

The Agnewsletter



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Ellis Island

The Ellis Island Immigration Museum has been open for one year. Opened on September 10, 1990, the museum showcases Ellis Island, the former immigration station, as the "Gateway to the New World" for over 17 million new Americans between 1892 and 1954. It is estimated that 40 percent of all U.S. Citizens can trace an ancestor to Ellis Island. The year-old museum has had about two million visitors since last September.

Ellis Island was named for Samuel Ellis, a Welchman who bought the Island in the 18th Century when it was called Oyster Island and was a popular picnic spot because of its renowned oyster beds. The island was a 3.5 acre sandbar when the U.S. Government purchased it in 1807. The Government built Fort Gibson on the island before the War of 1812, and during the Civil War, the island served as a munitions dump. In subsequent years, it was enlarged to 27 acres. Most of the dirt added to enlarge the island was excavated from the site of Grand Central Terminal and the New York City subway tunnels. The Government selected Ellis Island as the site for the immigration station in an effort to protect newcomers because as an island, it was free from the corruption and treachery that plagued mainland ports. Into the 1920s, Ellis Island was the nation's busiest port of entry until nativist sentiment brought severe restrictions on immigration. Ellis Island continued on until 1954 as a deportation center and detention area for immigrants who were sick or whose papers were not in order.

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Great-great-grandfather was a what?!

The fun of genealogy these days isn't searching for royals in your family tree. It's in finding colorful scoundrels and forebears born out of wedlock.

By Richard Phalon

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The passion for genealogy is hardly a new pursuit. But nowadays fewer folks are combing archives to see if they belong to the General Society of Mayflower Descendants or if they qualify for membership in the Daughters of the American Revolution. These days people seem to revel in discovering forebears who arrived in steerage or a relative who was hanged as a horse thief. Thanks to computers, the search is getting easier and cheaper all the time.

"It's all about family values," says *Bon Appetit's* Cleon T. (Bud) Knapp, owner of Knapp Communications. Knapp has hired professional genealogists to map out his family tree. "We came over here broke, probably as indentured servants, and we've done well. But in these days of the nuclear family, it's important we all remember where we came from."

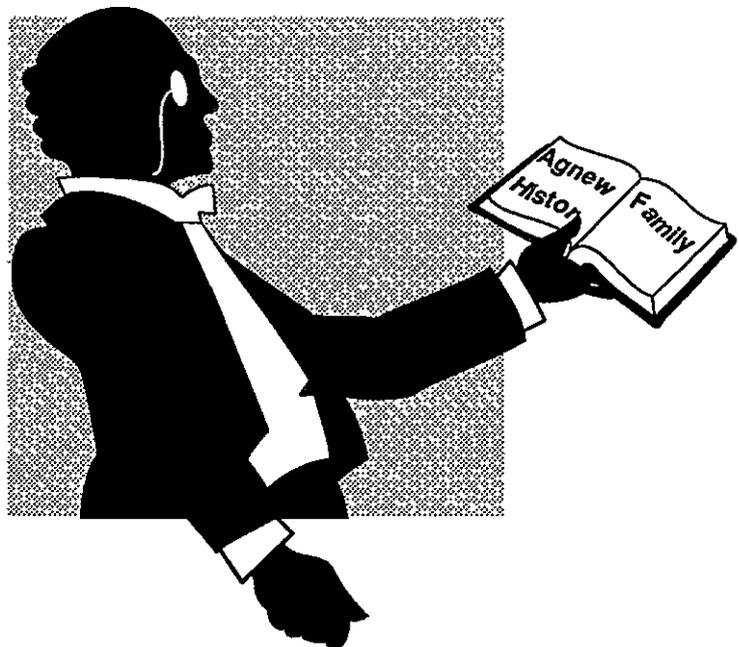
The microchip has made access to such documentary treasure troves as the Mormon Church's International Genealogy

Index literally as simple as punching a keyboard (see box, page 4). It has taken much of the drudgery out of the paper chase through such basic sources as birth and death certificates, census records, military pension applications, pas-

senger ship manifest, wills and deeds.

Access to the records of ordinary folks who immigrated to this country through Ellis Island will also be a lot easier, thanks to the efforts of the nonprofit Ellis Island

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Immigration

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Restoration Commission, headed by Philip Lax. Its \$15 million computer system, just off the drawing board, will generate vital basics on the 17 million immigrants whose first stop in the U.S. was the century-old immigrant gateway in New York Harbor. Ellis Island opened in 1892 and closed in 1924 for mass immigration purposes, and has recently reopened as an exquisitely restored museum. "We hope to be on-line next year," says Lax. "We're trying to insure that the records of people who contributed so much to the country won't remain dust in the attic."

Henry Hoff, 45, is an accountant by trade but a genealogist by avocation. And one of his specialties is tweaking hereditary groupies who measure their worth by the importance of the ancestral names they can drop, often on shaky grounds.

While majoring in British history at Yale in the Sixties, for example, he debunked a couple of traditions long cherished in his own family line. "I was a little suspicious right away," he says of one old family legend. "What was a prosperous Burlington County, N.J. farmer doing claiming gentry ancestry based on a coat of arms dated 1786?" Hoff discovered there was no such blue blood in the family tree.

He has been busy shaking out family tress ever since. Over the years, he has managed to turn out

a thigh-thick file of scholarly work, including coauthorship of the recently published, 12-generation genealogy of the Roosevelt family. Hoff is distantly related to

"We're trying to ensure that the records of people who contributed so much to the country won't remain dust in the attic."

—Phillip Lax, Ellis Island Restoration Commission

Theodore Roosevelt (a third cousin of his grandmother.)

Hoff and his coauthor, Timothy Field Bear, former reference head of the New York Public Library's genealogy division, unearthed several branches of the family omitted from an earlier treatment "because they didn't do very well in life," chuckles Hoff. Robert B. Roosevelt, for example,

an uncle of Theodore, had two families at the same time, one by his wife and another by his mistress.

The Hoff-Bear study also acknowledges a number of other illegitimate Roosevelts, including at least one conceived with a housemaid. "A painful disclosure to some," says Hoff, "but a lot of the fun in genealogy is that you never know where it's going to take you."

Hoff himself is known as the "Bastard-in-Chief" in his capacity as president of the Descendants of the Illegitimate Sons and Daughters of the Kings of Britain. As its coat of arms suggests (a horned helmet a symbol of cuckoldry, rampant over a cuckoo, a breed notorious for laying eggs in other birds' nests), the group is, of course, a send-up.

Hoff's common sense advice for new genealogy enthusiasts:

- Read some basic "how-to" literature.

- Join a local genealogical society where you can gather information at lectures or classes.

- Consider joining regional groups like the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society for top-drawer library and publications backup.

- Put together a three- or four-generation family chart based on marriage, birth, death

See Research, Page 4

Research

Continued from Page 3

certificates and any other documents that you can pull together on your own.

You'll want to start with such a chart, even if you are going to rely on a professional to do the rest of the legwork. That's how Bud Knapp got the ball rolling three years ago, when he put a Salt Lake City genealogist on the family case. She's still tracing the Knapp line through "eight or nine families." So far, the trail has led from the East Coast through Michigan and Minnesota, to Arizona and California; and backward to England, Scotland and Germany. The search has produced some surprises. "There were some outlaw, and one guy was hanged, but nothing really drastic," laughs Knapp. "My kids can't wait to see how it comes out."



Misplaced Flags

The Agnew Association misplaced several flags and banners after the biennial meeting last year in Santa Rosa. If you attended the Games, helped at the Agnew Association tent, and arrived home with an extra flag, please contact Art Agnew at P.O. Box 691, Petaluma, CA 94953. Thank you.



Punching up your past

The Latter Day Saints Family History Library in Salt Lake City is invaluable to genealogy researchers.

The Mormon Church, in keeping with its doctrine that non-Mormon ancestors should be "sealed" retroactively into the eternity of their families, has been photographing birth and marriage records from all over the world for over 50 years now.

The 150 million names reposing in the Church's International Genealogical Index can be tapped through a computer system that links 1,100 local Mormon centers in the U.S. and Canada with the repository in Salt Lake.

Anyone can walk into a family history center and do a search; the service is available for free. (You can find Mormon centers in the phone book.)

The network allowed this writer to pull out birth and marriage dates on probable forebears who had emigrated from Ireland during the 1840s to work the silk and wool mills in Paterson, N.J.

Clues of that sort can be reinforced or discarded by correlation with millions of other documents—census and probate records, mortgage abstracts and tax lists held on microfilm or microfiche.

The Church plans to computerize much more of this material. Because of the potential liability for invasion-of-privacy suits, the photographic records of the main genealogical index do not cover years later than 1910.

If you want to hire someone to do a search for you, be aware that there are a lot of scamsters around. Membership in the Association of Professional Genealogists is one good screen. This self-policing trade group provides an arbitration service for unhappy customers. For a roster of members and specialties, send \$2 and a self-addressed, stamped envelope to the APG, P.O. Box 11601, Salt Lake City, Utah 84147.

The major accrediting agencies are the LDS Family History Library (35 N. West Temple Street, Salt Lake City, Utah 84150) and the Board for Certification of Genealogists (p.o. Box 5816 Falmouth, VA 22403).

It's important to spell out the parameters of a search from the start: Do you really want to trace the family back to Ethelred the Unready, or is it enough to know where you come from in the old country?

The meter can run up quickly. Hourly rates in the New York area, according to Harry Macy Jr., director of information services for the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society, run around \$20 to \$30; nationally from "under \$10 to as much as \$50."

"It all depends on whether you want a Honda or a Rolls," says Macy.

—R.P.



Research on Sam'l Agnew of So. Carolina

The last issue of the *Agnewsletter* contained information about the family line descended from James Agnew of Balloo, County Down, Ireland who settled in Pennsylvania. New member Kenneth D. Agnew of Fountain Inn, South Carolina has provided the Agnew Association with information from his genealogical research, which traces his Agnew line from South Carolina to Pennsylvania, revealing more information about that line. His research

included transcribing the will of Samuel Agnew, son of James Agnew of Pennsylvania. The transcribed will appears on pages 6 and 7 of the *Agnewsletter*.

Kenneth reports that Samuel was the first of his line in South Carolina, although other Agnews (French Huguenots) preceded Samuel in South Carolina prior to 1770. He also has discovered that many Irish Agnews arrived at the port of Charleston over the next hundred years or so.

While some left a mark in South Carolina, others simply vanished. Kenneth says he has collected information on every Agnew he has encountered in his research on his direct ancestors and their other descendants. He offers to answer requests from members with South Carolina connections.

More information about Kenneth's family line appears on page 8, immediately following Samuel Agnew's last will and testament.



More on Ellis Island Museum

Continued from Page 1

A visit to the museum usually starts with a ferry ride that docks outside the walkway to the Registry Building where the museum is housed. The next stop is the massive baggage room where immigrants left the satchels that held all of their belongings. From there, it's up the stairway to the Great Hall where immigrants were subjected to a battery of examinations. During the peak

immigration years, from 1900 to 1920, as many as 5,000 people a day congregated in the Great Hall to await the examinations that would determine whether they would be allowed to stay in the New World, or be rejected and returned from whence they came. The dining hall could feed 1200 people at a time. The menu typically included soups, meat, fruit, vegetables, bread

and butter. The cost of the meals was charged to the steamship companies which by law were responsible for feeding passengers until they had been processed.

The museum plans eventually to have a computerized listing of all immigrants, but that project needs funding and, according to Ellis Island Immigration Museum staff, won't be on-line for several more years.



*Last Will And Testament
of
Samuel Agnew*

In the name of God Amen

I Samuel Agnew of Abbeville County and State of South Carolina being sick and weak of body but of perfect mind and memory, calling to mind the Mortality of body and knowing that it is appointed for all men once to die do make and ordain this my last Will and Testament in manner and form following (Viz!) My Soul I recommend unto the hands of Almighty God who gave it and my body I leave to be decently interred at the descretion of my Executors who may be hereafter named and as touching such Worldly Estate as it has pleased God to bless me with in this life I give divide and dispose of the same in the following manner and form.

Imprimis My Plantation where I now live and my Lands adjacent there unto the whole concisting of seven hundred and fifty seven Acres I leave and bequeth to my three sons James Agnew, Andrew Agnew and Samuel Agnew to be Equally divided among them when they come to years of Maturity, my loving wife Elizabeth during her Widowhood and the rest of the family till they arrive to years of Maturity to recieve their Maintenance and schooling of said Plantation my will and desire is that my loving son James Agnew should have the part of land on which my dwelling House stands in which I now live.

Item I give and bequeth unto my loving wife Elizabeth Agnew One Negro wench named Flora also one young Roan Mare.

Item I give and bequeath unto my daughter Mary Agnew one Negro girl named Beck likewise one bay filley and two Cows and Calves.

Item and to my loving son James Agnew I give and bequeath one Negro man named Ceafar and one Sorrel mare.

Item unto my son Andrew Agnew I give and bequeath One Negro man named Monday and a Roan Horse likewise my Smith Tools.

Item unto my Daughter Jane I give and bequeth one Negro boy named Tom and Two Cows and Calves.

Item I give and bequeth unto my son Samuel Agnew one Negro Boy named Jack,
Item I give and bequeath to my daughter Elizabeth Agnew one Negro Boy
named Peter and two Cows and Calves.

My Plantation Tools and Household Furniture I leave for the support of
raising of my family.

One hundred Acres of land wich I have lying near a place called the Old
Store I allow my Executors to sell hereby giving them full authority to execute
Titles for same.

The remainder of my Horses, Cattle and Hogs I leave to be sold, my Execu-
tors reserving what they may think proper for the raising and supporting of my
family. My Waggon and Still I also leave to be sold and the mon-

neys arising from the sale of the land and part of my personal Estate

I leave to be equally divided between my loving wife three sons and

three daughters share and share alike only deducting the Value of the Horse

Creatures that was left to my wife and part of the family out of their share.

And I do Nominate and appoint my loving wife Elizabeth Agnew Executrix
and my loving friends Adam Crain Jones Esq. and Samuel Watt Esq. Executors
of this my last Will and Testament hereby revoking and making void all former
Wills by me made and ratifying and confirming this and no other last Will and
Testament.

In Witness whereof I have unto set my hand and seal this Tenth Day of December in the
Year of Our Lord One Thousand Seven Hundred and Ninety and of the Independence of
the United States of North America the Fifteenth.

Samuel Agnew

Signed Sealed published and pronounced by the said Samuel Agnew as his last
Will and Testament in the presence of each other subscribed our names therre to
as witnesses.

James Wardlaw

John Sharp

X
Mary Seawright (her mark)

Recorded in Abbeville
County
Will Book 1, Page 43
Will located in Probate
Records
Box 1, packet 15
Proven 5 April, 1791

Transcribed April 1985 by
Kenneth D. Agnew and submitted by
same to the Agnewsletter.

Kenneth D. Agnew Family Line

KENNETH DEAN AGNEW b. 3/23/48, married Deborah Ayers b. 12/13/49. Three children: son Preston b. 12/21/80; daughter Brandon b. 3/26/85; son Payton, b. 6/23/87.

ANDREW HOMER AGNEW, JR. b. 9/8/14. married Lila Wilson b. 3/22/14 d. 1/18/87. Two children: KENNETH D. AGNEW, Donna Wharton.

ANDREW HOMER AGNEW, SR. 1882-1937 married Gertrude Brownlee. Four surviving children ANDREW AGNEW, JR., Mary Matheny,

Enoch Agnew, Lucia Rasor, ANDREW married second Mary Sullivan (Calhoun) (Brownlee) who has first married a Presbyterian elder, second a Methodist minister, third ANDREW, a Baptist deacon. She survived all three!

JAMES AGNEW 1775-1851, married Mary "Polly" Dodson; both are buried at the Greenville Presbyterian Church Cemetery. Five children to survive: Samuel Agnew, Elizabeth Hawthorne, Mahala Dunn, Enoch

that are known: Mary Ellis or Ware (records are unclear, she may have married each in turn); JAMES AGNEW, Andrew Agnew, Jane Brownlee, Samuel Agnew, Elizabeth McGee (descendants also Magee, McGhee).

JAMES AGNEW 1711-1770, born Balloo, County down, Ireland. Came to Colonial Pennsylvania about 1718. Settled on Musk Manor, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania (a tract of land near what is today Gettysburg, Adams County, Pennsylva-



James Agnew, Betty Hopkins.

JAMES FRANKLIN AGNEW 1850-1900, married Emma Smith. Seven children to reach adulthood: Arthur Agnew, Luva Mattison, ANDREW AGNEW, Edith Wharton, Miriam Parks, Kate Agnew, Gladys Agnew

ANDREW AGNEW 1825-1892, married first Nancy Ophelia Barmore; five children to survive: JAMES FRANKLIN AGNEW, Larkin Furman Agnew, Adoniram Judson Agnew, William

Agnew, ANDREW AGNEW.

SAMUEL AGNEW 1738-1790, born in Pennsylvania, moved to South Carolina in 1770, married Elizabeth Seawright and settled near what is now the town of Due West on the head waters of Long Cane Creek. He was a member of the militia, an ardent Whig in the Revolution and suffered heavy property losses from Tory activity. SAMUEL and Elizabeth are buried in Greenville Presbyterian Church Cemetery. They had six children

nia). JAMES married first Margaret ?, and they had two children; Judge John Agnew, Janet Scott. JAMES married second Rebecca Scott (sister or cousin of Hugh Scott, Janet's husband) and they had nine children: SAMUEL AGNEW, Martha Patterson, James Agnew, David Agnew, Margaret Patterson, Rebecca McLanahan, Sarah Douglas, Abraham Agnew, Ann Smith.

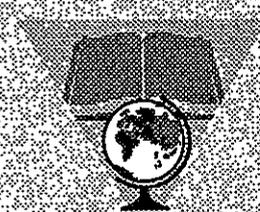
The California State Library—The Sutro Library

If you live in California (and about a quarter of our members do) then you have access to an impressive resource for genealogical research—it's the California State Library and it's open to the public. The California State Library, established by California's first Legislature in 1850, collects, preserves and disseminates information regarding the history of the State.

The State Library's California Room houses a massive collection which covers all aspects of life in California from prehistoric times to the present day. The collection includes maps, manuscripts, diaries, newspapers, periodicals, and extensive collections of records, papers, and memorabilia. While the library's collection represents all subject areas relating to California, the collection is particularly strong in genealogy. The collection contains nearly 3 million items from newspapers, periodicals, and books about California persons, places, and events, including volumes of the California Death Index.

A branch of the California State Library located in San Francisco, The Sutro Library, is dedicated to genealogy and local history. The Sutro Library contains over 10,000 family histories; more than 40,000 titles covering state, regional, county, and town histories which contain vital records; U.S. Census on Microfilm, 1790 to 1910; indexes to Ship Passenger Arrival Lists for major Eastern ports (pre-1900); Daughters of the American Revolution Lineage Books; periodicals published by historical societies, genealogical societies and family associations (to date, the *Agnewsletter* is not among them, but we will look into providing copies for the Library's collection); and indexes, guides, bibliographies, and how-to books.

Many of the materials from the California Room of the State Library and the Sutro Library are available on interlibrary loans through local libraries. The complete collections are available for use on site.



California State Library
Hours: Mon–Fri, 8 to 5
Mailing Address:
California Section
California State Library
P.O. Box 942837
Sacramento, CA
94237-0001
Street Address:
California Section
California State Library
Room 304
Library & Courts Bldg.
914 Capitol Mall
Sacramento, CA 95814
Telephone: (916) 654-0176
FAX: (916) 654-0241

The Sutro Library
Hours: Mon–Fri, 10 to 5
Address:
The Sutro Library
480 Winston Drive
San Francisco, CA 94132
Telephone: (415) 731-4477
FAX: (415) 557-9325

Agnews and Othernews

New Members

Ms. Jane H. Taylor
715 Dupre Drive
Spartanburg, S.C. 29302

Kenneth D. Agnew
504 No. Main St.
Fountain Inn, S.C. 29644

Mrs. Sandra J. Hollos
1524 G Split Oak Lane
Richmond, VA 23229

David Causey
204 Heritage Dr.
Warner Robins, GA 31093

Jerry R. Wood
P.O. Box 197
Rose Hill, KS 67133



New Agnews

Congratulations to Christopher French on the birth of a son, Matthew last Spring. Matthew is Association Founder Lois Schieck's first great-grandchild.

Congratulations, also, to Sir Crispin and Lady Susan Agnew on the birth of a son, Mark Douglas Noel on April 24, 1991.

The Last Word

Convener Art Agnew

Our "family" has grown considerably over the past year. The growth has been due mostly through the efforts of members spreading the word about the Association to other Agnews. Keep it up—the more we grow, the stronger we become. Remember—when you meet an Agnew, tell him or her about the Association. Just let me know who might be interested and I'll send them a complimentary copy of the *Agnewsletter*.

Our group is fairly small, but we are geographically wide-spread. Because of this, frequent and rapid communication is difficult, even in this age of fax machines and one touch dialing. Our primary means of communication is through the *Agnewsletter*, occasional correspondence to the membership, and the biennial meeting.

Suggestions about improving the Association are always welcome—except if the suggestion is to get rid of the convener! Seriously, if you have ideas about changes needed or suggestions for improvements in



the organization or the newsletter please take a moment to jot down your thoughts and send them to me. It helps to hear fresh ideas from all of the members and it establishes two-way communication.

The biennial meeting is scheduled for next year. One piece of unfinished business from the last biennial meeting is to establish a time and place for our next meeting. You recently received a letter from Lois Schieck seeking suggestions for the date and location of the next Agnew Association biennial meeting. If you haven't cast your vote, please do. We will keep you posted on plans for next year's event.

•••

Membership Application and Renewal

The following form is used to apply for membership in the Agnew Association of America, to renew memberships, and to give gift memberships.

Please send completed applications or renewals to:
**Agnew Association of America,
c/o Lois Schieck
#108—3475 Broken Woods Dr.
Coral Springs, FL 33065**

Checks should be payable to the Agnew Association of America. One year is \$15. Three years is \$40.00. Thank you.

Agnew Association of America
Membership Application/Renewal

Please check all that apply

New Membership
 Myself
 Gift(s)

Membership Renewal
 Myself
 Gift(s)

For gift memberships, please provide the name of the person for whom the gift is intended. For multiple memberships or renewals, please attach an additional sheet with the name and address of each gift membership or renewal.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

I have family information that I would be willing to share. I will forward it to the *Agnewsletter* for use in a future issue. *Agnewsletter* address: P.O. Box 691, Petaluma, CA 94953

Please contact me about the Agnew information I have.

Please send a gift announcement to each gift membership. (For gift memberships only)

Please send a copy of the latest issue of the *Agnewsletter* to each new member.

Please enclose a check payable to Agnew Association of America to cover each new membership or renewal (\$15.00 per year) and attach a listing of the names and addresses of gift memberships. Total enclosed \$ _____

(Signature) _____
(Date)

Address, if different than above: _____

Agnew Association Membership

The Agnew Association of America was established in the United States in April 1984 at the request of Sir Crispin Agnew, Bt. of Lochnaw, Chief of the Family Agnew. The purpose of the Association is to bring together all of the name Agnew or those descended from the name Agnew to promote interest in lineage and exchange of information. An Association newsletter is published quarterly to disseminate items of Agnew interest and assist contacts with other members tracing their Agnew line. The newsletter is available to members only, and back issues are available at \$3.00 each to members and prospective members. Member queries are answered without charge. In order to support the Association, the Board of Directors established annual dues of \$15.00, and \$6.00 for students.

A three year membership is \$40.00. Dues are payable by July 1 of each year. Lifemembership in the parent Association in Scotland is \$30 in the United States and Canada.

Membership application for both the American and Scottish associations and annual dues should be sent to:

Mrs. Lois Schieck
#108 —3475 Broken Woods Drive
Coral Springs, Florida 33065

Please make checks payable to the Agnew Association of America. For membership in the Agnew Association of Scotland, send a separate check for \$30 payable to the Agnew Association.

Agnew Association Officers
Arthur W. Agnew—Convener
Kenneth H. Agnew—Co-Convener
Lois Schieck—Secretary/Treasurer
Pat Alexander—Archivist
Dr. G. Marie Agnew-Marcelli—
Historian
Magalen Bryant—Director
Jean Schneider—Membership
Carol Agnew Smith—Editor



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