

SWEETLAND/SWETLAND LORE #1

(Formerly Swetland Lore)

Yes, this has a new name. Not enough voted to be sure what a majority of our members might prefer and this choice was a close vote. I chose not to call this Sweetland Lore #19. Numbering always gives difficulty sooner or later so I felt that this should be #1 under the new name. Although not unanimous, most voters favored continuing by donation, not regular dues. Support has been outstanding and continued support will be welcome.

The Swetland Family scholarship was awarded to Ruth Anne Kirby of Salem, OR, for the coming year. This award of \$500.00 was approved at the 1995 reunion. Donations for the 1997 award should be sent to our treasurer, Priscilla Swetland, RD #4, Box 121A, Montrose, PA 18801.

SWEETLAND RESEARCH - by Margaret N. Smith

Margaret Smith has written quite warmly of growing up in a family that respected and loved their ancestors. This is her story of the work performed in searching for data on her family lines:

I was a fortunate grandchild in many ways. Visiting my Sweetland grandparents often, I heard family stories of their grandparents and beyond. I saw grandfather's "museum" of artifacts, samples of living a few generations ago, and without conscious effort absorbed interest in and knowledge of the genealogy of our family. Grandpa Sweetland was proud of his family and I've come to share that pride. I would like to have known them all. The earliest in this country were undoubtedly Puritans.

I was able to piece together a chain of Sweetland names from this early knowledge. My grandfather had: Herbert (himself), Emory (Civil War), Lewis (a Methodist preacher) and Asa - the one who migrated going from Attleboro, MA, as a child, to Vernon, VT, where he married Tabitha Houghton (whose brother-in-law donated land for the town and college of Houghton, NY) and eventually moving to the western lands of Cattaraugus County, NY, after Tabitha died in Genesee County, NY.

The LDS (Mormon) Church Family History Library gave more in the Sweetland chain from the Ancestral File {Benjamin (Revolutionary War), Thomas, Samuel, John Oliver and John}. These are names submitted by Mormons when they join their Church. Their philosophy of a united family in heaven requires that they submit family names to the church files. It is wise to seek proof for these "facts" because rules were more lax in the past (more stringent now). Ancestral File is useful for clues only (not facts). Going from there to the International Genealogical Index (IGI), I found these names with an event, dates, etc., and also a string of numbers. Following up on the numbers, I was able to obtain a film number from the Batch number on IGI (they show you how). I was then able to read the film of the original records that the information came from. Luckily, Sweetlands were in Vital Records, not just vague family lore. Most towns with a Mormon church (Latter Day Saints) have a Family History Library, free and open to all. Inquire there.

My latest search has been to find the maiden names of wives. Alas - it was a chauvinistic world with eldest son in prime position and wife a possession just above the cattle. Often her maiden name wouldn't be mentioned. This requires real searching. I luckily happened on an article in the New England Genealogical Register which commented on Rebecca Clark, (who married John Oliver Sweetland) daughter of Christopher Clark and Rebecca Eire (or Eyre or Ayres). As in math when you have two points you can find a third. I was able to place Eires in Watertown, MA, where Simon Eire was a prominent man. I then went to their sources (Early Watertown, MA, Records and Hotten's Original List of Persons of Quality who Came to the Colonies) and found the whole Simon Eire family and immigration information.

At this point an interesting book was "English Origins of American Colonists." Simon's wife was Dorothy Paine (or Payne) whose parents William Paine and Agnes Neves (or Hannah House - further research) were from Lavenham, Sussex, England. William died 10 October 1660 in Boston, MA. The Eires (or Ayres) were from the same area in England.

I like mysteries and puzzles and genealogy research is the grandest puzzle of them all.

Where will we go from here? There can be more family to find and more land records in the court houses. English research can be done in the future, now that I know the locality.

Sources:

Cattaraugus County, NY, land records
Cattaraugus County, NY, marriage records
Little Valley, NY, cemetery records
Villanova, NY, cemetery records
LDS Ancestral File followed by search of MA vital records
IGI 84 NY, MA, England
Hotten, "Persons of Quality who came to the Colonies"
Hotten, "English Origins of American Colonists"
Family History Library (LDS) for Cattaraugus County, NY, and Attleboro, MA.
Ethridge Family Bible
Sweetland Family Bible
"Little Valley Hub," 22 July 1948 (death of H. S. Sweetland)
Census NY 1840, 1850, 1860, 1865, 1870, 1880, 1905, 1910.
"Cattaraugus Republican" death of M. J. Holdridge, Lewis Sweetland
Will and Probate of Lewis Sweetland
Land Records - Sarah at death of Lewis Sweetland
History of Cattaraugus County, NY
Gazetteer of New York, Cattaraugus County
Attleboro, MA, Death, Birth and Marriage records (film #578829)
Land purchases, Rehobeth, ME, 1672
Rhode Island Vital Records (film #22467)
Boston births
"Founder and Patriots of Cumberland, RI"
Periodical file (genealogical magazine articles)