



# **Trespassing in Time: Family History as Microhistory: Navigating the Historical Records as Shown Through the Narrative of a Danish- American Seafarer's Life**

*Anne Patterson Rodda*

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Anne Patterson Rodda, Certified Genealogist, specializes in the family histories of emigrants to America from Europe. Tracing her own ancestors from Denmark, Germany, and Ireland led to stories of family groups and individuals that sparked her curiosity about the times and places of those stories. Wanting to place family histories in their wider historical context, as genealogists strive to do, she began to investigate various methods of historical research and how they may be applied to genealogy.

Anne turned her dissertation for her Doctor of Letters degree (D.Litt.) from Drew University (USA) into a book, *Trespassers in Time: Genealogists and Microhistorians*, in which she explored a number of approaches to historical research used over the centuries, as well as the most recent theories being discussed in the United States and Europe. Her exploration led to her belief that microhistory is the most useful method for genealogists. Her first book applied this theory to Irish ancestry. This new volume applies the theory to Danish ancestry. As her Danish family story includes a German line, there is also some discussion of German family history. The basic methodology section from *Trespassers in Time* is included in this volume, adapted to the study of Danish and German ancestry, so it is not necessary to have read the first book in order to explore the ideas presented here.

The discussion of theory is a prelude to a microhistory narrative spotlighting the experiences of Anne's grandfather who traveled the world through the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. A courtroom drama begins the story of a seafarer whose many roles in life took him through major world events and pivotal times. Here is an example of how the techniques of microhistory allow us to see those events and times from one man's unique vantage point. The narrative not only trespasses on an ancestor's moments in time but travels the world with him.

(Certified Genealogist is a service mark of the Board for Certification of Genealogists®, used under license by board certificants after periodic evaluation.)

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