Christmas

MISSION IMPOSSIBLE

BY BOBBIE MIDDLETON

This is the story of an Exodus from a troubled land and of the family heritage these colonists carried with them while crossing the sea.



It was such a traumatic decision for **Anne Lovelace** to cross the ocean to a new continent. She was 39 years old on March 25, 1650. She was the widowed mother of 11 children ranging in age from a 21-year-old to a 3-year-old daughter.

Some of the events leading to Anne's motivation for coming to America can be understood by examining the events of the times. There was much religious and political intolerance in

England at that time. The ruling monarchs of the day were determined to maintain absolute control over their subjects, but the subjects were equally determined to gain individual liberty and freedom. Turmoil, turbulence and wars marked the reigns of Elizabeth I, James I, and Charles I. Constant struggles were taking place between the ruling monarchs and Parliament. A Civil War broke out in 1642 between the Royalists, who supported the King, and the Puritans, who supported Parliament. Oliver Cromwell led the Puritan army in a series of victories causing Charles I to flee to Scotland but with a price on his head. He was captured and beheaded in 1648.

The Lovelace family fortunes and lives were in shambles. What had been the Lovelace estate for 300 years had to be sold to pay debts incurred by the oldest son on behalf of the Royalist cause. **Anne Lovelace and her husband, Reverend John Gorsuch**, were Church of England adherents and ardent Royalists. One of the younger brothers had been killed fighting for the King. At least 3 of her other brothers were in prison or in exile.

Reverend Gorsuch installed as Rector of Walkern on July 28, 1632 and held this post for 10 years before being

ejected by the Parliamentarians in 1642. Following his ejection the Gorsuch family took refuge in the adjoining Weston Parish, where John's mother, **Alice Hall Gorsuch**, lived and was a major property owner.

What brought matters to a head was John's attempt to assert legal rights in the property from which he had been ejected. With material greed as a like motive for his murder, a finger of suspicion points at the Vicar of Weston. He had also become Vicar of Walkern upon John Gorsuch's ejection.

Following the death of **John Gorsuch** at age 40, the family stayed in Weston Parish under the apparent protection of grandmother Alice Hall Gorsuch. To understand what motivated **Anne Lovelace Gorsuch**, 2 years later to leave England forever with 7 of her children, one need only look at her situation in early 1648. She was living in a community where bitter political, religious and social enemies surrounded her. Her parents were dead her husband murdered, and her brother Richard Lovelace was in prison for his support of the King.

There was only one asylum to which **Anne Lovelace Gorsuch** would have

looked: That was Virginia. The Old Dominion of Virginia was England's first colony (1607) and remained its foremost colony. Virginia was a safe haven. It was steadfast in its support of the Established Church of England and of the Royalist cause. Involvement and investment in Virginia were in Anne's family blood. Her father, Sir William Lovelace (1584-1627) had been a member of the Virginia Company; five great uncles and her grandfathers, Sir William Lovelace (1561-1629) and Sir William Barne (1568-1619), had been members of the Virginia Company. If Anne's knowledge of Virginia was a long-term family affair then the catalyst who made her final move possible was her youngest brother, Francis Lovelace, who was a colonel in the Royalist army and had been the Governor of Carmarthen Castle in Wales during its siege in 1644-1645. Francis went to Virginia in 1650. Anne either sailed with her brother or followed shortly afterward. Francis later became Governor of New York in 1668.

Anne said goodbye to 2 oldest sons and left her 3-year-old daughter in the care of her mother-in-law. Anne said goodbye forever to 4 (the second son John may already have been dead)

of her oldest children and her youngest. So with 7 children aged 17, 15, 13, 11, 9, 8 and 6, this 39 - year old - woman set out to cross 3,000 miles of ocean to a colony still being hacked out of a wilderness that was just 4 years older than she.

In 1650 ships carrying passengers as cargo were tightly packed with about 60 immigrants and a crew of 30. The immigrants were confined to a deck space no more than 80 feet in length from bow to stem. In 1650 the average length of the voyage between England and Virginia was, depending on the weather, between 10 and 12 weeks at sea. Can one imagine keeping 7 young children in tow in an 80-foot deck space on a rolling sea, night and day for 10 to 12 weeks? How often were they sick? How many storms did they endure?

Anne Lovelace Gorsuch died in Virginia within 2 years of her arrival . Within the decade, the 2 oldest of the children who had made the voyage returned to England. Five, however, remained, grew to adulthood in Virginia, and as young adults moved north to Maryland, whence their descendants spread across a continent. This is the story of that

Exodus from a troubled land and of the family heritage that came down to the present day.



BRICK WALL BREAK THROUGH

GRIMES COUNTY EXAMINER

OCTOBER 21, 1898

"The eleven year old *family cat* of Mr. and Mrs. Jesse Youmens suffered this morning for being too particular about her comfort last night. She crawled into the cook stove and was baked to a turn." Cold weather generally results in a slight diminution of the cat family."

MY MAYFLOWER STORY

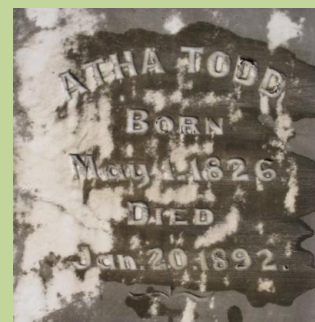
GREAT SURPRISES ARE
HIDDEN IN UNLIKELY PLACES

By Mervin Peters

My great grandparents Dansby are buried in Steep Hollow Cemetery, Brazos County, Texas, but I never had

spent much time researching my great grandmother, Laura Cedonia Todd Dansby's family. My son George Marshall Peters and I had written a book about her husband Durant Motier Dansby and his brother Marshall Cole Dansby, entitled the *Dansby Brothers in the Civil War*.

In April of 2009 I decided I really should be more interested in Laura. When looking at her Steep Hollow Cemetery site created by Barbara Coker on "Find a Grave" website, I discovered her father Atha Todd connected and that he was buried in Old Bethel Cemetery near Harvey, also in Brazos County. I went to see his grave marker to determine if his wife Helen Caroline Todd was nearby. I discovered Helen Caroline Soles Todd on one of the sides of Atha's square stone that had been overlooked when the original website survey was done.



Her stone indicated she was a Soles, which prompted my interest in other Soles buried nearby. Later when adding Helen Caroline to "Find a Grave", I looked at the "Find a Grave" site for her brother Joseph M. Soles in the same cemetery. A narrative about him had been placed on the "Find a Grave" site and at the very bottom it read, "According to a descendant of one of Dr. Soles' sisters, this Soles family had been accepted by the Mayflower Society as descendants of George Soule."



If this is true, then it meant I am a descendant of the Mayflower as well. The sister whose family had done the research was not my Great, Great grandmother's, but another sister. I had never even heard a suggestion that I might have any kind of connection to an original passenger on the Mayflower.

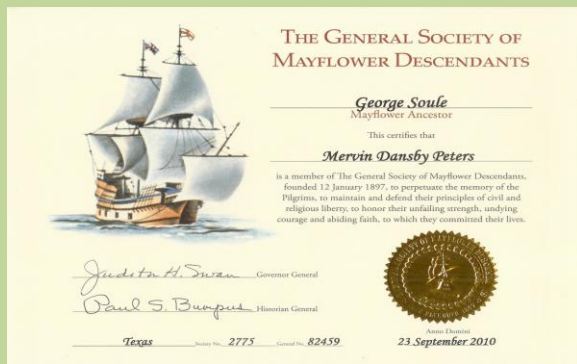
George Soule was born in England about 1595, and as a young man became a teacher to Edward Winslow's children. Soule came with Winslow to America on the Mayflower in 1620, probably as an indentured servant. He was one of 41 signers of the Mayflower Compact in November, 1620. Soule was among the one half of the population that survived the first winter in Plymouth and was present at the time of the "First Thanksgiving" in 1621. Soule died in 1680 and is likely buried in Miles Standish's burial ground in Duxbury, Massachusetts.



Obviously, I began my search for the author of the Mayflower comment on Joseph Soles' "Find a Grave" site. The creator of Joseph's site had received the information from a descendant. Fortunately, she was able to locate her original communication and provide me with a name and email address. I got in contact with him and

received what information he had available, and then began my own research and application process in the summer of 2009.

I have been able to put all the pieces together, including significant new documentation that was not required by the Mayflower Society just a few years ago. On September 23, 2010, my application was accepted after 18 months of documentation, assembly of my application, great assistance from the Texas Society's co-historian and a lot of waiting.



The Society of Mayflower Descendants focuses on births, marriages and deaths and requires strong proof of each and strong links between generations, identified as absolute or primary proof. Copies of original records are key. Probate records/wills that list children are considered absolute and primary proof. Marriage licenses naming both parties are proof. Birth certificates

naming parents are proof. Secondary proof can include Bible records and family manuscripts. Federal census records that clearly identify parents and a relevant child are considered proof.

The Society of Mayflower Descendants expects birth records for all relevant individuals. If unable to find them, SS-5 records from Social Security are a government issued substitute. Birth records have to be supplied when applying for SS numbers.

Online records probably won't be accepted by The Society of Mayflower Descendants because online records only prove that the actual records exist. Neither will family narrative unless significantly aged and available in the public domain.

Bible records that give date of birth, but no link to parents; census that do not show relationship, the grave photo that does not show parents are all examples that do not adequately link generations and at best are considered secondary.

Going the extra steps to get original records helps as it demonstrates to

The Society of Mayflower Descendants that everything possible had been done.

A few strong secondary sources may be accepted when multiple sources for the same facts are available, but certainly aren't considered proof. Too many of these will render the application not conclusive.

The Mayflower connection discovery brought back to mind an article written for the Bryan Weekly Eagle in 1927 by a niece of Helen Caroline, telling of 3 sisters and their families' travel by wagon in 1869 from Lowndes County, Alabama to Texas. I read the article a number of times, but never completely understood how it connected with our family until I began my research into the Soles/Soule Family.

This research also helped me connect more with the Soles/Barron family book written in 1969 by Mildred Dowling Barron about these same Soles sisters and their families in Lowndes County, Alabama and later in Brazos County, Texas in 1869. This only goes to demonstrate that a wealth of knowledge is out there for

the finding and understanding and often one discovery leads to another. One never knows where one little discovery will lead.

RAMBLER'S INDEXING

SUE FOY

We are about half way through the indexing project in the Vertical files at Carnegie. The members who have been working on the project are Georgianne Bigam, Dean Duncan, Carmel Hill, Margaret Hinrichs, Karen & Tom Levett, Sharon Reinhard, Jan Schwartz, Joan & John Sikes, Kate Thomas, and myself. The next sessions have been scheduled for **January 10th & 24th**. We welcome any Rambler member who would like to help us with this project. Take a look at the Rambler web site: www.researchramblers.org - click on "Resources"; click on "Vertical Files".

NEW YEAR RESOLUTION

Ray George

Make a New Year resolution now and print a copy of this form and have your family sign it and attach it to your "Last Will & Testimony."

TO MY SPOUSE, CHILDREN OR GUARDIAN:

Upon my demise it is requested that you **DO NOT** dispose of any of my genealogical records, books, files, notebooks, or computer programs for a period of two years. During this time, please attempt to find one or more persons willing to take custody of the said materials, and the responsibility of maintaining and continuing the family histories. In the event you do not find anyone to accept these materials, please contact the genealogical organizations of which I have been a member to determine if they will accept some parts, or all of , my genealogical materials.

Please remember that my genealogical endeavors have consumed a great deal of time, travel, and money. Therefore, please do not ignore my request.

Name of Genealogical Society where I wish my material to go to: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Witness: _____ Date: _____

Witness: _____ Date: _____

The above is a good document to put with your will, this will help your family should something Happen to you, before you are able to dispose of your genealogical material yourself.





Kate Thomas presents Bill Lay with Award for Leadership



The Ramblers newsletter staff is losing one of its members: Kate Thomas is moving back to Houston in January.

Thanks Kate for all your help and input on preparing our quarterly newsletter.....but just think how close you'll now be to Clayton Library!

We'll miss you.
Mary Jane, Henry, Jane and Joyce