



# Dane County Area Genealogical Society News

May 31, 2008

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## *The Story of the Mysterious Photos taken in the 1800's by Two Madison Photographers at June 5<sup>th</sup> Program*

The June 5<sup>th</sup> program will feature a slide presentation that illustrates how four board members, Rollie Littlewood, Shirley Levine, Tom Glassel, and Pat Skubis combined both traditional and internet research methods to research the lives of two Madison photographers and the mysterious photos sent to DCAGS. You will not only learn about the resources they used, but you will learn about early photography and see early photos of Madison landmarks and the influential residents who lived in the Madison area in the 1800s.

Back in January, Tom Glassel wrote an article about the start of our search. If you haven't already read the article refer to it on our web site at <http://www.dcags.org/> or <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~widcags>. You can also

view the mysterious photos there.

Tracing the two families as they moved from the east coast and eventually arriving in Madison turned up many records about them.

Finally finding Sarah Jones, N.P. Jones's widow in the 1910 census led to a brief detour exploring the nurse listed as the matron, chief of the Hospital located on Mound Street. Finding an article about her sisters in the same Journal as the article on the Curtiss family was an added unexpected gift.

Following information in an article on an East High blog, led to the obit of E.R. Curtiss's grandson. After Rollie located a copy of the obit at the Historical Society, I went on to locate living descendants who have a collection of both E.R. Curtiss's

and his son's photos. I am hoping to meet with them before our program and see if they might have any information that would help us identify the lady in the Photo.

We may never learn just who the women are in these three photos, but they have provided four of us some fun during this long snowy winter. By researching the photographers I personally have found some new resources to teach others about. That in itself is a reward for the effort. Hopefully by sharing what we found and the methods we used it will help you with your own research.

Please join us June 5, 2008 at 7:00 P.M. at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints at 4505 Regent Street, Madison, WI.

***Regular DCAGS meetings are the first Thursday of each month at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints located at 4505 Regent, Madison, Wisconsin beginning at 7 p.m.***

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***DCAGS Update:***

***The DCAGS Governing Board meets the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of each month. The next meeting is on Monday, June 16 at 6:30 p.m. South Park Library, 2222 Park St. We invite all members to attend. Please join us!***



Get ready for our July 10<sup>th</sup> meeting. We are planning an evening of socialization and sharing. The evening fun will start

## *July DCAGS Picnic*

at 6 PM with a picnic supper. At 7PM several former students of Ann Short will present their personal Histories. Their examples will show us how we can write our own stories. The event will take place at the Fitchburg Senior Center. Watch for the full write up

and directions in our next newsletter and on the Web. The picnic supper will be provided, so if you plan to attend, be sure to sign up at our June meeting or email Pat Skubis at [p318skubis@hughes.net](mailto:p318skubis@hughes.net) before June 16<sup>th</sup>.

### **Individual Highlights:**

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## *Polly's Family: From New England to the Plains and Beyond*

The Reverend David McDonald treated DCAGS members to a journey of discovering one's roots at the May 1 meeting.

David began where many of us begin – pictures, letters and a family Bible. He explained how he was able to research the ancestors and descendents of Polly Putnam (1793-1886) and Jonathan Betts (1787-1841).

David gave us several items to review – letters, pension record, land records and bible records. Throughout the presentation David would have us refer to the documents as we reviewed the migration of Polly Putnam.

One was a letter between brothers dated January 23, 1881. David had a series of questions to ask about the letter:

Who signed the letter?

How does the writer greet the recipient?

When was it written?

What's its subject?

Who is mentioned in the letter?

What other data is included?

Could you write a citation for it?

The letter lists various birth dates and death dates, including

one for Polly as February 2, 1793.

David was able to verify this by looking at New England records. Polly's birth is listed in an index in Vermont. There was also a book written on the Putnam family in Vermont/New York that also lists the parents of Polly.

Soon after Polly's birth, the family moved to New York. Polly grew up there and married Jonathan Betts in 1814. The couple lived in New York for the next two decades. One of the other documents David provided was a sale of property in 1828. As part of the recorded deed was a testament that Polly voluntarily was agreeing to the sale. This was done because wives often had dower rights in land and it was necessary to determine that wives freely and voluntarily were relinquishing those rights.

The family moved to Ohio in 1832. The couple had eight children. Jonathan died in Ohio on April 10, 1841.

One of the other documents David gave us was bounty lands of 80 acres that Polly received because Jonathan was a soldier in the War of 1812. The land was located in Iowa and Polly assigned her interest in the land to her son Charles. Soon after Charles' family moved to Iowa and Polly joined them. Other family members also moved west.

One of the documents David gave us was a circuit court case where Polly sued her son Putnam for money he owed her. In the end, judgment was entered in 1871 against Putnam for \$74.26. Later Putnam moved from Iowa to Kansas.

As Jonathan's widow, Polly later applied for and received a widow's pension for \$8.00 a month in 1878. The application includes an affidavit of her son-in-law Frank Hunter that lists the date of Polly and Jonathan's marriage as September 11, 1814. The information was said to be contained in a family Bible.

Polly lived the last several years with her daughter Julia and her husband Frank Hunter. She died December 6, 1886. She was very nearly 94 years old. She is buried in Gilbert, Iowa.

The last item David provided was a Bible record of Newton Betts, the grandson of Polly, who lived in Bloomington, NE. It is from this line that David's wife descended. The copyright date of the Bible was 1892. David asked us to compare the handwriting to see if we could determine who did the writing in the book.

David provided a fascinating journey to learn how you can collect the nuggets to research your family history.

### *Got a Family Recipe?*

Tom Glassel suggested we include a family recipe in the newsletter if there is room. To start us off, I am submitting the first recipe.

Grandma's Rhubarb Cake

Ingredients:  
1 1/2 cup white sugar  
1/2 cup shortening  
2 eggs  
2 cups flour  
1 cup sour milk  
1 tsp. vanilla  
1 cup cut rhubarb  
Mix together and place in 9 x 13 inch cake pan

Topping:  
1/2 c. white sugar  
1 tsp. cinnamon  
Melted butter  
Spread topping on cake batter and place cake in the oven.  
Bake at 350° for 30 to 35 minutes.  
This is an old-fashioned recipe from my Grandma that is great to make with spring rhubarb!

## Upcoming events

### *Profiles of German Emigrants*

What: The German Interest Group-WI is sponsoring a German Workshop titled "Profiles of German Emigrants" Featured speaker will be Baerbel Johnson, who is a professional genealogist and works at the Family History Library in Salt Lake City.

When: July 12, 2008

Where: The University of Wisconsin-Whitewater campus.

Registration:

<http://www.rootsweb.com/~wigig>

### *Footprints of Family History*

What: The Federation of Genealogical Societies Annual Conference for Genealogists

When: September 3-6, 2008

Where: Philadelphia, PA

Registration Information:

[www.fgsconference.org](http://www.fgsconference.org) Early registration due by June 2.

### *Cornish Genealogy Seminar*

What: The Southwest Wisconsin Cornish Society and the Cornish Society of Greater Milwaukee are hosting a genealogy conference on Cornish Genealogy.

When: September 26-27, 2008

Where: Comfort Inn, Mineral Point, WI

Registration Information:

[www.cornishfest.org](http://www.cornishfest.org)

## President's Message

I hope you all enjoyed David McDonalds' presentation of: "Polly's Family: From New England to the Plains and Beyond." I want to thank David for sharing his family story and how he documented his sources with all of us.

On behalf of the board I want to invite all of you to attend our July meeting. The board will be hosting a picnic to be held at the

### *MATC Genealogy Classes for Summer.*

MATC has two Internet: Genealogy Intro Classes scheduled for this summer. This course covers learning basic Internet skills needed to research genealogy sources on the web. Topics covered include: navigating the web by using search engines, web addresses, and links: using web based e-mail and how to send attachments: downloading both genealogy software and Acrobat Reader. You will become familiar with genealogy websites and what they have to offer.

Course fee is \$47.67 if under 62. For those 62 or over, cost of cooking, computer, sewing, or camera classes is only \$4. Call (608) 246-6220 to enroll. Class # 12734 will meet each Tuesday and Thursday for 3 weeks from 1PM to 4PM at the Fitchburg Senior Center starting June 10<sup>th</sup> ending June 26. Class# 12735 will meet on Thursdays for 6 weeks, at the South Madison Community Campus on Park Street, starting July 17 and ending August 21. Time is from 9AM to 12 Noon. For a list of other class offerings check out the MATC website.

Fitchburg Senior Center on Thursday, July 10<sup>th</sup>. Check out the preview of the evening events and then read all about it in our featured article in the June edition of the newsletter.

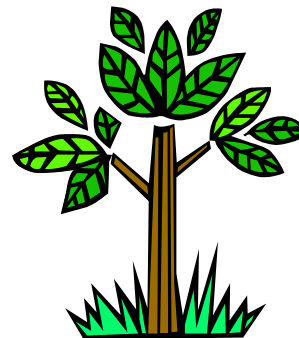
I am looking forward to sharing the methodology used in researching the Jones and Curtiss families at our June meeting. Hope to see all of you on Thursday, June 5<sup>th</sup>.

Pat Skubis

### *Genealogy Classes for the Fall at the Wisconsin Historical Society*

Advance Notice: The Wisconsin Historical Society Library and Archives will offer the following classes this fall: "Ancestry.com," "From Daguerreotype to Digital File: Organizing and Caring for Family and Personal Photos," "Digitizing Photographs," "Oh Darned! Where Did I Put Uncle George? Keeping Track of Your Family," and "Immigration and Naturalization Research." Registration information will be placed on the WHS website when dates are confirmed:

<http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/libraryarchives/classes/>



### *WorldVitalRecords.com*

Sherry Lloyd shared the following information with members at the May DCAGS Meeting. WorldVitalRecords.com is offering DCAGS members the following offer.

Sign up for the world collection. Call 1-888-377-0588 and ask for Nathan. You can receive three years for the one-year price (One year price is \$149.95) Or you could receive six months trial for reduced price. Plus you will receive Family Tree Maker software with trial period of Ancestry (online database).

Dane County Area Genealogical Society  
P.O. Box 5652  
Madison, WI 53705-0652



**Address Service Requested**

We're on the Web!

See us at: [www.dcags.org](http://www.dcags.org)



**Dane County Area  
Genealogical Society**

P.O. Box 5652  
Madison, WI 53705-0652

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See you  
June 5

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We have a new web address:  
[www.dcags.org](http://www.dcags.org).

If you enter the address it  
will take you to the group's  
website on Rootsweb.

**DCAGS officers for 2008:**

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