

Genealogy Corner

By Art Young, Genealogy Chairman

Genealogy research can be frustrating at times, but when you find a long missing link to a next generation, there is no way to explain the feeling of accomplishment and satisfaction you will feel, until you make one of those discoveries. This article tells about one such discovery.

Our New York State Library at 222 Madison Ave. in Albany was established in 1818 and contains over 20 million research items including, on the 7th floor, hundreds of shelved hardcover family histories in alphabetical order by title.

In my line of ancestors is a Union Civil War soldier who was captured at Gettysburg and died in Andersonville Prison in 1864. I knew that his wife's parents were Stolham Hinckley and Jerusha Bradish. Whereas I had been able to trace my Hinckley line back to the 1500's in England, I had not been able to find any records for Jerusha Bradish, except that there was a Bradish family book listed in the NYS Library index that neither I nor the Library personal could locate.

I volunteer once or twice a month at the 7th floor volunteer genealogy desk. One day when I had some free time, I went back to the family history shelved books and moved several books near the space that the Bradish book should have been. Still no Bradish book, but as I turned away, something fell to the floor from behind the book shelf I had been searching.

It was a canvas folded into book size that had been stuck behind the other books and that had been created by 2 Bradish brothers who descended from Robert Bradish of England, from whom all of the Bradish family in America descend. The chart included 8 generations of the Bradish family, with the names of husbands, wives, dates of birth, death, and marriage. Guess what, on the very bottom line of the chart was listed my Jerusha Bradish married to Stolham Hinckley.

So please never give up when you think that you have reached a dead end in your research and always keep in mind the great recourse of our NYS Library,

Growing Up on Brockley Drive

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On the other hand, hawks were very rarely seen. Whether this was owing to the early use of DDT, which dangerously thins their eggshells, or simply due to the disappearance of chicken runs in back yards, I don't know. Also rarely seen were deer. I wish that was the case today. Leash laws keep our dogs indoors, and that has meant everyone in my family had a "deer incident" with damage to our cars. I am still sore about the ninety dollars worth of tulips planted by my front steps, that were gone the next morning.

Well, this is already too long and I have run out of things to say. Tomorrow morning, as I lie in bed waiting for six o'clock so I can get up, other memories will come to mind. You can't escape them.



"I think of the freedom I had as a kid, free from adult supervision, free to do what we wanted, free to get into yelling matches, play dangerously and make our own mistakes"

Robert Mulligan

Growing Up on Brockley Drive

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By Robert Mulligan,

I grew up on Brockley Drive, a spur of a dozen houses on the right side of Delaware Avenue, which petered out in the woods to the north. The Cape Cod homes were built by the Brockley family who had owned the farmland. Frank was the developer and his brother Jimmy was one of the carpenters. I believe Jimmy had lost a leg in the War, but when you saw him climbing a ladder with a heavy load of something in his arms, you would notice the limp, but you would not think him handicapped.

My father's lot ran down a slope to a branch of the Vlomankill. This is the same stream that flows near the Red School House in Cedar Hill, and empties into the Hudson River at today's Town Park. The stream was dry in the summer but waist deep during the spring snowmelt. One sunny winter's day, my best friend and I paddled my father's Grumman aluminum canoe up the stream, halfway to Orchard Avenue. The "stream" was only about eight inches deep, but that was enough to float our boat. Of course, we had to use our paddles to push the boat through the slush. We crossed fallen branches, when the bow paddler scuttled aft to raise the bow. Then, once atop the branch, both paddlers had to scuttle forward to the bow and pushing with their paddles slide the canoe forward. Come to think of it, neither Carl nor I were obese couch potatoes, spending all our time in front of a VDT.

The stream ran through a six foot tall earthen berm that had once impounded enough water for a very large farm pond. I assume this pond supplied ice for the family and perhaps for sale to others. The berm had a narrow cut made in it to drain the pond, but enough water remained to allow many a hockey game to be played there by the neighborhood kids. It would be two or three decades before the YMCA hockey rink would be built. It is nice that the Rink allows a much longer period of skating and it is nice that our hockey teams are organized, trained and so much better players than my friends were. But when I think of the freedom I had as a kid, free from adult supervision, free to do what we wanted, free to get into yelling matches, play dangerously and make our own mistakes, I lament the loss of that experience among today's kids. A freedom they may perhaps never know, in today's organized, adult led world.

Google maps shows no pond there today. Probably it was drained as a hazard for children.

The low swale through which our stream flowed was covered in parts by cattails. The stalks of these made dandy "arrows" for our "Cowboys and Indians". If you could get some lawnmower gasoline and soak the sausage-like seed heads on them, they would make interesting torches. Cattails were then just about everywhere in the wetter parts of town. Today they are very hard to find. They have been replaced by tall reeds with feather-like tops. I first saw these on Long Island and I believe they have migrated here from the south. These *Phragmites australis* are, as I have been told, another immigrant from Europe. They produce a poison that kills surrounding plants, then their rhizomes take over. Not very nice of them and they have certainly decimated the cattail population.



As a child, the author dug up a maple sapling in the fields where the high school is today. The tree still stands in front of his former home on Brockley Drive.

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