



ANCESTOR INTRODUCTIONS

Forensic Genealogy & Professional Family History

Mark A. Wentling, MLS, Certified Genealogist®

53 Smith St., Attleboro, MA 02703 | mark@ancestorintroductions.com | ancestorintroductions.com

PROFILE

Full-time professional genealogist, with over 25 years of research experience. University professor of genealogical principles and methods. Specializing in forensic genealogy since 2017, including identifying next of kin and missing and unknown heirs for attorneys, and next of kin and DNA donors for the U.S. Department of Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency. Active board member.

CERTIFICATION

Certified Genealogist®, Board for Certification of Genealogists, certificate no. 1134, expires 1 March 2026.

- Indicates the Board for Certification of Genealogists, an independent, not-for-profit, nationally and internationally recognized certifying body, has reviewed a portfolio of my work and judged that it meets its rigorous standards for documenting, researching, reasoning and writing, as set forth in its Genealogy Standards.
- Certified Genealogist credential holders are required to submit work samples for renewal of certification every five years.
- Certified Genealogists sign the Board's Genealogists Code of Ethics that ensures credentialed associates' conduct protects the public, clients and the genealogy profession.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Adjunct Professor, Department of Forensic Science, Henry C. Lee College of Criminal Justice and Forensic Sciences, University of New Haven, January 2021 to present

- Developed and teach course on standards, principles and methods for locating, evaluating and using genealogically relevant records to reconstruct identities and relationships, in accordance with the Genealogy Standards set forth by the Board for Certification of Genealogists. Students are primarily members of law enforcement who need genealogical research and writing competence to identify crime victims, perpetrators, and their relatives using DNA.

Course Facilitator, *Genealogy Principles*, Boston University, Center for Professional Education, Fall 2018

- Led daily discussions with students, and graded and provided feedback on assignments, in this online course designed to introduce students to research principles and methods, including *Genealogy Standards* of the Board for Certification of Genealogists, the Genealogical Proof Standard, planning and conducting effective research, citing and evaluating evidence, and writing and evaluating genealogical proof arguments.

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

“Who Was Grace Holcom, Wife of Daniel Manley,” *The New England Historical and Genealogical Register* 174 (Fall 2020) : 324-327.

A study using direct and indirect evidence from vital records, naming patterns, land, probate and military pension records, and published genealogies to resolve the question of whether a widow or her daughter, each bearing the same name, married a Revolutionary War veteran.

BOARD MEMBERSHIP & LEADERSHIP

Association of Professional Genealogists, Board of Directors

Director, 2022-2023

Association of Professional Genealogists, Forensic Genealogy Special Interest Group

Vice President & Program Chair, 2020-2021

Association of Professional Genealogists, New England Chapter

Mentoring Program, Founder and Coordinator, 2019-2021

Vice President, 2018-2020

EDUCATION

Genealogical Research Institute of Pittsburgh, LaRoche College, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Course, “Fundamentals of Forensic Genealogy for the 21st Century,” June 2018

Boston University, Center for Professional Education

Certificate, Genealogical Research, 2017

ProGen, Professional Genealogy Study Group

18-month mentored program focused on practical application of professional genealogy research standards and methods, 2018

University of Maryland at College Park, College Park, Maryland
Master of Library Science, with archives concentration, 2002

Houghton College, Houghton, New York
Bachelor of Arts, Sociology, 1996

GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Ancestor Introductions Forensic Genealogy & Professional Family History
Owner and Principal Researcher, 2015-present

- Genealogical research for clients on historical persons, using genealogical sources such as vital records, census, land and probate records, newspapers and published genealogies, including analysis of DNA matches to assist individuals with unknown ancestry.
- Missing and unknown heir research for attorneys, since May 2017, including research to identify next of kin of deceased, adopted persons, and individuals with interests in estates and property, producing affidavits of kinship and due diligence, with sourced-cited evidence and exhibits. Recent casework includes:
 - **2021-2022 - Rhode Island:** Traced heirs to the estate of a decedent whose family members had multiple out-of-wedlock births. Proved "children" named in published obituaries for several relatives were in fact stepchildren and ineligible to take. Research resulted in opposing counsel's pleading based on a contingency-based heir search firm's faulty research to be withdrawn.
 - **2020-2021 - New York:** Identified heirs living in Germany and the U.S. for the estate of a Westchester County decedent whose mother was born out-of-wedlock to a father whose identity had been falsified in records. I then identified the likely father and his living next of kin by eliminating nineteen other men of the same name from contention. Case involved extensive research in German and New York City records from mid-1800s to present.
 - **2019 - Massachusetts:** Proved the formal adoption of a Massachusetts woman during the 1940's, settling the question of whether her biological or adoptive relatives could take. Then, identified nine heirs not known by her family, nearly doubling the number of eligible distributees.
 - **2018 - New York:** Traced the family of an African-American decedent, born in South Carolina during the 1930's, through Virginia, New Jersey, and New York City, to successfully identify his sole living nephew.
 - **2018 - Massachusetts:** Used immigration and military service papers to prove that a decedent's Italian grandfather fled the draft to Connecticut during World War I, then

started a second family in New York City during the 1920's. I then identified his two previously unknown children, who were still living and eligible to take.

- **2017 - Massachusetts:** As part of a quiet title action, identified the sole living distributee for an estate left to the decedent's four siblings in 1909.
- Military repatriation research for the U.S. Department of Defense, Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency, August 2017 to present, (via contract of Stone House Historical Research, Essex Junction, Vermont), conducting genealogical research to identify next of kin and eligible autosomal DNA, yDNA and mitochondrial DNA donors to assist in the identification of recovered remains of U.S. Army soldiers lost during World War II and the Korean War and to return them to their families. Over 90 cases completed, with research spanning every U.S. state, plus international research in Canada, Wales, and Germany.

Rock Island Lighthouse Historical & Memorial Association

Founder, Director & Principal Researcher, 2000-2015

- Genealogical research in federal repositories, including the National Archives and Records Administration, the U.S. General Services Administration, and U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, as well as state and local government offices and private collections, to document the lives of fourteen 19th- and 20th-century workers at Rock Island Lighthouse, Fisher's Landing, New York, and to develop a history of the station and its structures.
- Research results used as permanent exhibits in on-site museum operated by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation (NYOPRHP).
- Awards, for research contributions to New York State:
 - New York State Assembly Citation, 2013
 - Historic Preservation Award from New York State Office of Historic Preservation, 2013.

Heritage Indexing & Research

Owner and Principal Researcher, 2000-2005

- Historical genealogical research for clients at major federal and private repositories in Washington, D.C., including National Archives and Records Administration, Library of Congress, and National Society Daughters of the American Revolution Research Library.
- Produced indexes to significant resources for upstate New York researchers.