

The Schunke Collection

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Marjorie Webster Schunke (MWS) (1905-1990) was a genealogical researcher in Rhode Island who accumulated a large amount of material much of which is now held at the North Kingstown (RI) Free Library (NKFL). Most, if not all, of the material has been microfilmed by the Church of Latter Day Saints. The microfilms are held in facilities of the LDS in Salt Lake City and are available on the Internet. Schunke is particularly known for her studies of the Worden and Webster families but she also studied many other Rhode Island families.

Schunke was a food service manager at the University of Rhode Island. Her father was Fred Webster, her mother was May Elsie Worden. She married and subsequently divorced Herman E. Schunke. They had one son, Peter Worden Schunke. Peter married Elizabeth Holland whose mother was a King and grandmother a Snow. All of these families are discussed in this material. Herman Schunke's father was John who married Emma Mueller. They came from Saxony. Marjorie did not explore their ancestry.

The following is a beginning introduction to the Schunke materials for the use of researchers interested in them. It is based on a scan of the online microfilm images. I have not visited the NKFL.

MWS's materials are of various sorts, much is handwritten charts or notes. Others are typed, either by MWS or others. Some is printed from books or journals. There are pictures and maps. Occasionally there is material having no genealogical significance such as recipes or newspaper clippings MWS found interesting. There is a very large amount of repetition. Much of the handwritten material seems disordered and of little use, her own notes to herself. Sometimes related material is bunched together but often there appears to be little sense to the order of material. There are title pages that may or may not reflect what follows. There are also indexes (actually tables of contents) that may or may not relate to what follows. Unfortunately, MWS often did not date items so in what appear to be revisions it is hard to tell which item came last.

There are two ways to access this material. You can go to the North Kingston library or you can view the microfilms online. Although the microfilms appear to encompass all or nearly all of the material in the library, there is little relationship between the order of the material in the two places which could lead to considerable confusion. The NKFL has developed summaries to a small amount of the material in the library. These summaries may be accessed on this website <http://wordenfamillyassoc.org/Schunke/North%20Kingstown%20Free%20Library%20Documentation.html>. I have managed to locate the material in the NKFL summaries in the LDS files and have detailed those relationships in a file on this website http://wordenfamillyassoc.org/Schunke/NKFLibrary_Schunke_Summaries.pdf. References in these summaries to "Boxes" and "Volumes" have little meaning in the context of the LDS rolls but may be relevant to the NKFL holdings.

LDS films (here called "Rolls") are usually made up of one or more "Items" which in turn are made up of "Images," that is, individual pictures of materials. Note that this is a little confusing, what we usually think of as "items" are "images" and "items" are collections of images. Images are numbered from the beginning of the roll, not the beginning of the item they are in.

As mentioned above, there is a great deal of repetition. Sometimes the replication occurs right after a image appears, but there is also a fair amount of replication across rolls. The rolls sometimes have a END OF ROLL indication followed by more material ending in a real END OF ROLL. This additional material is usually repetitions of the last one or two items before the first END OF ROLL.

To navigate the LDS rolls:

These films are accessible at:

<https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/485783?availability=Family%20History%20Library>

This site is a list of 23 films (called “Rolls”). A particular roll may be accessed by clicking on the camera icon at the right of the entry. LDS has provided “film notes” which consist of MWS’s headings to items which are sections of the material. These notes are sometimes helpful but at other times have little to do with the material that follows. A few images on each roll are for LDS housekeeping, a few are headings for material that follows, which may or may not actually reflect the material that follows.

Once you are viewing the relevant roll you will either be looking at a single image or a screen full of images. You can toggle between these with the menu at the left edge of the screen (the vertical bar with + and - , below which is an icon of either a page or collection, this is the icon that toggles). Above that vertical bar is “Image x of y” where y is the number of images on the roll and x is the image you are currently focused on. To go to a particular image on the roll, go to the x slot, erase the number and put in the number of the image you want and hit “Enter”. The right and left arrows move to the next or preceding images. The mouse wheel can be used to enlarge or reduce the image.

On the WFA website I have put a file

http://www.wordenfamillyassoc.org/Schunke/Schunke_on_LDS.pdf. In it is an almost complete table of contents of the first roll and a fair amount of the second roll. After that I have provided an account of the first few entries and (usually) the last few entries in each item together with an unsystematic sampling of the rest of the roll. I have examined each of the tables of contents (often labeled “Index”) and attempted to give an assessment of them. Sometimes the ToFCs are useful, other times they have little to do with the material that follows.

Advice to researchers on using this material: I would first look at the NKFL summaries to see if material of interest is located there. If so, check my NKFLibrary_Schunke_Summaries to find where on the LDS rolls it can be found. This is probably the easiest way to get to Schunke material, but not much of the Schunke material is in these summaries. Failing that, consult my Schunke_on_LDS document.

There is a file on the WFA website titled “Schunke Collection Name Index.” This index may be useful for researchers visiting the NKFL. It does not appear to be useful for those using the LDS rolls.

Much of the material on the LDS files can be found elsewhere. MWS wrote an unfinished manuscript entitled *The Worden Family in Rhode Island*. Several versions or fragments of this MS exist in her collection and a version can be found on the WFA website. Also on the LDS files are important original materials including land transactions. MWS also made copies, both handwritten and xeroxed of historical volumes such as *Victoria History of the Counties of England* (particularly the Lancashire volumes), Chetham Society publications, Edward Baines’ *History of Lancashire*, and various published visitations. All of these books can be found online at Google Books, the Internet Archive, or HathiTrust. Also in MWS’s materials are sections of Oliver Norton Worden’s *Some Records of Persons by the Name of Worden* and parts of George Bolton’s articles in *Wordens Past* (available on the WFA website) that have been collected into the book *Worden Origins*. There are also copies of early *Wordens Past*.

The first two rolls of the LDS files are dominated by material on the English Wordens and the first few generations in America. Other material also pops up here once in a while. Some of this early material also appears (usually repeated) in later rolls. The last few rolls (beginning with roll 9) are dominated by families other than Worden or Webster, most of which seem not to be related to the Wordens. It is possible that the Schunke Collection will be most useful to researchers of families other than the

Wordens. Other families that are prominent are Woodmansee, Hazard, Faringtons (the medieval family), Sheldon, and Leftt.