

The
Hancock Historian

Newsletter of the
Hancock County Genealogical Society

Volume 25, No. 4
July 2019

HANCOCK COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

Minutes: June 8, 2019

Hancock County Genealogical Society meeting started at 10:05 in the Riverview Room at the Ellsworth Public Library.

Present at the meeting were 4 members and 1 guest.

The minutes for the May meeting were read and approved by the membership as read.

There was no treasurers report this month.

Current membership stands at 48 members.

A copy of the May minutes, a new flyer promoting HCGS and 1820 Census form was given to the members present.

The 1820 Census project was discussed in general, and to do every town is going to be a big undertaking by just the active membership. Emery handed out what he had done. Members will wait for Patsy's ideas about the census project.

Bob W spoke about Whitaker Cemetery and the condition was falling back to nature again. He was going to contact another member of the family, to see about getting it cleaned up again.

Voting in a new treasurer was tabled until the next meeting.

Ralph gave information on the upcoming MGS Genealogical Fair at the Maine State Library, Saturday, June 29 from 9 to 3, and information on the Annual Conference in September in Portland.

Members will be thinking about deciding at the August meeting whether to cancel the Sept meeting because of the MGS Conference is the same day.

A guest at the meeting, Femke Harvey from Orland was looking for help to get started in researching her family in the Netherlands. It was recommended to ask Max if he would help her get started and give pointers. Ralph will email Max.

On publishing a book on the Death Index of the Ellsworth American, I received one estimate and waiting for MGS to respond with an answer.

Jiffy Print in Bangor will do a Plastic Spiral Bound Book.

200 pages for 5 1/2:" x 8 1/2", 200 pages for around \$540.00

300 pages for around \$640.00

Meeting adjourned at 11:15am

Ralph Harris

President – acting Secretary

Hancock County Genealogical Society
Minutes: 13 July 2019

President Ralph Harris called the July meeting of the Hancock County Genealogical Society to order at 11:00am on Saturday, July 13, 2019 in the Riverview Room of the Ellsworth Public Library following a program by Dr. Wayne Smith entitled "The Surry Tragedy of 1877". This story of five young Surry men who were lost during a voyage of the ship *Joshua Grindle* to the West Indies, was enjoyed by the 9 members and guests who were in attendance.

The Newsletter will be published by late July. Wayne called for submissions from anyone who wanted to add something to this edition.

The Treasurer reported a total inflow of \$60.00 in dues, \$.08 in interest for the period ending 30 June 2019 with outflows of \$13.20 for newsletter printing and postage and \$25.00 in speaker fee. This makes our net inflow of \$21.88. (See details below.)

Minutes for June were read and accepted with one small correction in wording.

Members voted to accept the resignation of Max Brenninkmeyer as Treasurer. Max will be leaving the area soon to be nearer his family. Jean Boynton was elected unanimously to fill the position of Treasurer. Charlene will write the appropriate letters for Camden National Bank to transfer the control of our account from Max to Jean.

Ralph has talked to MGS about publishing the death index to the *Ellsworth American* that Wayne Smith has been working on. There was a discussion of how many books we thought we could sell, and spiral bound versus paperback or hardcover. The subject was tabled for the time being.

The meeting adjourned at 11:45 am.

Respectfully submitted,
Charlene Fox Clemons
Secretary

Hancock County Genealogical Society
Income & Expense: 1 April 2019 – 30 June 2019

INFLOWS		OUTFLOWS	
Dues	60.00	Newsletter & Postage	13.20
Bank Interest	<u>0.08</u>	Speaker Fee	<u>25.00</u>
TOTAL INFLOWS	60.08	TOTAL OUTFLOWS	37.20
NET INFLOW	<u>\$21.88</u>		

Balance Sheet: 30 June 2019

31 March 2019 Balance	\$3,191.94
31 Mar 2019 – 30 June 2019 Net Inflow	<u>21.88</u>
30 June 2019 Balance	\$3,213.82

From the Library – July, 2019

The Library is always interesting, but especially so during the summer months when people are visiting the area and searching for information on their families who lived in and around the area a generation or two ago.

Summer also seems to be the time when requests for family information come via email from across the country. In early May, a gentleman called from Georgia and asked me to find his father's farm in Ellsworth. He was planning a trip to the area and wanted to see it. Now this is not normally what I would be doing in the realm of genealogy research, but he was insistent that I should be able to do it, so why not? Several weeks' worth of deed research and finally an hour or so spent with Stu Markoon at the Lamoine Town Office led me to the farm (100 plus acres) that was a half a mile from my house. It turned out not to be in Ellsworth but in Lamoine. I sent tax maps, and explicit directions and even a photo of the farm house to him and he was delighted.

This week, I had an email from a lady in California. She and her boyfriend had found an old book with a photograph in it. The girl was Rachel Adams and the photographer's studio was in Ellsworth so they wanted to track down Rachel's family and get the photograph back to her descendants if possible. In the "it's a small world" category, it turns out that I went to grammar school with Rachel's niece, Mary. So the photo will be reunited with Rachel's family and the lady in California will have done a really nice thing. So many people would have just tossed the picture but this lady chose to track it down.

Genealogists are such nice helpful people! That is a big part of what makes my job so enjoyable.

See you at the library,
Charlene

HCGS Meeting Schedule for Late Summer - **Please Note Changes!**

The **August meeting** of the Hancock County Genealogical Society **will happen** at its regular time of 10:00 A.M. on Saturday, August 10, **but it won't be at the library!!** Due to the Friends of the Ellsworth Public Library booksale, which is being held in the Riverview Room of the Library, the **HCGS meeting is moving to the Chamberlain House**, home of the Ellsworth Historical Society at 357 State Street, but it's still on the same date and at the same time: **Saturday, August 10, at 10.00 A.M.**

ALSO, the **September meeting** of the Society is being **cancelled** as it conflicts with the two-day Conference of the Maine Genealogical Society which is being held in Portland on Friday and Saturday, Sept. 13-14.

Looking ahead to **October**, Charlene is working to schedule a program by an author who has written a book on the Scottish prisoners who were sent to America after being captured at the **Battle of Dunbar on Sept. 3, 1650**. Some of these soldiers ended up in Maine and are the ancestors of many of us. This should be good.

In Memory of Agnes Carr

I was sorry to hear of Agnes Carr's passing. She was of great help to me while I was researching the Mitchell family as I prepared an article for *The Maine Genealogist* a number of years ago. I would title the article *The Mitchell Mystification*. My investigation took me to the Ellsworth Public Library. I was searching for information about the possible brother to George Mitchell, Mary Jane Mitchell and Grace Ann Mitchell, who had married Elijah Sylvester. They were all buried near each other in an Etna Cemetery. Elijah and Grace Ann were the maternal grandparents of my maternal grandmother. They had lived in Etna and moved to Bangor's Seventh Ward which became Veazie.

When Agnes entered the Genealogy section of the Library one day, I was huddled over the microfilm reader. She joked, "Every time I come in here lately, I see you there and I look for dust and cobwebs on you. What are you looking for?" I told her I was looking for information about Nelson Mitchell. He lived in Eden and then Ellsworth. I don't now recall the exact figures involved, but I said something like this: "The wife of Nelson Mitchell must have been really vain. In 1850, she was 32 years old. In 1860, she was 39 years old and in 1870 she was 47 years old. Each ten years, she aged only eight or so years." In each census, her name was Mary with "Polly" being in one census - Polly being a nickname of Mary.

She answered, "Oh, I know him! Do you know where the cemetery is in Hulls Cove?" she asked. When I said I did not, she said, "As you go into Hulls Cove, you go down the hill and the cemetery is on your right. You'll miss the entrance. Go to the beach, turn around and go back. You'll find Nelson Mitchell buried there."

I did as she said. I drove to Hulls Cove. I drove slowly down the hill vowing not to miss the entrance. I drove past it just as she said I would. Once in the cemetery, I soon found Nelson Mitchell with his wife Mary, his wife Mary and his third wife Mary. And thanks to Agnes Carr the puzzle was solved. And thanks to another fine lady who is now deceased - Lois Ware Thurston, CG - I discovered that George, Mary Jane, Grace Ann and Nelson Mitchell were descended from a member of the *Sprague* family . . . and that member was descended from several passengers on the *Mayflower*.

Wayne, if you want to use this in another Newsletter, you may. It might help a descendant of the Mitchell family on MDI make their connection to the Mayflower.

- Richard Spinney

The Surry Tragedy of 1877

by Dr. Wayne H. Smith

The story of the Surry Tragedy of 1877 has been told around Surry ever since it happened in the fall of 1877. It directly affected a number of Surry families including the Treworgys, the Gaspars, and the Carters and indirectly affected the entire town. I will present below an overview of the family of Levi Townsend Treworgy and a few others, and then relate the tale that affected them most directly.

Levi Townsend Treworgy (1819-1902) was the ninth of the eleven children of Nathaniel Treworgy (1778-1859) of Surry and his wife Huldah Townsend (1782-1844), originally of New Haven, Connecticut. At the age of 22, Levi married first **Margaret W. Herrick** (1823-1843) of Blue Hill on 26 Dec. 1841 in Surry and on 15 Jan. 1843 Margaret died while giving birth to a daughter, **Margaret Herrick Treworgy** (1843-1926). Levi next married **Permelia Young Hodgdon** (1824-1905), daughter of Joseph Hodgdon Jr. and his wife Permelia Young of Eden. The couple then went on to have seven children, all born in Surry:

1. **Celestia Permelia Treworgy**, b. 15 Sep 1845, d. 9 Jun 1920, md. 16 Jan 1864 to Gardiner Granville Gaspar, b. 29 Jun 1840, d. 29 Nov 1877 in Cuba.

2. **Arvilla Marie Treworgy**, b. 4 Jun 1847, d. 26 Nov 1915 in Lynn, MA, md. 19 Sep 1875 in Salem, MA to Lewis H. Richards, b. 22 Dec 1849 in Salem.

3. **Adelma Josephine Treworgy** (twin to Arvilla), b. 4 Jun 1847, d. 13 Mar 1857 in Surry.

4. **Ciserlena Jane "Jennie" Treworgy**, b. 10 Jul 1850, d. 9 May 1902 in Somerville, MA, md. 10 May 1872 to William Augustus Knox, b. 12 Feb. 1849 in Ipswich, MA.

5. **Wilford L. Treworgy**, b. 25 Dec 1852, d. 12 Nov 1877 at sea, md. Mary Jane "Janie" Essington, b. 1855 in Ellsworth.

6. **Augustus T. Treworgy**, b. 15 Dec 1857, d. 13 Nov 1877 at sea, never married.

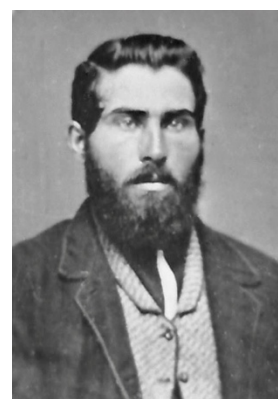
7. **Alendal Lincoln "Linc" Treworgy**, b. 15 Oct 1859, d. 28 Nov 1939 in Surry, md. first in 1879 Hannah L. Inman, b. abt. 1857; md. second 1 Jan 1892 in Blue Hill, Mary Edna Hooper, b. 30 Jan 1875 in Blue Hill, d. 3 Sep 1956 in Boston. They had five children.

Another who was directly affected by the Surry Tragedy of 1877 was Celestia's husband, **Gardiner Granville Gaspar**, b. 29 Jun 1840 in Surry, d. 29 Nov 1877 in Santiago de Cuba, Cuba. Gardiner was the tenth of the eleven children of Francisco Manoel Gaspar (1790-1871) born in Flamengos, on the island of Faial in the Azores, a Portuguese archipelago in the middle of the North Atlantic, and his wife Susan Meader (1799-1877) from West Ellsworth.

Finally there were two others who were directly affected by the tragedy. **Arthur P. Carter** (1847-1877) was the oldest of the ten children of **Vespasian Carter** (1827-1906) and his wife **Susan C. Lufkin** (1826-1882). Arthur was born in Sedgwick on 2 Jan 1847,



Wilford & Augustus Treworgy



Gardiner Granville Gaspar

and died on 14 Nov. 1877 at sea. And **Maurice Coleman**, whose mother's name was Mary, was born about 1850, and died in Cuba in late November 1877.

Another Surry boy who survived the Tragedy was **Isaac "Lincoln" Merrill**, b. 9 Jan 1861 in Surry, d. 10 Jun 1936 in Ormond Beach, Florida. He married twice, first to **Amelia Chamberlain Horne**, by whom he had two children, Carlton and Elizabeth, and second to **Leila A. Barbour**, by whom he had another son, Isaac Lincoln Merrill II.

Two other names are important to the telling of this story. **Joshua Grindle** was born at Surry in 1844, the son of Judge Robert Grindle and his wife Mary Varnum. He came to California by way of the Isthmus of Panama in May 1869, arriving in Mendocino that same month. He was employed by the Mendocino Lumber Company first as a chopper and later as a log rafter. In 1898, he severed his connection with the lumber company and became a banker. He organized the Mendocino Bank of Commerce in 1905 with Fred Stickney and was named president of the new bank. Grindle married four times, having lost two of his wives in childbirth. His last wife was Eliza Tobin, also a widow, who brought two grown daughters to the marriage. Eliza died in 1927 and Grindle died the following year.

A second Joshua Grindle was the three-masted schooner that was named after Joshua Grindle. It was built around 1874, weighed 182 tons, was 105 ft. long, 28.2 ft. wide, and 8.7 ft. deep. It was "officially built in Ellsworth by Abraham Lord, and launched on Oct. 24, 1874, BUT... According to local historian, Howard Jellison, speaking in July 1978, *"About shipyards. As you go down the road by Willard Kane's store, you turn to the right when you get to the shore, and there is a cove there. That is where the shipyard was. It was started in 1839, and the last ship built there was launched in 1873, and I remember hearing my father tell about it; he was a boy about ten years old. They launched it, I think, around July 4th, and had a big celebration; it was the 'Joshua Grindle.' BUT THEN... According to Jerry Lord, quoted in Ann Dolan's masters thesis about the neighborhoods of Surry, " *"Well, there was a large shipyard toward the mouth of the [Union] river. They used to call it an Ellsworth yard, but it was in East Surry. [Today the road down to the site is called "Kelly Lane."]* *"They built a lot of schooners there."**

And, oh yeah, there was one more character, the captain of the Joshua Grindle. His name was William Allen Freethy (1847-1915). He was born in Surry, died in Holyoke, MA, and was married to Joshua Grindle's younger sister, **Susan Means Grindle**.

SO, WHAT IN THE HECK WAS THE TRAGEDY?

OK, so we're talking about a sea voyage aboard a vessel named the Joshua Grindle. It had a crew of seven men, all from Surry, consisting of the Captain, William Allen Freethy, the Mate Gardiner Granville Gaspar, three Seamen, Wilford L. Treworgy, Augustus T. Treworgy, and Maurice Coleman, a Steward, Arthur P. Carter, and a young Cabin boy, Isaac "Lincoln" Merrill. The journey, as penned by the two Treworgy brothers and found in the log book of the Schooner Nellie Grant of Ellsworth, began on Sept. 23, 1877. Quoting from the log:

*"Left home at 5 a.m. with sorrowful parting and tears for Bucksport...to take the steamboat for Boston, arriving there the 24th. Went to Salem and visited their sister [Arvilla], then **Wilford** went to Lawrence, visited his intended, Janie Essington, and was married on the 26th of September. On the 29th they sailed for New York and arrived there on the 30th. Went on board the three-masted schooner, JOSHUA GRINDLE, and sailed on the 8th of October, with fifteen days passage, which would bring it the 23rd. The 22nd we had a thunder storm; the*

*lightning struck the mate, **Gaspar**, across his chest and he inhaled it and so hurt his lungs that he soon spit blood. The 25th he took the yellow fever and died. **Wilford** was struck in his legs by the lightning, which tripped him up, and he fell to the deck without serious damage."*

We're not sure exactly when, but at some point in late October, they reached "St. Jago" [which we now understand to be the port city of Santiago de Cuba on the southeastern coast of Cuba]. One newspaper account said that not only **Gardiner Gaspar**, but also **Maurice Coleman** died at St. Jago and were buried there, both victims of yellow fever. The log book notes only: "*Discharged and then loaded with sugar...*"

After Gardiner Gaspar's death, **Wilford** and **Augustus** somehow sent word to his widow, their sister Celestia Gaspar, saying that she need not worry too much, as they would help her to bring up her three small children: Eugene Granville Gaspar, age 12, Millie Ardelle Gaspar, age 9, and Ernest Elwood Gaspar, age 5.

But soon after their departure from St. Jago, about Nov. 8, "*...and in clearing up and getting ready for sea, he got heated up, so that in two hours after sailing, **Wilford** was taken with yellow fever. They sweated it out and he took a little cold. The congestion got in his lungs and [four days from port] he died on the 12th of November, 1877.*" On the 14th, the steward, **Arthur P. Carter**, died. Then, "***Augustus** took the yellow fever and they sweated him and he was getting better when Wilford's body was put over the side. He was called to the gangway to see him, but the scene was too much for him to bear and he lost hurt desperately; got crazy; his nose bled fearfully; said he was sick; told them to tell his father to come to get him; but without avail. He fainted away and died on the 14th of November, 1877.*" Both Arthur and Augustus were also buried at sea. The two remaining crew members were the captain, **William A. Freethy**, and the young cabin boy **Lincoln Merrill**. Details are scarce, but it appears that on November 16, the **Brig ROMANCE**, belonging to the Navassa Phosphate Company, was returning from Navassa to Baltimore with a load of a "most valuable fertilizer: the phosphatic guano or phosphate of lime found in vast deposits on the Island of Navassa." According to a newspaper report from December of 1877, the ROMANCE gave them four Negro sailors to work the Joshua Grindle into port.

So, seven crew members left, only two returned: **William A. Freethy** and **Lincoln Merrill**. **Gardiner Granville Gaspar** and **Maurice Coleman** were buried at St. Jago (Santiago de Cuba). **Wilford L. Treworgy**, **Augustus T. Treworgy**, and **Arthur P. Carter** were all buried at sea. "When Wilford's bride, **Janie (Essington) Treworgy**, heard of his death, she went berserk and searched for him among the banking boards."

The tragedy didn't completely end there. Wilford and Augustus's parents tried in vain to recoup their sons' wages but Captain Freethy apparently harbored ill feelings towards their father, Levi Townsend Treworgy, and came up with every excuse he could think of for not doing so. It is fortunate that he did arrange for the return of the boys two wooden chests in which they carried their clothing and other personal effects onto the Joshua Grindle. The two chests are now in the possession of Mr. Jeff Benham of Surry, whose grandfather, Wilford Augustus Treworgy, was the nephew of his two namesakes.

Finally, what ever happened to the Schooner Joshua Grindle? Well, in 1882 she was bought out by a group of men from Mendocino, CA who had her fitted out for a cruise around the Horn. She arrived in San Francisco on May 25, 1882 and spent the next five years carrying ties and lumber to southern ports of California. Unfortunately, she went ashore and was wrecked at Pismo Beach (a four-hour drive south of San Francisco) on April 15, 1887.

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