Cheyenne Genealogy Journal

Message From Your CGHS President. . .

Season's Greetings! I hope that you are all having productive results as you seek new information and pictures of family members. Each time that I do it's a great find for me. No matter what it is, I've either confirmed what I have, or I have been able to add to what I know about someone. If you have the opportunity to read the November/December issue of *Family Tree Magazine*, there were several articles that were of interest to me and you may find something of interest to you as well.

Don't forget to select a special heirloom or other cherished item to "show and tell" at our December 12th meeting as well as making a special treat that you usually include in your upcoming holiday celebrations to bring and share with everyone. We suggest either sweet or savory snacks, finger-foods or appetizers. *[Due to the winter weather—the Dec 12th date was postponed, so watch your e-mail for a rescheduled date!]* Also start thinking about the Society's upcoming events—the May Banquet & Silent Auction and the Cemetery Walk, along with who would like to serve in the two open officer positions that need to be filled—Secretary and Treasurer

I hope you all have a special holiday season and enjoy the company of family and friends. *Cathy*

RootsTech 2024 Registration is Open!

Center in Salt Lake City, Utah. The event will take place February 29– March 2, 2024. Mark your calendars and register today. *The first 1,000 registrants for the in-person conference, as well as the first 1,000 registrants for the online conference, will receive a limited-edition collector's item--the RootsTech Insider Badge.*

RootsTech is the largest genealogy event in the world, sponsored and hosted by FamilySearch. Roots-Tech brings people from all over the globe together for one common mission: gathering and celebrating family. Classes at RootsTech are offered free for all skill levels, beginner to expert.

A featured keynote speaker this year is American actor, Sean Astin, who will share his story on how he created his legacy as a respected figure in the acting industry. The Expo Hall—the heartbeat of the conference—is home to many sponsors and exhibitors that offer new innovations and technology to help further your genealogy work.

RootsTech registration for the 2024 conference is now open! With hundreds of new genealogy classes, cutting-edge technology and innovation, and entertainment that won't disappoint, RootsTech has something for everyone. Last year's RootsTech was the first year that the conference offered both in-person attendance as well as virtual access, and it was a smashing success with over three million attendees. This year, RootsTech will offer those same options with registration for both an online or in-person experience at the Salt Palace Convention

How Christmas Was Celebrated By the Puritans In the 13 Colonies...

This article is by Sarah Pruitt, from **history.com***; original 3 Dec 2020; updated 5 Oct 2023.*

While most Americans today probably can't imagine the Christmas season without Santa Claus, Christmas trees, hanging stockings and giving gifts, most of those traditions didn't get started until the 19th century. In the pre-Revolutionary War era, people living in the original 13 colonies disagreed fiercely over the question of how to celebrate Christmas—and even whether to celebrate it at all.

Roots of the Colonial Christmas Debate

English settlers who traveled to the New World brought the debate over Christmas with them. By the late 16th century, a group of Protestant reformers known as Puritans sought to purify the Church of England, and purge it of Roman Catholic traditions they saw as excessive. This included Christmas, which had roots in the pagan Roman winter festival of Saturnalia, as well as the Norse festival of Yule. At the time, celebrations of Christmas in England lasted for nearly two weeks—from the day of Jesus Christ's birth, December 25, to Twelfth Day, January 6—and consisted of rowdy celebrations including feasting, gambling, drinking, and masquerade balls.

Christmas in Jamestown and Plymouth

Like those they left behind in England, the settlers who came to the New World were divided on whether and how to celebrate Christmas. For the settlers who arrived in Virginia in 1607, Christmas was an important holiday. While celebrations may have been limited, given the harsh realities of life in the struggling new Jamestown settlement, they preserved it as a sacred occasion and a day of rest. By the 1620s and '30s, Christmas was established as a benchmark in the legislative calendar of the Virginia colony, according to Nancy Egloff, Jamestown Settlement historian. Laws on the books in 1631, for example, stated that churches were to be built in areas that needed them before the "feast of the nativitie of our Saviour Christ." By contrast, the Pilgrims of Plymouth Colony belonged to a Puritan sect known as Separatists. They treated their first Christmas in the New World as just one more working day. Governor William Bradford noted in his diary that the colonists began building the colony's first house on December 25, 1620. The following year, when a group of newly arrived settlers refused to work on Christmas Day, Bradford let them off the hook until they could become "better informed." But he drew a firm line after he found them playing games while everyone else worked.

"If they made the keeping of it [Christmas] a matter of devotion, let them keep their houses," Bradford wrote. "But there should be no gaming or reveling in the streets."

Puritans Made Christmas Illegal

The bitter differences between Puritans and Anglicans would eventually lead to the First English Civil War (1642-46), after which the Puritans came to power and banned the celebration of Christmas, Easter, and the various saints' days. In their strict view of the Bible, only the Sabbath was sacred. Christmas, with its pagan roots, was especially unacceptable.

Massachusetts Bay Colony, founded in 1630 by a group of Puritan refugees from England, followed this example. According to a law passed in 1659, "whosoever shall be found observing any such day as Christmas or the like, either by forbearing of labor, feasting, or any other way" would be slapped with a five-shilling fine.

In 1681, after the English Civil Wars ended and the monarchy was restored, Massachusetts gave in to mounting pressure and repealed some of its most restrictive laws, including the ban on Christmas. Puritan opposition to Christmas remained strong throughout the colonial period, however: Most businesses often remained open on December 25, and Massachusetts didn't officially recognize the holiday until the mid-19th century.

Colonists Imported English Traditions

Despite Puritan efforts, many colonists in New England did celebrate Christmas, importing English customs such as drinking, feasting, mumming and wassailing. Mumming, or "masking," involved people dressing up in costume and going from house to house, putting on plays and otherwise performing. Wassailers also traveled between homes, drinking and singing while passing around bowls full of spiced ale or mulled wine.

In the middle and southern colonies, where there was more religious diversity, Anglicans, Roman Catholics, Lutherans, Moravians and other groups introduced their own Christmas traditions to the New World, both religious and secular. Far from the children-focused occasion it is today, the Christmas season was packed with adult activities such as parties, feasts, hunts, balls and—of course—church services. People decorated homes and churches with evergreen plants such as holly, ivy, mountain laurel and mistletoe, a favorite of couples seeking a holiday kiss. In addition to mumming and wassailing, revelers in southern colonies like Virginia enjoyed caroling, singing popular English favorites such as "The First Noel," "God Rest You Merry Gentlemen" and "The Holly and the Ivy."

Though Christmas had become a relatively mainstream celebration by the mid-18th century, it still wasn't officially recognized as a holiday by the time of the Revolutionary War. In 1789, Congress went so far as to hold its first session on Christmas Day.

It would take nearly a century for Congress to declare Christmas a national holiday, which it finally did in 1870. By that time, traditions such as the Christmas tree, Santa Claus and gift-giving had made their way into the American mainstream, helping to turn December 25 into the family-friendly holiday we know and love today.

A puritan rebuking children for picking holly during the holiday season (Hulton Archive-Getty Images)

...And How Christmas Was Celebrated During the Civil War...

Information in this article is from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia—Christmas in the American Civil War

Christmas in the American Civil War (1861–1865) was celebrated in the Confederate States of America (the South), but frowned upon and actually fined in Massachusetts. It was seen as an unnecessary expense. It was thought to be a day of fasting by the Puritans and Lutherans. The day did not become an official holiday until five years after the war ended. The war continued to rage on Christmas and skirmishes occurred throughout the countryside. Celebrations for both troops and civilians saw significant alteration. In 1870, Christmas became an official federal holiday when President Ulysses S. Grant made it so in an attempt to unite north and south.

On the first Christmas Day during the war, Lincoln hosted a Christmas party during the evening; earlier that day, he spent many hours trying to legitimize the capture of Confederate representatives to Great Britain and France. In 1862, the Lincolns visited injured soldiers at the various hospitals. Many Union soldiers in 1863 received gifts "From Tad Lincoln", as Tad had been deeply moved by the plight of Union soldiers when he was taken by his father to see them. The gifts were mostly books and clothing. The most famous Christmas gift Lincoln ever received came on December 22, 1864, when William Tecumseh Sherman announced the capture of Savannah, Georgia. Military exercises also took place on December 25. In 1861, a blockade runner was caught by the Union navy, and there were two skirmishes in Virginia and Maryland. In 1862, there were several skirmishes, and Confederate general John Hunt Morgan engaged in his famous Christmas Raid in Kentucky. On that day, Morgan's men destroyed everything they could of the improvements that the Louisville & Nashville Railroad had made along 35 miles of track. There was also a military execution for desertion that the soldiers were forced to witness. In 1863, Union forces destroyed Confederate salt works at Bear Inlet, North Carolina and, in South Carolina, there were skirmishes between the Union navy and Confederate artillery on the Stono River and near Charleston. In 1864, the Confederates fiercely repelled the Federal assault of sixty warships on Fort Fisher and several

skirmishes were fought in the western theater of the war. Soldiers not actively campaigning celebrated Christmas in several ways. Union soldiers would use salt-pork and hardtack to decorate Christmas trees. Others were treated to special meals; a captain from Massachusetts treated his soldiers to foods such as turkey, oysters, pies, and apples. However, many soldiers received no special treats or privileges. In one incident on December 25, 1864, 90 Union soldiers from Michigan, led by their captain, dispensed "food and supplies" to poor Georgians, with the mules pulling the carts decorated to resemble reindeer by having tree branches tied to their heads. In some units, celebrating Christmas was not allowed. On December 25, 1862, soldiers of one unit were punished for celebratory gunfire for the holiday, when actually the gunfire was for a funeral salute.

Carols, hymns, and seasonal songs were sung during the period, with some, such as "Deck the Halls", "Oh Come All Ye Faithful", and Mendelssohn's "Hark, the Herald Angels Sing" (1840), still sung today. Although popular in Europe at the time, Christmas cards were scarce in the United States, and would not enjoy widespread use until the 1870s. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow wrote his pacifist poem, "Christmas Bells" on Christmas Day 1864 at the news of his son Lieutenant Charles Appleton Longfellow having suffered severe wounds in November during the Mine Run Campaign. The poem was set to the tune "Waltham" by John Baptiste Calkin sometime after 1872 and has since been received into the established library of Christmas carols as "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day". The carol version does not include two stanzas from the original poem that focused on the war.

For children, Christmas was altered during the war. Presents were fewer, especially in the devastated South. In *We Were Marching on Christmas Day*, author Kevin Rawlings notes that some southern children worried about the Union blockade, and one little girl, Sallie Brock Putnam, plotted the course Santa Claus would have to take to avoid it. Sometimes fathers on both sides were allowed furlough, and children were said to react to their fathers as if seeing "near strangers." [Excuses for a lack of Santa included 'Yankees having shot him.']

It can be difficult to relate to the men and women of the Civil War era. Despite the extraordinar-

ily different circumstances in which they found themselves, however, we can connect with our forebears in traditions such as the celebration of Christmas. By the mid-19th century, most of today's familiar Christmas trappings — Christmas carols, gift giving and tree decoration — were already in place. Charles Dickens had published "A Christmas Carol" in 1843 and indeed, the Civil War saw the first introductions to the modern image of a jolly and portly Santa Claus through the drawings of Thomas Nast, a German-speaking immigrant. Civil War soldiers in camp and their families at home drew comfort from the same sorts of traditions that characterize Christmas today. Alfred Bellard of the 5th New Jersey noted, "In order to make it look much like Christmas as possible, a small tree was stuck up in front of our tent, decked off with hard tack and pork, in lieu of cakes and oranges, etc." John Haley, of the 17th Maine, wrote in his diary on Christmas Eve that, "It is rumored that there are sundry boxes and mysterious parcels over at Stoneman's Station directed to us. We retire to sleep with feelings akin to those of children expecting Santa Claus."

For many, the holiday was a reminder of the profound melancholy that had settled over the entire nation. Southern parents warned their children that Santa might not make it through the blockade, and soldiers in bleak winter quarters were reminded, more acutely than ever, of the domestic bliss they had left behind. Christmas during the Civil War served both as an escape from and a reminder of the awful conflict rending the country in two. Soldiers looked forward to a day of rest and relative relaxation, but had their moods tempered by the thought of separation from their loved ones. At home, families did their best to celebrate the holiday, but wondered when the vacant chair would again be filled.

A husband and wife separated by the war (Nast, 1862).

What Can Happen If Someone Hacks Your DNA Sequence?

*This article was written by Holly Large, Editorial Assistant of **AFLScience**, a UK-based science website that is part of LabX Media Group, a Canadian-based corporation located in Midland, Ontario, Canada. It was cited in Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter.*

With the recent news that hackers stole data from around 6.9 million users of the genetic testing company 23andMe, it's understandable that some might have concerns as to what someone could do with that information. Whilst no DNA records were reported stolen, it does beg the question of the potential consequences if they had been. After all, you can change your address or your name, but unless you subject yourself to a hefty amount of radiation (in which case, someone having your DNA would be the least of your concerns), you'd be hard-pressed to alter your genetic material. So once someone has your DNA sequence, can they glean anything of importance from it?

It depends on who's looking

Of course, some things can be interpreted from our DNA – otherwise, genetic testing services wouldn't exist, nor would we be moving toward health-care personalized by our genetics, but a certain level of expertise is required. It takes training to accurately interpret genetic information, particularly when it comes to our health, and even with training, there are limits. A study of various direct-to-consumer (DTC) genetic testing companies, including 23andMe, found that 50 percent of those companies declared on their websites that there were limits to the accuracy with which they could predict disease risk or incidence.

Even clinical genetic testing often involves a whole team of experts to accurately determine what a particular genetic mutation might mean for your health, including clinical scientists, doctors, and genetic counselors. "You need experts to help people understand how much stock to put in that DNA result," said Mary Freivogel, president of the National Society of Genetic Counselors, speaking to NBC News.

It depends on what other information comes with it

One of the major issues in privacy when it comes to genetic testing is not necessarily the security of the DNA data itself, but the information that may come alongside it. At present, it's very difficult to identify someone solely from their genetic information, but combine that with other data like medical history, birth date, or zip code – which are sometimes required by DTC companies – and suddenly, it can become that bit easier.

"Especially if it is coupled with health information, you can say this is a 39-year-old woman from Westchester County who is five feet, seven inches tall, who has blue eyes and has cystic fibrosis – it wouldn't be that hard for somebody to find you," Hank Greely, director of the Center for Law and the Biosciences at Stanford School of Medicine, told NBC News.

Researchers have also proved that it is indeed possible. Back in 2013, a team from Harvard University successfully identified participants in the Personal Genome Project by name. They did this not by using the DNA participants had contributed as part of the project, but from publicly available profiles with information about medical history and demographics, like gender and zip code. Linked up with public records such as voter lists, the researchers were able to correctly identify 84 to 97 percent of the profiles they were given names for.

What could be done with your genetic information?

The real question is perhaps why anybody outside of research or healthcare would want to bother looking at your DNA. There are, of course, nosy parkers, but one of the ethical concerns surrounding genetic testing is that genetic information could be used in more nefarious ways by insurers or employers. Hypothetically, for example, an insurer could deny you health insurance based on your genetic profile, which indicates an increased risk of developing heart disease. In the US, that's where the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 comes in, a law that bans discrimination based on genetic information (although it's not a catch-all). With significant strides being made in our genetic testing capabilities and the unpredictability of politics, it's possible that, with time, the situation may well change. For now though, if someone were to have a nosy at your DNA, they'd likely face one too many hurdles; first, even figuring out what it says about you, and second, legally doing something with that knowledge.

All "explainer" articles are confirmed by fact checkers to be correct at time of publishing. Text, images, & links may be edited, removed, or added to at a later date to keep information current.

23andMe Changes Terms of Service Amid Legal Fallout From Data Breach by Hackers

*This article is from **Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter,** 11 Dec 2023*

Days after a data breach allowed hackers to steal 6.9 million 23andMe users' personal details, the genetic testing company changed its terms of service to prevent customers from formally suing the firm or pursuing class-action lawsuits against it. It's unclear if 23andMe is attempting to retroactively shield itself from lawsuits alleging it acted negligently.

Through a mechanism called acceptance by silence or inaction, 23andMe stipulated that customers must explicitly tell the company they disagree with the new terms within 30 day of being notified of the changes or they will be locked into the terms automatically. (**The latest:** At least two law firms are pursuing a class action against 23andMe.—Canada-based law firms YLaw and KND Complex Litigation have proposed a class-action lawsuit against the company in the Supreme Court of British Columbia.)

A 23andMe spokesperson said on Friday the company did not change its terms of service to limit its customers' rights to seek relief in court but to speed up the resolution of disputes. The spokesperson said the new terms allow customers to seek relief in small claims court. They noted that customers also retain the right to opt out of mandatory arbitration by not agreeing with the new terms. The spokesperson did not say whether the company was attempting to protect itself from potential legal fallout stemming from the breach. **The big picture:** Small claims courts are generally less formal than traditional courtrooms and handle cases involving claims generally under $10,000, depending on the state court system involved. The new terms only allow customers to seek relief in small claims court if they give the company written notice before an arbitrator has been formally appointed to handle the dispute.

Genealogy News You Can Use...

The *AI Time Machine* is a Fun Feature on MyHeritage That Uses Artificial Intelligence to Create Imaginary Avatars (Images) of Someone From Ancient Greece to 20th Century Outer Space

The [AI Time Machine](#)™ is a fun feature on MyHeritage that uses Artificial Intelligence (AI) to create imaginary AI avatars (images) of a person as he or she may have looked in different periods in history. It takes real photos of a subject that you upload, and transforms them into stunning, hyper-realistic AI avatars depicting that person featured in a variety of themes from across the globe — from prehistoric times to the age of space exploration and beyond. Using AI Time Machine™, you can see yourself as an Egyptian pharaoh, a medieval knight, a 19th-century lord or lady, an astronaut, and much more, in just a few clicks! When you use AI Time Machine™ for the first time, you'll be prompted to create an account on MyHeritage. It's quick and easy.

AI Time Machine™ utilizes text-to-image technology licensed from Astria. Using a number of photos of one subject, it constructs a model that can depict the same person in a variety of poses and lighting conditions that are different from those in the original photos. Then, using a series of predefined themes, it synthesizes the model with motifs from the various themes to craft photorealistic AI avatars.

You can create beautiful and realistic AI avatars of yourself in different time periods on this page, in just a few simple steps. Click "Try it now" and follow the instructions to upload 10–25 photos of yourself taken at different angles. Once you've uploaded the required photos, enter a title and select a gender. The technology will then get to work and you'll receive an email when your images

are ready, with a link to view the results. If you don't have enough existing photos to use, you can simply snap a few more with your mobile phone using different poses and backgrounds, and then upload them.

As a tip, you can easily find photos of yourself on an iOS device by tapping People & Places under Albums in the Photos app and selecting yourself. You can then add all the photos that you want to a temporary album, and upload photos from that album to MyHeritage's AI Time Machine™ page. Other photo apps, such as Google Photos, have a similar function. AI Time Machine™ currently offers dozens of themes, including many different representations of different eras — from ancient Greece to 20th century outer space!

It typically takes between 30 to 90 minutes to build the initial model from your uploaded photos and prepare all the AI avatars for you. You'll receive an email when your images have been created. The quality of the output you'll receive depends very much on the quality of the photos you upload. The more photos you upload and the more varied they are, the better your results will be. For best results, use existing photos from your camera roll or computer that include:
—Singularity: only one person (and always the same person).
—Variety Selfies (mostly), but also upper-body and full-body.
—Different poses and expressions, with different head angles.
—Photos taken on different days (avoid photoshoots of many photos taken in the same setting).

—Avoid heavy makeup and sunglasses.
—No photos of children, and no swimsuit photos or explicit photos.
—Photos from a wide range of ages tend to confuse it; it's fine to upload photos that cover a span of up to 3 years, but it is not recommended to upload photos covering a wider range of years.

For more details on the terms and conditions for using AI Time Machine, go to https://www.myheritage.com/ai-time-machine

A New Approach to Genetic Genealogy Sheds Light on African American Ancestry

*This article was written by Holly Alyssa MacCormick, from **Stanford News**, 10 July 2023.*

Family trees, photo albums, and grandparents are often the go-to sources of information for people curious to know who their relatives were. Genetic ancestry is also a useful tool, but these measurements typically provide data on percentages of different populations in a person's ancestry, not on specific people. Now, a new study led by researchers from Stanford and the University of Southern California introduces a new way to think about genetic ancestry, revealing information that approximates the number of people from a source population. The researchers apply this new approach to the genetic and genealogical history of African Americans from the 1600s to the present to estimate the number of African and European ancestors who appear in a randomly chosen African American person's genealogy.

The authors provide context for their results by using a historical book written about several generations of the family of Michelle Obama, the former first lady of the United States, as an example. Jazlyn Mooney, a former postdoctoral scholar, Stanford School of Humanities and Sciences, now an Assistant Professor at USC, is the lead author. Noah Rosenberg, Stanford Professor of Population Genetics and Society and professor of biology in the School of Humanities and Sciences, is senior author. The study was published July 6 in [Genetics,](#) where the authors discuss their new approach and how it helps fill a gap in the ancestry of African American people descended from Africans forcibly transported to the U.S. as enslaved captives during the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

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www.cghswyoming.org

and on Facebook at
https://www.facebook.com/pages/Cheyenne-Genealogical-Historical-Society

The Cheyenne Genealogical & Historical Society continues to wish our members healthy, productive genealogical research! We encourage all members to pay their CGHS dues, participate in our programs, get assistance at the library, and invite friends & new members to join us! *We welcome our newest member, Shirley Doll.*
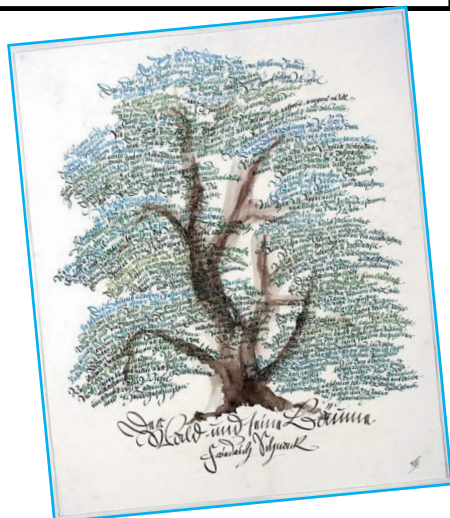
"Check This Out"

Family history-related fiction & nonfiction book reviews by CGHS members & others

Family Christmas: (An Ellie McLellan Genealogy Mystery-Book 5)
By Beth Farrar (c. 2023, 202 pages; Canada Publisher, Canada—fiction)

Family feuds can be triggered by different factors, including misunderstandings, pride, greed, and envy.
This Christmas season, genealogist Ellie McLellan is put in charge of organizing the Percyville holiday festivities. Together with her dwindling senior genealogist group, she endeavors to plan an exceptional event for the town. But when a family feud is unexpectedly thrust upon her, she must find a Percyville treasure before the last generation renews the feud or destroys the the town's Christmas tradition. Will the elders of the community have the clues Ellie needs to solve this mystery? Will she recover the item before it is stolen a second time and lost forever? —*Amazon Review*

Other books in the Ellie McLellan Genealogy Mystery Series:
—Family Secrets (book 1)
—Family Mistakes (book 2)
—Family Promises (book 3)
—Family Crimes (book 4)

If you do genealogy, you have likely used the SnippingTool to capture clips online or in documents. But... did you know that it and the updated Snip & Sketch did all this? Here is a great tutorial on how to use these tools.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS & HAPPY NEW YEAR
from the officers and board members of the Cheyenne Genealogical & Historical Society :

President: Cathy Banks
Vice President: Valerie O'Neil
Secretary: Jeanette Hursman
Treasurer: Jo Butler
Past President: Judy Engelhart