

# Old Broad Bay Family History Association Newsletter

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The Old Broad Bay Family History Association, P.O. Box 1242, Waldoboro, ME 04572-1242  
On the web at: [www.rootsweb.com/~meobbfha/](http://www.rootsweb.com/~meobbfha/) Editorial comments & queries to [obbeditor@earthlink.net](mailto:obbeditor@earthlink.net)

## To Search and To Share

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### NERGC to be held in Manchester, NH

The biennial New England Regional Genealogical Conference (NERGC) will be held in Manchester, New Hampshire, 22-26 April 2009. The conference will be held at the Expo Center of New Hampshire with participant lodging at the adjacent Radisson Hotel.

Full information about the conference is available at [www.nergc.org](http://www.nergc.org) to include an online registration link and the full conference brochure. Those without access to the web may call conference co-chair Melinde Sanborn at 603-471-0938 for information and to receive a conference brochure.

Wednesday, April 22 will be devoted to sessions for librarians & teachers with the main portion of the conference starting on Thursday. A beginners session will be held from 8:00 to 11:00 a.m. followed by the formal opening session at 1:00 p.m.

OBBFHA will be participating in the Society Fair on Thursday, April 23, from 5:15 - 7:00 p.m. This is an opportunity for smaller genealogical and historical societies to distribute information about themselves and to attract potential new members. If you are interested in helping out at the

OBB booth, please contact Helen Shaw at [obbeditor@earthlink.net](mailto:obbeditor@earthlink.net) or write her at 77 Pascal Ave, Rockport, ME 04856.

Featured speakers will be James Hansen, Thomas W. Jones, and Megan Smolenyak Smolenyak. There will be four half day workshops on Friday and Saturday: *Identifying & Preserving Family Photographs* by David Miskin and Maureen Taylor, *Leaping Over the Immigration Hurdle* by Leslie Huber, *Cemetery Research* by Donna Walcovy, *Deed Research* by Carol McCoy. OBB Editor and Maine Genealogical Society (MGS) board member Helen Shaw will be presenting two talks on Friday (*The Indentity of George Sidelinger of Rockport, Maine* and *Black, White and In Between, Racial Designations in the Federal Census*).

## **Lincoln County Revolutionary War pension records**

The abstraction of information from the Revolutionary War pension records in the Lincoln County vault is continuing and is now a formal project of the Lady Knox Chapter NSDAR. With permission of County Recorder of Deeds Marcia Silva, the loose papers were returned to their original order according to the lists in the Common Pleas books.

Non-archival paperclips and notes were removed and the loose papers were organized into sets of ten in folders with the court date and corresponding list numbers. A printout of the Common Pleas list was placed at the beginning of each court session making it easier for researchers to locate a specific pensioner's paper. Unfortunately, we did not have archival folders and those used will need to be replaced as soon as proper folders can be purchased.

Members of the Lady Knox Chapter are proof reading the abstractions and the transcriptions of the Common Pleas lists. They are also checking for the existence of full pension files in the National Archives, scans of which are available on-line at *Heritage Quest*. Reference to the pensioners are also being looked for in the *DAR Patriot Index* and SAR patriot lists.

## **Cemetery book nears completion**

A copy of Randy Gross two volume book *Cemeteries of Waldoboro and Surrounding Areas*, will be presented to the Waldoboro town office and to the Waldoboro Public Library sometime in February. Randy is still looking for funding to publish the book and hopes that someone who sees the presentation copies will come forward with the necessary money. Potential donors can contact Randy via the OBBFHA address. Donation checks made out to the Waldoboro Historical Society (and marked as being for the cemetery book project) are tax deductible.

## **The Art of Gravestone Rubbing**

*by Mark A. Benner*

If your complete genealogy is on your computer you can add portraits and old photos of relatives and ancestors to your printed text to give more depth to your project. You can also add photographs of their gravestones to add more completeness to your work.

Modern day headstones photograph well using almost any kind of camera or lighting. Older stones, such as white marble, photograph well only if there's a bit of shadowing or dirt in the relief of the carving. On film, a clean, bleached white marble stone is barely legible, and just as badly so are old slate stones. To best capture images of those on film you may have to wait for the light from the sun to shine at a different angle earlier or later in the day. Or you might want to use a large mirror or use bright lights to catch the ultimate shadowing effect of the inscriptions.

This is where the practice gravestone rubbing comes in. Good rubbings can be saved as is and can also be successfully photographed to add to your genealogy because the inscriptions and artworks are clearly legible.

At our annual meeting last August I brought out my collection of random Waldoboro gravestone

rubblings to show to the amazement (and thrill?) of those still present stragglers left at the end of the day. Next year I'll bring them and leave them out early for a display for all to enjoy.

### **What is gravestone rubbing?**

Gravestone rubbing is the practice of creating a copy of a gravestone by rubbing a rendering material such as charcoal, wax, or graphite on paper placed over the engraved surface of a gravestone in order to obtain an image of the stone's lettering and designs. It is often used as a method of retrieving genealogical information.

### **What you'll need to do your own gravestone rubbings**

\* Paper - I use newsprint paper from Lincoln County Publishing in Newcastle, Maine. It's cheap, and for about five bucks you'll get a remnant roll with enough to do hundreds of rubbings. I pre-cut mine into about three foot lengths and roll them up before I leave home in case it's a windy day out in the field. It's always best to use paper that is much larger than the gravestone.

I bought a few sheets of Pellon that is used as a dressmaking fabric that was supposed to offer good results. Each sheet, about (2 x 3 ) was two bucks and looked/felt like tough coffee filter paper but twice as thick. I wasn't really happy about the results when I tried rubbing some old slate stones.

\* Masking tape - You'll need this to tape the paper securely to the gravestone. Duct tape, scotch tape, or any spray adhesive are not advisable as you don't want to leave any gooey residue on the gravestone.

\* Scissors/shears - Sometimes the paper you pre-cut is too large for a small stone and you'll need to trim for better results. Also, untrimmed grass and weeds at the base of a gravestone will interfere with rubbing the epitaph or inscriptions at the bottom part.

\* Wax rubbing block - I use black but there are six or seven other colors available. One five dollar black wax puck will easily do over three dozen gravestone rubbings. You may want to try experimenting. I do know from experience that these wax rubbing blocks work the best and are far superior than a carpenter's lumber crayon or those small artist's drawing charcoals or graphites as they are too small and brittle.

I've heard that there are those out there who use those children's sidewalk chalks but you'll have to spray some sort of clearcoat over the finished product; messy. Spray this onto the finished product at home and not while it is still wrapped around the gravestone.

Simple colored candle wax will not work, even if you find black Halloween ones. It is possible that if you have tons of Crayola crayons kicking around that they could be melted down in a coffee can on your stove and poured into some sort of cupcake paper mold. Leave out the lightest colors, though, like whites and yellows; the darker the better.

\* Fine nylon hand scrub brush - NEVER use metal on any gravestone, EVER. No wire brushes, no putty knives or scrappers. I use the palm of my hand and/or a soft bristled fine nylon hand scrub brush. If the stone is really lichen or moss covered you may use only plain water to soften and remove with the brush and allow stone to dry before covering with paper.

\* Pencil - You should write somewhere on your finished project which cemetery you found the gravestone and the directions for re-finding it in case anyone should ask or you'd need an extra copy of it in the future.

### **How to do your own gravestone rubbing**

Be very aware that in many places of this country that this activity is forbidden. Some inexperienced and careless rubbers have knocked down or broken stones in the past. When I go out to do my own rubbings I don't advertise and instead seek peace and solitude and of course, I leave no mess or evidence behind. I should tell you here that you should seek permission first. This is, after all, someone else's property. Another important factor; You can't do this in the rain or when gravestones are wet.

It is possible to collect some beautiful artwork that can be displayed or even framed. Select the gravestone you wish to copy. Then, run the flat of your hand over the face of the marble or slate stone to be sure it's flat, smooth, and debris free. You may use your fine nylon hand brush to remove loose debris.

Take one paper and wrap the gravestone by folding over and lightly stretching and taping, in the back, the left side and then the right. Fold the top over squarely and tape anywhere in the back also.

Hold the wax hockey puck flat to the paper and with even pressure rub back and forth. Rub lightly at first to get the feel of how the process works. You can do the perimeter of the stone first, the top to the bottom, one side and work toward the other, bottom to top, or from the center outward... it doesn't really matter. When you're rubbing the paper with one hand you'll find it helpful to keep your other hand holding the paper tight to the stone to keep from slipping with the other.

Sometimes you'll find that if you do an entire gravestone with a back and forth method, going up and down in the opposite direction will improve the quality of the final product. Don't remove the paper until you're finished. Reapplying may be difficult or impossible. After doing a few of these you'll soon become an expert yourself.

Remove the paper from the gravestone when you're finished and tear off the bits of tape. These can then be rolled up for transport and stored as is or until you get home to neatly trim to size. Then you can construct a book, of sorts, or purchase an art portfolio so that they can be viewed and stored flat.

### **Things you should never do to gravestones**

\* Don't disturb a gravestone that is in serious decay, unstable, or about ready to fall over. The cemetery authorities ought to be notified before someone gets hurt or further damage to the stone may occur. Any gravestone with an obvious crack in it should not be touched as any pressure against it may cause it to break and fall over.

\* Make no marks directly on the gravestone with the rubbing wax, chalk, markers, etc. It won't do the gravestone any good and may take years for these substances to disappear.

\* Use no detergents, soaps, vinegar, bleach, or any other cleaning solutions on the stone, no matter how mild. Expert commercial stone cleaners agree that more harm than good may occur because of

the unknown long term effects.

\* Use no shaving cream, chalk, graphite, flour, dirt, or other concoctions in an attempt to read worn inscriptions. Living biological agents (lichens, mosses, etc.) will move in and actually feed off these and thus speed up the degradation of the gravestone. Just because it looks like it may get washed away over time doesn't mean the residue isn't still present.

\* Never use stiff bristled brushes, wire brushes of any kind, putty knives, nail files, pry bars, or any other metal tool on the gravestone.

\* Weedwackers are the single most detrimental tool used in cemeteries today as, over time, they permanently scar the base of gravestones.

Originally, I bought my wax hockey pucks for about a dollar each at the craft store that was located in downtown Newcastle, Maine on Business Route One, right next to the former Weeks-Waltz automobile dealership. But both of these businesses have gone out of business since.

After checking many local smaller art and craft supply stores, I finally searched through all the large big-box R.C. Moore and Michael's craft stores in Bangor, Augusta, and Waterville and I wasn't able to locate any gravestone rubbing blocks (wax hockey pucks).

After doing an internet search for any place in Maine that would still have any such item, I found but one and dealt very successfully and pleasantly with them. By ordering the items I wanted over the phone and using a charge card I received my purchase in two days and I also received their newest catalogue.

Gravestone Artwear (mail order address)

P. O. Box 141

York Harbor, Maine 03911-0141

phone orders; 1-800-564-4310 (Visa & Mastercard)

online at [www.ggravestoneartwear.com](http://www.ggravestoneartwear.com)

Gravestone Artwear studio (physical store address)

250 York Street

York Village, Maine 03909

Source of material used in this report came from my own personal blunders and experiences and from various online web sites to insure that I didn't leave out important details of this process.

## **Maximizing your chances to find people in indexes**

*by Helen A. Shaw*

Having trouble finding your relatives in on-line databases and printed indexes? The advent of soundex and wildcard searches for on-line databases has made it much easier to find those elusive relatives, but even these advances have not made it possible to find all relatives. Also, researchers must on many occasions still deal with soundexes for National Archives microfilms, old card indexes at libraries and court houses, and published indexes for public records and in books. What can be done to maximize your search results?

The first step is to determine who you are looking for. Silly, you say? You are searching for your great-grandmother Fanny Baker Smith; how much easier could that be? Well, was Fanny really Frances or Francine or some other variant? Was Fanny based on her middle name or was Fanny simply a nickname that had no bearing on her real name? Was Baker her maiden name or the surname of her first husband? Was Smith her maiden name or the surname of her first husband or her second husband?

You need to make a list of all personal identifying variations you find, the type of record or source in which you found each variation, and the date the record was made. For example, your list for the aforementioned Fanny Baker Smith might look like the following:

baptismal record, 1 January 1840: Frances Mary Baker  
1850 census: Fanny Baker  
1860 census: Mary Baker  
marriage record, 25 June 1862: Mary Frances Baker  
1866 widow's pension: Frances M. Smith  
1870 census: Fanny M.. Smith  
1880 census: F. Mary Smith  
1900 census: Mary Baker Smith

In some countries or religions it was (and continues to be) common to have more than one given name and to be called by different names depending on one's relationship to the person or the formality of the record being made. There could be the formal name as it appears in the birth record, the religious name as it appears on baptismal or other official church records, the informal name used by the immediate family, an informal name used by the extended family, a nickname used by friends, and a semiformal name used by business associates and neighbors. Knowing what name was used by whom and in what context can be very important to your search for a missing relative.

You might think having a middle name as well as a first name to work with would make the search easier, but I like to tell of my great-grand-uncle Charles Ferdinand Stearns, who in the nine federal censuses in which he appeared, was never listed by the same name twice. He was listed as Charles, Charles F., C. Ferdinand, Ferdinand, Ferdinand C., C. F., F. C., Ferd, and Fred C. With the German names so many OBB members work with you often have the problem of all the sons (and daughters) having the same first name, but different middle names. Not to mention some family members Anglicized their given names and some did not. Some Anglicized their name(s) early on and some did it later, appearing in various records by different names depending on when the record was produced.

Do you know the common English versions of German (and other non-English) names? Do you know what nicknames went with which given names? There are on-line resources to help with these questions as well as several publications and syllabus material from state and national conferences. For example: *Nicknames Past and Present* by Christine Rose (4<sup>th</sup> edition, 2002) provides not only nicknames, but appendices covering Dutch/Frisian/English equivalents, truncated & superscripted versions of names, and nicknames in New England. A large number of references concerning names can be found on-line at Cyndi's List, to include seven articles by Michael John Neill on problems with finding people in indexes.

The second step to be taken is to determine all the possible spelling variations for the given and surnames you are researching. Again, you might think this is easy; the name has always spelled the

same way. In some cases this may be true and you are lucky when you run into that situation, but it is not just spelling you have to deal with, it is typos, bad handwriting, ignorant (and at time nearly illiterate) record keepers, and record keepers who did not speak (or spell) the language of the person they were writing about.

I keep lists of all the variations for surnames I am researching. These lists can be as simple as just the variations or can include specific citations to where each variation was found. This latter information can be helpful when branches of a family use different variants or when one branch drastically changes the surname.

A good example of spelling variations is the surname Sidelinger. The original spelling in Germany appears to have been Seythlinger, though Seitlinger is also early German. Variants seen in Maine records and in the censuses include: Sidlinger, Seidlinger, Seidelinger, Sidenlinger, and Sidelinker. This last variant is found in the Martin & Elizabeth (Sinclair) Sidelinger branch and is still used by descendants today. [Martin is believed to be the son of Charles & Sarah (Smith) Sidelinger; he moved to Monteville shortly after the 1790 census.]

A more drastic change for an OBB family was the Anglicization of Bornheimer to Burns possibly as early as the 1790s. Not all branches of the family appear to have made the switch and additional research is needed to determine when and who made the change. Such a drastic change may be found in court records, though, in general, as long as deceit is not intended, name changes are not required to be formally made in court. If you suspect such a change, a check of the law at the time and location of the name change may be helpful in determining which court records should be searched.

When dealing with a name from a language with which you are unfamiliar, it is helpful to find someone fluent in that language and ask them how the name was originally spelled. You should also ask how the name was originally pronounced and, after listening very carefully, write down what you hear phonetically. Even common English names can throw us for a loop. For example, the Irish surname Keene has the obvious variants Keen, Keane, and Kean, but it is helpful to know that a fresh-off-the-boat Irishman would pronounce the name Cane.

Sometimes repeating the name over and over will reveal another spelling variation. For example, one of my father's cousins married a man with the surname Holdeman. I had difficulty finding the family in the 1910 census until I repeated the name out loud several times and found myself saying Holderman. This changed the soundex code and once that change was made, the search was successful.

Not all changes in spelling will change the soundex code, but keeping a list of variants allows the researcher to identify those changes and makes searching, both on-line and off, more efficient. Soundex converters (for English names) can be found at several on-line sites. Goggling Soundex will bring up several options. You can also determine the soundex code the old fashioned way. If anyone is interested in having these directions, please contact me (77 Pascal Ave., Rockport, ME 04856) and I will send you the instructions.

## Every name index to vol. 5 (new series) 2008 OBBFHA Newsletter

The following index includes cross-references between the maiden name and married name for women when both are known.

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