Planning Your Research Trip to the DAR Library

Taking maximum advantage of your time at the library takes a little bit of preparation. Here is a checklist to help make your visit a success:

Decide on a question you will work on (be as specific as you can – "Who were John Smith's parents?" works here, "Who were John Smith's ancestors?" does not.

Gather all the information you have on this topic, and make a summary of what you know, and from where you got that information. You do not need to bring all your files with you, but make sure you have the basic information you need.

Write down the

WHO:_____

WHERE:_____

WHEN: _____

DAR Library contains a number of different resources, both in print and electronic format. The list below is not exhaustive, but highlights the largest and most popular collections:

- **Physical collection** (books, periodicals, manuscripts, special collections)
- **Electronic material compiled by the DAR**: GRS (the Genealogical Research System), containing applications and supporting material, GRC material (records collected and published by DAR chapters over the years, as well as material from family bibles), PRP (Patriot Records Project images)
- A number of **publicly available genealogical databases** (including resources available to FamilySearch Affiliate Libraries)

Step 1. **If you are researching a potential Patriot**, go to the GRS at: http://services.dar.org/Public/DAR_Research/Search/   and check if the DAR has information on this Patriot. If yes, note the Ancestor number: A_____. You will be able to electronically access the associated applications and supplementals at the Library and purchase any associated record copies (cost of one record copy is $10). Actual record copy content is only accessible at the Library.

If there have been no previous applications, based on the potential Patriot's service, the Library may still hold material pertaining to them in the other collections.

Step 2. Go to the Library Catalog: https://librarycatalog.dar.org/library

For the most preliminary search, just enter your search terms. The result will be a list of materials in the DAR collection:

When you click on the record containing DAR Library items, you will arrive at a list of the 4 books pertaining to the Dimon family. Let's take a look at one of those records:

Title:	The Dimons of Fairfield, Connecticut : a family history / John McKay Sheftall
Author:	Sheftall, John McKay
Location:	MAIN LIBRARY
Call Words:	FAMILIES DIMON SHEFTALL
Item Type:	Book

As you can see, the DAR Library does not utilize either the Dewey Decimal or the Library of Congress Classification schemes. Rather, the collection is arranged by a term classification system that uses call words instead of call numbers. Books are arranged on the shelves in alphabetical order by line of the call word within this system. In the case above, the call words you would need to note are FAMILIES DIMON SHEFTALL. Once you know the call words of the book you want, you can use the maps available at the reference desk or ask a staff member to direct you to the appropriate section. (The Library also has material in onsite storage, which patrons need to request at the reference desk.)

 For more detailed suggestions on how to search the catalog, including what to do if you need to search for geographic locations, go to https://www.dar.org/library/collections/dar-library-catalog

Having a list of materials you would like to consult makes it easier for you to plan your time with us, and for us to help you.