

Walworth County Genealogical Society Newsletter



Volume 23 Issue 2

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March - April 2014

Guest Speakers/Programs for 2014

Tuesday, April 1st, 6:30 pm: Ancestor Stories: “Good and/or Bad” - Bring in a story to share!

Tuesday, May 6th, 6:30 pm: Bring a friend along for an introduction to WCGS - Membership Drive

Tuesday, June 3rd, 6:30 pm: Meeting at University of Wisconsin, Area Research Center, Whitewater - Karen Weston will present a short program followed by independent research - for carpool information, please check the website: www.walworthcgs.com

Tuesday, July 1st, 6:30 pm: Judy Rockwell will present “Lifewriting”. Bring a picture or memento that triggers fond memories to write about.

Saturday, July 19th, 11:00 am: Cemetery Walk - St. Peter’s in East Troy in conjunction with the East Troy Historical Society (details to follow).

Please consider a donation for either the local food pantry or Lakeland Animal Shelter

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From the President's Desk

Mike Hay - WCGS President

Welcome to Spring!

The sun seems to shine a little more, and fifty degree breezes are blowing (a bit stronger than we might like), but it looks like we have once again beaten "Old Man Winter".

Our program entitled "Discover Your Family Tree" which was supposed to have been presented Feb. 20 2014 as part of the Park & Recreation Department's Adult program was cancelled again due to lack of participants from the community. We'll have to come up with something different.

As a result, Martha and I went to the twin cities on the 21st of February to offer assistance to Martha's sister, whose son had been hospitalized. In doing so, we ran headlong into an 8 to 12 inch snowstorm, which reminded us why we don't travel North in the wintertime! A suggestion to anyone who does; stop often for coffee, and pick up a handful of those little salt packets at each stop. Then when you get to the frozen portions of the Interstate, throw them out your window to help melt the ice! Couldn't hurt!

We have purchased a new scanner/copier for use in our library. It can print up to 13 X 19 inch copies and can scan 11 X 17 inch copies. It has the capability to print duplex and is wireless so we can make great use of that feature. It also prints in color. It will be kept on the new rolling cart, which we also purchased, in the locked closet of our area and will be rolled out when the library is open. This will prevent its being used by other patrons of the library when WCGS is not there.

This was purchased with the contributions to our equipment fund which is still in need of more donations in order to replace the old computer which is on its last legs. Equipment is an ongoing need.

Martha and I attended the board meeting at Burlington Genealogical Society last week to discuss their hosting of the Family History Fair on September 27. They are planning to have Russell Horton and another speaker and are preparing for the event which will be held at Burlington High School. They are looking for donations for the "silent auction". If you have anything you would like to donate, let me know.

We have this year's programs planned, so if you would like to offer putting on a program describing your methods of researching your ancestors, you have some time to think about it. We know many of you have traveled abroad in your quests and your experiences would be invaluable to the rest of us. So contact any of the board members and let us know what we can do to help you set up a program for our group.

I would like to welcome our three new members who have joined so far this year and hope that we can encourage others to join us in our endeavors.



Deb Ketchum, Librarian



Ketchum's Korner

Does your history take you to Ireland or the Scandinavian areas? How about County Kildare Ireland? The book "Tracing Your Ancestors in County Kildare" begins with an insightful brief history of the Irish people. The map of County Kildare's ancient territories leads to notable families of Fitzgerald, Bermingham, Alymers, Eustaces and Wogan. The maps and pictures progress to Civil Administration. Did you know there are 110 civil parishes and about 25 Roman Catholic ones? The Kildare County library has many of the general resources necessary for family research. This book tells and gives samples of the best records to look for to further your research. It also has a list of church parishes and when they started keeping records, a map of all the burial grounds and information the Journal of Kildare Archaeological Society. The JKAS has archives of articles of relevance to genealogy in land, legal and of course families such as Allen, Bowen, Cooke, Cusack, Dixon, Hort, Kavanagh, Lawe, Lynch, Markham, O'Connor, Pole, Rowan, Sherlock, Talbor, Wall and Young to name a few. Not a very big book for 85 pages but chock full of useful information.

Genealogy research in a foreign country can be a nightmare if you don't understand the language or layout of records. "Scandinavian Genealogical Research" from the Thomsen's Genealogical Center contains three volumes in one book for research in the Danish/Norwegian areas. Volume I covers the language and has a dictionary of the word in English. Volume II covers handwriting and names. You're heard the name adage of: Peder Hansen's son Soren would then be called Soren Pedersen or his daughter Marie would be Marie Pederdatter. But did you know that Peder Hansen's name could change because of his occupation, where he lived or the farm he worked on. Such as Peder Hansen was living on Jens Lien's farm he would be Peder Lien. The book gives a list of first names found in records. It also explains handwriting and shows plenty of great samples. The final Volume III addresses research resources showing maps and lists of available records with samples of what those records can tell you. A few pages on Research Procedures walks you through how to interpret and use the information you may find and where to go next. Both of these books are available for review at our library.



The History & Herstory of Walworth County

By Chris Brookes

Herstory: Geneva Van Slyke



The Annals of Lake Geneva (1835-1897) by James Simmons records, “Mrs. Van Slyke was removed to the log house ... and a day or two afterwards she gave birth to Geneva Van Slyke, the first white native of our village.” And she’s never mentioned again, not even in the index. Who was Geneva Van Slyke?

Usually I start Walworth County research with Albert C. Beckwith’s *History of Walworth County, Wisconsin (1912)*, and there I found, under the Town of Walworth, James Van Slyke (father of

Geneva) had removed to Fontana. “It is not known when or where James Van Slyke went from that town or from this earth.” (p. 445) Charlotte, Dolphus, Mary, Rosalie, and D.J., sole heirs of Charlotte Van Slyke are mentioned. A Catherine Van Slyke is named. No Geneva except “The child born at Geneva in 1836 died in 1856.”

The breakthrough came when the other *History of Walworth County, Wisconsin* by C.W. Butterfield (1882) revealed several references to the Van Slykes. Mrs. Van Slyke’s mother, Mrs. Cummings, died in the winter of 1838. Aha! A maiden name! Also, Geneva Van Slyke born between July 2 and July 4, 1836. When she was about a year old, she had a new christening and was named Geneva! WOW!

The guide to the Brick Church Cemetery in Walworth listed:

John Cummings
Mary Cummings
Catherine Cummings Van Slyke, wife
of James
(confirmation of Mrs. Van Slyke’s
given name!)
AND Charlotte G. Van Slyke, born
1836, died 30 July 1857.

Census records and other local history sources indicate Charlotte G. is indeed our Geneva, died young and unmarried, buried in Brick Church Cemetery, Walworth, near her mother and grandparents.

Her birth, as mentioned briefly by Simmons, turned out to be an impressive story and her mother a remarkable woman.

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Catherine Van Slyke's biography is included in the AAUW *Geneva Lake Women's Project* at the Geneva Lake Museum.

"Catherine was often alone it seems. Her husband had a knack, it is said, for not being around when needed and being around when not. There were no other women in the settlement at the time. And the men who were present seemed little inclined to help. That is, all but the 15 year old son of Christopher Payne, Jason. Jason assisted with the delivery and continued caring for Catherine and the baby even after her husband's return.

In the Fall of 1836, James built a new cabin in the sheltered valley of present day Fontana. It was in sight of the Indian village. Catherine was surely a friend to the Indians. When Chief Big Foot was leaving in September that year, he showed his respect for her by visiting Catherine's cabin to personally say farewell.

The winter of 1836-37 was particularly severe. In February, Catherine's husband had gone with another man, Nathan Disbrow, to herd hogs back from Squaw Prairie (present day Belvidere, IL). The oppressive cold forced the men to abandon the swine just four miles from home. Catherine amputated the toes from one of Nathan's feet using only her household scissors.

That Spring, James plowed the first 100 acres of prairie in the county. Catherine was surely behind him sowing seed, if not pulling the plow herself. There were four children and two adults in a 14 x 16 cabin that often hosted others as well, family visitors and strangers alike in need of food and shelter.

When Charlotte was about one year old, she was christened 'Geneva'. Mr. R. Wells Warren who had come to build a mill is credited with naming her after the lake and gifting her a parcel of land."

So just remember – there are two books of the *History of Walworth County, Wisconsin*, and the information may differ in surprisingly helpful ways!

News from Neighboring Societies

British Interest Group of Wisconsin and Illinois (BIGWILL) has its next meeting on May 17, 10:00 am until Noon. The topic will be "Developing a Sixth Census: Finding More in 'The Census' Than Meets the Eye" presented by Daniel Hubbard. Discover what you can find in the census: critical years, where and when to find specific information, census surprises, and less frequently used census records. BIGWILL holds its meetings in Richmond, IL in the Community Church of Richmond, 5714 Broadway Street.

Burlington Genealogical Society will be traveling to Parkside University in Kenosha for its April meeting, Wednesday, April 16, 2014 from 7:00 - 9:00 pm. Parkside has records for Racine and Kenosha counties for genealogists. Contact the Burlington Genealogical Society for directions and carpooling information.

Program Recap

Our February "Show and Share" was pretty well attended despite the cold weather. Some members shared stories and the rest of us asked questions and participated in the discussions. Not very many members came to the March meeting. We contributed that to the ongoing nasty winter. Deb Ketchum told about the original owner of Wandawega Resort. She then brought up GIS Portal and showed how to find information on it. Deb will be doing another program on GIS Portal at the October meeting.

Reminder

If you haven't paid your dues yet, please get them paid as soon as possible. The society is only able to continue operating if we receive the support of our members!

Have a story to tell? Send it to wcgnewsletter@gmail.com and I will put it in the newsletter. Our members have been researching for years and I'll bet they all have interesting stories. Why not send me yours?



AROUND THE COUNTY TIDBITS

by Shirley Sisk

East Troy - Thursday of last week the wife of Mr. Geo. Harlow had a slight stroke of paralysis. One side of the person being affected. Later in the week Mrs. Harlow had another shock, and the family and friends are seriously alarmed.-----Mr. and Mrs. Robt. Potter and little daughter started for their home in O'Brien Co., Iowa, Monday morning last week. A several weeks visit with their brother, Rev. Thos. Potter, of this place, is ended. The brothers had been separated for a good many years.-----We learn that Mrs. Dwight Burgit is so far recovered from an attack of throat difficulty as to be considered out of danger.-----Geo. Harlow and Chas. Kuhl were engaged in sinking deeper the well of Mr. H. B. Gilbert, when Mr. Harlow was suddenly called to his wife's assistance. Mr. Kuhl was in the bottom of the well when he missed the steady hand of George at the windlass above. We are sure that Kuhl took the matter coolly, especially if he had his pipe with him.-----Sunday Morning, January 20th, Mrs. H. B. Gilbert, in passing to a neighbors, slipped and fell, breaking her arm above the wrist and severely spraining the wrist. Dr. Scott was called and Mrs. Gilbert made as comfortable as possible. (Delavan Republican, Wed., January 30, 1889)

Troy - Mrs. E. T. Adkins met with quite a painful accident on last Monday night by slipping on some ice. She dislocated one of her ankles, but is getting along nicely.-----Geo. Lake and F. E. Loomis are at Chicago receiving medical treatment from Dr. Parks.-----Mr. and Mrs. H. W. Odell were surprised on last Wednesday evening by about thirty of their friends. A pleasant evening was spent and all went home wishing Mary many more birthdays. (Delavan Republican, Wed., April 9, 1890)

Elkhorn - Registration of marriages filed with W. T. Taylor, County Register, for record. Thomas Albert Welch to Mary Heath, Lake Geneva, April 2.-----Andrew John Miller to Nettie Augusta Isholm----- James W. Gardener to Lottie May Fitzgerald, Darien, April 3.-----Amos Riley Ives to Hattie Louisa Soper, Darien, April 4.-----John Wright

Rouse to Ella Maud Weeks, Lake Geneva, March 13. (Delavan Republican, Wed., April 9, 1890)

Fairfield - E. F. Welch and wife returned on Thursday last from a six weeks' visit in York state.-----J. Barrett and family moved to Janesville on Saturday last.-----Mrs. Alva Johnson has been seriously ill for the past two weeks but is now slowly improving.-----Mrs. Cornelius Dykeman continues in quite poor health.-----Post master Loomer has been on the sick list for a week past, but is thought to be improving.-----Earl Livingston who was so seriously injured by the falling of a tree some two weeks since, we regret to say, still lies in a very critical condition. (Delavan Republican, April 9, 1890)

Millard - Fred Harrison is moving to the Oren Day farm.-----Harry Loomer returned to his home at Paola, Kansas, Friday.-----Miss Alice Rood, of Tibbets, visited her cousin, Miss Lillian Snow, Sunday.-----Rev. G. J. Kyle is enjoying a visit from his sister and nephew, of Granville, Ohio. (The Enterprise, Delavan, Thurs., Sept. 9, 1897)

Delavan - Miss Ruby Crumb, of Leonardsville, N.Y., is visiting Mrs. Alice Burton and other relatives in and near Delavan.-----W. W. Lawton and mother-in-law, Mrs. Shaver, of Osceola, Mo, are visiting his niece, Miss Abbie Lawton for a few days.-----W. D. Bailey and family leave for Chicago, this week, where they will reside. Mr. Bailey has a position as traveling representative of a publishing house.-----Mrs. Jas. Harris, of Mellette, So. Dak., and sister, Mrs. Laura Kenyon, of Pipestone, Minn., are visiting Delavan relatives for a couple of weeks, and attending the great county fair.-----Burt Hollister and wife, of Winthrop, Iowa, and Albert Hollister, wife and son of Manchester, Iowa, arrived yesterday for a visit with relatives, and to take in the great Walworth county fair. (The Delavan Enterprise, Sept. 30, 1897)

History Fair Student Essays Contest

We continue printing the winning essays from our “My Favorite Ancestor” contest which was held at the Family History Fair last October. Third place went to Eric Castro, Traver School 7th Grader, for his essay titled “The Best Dad Ever”.

The following is his essay:

I think my dad is the best dad because he is always with me and always will be with me. My dad was born on 06-27-74. I think he’s getting pretty old, but he says no. Some parts in his life were hard and some things were easy. One hard thing that my dad had in his life was getting food on the table. Another thing that was hard for him was going to school, because he had to go to work every day so that he could have food to eat. That is why he only made it past middle school, because he didn’t have enough money to go into high school.

All he wanted in his life was to be with his family. He says that when he was a little boy in Mexico, he would grab a chicken and kill it with his dad and then they would make chicken soup. He would also help his mom cook a lot. In the night he would always go to farms and steal some fruit and vegetables with his brothers and friends.

When he was in the 5th grade, he was a really good soccer player. He would even play with the bigger kids because he was the best on the team. He almost got to play in a professional team but he injured his foot and couldn’t play for a while. His friends and he started a little team and versed other teams that were from big cities. He said that they almost won every game, except two or three, when not all the players showed up. He said that he was probably the best player on the team because he was the captain of the team. His team was mostly brothers and cousins because he said that it was easier to practice when they all mostly lived together. They won the World Cup like ten times. That’s how good his team was!

My dad lived on the farm his whole life but he would sometimes go to a town and go get groceries and to play soccer. Whenever they went to the town they never went by car. They either went on foot or they went on a horse. My dad said that he knew how to ride a horse since he was five years old. He would always go with my grandpa and take the cows in the pen. My dad said that he spent about 80% of his live on horseback.

Now things have changed because his brothers are known all over the country and some are still in Mexico. He still plays soccer, but some things have changed. Now that he is older, he can’t do as many things as he did when he was young. Now when he plays, he either does not feel good or he gets a leg cramp. But he still loves to play soccer. He just can’t stop playing. Sometimes he even plays with me. Whenever my cousins come over, we usually make teams and start playing right away. My dad also likes to play in the rain a lot. The only thing he does not like is when he either gets a fever or gets sick after the game.

He also really likes to ride horses with his brothers and friends. They like to go in the fields and

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“My Favorite Ancestor”

(Continued from page 19)

go around and just look at the beauty. Sometimes I even go with him. We go at around 8 in the morning and come back at like four in the afternoon. I love it when it's just him, my brother, and I. My dad always tells us stories about when he was a little kid. Whenever we get home my little brother and sister always want us to take them for a ride around the house. I get pretty tired because they never want to get off the horse. They just want to keep on riding and riding.

My dad doesn't really like to go to the store. He just wants to spend time outside and doing activities outside. If he goes to a store he only would go to Bass Pro Shops because that's where they sell all the outdoor stuff. He really likes the big tank where you can go fishing in. In his whole life he has probably bought about seventy-five fishing poles.

Like he said, he is happy when he is with his family and so am I.

(Editor's note: It's refreshing in today's world to see a young person have such love and respect for a parent. Let's hope that Eric keeps this wonderful attitude about family.)

Are You Related To Me?

The spotlight, this newsletter, is on Sylvia Hall Linton. Sylvia is a former librarian and has been an active member since 2013. Sylvia has a plethora of stories about her family and we need to have her present a program to the group.

1. How did you get interested in genealogy?

My grandparents lived with us when I was a child, and they were great storytellers. Like any child, I grew fond of the characters in the stories - except that in my case, the people were real. They were my ancestors; the Irish great grandmother who was probably a witch, the great grandfather who fell under a train and had his legs cut off, the Revolutionary War Minuteman who survived all the battles only to come home and die "of a pain in his great toe." It was only later, when I found a job in the Local History & Genealogy department of a library, that I realized I needed some data to back up those stories, and that's when my interest in genealogy was born.

2. Names, places and date of ancestors.

Most of the ancestors whose names I know came from England to New England in the 1600s. They include the **Warren** and **Cooke** families that came on the Mayflower (1620) and the **Burroughs, Hall, Mosher, Holmes, Wilcox, Pixley, Braley, Trask, Downing, Audley, Rogers,** and **Reynolds** families. I am descended from at least nine ministers, most of whom found themselves banished from Puritan Massachusetts as "religious undesirables" - that is, Baptists. Many of them joined Roger Williams in his exile to Rhode Island, where sadly, they in turn persecuted others who did not conform to their beliefs.

3. Names and places of interest:

When my early immigrants left Massachusetts, they went primarily to Rhode Island, New Jersey, New York State, and Pennsylvania (Lycoming County). More than one historian noted that "They had restless feet".

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Are You Related To Me?

Sylvia Hall Linton
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only exceptions to the “England to New England” immigration was the Irish **Ennis** immigrant who came to Virginia in 1635 due to his political sentiments. And then there was **Patrick Sullivan** who had been studying for the priesthood and went AWOL from the seminary in Dublin, much to his family’s dismay. My most recent immigrants were the **Manecke** family from Germany, who arrived in Wisconsin in 1881 with only his watch making tools and five small children.

4. **Burial areas**

Massachusetts (Bristol County), Rhode Island, New York State, and Wisconsin (Kewaunee, Langlade, and Marathon Counties)

5. **Any Vets in your family line?**

American Revolution: Robert Pixley/Piggsley/Pittsley of Freetown, MA

Civil War (Union): Bodine **Montague** and John Konkle **Hall** (Pennsylvania) and Charles **Mosher** (Illinois)

World War II: Francis W. Hall (Pennsylvania). He was my father, and he fought in France, Belgium, and Germany.

6. **Have you visited the old homestead? Does it still exist today?**

I have visited the Manecke “hof” in Ladbergen, Germany and the Ennis home (“Ballynahown”) in Ireland, and the Sullivan house in Picture Rocks, Pennsylvania. I think those are the only “homesteads” still standing. I have found roads and towns called by my family names, but most of the “homesteads” are under bypasses or parking lots!

7. **Anything interesting happen while researching?**

Oh yes - sometimes “interesting” in a spooky way. I am convinced that my ancestors are actively involved in my search for them! I found the ancestral home of the **Manecke** family in Germany because of a dream I had in which my great grandfather (who died before I was born) told me to “Go to Ladbergen **NOW**.” He had come to America in 1881 and his brother had stayed in Germany; letters between them promised a reunion sometime in the future, but wars intervened and their descendants lost the thread connecting them. Unbeknownst to me, a great aunt in her 90s had been praying that she would not die until she saw the descendants of her Papa and his brother reunited. At the time of my dream, she had suffered a stroke and it seemed her prayer would be unanswered. She lived to welcome me into her arms. “The rest of the story” is now one of the tales I will pass on to the next generation.

8. **Any surprises in your research?**

I arrived in Athlone, Ireland on a bus late at night, and having no reservations, I chose a B & B at random from the phone book. In the morning, I asked the proprietor if there was a local library where I could research my **Ennis** family, and she replied, “*Ah, that’s why you chose to stay here... you did know that this was his farm, did you not?*” I did not.

9. **Please contact WCGS to network with me.**

I’m looking for more members to fill out the “Are You Related to Me?” form. If you need a form, email me at wcsnewsletter@gmail.com and I will be glad to send it to you. I have a Word document form that you can type directly into and email back to me, or you can print it out and send it in through snail mail. You never know which of our members is a distant relative.

For Anyone Interested - Free Conference

Saturday, April 26, 2014

Family History Conference

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints

5405 Rib Mountain Drive, Wausau, WI

For more info call Mort McBain 715-359-9709

Registration

8; 15 – 9; 15 am

Lunch

11; 30 am to 1 pm

If you want to bring a sack lunch a lunch room will be provided, or there are restaurants and fast food places on the other side of the Highway 29 overpass. The FHC will be open and staffed all during the conference.

No charge – but please help us by pre-registering, (however registration will also be accepted at the door)

You can pre-register by sending an E-Mail to family.history.wi@gmail.com listing your name and then listing each class by Block and Number that you plan on attending, e.g. "Block A #3, Block B #2" etc. or by circling your choices below and sending by regular mail to: F.H.C. Conference, 4802 Augustine Ave., Weston WI 54476

NAME _____ ADDRESS _____
(City, County & State only)

<p style="text-align: center;">9:30 to 10:20 am</p> <p>Keynote Speaker</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Finding your Wisconsin Ancestor in Civil War Records – Brett Barker, UWMC</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Block A 10:30 to 11:20 am</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Getting Started in Family History – Mort McBain 2. European Immigration Patterns – Harlan Grinde 3. The Cloud, Flash drives & Backups – Brent Montague
<p style="text-align: center;">Block B 1:00 to 1:50 pm</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What's in Your German Place Name: Geography & German Genealogy – Don Litzer 2. Using Records from the Marathon County Historical Society - Gary Gisselman 3. Researching Swedish Roots – Floyd Hallberg 4. Using familysearch.org – Mary Schiltz 	<p style="text-align: center;">Block C 2:00 to 2:50 pm</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. German Language & Handwriting – Sarah Litzer 2. The Evolution of Counties in Wisconsin & Townships in Marathon County – Laurel Hoffman 3. Researching in Denmark - LeeAnn Chadderdon 4. Scottish Research – Mort McBain

WALWORTH COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OFFICERS

PRESIDENT	Michael Hay	455 Fellows Road	Genoa City, WI	wcgspres@gmail.com
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OTHERS:	Newsletter Editor: Martha Hay wcgnewsletter@gmail.com			
	Past-President: Deb Ketchum			
	Historian: Pat Blackmer			
	Librarian: Deb Ketchum			

Regular meetings of the WCGS are the first Tuesday of each month at the
Delavan Community Centre, 826 E. Geneva St., Delavan, WI.

Library Hours: Matheson Memorial Library, 101 N. Wisconsin St., Elkhorn, WI- Every Tues. 10-3pm
other times by appt - call 262-215-0118 or 262-728-6182

The membership year runs from Jan. 1st thru Dec. 31st. The newsletter is published bi-monthly.

****Dues are \$15 (\$50 Lifetime) for an individual, \$18.00 (\$100 Lifetime) for a family, \$25 contributing, \$7.50 student.
\$5.00 additional per year to receive the newsletter through the mail.

MEMBERS: Want email meeting minutes or not?? Contact Kay - sargent@idcnet.com

Visit the Walworth County website and uncover your roots! <http://www.walworthcgs.com>

E-Mail us at societynews@walworthcgs.com

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