

# WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS ROOTS EVENTS

BERKSHIRE, FRANKLIN, HAMPSHIRE and HAMPDEN COUNTIES in  
MASSACHUSETTS

September 1, 2018 - Volume 5 No 9

~~~~~

Visit our Website at: [www.wmarootsevents.com](http://www.wmarootsevents.com)

Like Us on our [Facebook Page](#)

---

**September 11, 18, 25, Oct 2 & 9, 2018, Tuesday** (2:00 pm and 5:15 pm): **Hands-on Genealogy with Alan Doyle Horbal**, professional genealogist, with Cathi Iuliano and Susan Bedard at the Polish Center 33 South Street, Chicopee Massachusetts 01020. Basic outline and instruction on researching the 1900, 1910, 1920, 1930 and 1940 U.S. Census. Learn how to find your ancestors' emigration to the U.S. using the <http://stevemorse.org> website and the [www.ellisland.org](http://www.ellisland.org) website, along with several other databases. Discover how to search for family members outside of the U.S. using <http://familysearch.org>. We will explore England, Canada, Poland and other countries. All students must have an email account and be computer literate. **Space is limited.** Please sign up for sessions. **We ask that you attend all four classes.**

**You must bring your own laptop for classes 3 and 4.** To register call 413-592-0001  
The cost for the course is **\$10.00**

~~~~~

**October 23, 30, November 13 & 20, 2018 Tuesday** (2:00 pm and 5:15 pm)\*\*: **Hands-on Genealogy with Alan Doyle Horbal**, professional genealogist, with Cathi Iuliano and Susan Bedard at the Athenaeum (Pittsfield Public Library), 1 Wendell Avenue, Pittsfield, Massachusetts 01201. Basic outline and instruction on researching the 1900, 1910, 1920, 1930 and 1940 U.S. Census. Learn how to find your ancestors' emigration to the U.S. using the <http://stevemorse.org> website and the [www.ellisland.org](http://www.ellisland.org) website, along with several other databases. Discover how to search for family members outside of the U.S. using <http://familysearch.org>. We will explore England, Canada, Poland and other countries. All students must have an email account and be computer literate. **Space is limited.** Please sign up for sessions. **We ask that you attend all four classes.**

**The 5:15 pm class members must bring your own laptop for classes 2, 3 & 4.** Library laptops will be available for those attending the 2:00 pm session or you can bring your own if you prefer. To register call (413)499-9486 Ext. 6. There is no cost for the course - it is **FREE**.

\*\*These classes are sponsored by Berkshire Family History Association.

~~~~~

## News from the American Archives Catalog:

### ***The Radium Girls***

Early in 2016, the Electronic Records Division of the National Archives and Records Administration received an unusual collection of donated electronic records. The original paper records, found to be radioactive, were discovered by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) during cleanup operations at the Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania Safety Light Corporation Superfund site. These records document the perspective of the United States Radium Corporation (USRC) and its predecessor, the Radium Luminous Material Corporation (RLMC), on the story of the radium luminous paint dial painters, popularly known as the Radium Girls. These digitized records are now available in the National Archives Catalog as [Records Related to Radium Dial Painters, 1917-1949](#) (National Archives Identifier 40978844).

Following Marie Curie's discovery of the element radium in 1898, scientists and entrepreneurs sought to understand and exploit the element's properties. Many young women were employed in dial painting studios, applying paint containing radium to a number of products, including watches and instrument dials. For some time after its discovery radium was considered safe and was even advertised as a beneficial substance.

During the early 1920s, a growing number of scientists and physicians began to question the benefits of radium and, slowly, acknowledge its link with the debilitating illnesses afflicting dial painters. Complaints and lawsuits by former employees against the USRC began to proliferate in 1923.

In this case, which received substantial attention in the press and from the New Jersey Consumer's League, the dial painters received \$10,000 (some sources state the amount was as high as \$15,000), a \$600 annuity while they lived, and the coverage of their medical expenses, subject to the approval of a committee of three doctors.

While a few dial painters received substantial settlements, generally such suits and claims resulted in much smaller compensations. The majority of dial painters received no compensation from the company. In 1980, U.S. Radium was substantially reorganized and ultimately dissolved into new corporations. Its former radium processing facilities, which included the dial painting studio of Orange, New Jersey, where Grace Fryer and her compatriots worked, became a Superfund cleanup site. The EPA completed the cleanup in Orange during 2006, and cleanup work at the Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania facility, which is still ongoing, is where the collection was discovered. The radioactive paper records have been disposed of accordingly, but thanks to the Safety Light Corporation's donation of the documents, and the EPA's scanning of them, the history has been preserved and made available in the National Archives Catalog as [Records Related to Radium Dial Painters, 1917-1949](#) (National Archives Identifier 40978844).

*This post was excerpted from a blog post on [The Text Message](#) by Zachary Dabbs, processing archivist at the National Archives in College Park. Read Zachary's [full post](#) to learn more about these records.*

Do you find these records fascinating? Help us transcribe them!

*[Get Started Tagging and Transcribing!](#)*

**Questions or comments? Email us at [catalog@nara.gov](mailto:catalog@nara.gov).  
*American Women and the Vote***

Wiki Education, in collaboration with the National Archives, is offering a virtual professional development course that trains individuals with a research interest in political science, women's rights, history, and related fields to successfully contribute to Wikipedia.

Participants in this new course will learn how to improve Wikipedia's coverage of the history of women's voting rights in the United States in honor of an upcoming exhibit hosted at the National Archives Museum, [Rightfully Hers: American Women and the Vote](#). Take an active role in ensuring that the world's most popular reference source is more representative, accurate, and complete. Apply to be a part of this unique initiative today!

Learn more at: <https://wikiedu.org/national-archives-professional-development/>

Questions or comments? Email us at [catalog@nara.gov](mailto:catalog@nara.gov).

### ***Scanned in the Innovation Hub: Pension file discoveries***

We are fascinated by the remarkable stories found within military pension files. They often contain valuable details about family history, as told through military veterans themselves, or through their widows and dependents who provided evidence of their relationship to a soldier

Today we share a couple of the interesting stories recently found within pension files while scanning in the Innovation Hub in Washington DC...

#### ***“Approved Pension File for Bettie Sugar, Widow of 1st Sergeant Sugar George (alias George Sugar), Company H, 1st Indian Home Guards (C-2496362)”***

Widows of veterans often applied for pensions, and sometimes proving you were the legitimate spouse could be complicated. For the pension of George Sugar (aka Sugar George), his widow Bettie Sugar had to first prove she was divorced from her first husband.

She married a man named Peter Smith, also enslaved. After the war and emancipation, they continued living together for a few years, until Peter apparently left and married someone else.

Some years later, Bettie married George Sugar. When George died around the turn of the century, Bettie filed for his pension. The Pension Office inquired if she had divorced her first husband, making her George Sugar's legal widow. However, she didn't have a legal divorce while living in the Creek Nation. She explained, "I never got a divorce from Peter Smith but when he married again I thought I had the right to marry again." The Bureau of Pensions agreed: if a marriage was legal according to the law of the land where the person married, it was good enough for the Pension Office. The same rule applied to

divorces. Also of note in this file is a copy of Bettie Sugar's assets. She inherited from her husband seventy head of cattle, nine horses, 160 acres of land and \$12,500 in cash.

### ***“Private Lewis Martin, Company E of the 29th Regiment of the US Colored Troops”***

In this file, Private Lewis Martin's official Certificate of Disability for Discharge includes an image of Martin, seated, showing the two amputated limbs he'd received in battle at the Siege of Petersburg on July 30th 1864. Photographs are a rare find in pension files. Martin was plagued by pain from his amputation sites as well as where shots had grazed his shoulder and temple, but did go on to marry Mary Jones after the war in 1869. His file documents requests for an increase in his pension, which raised from an original pension of \$20 to \$50 per month over the decades. He dropped off the Pension Office's rolls in 1895.



### **[New posts on American Ancestors Database News:](#)**

#### **[Early New England Families, 1641-1700: new sketch](#)**

Today we're announcing one new sketch in Alicia Crane Williams's Early New England Families, 1641-1700. Early New England Families, 1641-1700 is a study project focused on families listed in Clarence Almond Torrey's manuscript, New England Marriages Prior to 1700. The new sketch pertains to [Guido Bayley \(m. 1641\)](#). Bayley lived in Salem, Beverly, and Bridgewater. He died before 1702/3. Bayley married twice and had five children.

Please note: This database is available to Individual-level and above NEHGS members only. [Consider membership.](#)

[Molly Rogers](#) | August 13, 2018



#### **[Updated database: Milford, CT: Records of the First Church, 1640-1829](#)**

Today we're announcing an update to a database, [Milford, CT: Records of the First Church, 1640-1829](#). This database is based on a manuscript in our library that contains baptisms and marriages from the First Church in Milford. This database now has images and is searchable by first name, last name, record type, parents' and spouse's names where available, year, and record type. It is thanks to the efforts of our wonderful volunteers that we have been able to accomplish this update. This database offers over 2,600 records and over 5,600 names to search.

Please note: This database is available to Individual-level and above NEHGS members only. [Consider membership](#).

[Molly Rogers](#) | August 9, 2018



### [\*\*\*Six new browsable Archdiocese of Boston parishes\*\*\*](#)

Today we've added 29 new volumes to **Massachusetts: (Image-Only) Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston Records, 1789-1900**. These new volumes come from six parishes: Sacred Heart of Jesus (Cambridge), St. Charles Borromeo (Woburn), St. James (Salem), St. John the Baptist (East Boston), St. Mary (Quincy), and St. Thomas Aquinas (Bridgewater). These parishes span the ethnic groups of early Catholics in Massachusetts--of course there are many people of Irish descent, but St. James (Salem) served Salem's French Canadian population and St. John the Baptist in East Boston ministered to Boston's Portuguese Catholics. The two added Sacred Heart of Jesus (Cambridge) volumes complete this parish up to 1900. This update adds over 6,200 new images to browse. If you have questions about how to navigate this database, be sure to watch our [how-to](#) video.

[Sacred Heart of Jesus \(Cambridge\) Baptisms, 1899-1900](#)

[Sacred Heart of Jesus \(Cambridge\) Marriages, 1897-1900](#)

[St. Charles Borromeo \(Woburn\) Baptisms, 1857-1878](#)

[St. Charles Borromeo \(Woburn\) Baptisms, 1878-1888](#)

[St. Charles Borromeo \(Woburn\) Baptisms, 1888-1895](#)

[St. Charles Borromeo \(Woburn\) Baptisms, 1895-1899](#)

[St. Charles Borromeo \(Woburn\) Baptisms, 1899-1900](#)

[St. Charles Borromeo \(Woburn\) Confirmations, 1898-1900](#)

[St. Charles Borromeo \(Woburn\) Marriages, 1857-1895](#)

[St. Charles Borromeo \(Woburn\) Marriages, 1895-1900](#)

[St. James \(Salem\) Baptisms, 1851-1864](#)

[St. James \(Salem\) Baptisms, 1857-1861](#)

[St. James \(Salem\) Baptisms, 1865-1891](#)

[St. James \(Salem\) Baptisms, 1891-1900](#)

[St. James \(Salem\) Marriages, 1851-1900](#)

[St. John the Baptist \(East Boston\) Baptisms, 1873-1888](#)

[St. John the Baptist \(East Boston\) Baptisms, 1888-1893](#)

[St. John the Baptist \(East Boston\) Baptisms, 1893-1900](#)

[St. John the Baptist \(East Boston\) Marriages, 1873-1900](#)

[St. Mary \(Quincy\) Baptisms and Marriages, 1844-1848](#)

[St. Mary \(Quincy\) Baptisms, 1849-1850 and Financial Records, 1864-1866](#)

[St. Mary \(Quincy\) Baptisms, 1900](#)

[St. Mary \(Quincy\) Marriages, 1853-1854](#)

[St. Thomas Aquinas \(Bridgewater\) Baptisms and Marriages, 1853-1856](#)

[St. Thomas Aquinas \(Bridgewater\) Baptisms, 1865-1881](#)

[St. Thomas Aquinas \(Bridgewater\) Baptisms, 1882-1900](#)

[St. Thomas Aquinas \(Bridgewater\) Confirmations, 1885-1900 \(Vol. 1\)](#)

[St. Thomas Aquinas \(Bridgewater\) Confirmations, 1885-1900 \(Vol. 2\)](#)

[St. Thomas Aquinas \(Bridgewater\) Marriages, 1863-1900](#)

**Molly Rogers** | August 16, 2018

~~~~~

1. Mission Statement:

<http://wmarootsevents.com/mission-statement/>

2. Submission Requirements:

<http://wmarootsevents.com/events/submit-an-event/>

3. Polish Genealogy Terms

<http://wmarootsevents.files.com/2015/07/polishtoenglishgenealogyterms.pdf>

4. Foreign to English Names:

<http://wmarootsevents.files.com/2015/07/givennames-list.pdf>

***The Deadline for submission for the October 2018 Newsletter is September 23, 2018.***

***Thank You!***



***HAPPY SEARCHING!***