

WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS ROOTS EVENTS

BERKSHIRE, FRANKLIN, HAMPSHIRE and HAMPDEN COUNTIES in MASSACHUSETTS

April 1, 2017 - Volume 04 Number 04

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**March 30, April 6, 13, 20, 27, 2017, Thursday** (10:00am - 12:00pm **and** 1:00pm – 2:00pm): Polish Genealogical Society of Massachusetts, **Polish Center of Discovery and Learning 33 South Street, Chicopee, MA 01013 (413) 594-1800**. Basic Hands-on Genealogy with Alan Doyle Horbal, professional genealogist. Outline and instruction on researching the 1900, 1910, 1920, 1930 and 1940 U.S. Census. Discover 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.

**There will be a combined class on April 27th at 11:00am**

All students must have an e-mail account and be computer literate. Limited space, please sign up for sessions. We ask that you attend all four classes. You may bring your own laptop. To register go to [PGSMA.org](http://PGSMA.org)

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April 2, 2017, Sunday (1:00 pm): **Irish Cultural Center of Western New England** will be presenting an Info Session on 2017 End of Summer Ireland Tour: September 2 – 12, 2017 at the Dooley Campus Center, Elms College (Room 207). The tour will be visiting Dingle, Kilkenny and Dublin – Ireland's Three Gems. Tour beautiful Ireland on a leisurely paced tour through gorgeous countryside, charming towns, and bustling cities. Visit our website for more info, itinerary and reservation form. <http://www.irishcenterwne.org>

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**April 26 – 29, 2017, Wednesday – Saturday: The New England Regional Genealogical Consortium Conference (NERGC 2017)**, Using the Tools of Today & Tomorrow to Understand the Past, will be held at the Mass Mutual Center, 1277 Main Street, Springfield, MA. Click on links below to learn more about the agenda and to register.

**NERGC 2017 Using the Tools of Today & Tomorrow to Understand the Past**

**REGISTRATION FOR NERGC 2017 IS NOW OPEN!**

The 20-page 2017 NERGC conference brochure is available [here](#). The brochure contains the full conference schedule, summaries of lectures, speaker biographies and information on available luncheons, banquets, research tour and special events. Register online [here](#). To register by postal mail, see page 19 of the brochure.

**Registration Fee is \$150**

**April 30, 2017, Sunday:** (4:00 pm): **The Irish Cultural Center of Western New England** will be presenting Searson - Celtic Music Concert. Searson is known for their own original music from Canada's Ottawa Valley, mixed with Celtic, East Coast, and Scottish. Their performances feature high energy fiddling, vocals and step dancing. Tickets are general admission, table seating. Doors open at 3:00 pm.

**Cost is \$20 for ICC Patrons, \$23 for general public, \$28 at the door.**

Tickets are available online or by calling the ICC at 413-333-4951. To learn more and get tickets:

<http://www.irishcenterwne.org>

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May 2, 9, 16, & 23, 2017, Tuesdays: (9:30 am-11:00 am): Basic Hands-on Genealogy with Alan Doyle Horbal, professional genealogist. **Cheshire Senior Center, 119 School Street, Cheshire, MA 01225.** Outline and instruction on researching the 1900, 1910, 1920, 1930 and 1940 U.S. Census. Discover how to find your ancestors' emigration to the U.S. using the <http://stevemorse.org> website and the <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 e-mail account and be computer literate. Limited space, please sign up for sessions. To register call The Cheshire Library at (413) 743-9719.

We ask that you attend all four classes. You may bring your own laptop.

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**May 18, 2017, Thursday:** (6:00pm - 9:00pm): **Berkshire Family History Association** invites you to a genealogical program: The Rich Resources of Western Massachusetts and It's Not All on the Internet: Using Alternative Resources presented by Dave Robison, Professional genealogist and owner of Old Bones Genealogy of New England. Country Club of Pittsfield, 639 South Street (Rte. 7 & 20), Pittsfield, MA 01201.

Light refreshments will be served. A free raffle will be held.

**Pre-registration is required. A fee of \$10.00** will cover the cost of the program and refreshments. To receive a registration form, call 413-445-5521 or email [bfhainc@gmail.com](mailto:bfhainc@gmail.com). Join BFHA or renew your membership (\$12.00/yr.) and receive free admission.

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June 16 – 18, 2017: 2017 Ontario Genealogical Society Conference, Ottawa, Ontario. Members of the **Ontario Genealogical Society** and family historians from around the world are coming together in Ottawa this June to celebrate and collaborate. Please join us for three days of inspiring lectures, workshops, displays and other exciting events.

For the first time at OGS, we are offering an Ancestry deep dive. Ancestry experts will hold a special event on how to get the most out of AncestryDNA®, and offer tips and tricks on their core family history product. Don't miss it!

[Register for Conference](#)

[Register for Ancestry Deep Dive](#)

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## FLIP-FLOPPING MAIDEN NAMES? MAYBE HERE'S WHY!

by *A. Zarzecki*

In the course of my research, I found my great-grandmother's maiden name was listed as Zarzecka on about half the documents I discovered; but in all the others, it was recorded as Dabrowska. This was very confusing and cast doubts as to if this was really my ancestor or someone with the exact same name. Based on the documents I had, it was not possible to determine with certainty what her name really was. This could have been resolved by marriage records; unfortunately, the Soviets burned down the rectory of my ancestral parish church in 1942. And while the baptism registers did not burn and go back to the mid-1600s, all the marriage and death records prior to 1810 turned into a pile of ashes.

At times, the priests made errors; but usually in these cases, the maiden name would be wrong on only one record and correct in all other instances. In this case, there was an even 50/50 split between the two names, so something else was going on here. But what? Identical names can repeat frequently in any given parish. There could be five people named Michalina Wolczek all alive at the same time and of the approximately same age. I thought perhaps that there were multiple people with the same name as my ancestor. After careful analysis, I determined that this did not apply in this case. So rather than researching the wrong family, I simply stopped researching this branch of the family. If I chose the wrong name of the two possibilities, then I would have spent many hours researching a family that was not related to me.

I mentioned this research impasse to our colleague Daniel Bućko in Kraków, and he informed me that in certain periods of the nineteenth century, when a woman was widowed, the priests would sometime list the surname of her first husband as her maiden name in any subsequent records. He advised me to go through the records again and to see if there were any birth records of anyone in which both names appeared. Because of the destruction of records during World War II, searching marriage records—which would have been the most obvious path to take and which I would have already done—was not an option.

Thus, I began going through the birth records and BINGO. I learned that my ancestor had been married previously, her married name was Dabrowska, and that's why it kept appearing as her maiden name in later records. She had five children with husband number one. I now knew that this entire group of people were blood relatives and began researching the descendants of these five "new" relatives. Some of their descendants immigrated to the United States, settling mainly in Michigan and Connecticut, and I have added hundreds of new people to my family history.

If you have encountered a similar problem, i.e., two "maiden" names that alternate in various records, consider the possibility that your female ancestor may have been married twice and that her "maiden" name is really her deceased husband's surname. □

Now you can be instantly notified via email when our Database Team **adds new databases or new records** to existing databases. Just subscribe (it's free) with any email account [here](#) to get this news in real time.

We will explain which databases have been updated, and link directly to them so you can begin your search. We will also share tips to help you get the most out of your searching, and inform you of any upcoming webinars designed to help you search our collections. \*Please note that some databases may require paid member access.

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 **American Ancestors** *DATABASE NEWS*  
by NEW ENGLAND HISTORIC GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

[New sketches: Early Vermont Settlers to 1784](#)  
*by Molly Rogers*

**Early Vermont Settlers to 1784** now has five new sketches, enumerated below. This database focuses on families that lived in Vermont prior to the end of the Revolutionary War, as identified in Donald Alan Smith's thesis "[Legacy of Dissent: Religion and Politics in Revolutionary Vermont 1749 to 1784](#)" (Clark U., Ph.D., 1980).

These five new families came from Windsor, VT, where the Constitution of Vermont was signed in 1777. This constitution created the Republic of Vermont, an independent nation. The Republic of Vermont existed until 1791 when Vermont became part of the United States.

[Ebenezer Hoisington \(Windsor\)](#)  
[Joab Hoisington \(Windsor-Woodstock\)](#)  
[William Smead \(Windsor\)](#)  
[William Smead, Jr. \(Windsor\)](#)  
[Zephaniah Spicer \(Windsor\)](#)

[Update to Hampshire County Probate File Papers](#)  
*by Molly Rogers*

This update to the **Hampshire County, MA: Probate File Papers, 1660-1889** adds 6,538 additional case records and 175,000 individual file papers. This database is possible through our collaboration with the [Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court Archives](#) and the Hampshire County Probate & Family Court. The collection contains the records of Hampshire County probate cases filed between 1660 and 1889. The probate cases include wills, guardianships, administrations, and various other types of probate records *except* adoptions, which are not public records in Massachusetts.

Rather than sequential case numbers, the Hampshire County file papers are numbered by file box (1-267) and then folder within the box. The case number naming convention is [box number]-[folder number]:[page number]. For example, the first page of the first folder in box 1 is "1-1:1".

For more information about this database, please consult our [introduction](#) which contains helpful information and examples for understanding and interpreting this collection.

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New Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston volumes
by Molly Rogers

We have two new additions to **Massachusetts: (Image Only) Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston Records, 1789-1900**.

Saint Joseph's Parish in Boston served the Irish community in the West End. The following volumes are included in this update:

[St. Joseph \(Boston, MA\) Baptisms, 1862-1876](#)
[St. Joseph \(Boston, MA\) Baptisms, 1877-1879](#)
[St. Joseph \(Boston, MA\) Baptisms, 1879-1882](#)
[St. Joseph \(Boston, MA\) Baptisms, 1882-1884](#)
[St. Joseph \(Boston, MA\) Baptisms, 1884-1889](#)
[St. Joseph \(Boston, MA\) Baptisms, 1889-1895](#)
[St. Joseph \(Boston, MA\) Baptisms, 1895-1900](#)
[St. Joseph \(Boston, MA\) Baptisms, 1900](#)

St. Joseph marriages will be included in a future update.

Saint Theresa of Avila Parish in West Roxbury was established in 1895. The following volumes comprise the pre-1901 records of this parish:

[St. Theresa of Avila \(West Roxbury, MA\) Baptisms, 1896-1900](#)
[St. Theresa of Avila \(West Roxbury, MA\) Marriages, 1896-1900](#)

If you need any help navigating this collection, be sure to watch our [video](#) on how to browse!

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**Western Mass Roots Events Website:** Click [here](#) to view a current listing of recurring regional genealogical activities on our website, sorted by day of the week.  
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For more information regarding the following, please click on the web addresses. You may have to hold down your "Control (Ctrl)" key and click in order to follow the link:

1. **Mission Statement:**
<http://wmarootsevents.wordpress.com/mission-statement/>
2. **Submission Requirements:**
<http://wmarootsevents.wordpress.com/events/submit-an-event/>
3. **Polish Genealogy Terms**
<http://wmarootsevents.files.wordpress.com/2015/07/polishtoenglishgenealogyterms.pdf>
4. **Foreign to English Names:**
<http://wmarootsevents.files.wordpress.com/2015/07/givennames-list.pdf>

The Deadline for submission for the May Newsletter is April 24, 2017. Thank you.



Happy Searching!