

MICHIGANA

Volume 58, Number 4

October/November/December 2012

Michigan STATE Censuses ONLINE!

SCHEDULE 1.—Inhabitants in Township of Beards, in the County of Kalamazoo, Michigan, enumerated by me on the 9 day of June, 1884.
William H. Goss

MARK ALL SPACES WITH PEN AND INK. DO NOT USE PENCIL OF ANY KIND.

Number	Sex	Age	Color	Race	Married	Single	Widowed	Divorced	Place of Birth	Place of Birth of Father	Place of Birth of Mother	Place of Birth of Grandfather	Place of Birth of Grandmother
1	Male	45	White	Married	No	No	No	No	Ohio	New York	New York	New York	New York
2	Female	12	White	Single	No	No	No	No	Michigan	New York	Ohio	Ohio	Ohio
3	Female	15	White	Single	No	No	No	No	Michigan	New York	Ohio	Ohio	Ohio
4	Male	18	White	Single	No	No	No	No	Michigan	New York	Ohio	Ohio	Ohio
5	Female	9	White	Single	No	No	No	No	Michigan	New York	Ohio	Ohio	Ohio
6	Male	27	White	Married	No	No	No	No	New York	New York	New York	New York	New York
7	Female	22	White	Married	No	No	No	No	Michigan	New York	New York	New York	New York
8	Female	18	White	Single	No	No	No	No	Michigan	New York	Michigan	Michigan	Michigan
9	Female	15	White	Single	No	No	No	No	Michigan	New York	New York	New York	New York
10	Female	15	White	Single	No	No	No	No	Michigan	New York	New York	New York	New York
11	Male	35	White	Single	No	No	No	No	New York	New York	New York	New York	New York
12	Female	45	White	Married	No	No	No	No	New York	New York	New York	New York	New York
13	Female	51	White	Single	No	No	No	No	New York	New York	New York	New York	New York

Seeking the Archives of Michigan

The Quarterly Magazine of the Western Michigan Genealogical Society

Western Michigan Genealogical Society

Grand Rapids Public Library, 111 Library St. NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49503

website: www.wmgs.org

email: Membership@wmgs.org

Submissions to *Michigana*

All genealogical or family history subjects are accepted. Quality research is encouraged. It is helpful if there is a connection to Michigan.

Photographs are best presented using 300 dpi tif scanned files, or RAW digital files. Lower dpi numbers are less acceptable because print quality may suffer. Scans of ink jet printed pictures may also cause a loss of quality. Preservation of original materials is sought - diaries, land records, bible pages, etc. All articles may be edited for length, clarity or content.

Please contact the editor with ideas, suggestions or submissions.

Change of Address {Temporary or Permanent}

If you will be moving to a new address permanently, or going on an extended vacation, please notify WMGS at least six weeks before the address change occurs. Be sure to include the date your address will permanently change or the dates when you will leave and plan to return. You may email us at Membership@wmgs.org, or write to: WMGS Treasurer, Western Michigan Genealogical Society, 111 Library St. NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49503-3268.

Back Issues of *Michigana* are available for \$7.50. Copies of articles may be purchased for \$5.00. Go to www.wmgs.org for an order form.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: Western Michigan Genealogical Society, Grand Rapids Public Library, 111 Library St. NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49503-3268

MICHIGANA (ISBN 0462-372X) is published quarterly (January/February/March, April/May/June, July/August/September, October/November/December) by the Western Michigan Genealogical Society. WMGS is a 501c3 non-profit organization and is affiliated with the Michigan Genealogical Council. All WMGS members receive *Michigana* and the *WMGS Newsletter* as a membership benefit. All rights reserved. No part of this quarterly publication may be republished for profit either digitally or on paper without permission in writing from the individual author of an article and/or the Editor, Western Michigan Genealogical Society, Grand Rapids Public Library, 111 Library Street NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49503-3268. Copyright © 2012.

***Michigana* is produced with the assistance of:**
Wolverine Printing,
315 Grandville Ave. SW,
Grand Rapids, MI 49503 616-451-2075
info@wolverineprinting.com

Officers 2010-2012

President	Don Bryant
Vice President	Marcia Shears
Treasurer	Marlene Fabbro
Recording Secretary	Janet Jensen
Past President	Mindy Koole

Committee Chairpersons

Correspondence Coordinator	Lucy Read
Education Coordinator	Bill Grinstead
Public Relations Chairman	George Bayard
Acquisitions Coordinator	Lucy Read
Purchasing Coordinator	Lisa Christensen
Sales Coordinator	Wanda Schottler
Search Coordinator	Wanda Schottler
Projects & Publications	Wanda Schottler
Newsletter	Lisa Christensen
MGC Representative	David Lee Smith
Historian	Sue Rabick
Web Master	Don Bryant
Data Master	Roger Moffat
Manuscript Coordinator	Sue Irvine
Surnames	Judy Wilson
Membership	Roger Moffat
Volunteer Coordinator	Shirley De Boer, CG
Pioneer Certificates	Kaye Fish
Hostess	Joanne Fast

Michigana Staff

Editor	Bobbi Schirado
Assistant Editor	Sue Irvine
Columnists	Mary Rasch Alt
	Shirley De Boer, CG
	Sharon Yentch
	Sue Rabick
Circulation	Wanda Schottler, Roger Moffat
Contributors:	Sister Michael Ellen Carling O.P
	Paula Naujalis
	Gail Snow
	Sue Osgood
<i>Michigana</i> Index	Sue Irvine
Proofreaders	Ann Ed
	Janet Jensen
	Rob Schirado

COVER PHOTO: Archives of Michigan, Seeking Michigan.com 1884 Michigan State Census, Brooks Township, Newaygo County. Page 12; Film Number 1711.

MICHIGANA

Volume 58, Number 4

October/November/December 2012

Table of Contents

Features

- 134 *What We Can Learn from Church Records*
By Pam Swiler
- 136 *New Options for Michigan Research*
By Bobbi Schirado, Jessica Miller and Kris Rzepczynski
- 130 *Probate Records at the Archives of Michigan;
The Great Cornell Chase - Part II*
By Bobbi Schirado
- 142 *The "Why" of Genealogy*
By Thomas McKentee
- 143 *Sometimes SinS Yield Dividends: Who Was Ainslie?*
By Al Dawson
- 149 *The Ogden, Edison, Dowling and Oakes Families - Part II*
By Sister Michael Ellen Carling, OP
- 158 *War of 1812 and Civil War Records at the Allen County Public Library*
By Mary Rasch Alt

Columns

- 122 *Editor's Notes - Grab Those Disappearing Stories*
By Bobbi Schirado
- 128 *Cruisin' Through the Stacks at the GRPL - County and Local Histories*
By Sue Rabick
- 130 *The Writer's Corner How My Research, My Trip and My Curiosity
Turned into a Book*
By Claudette Darling
- 131 *The Learning Corner: All About Women*
By Shirley De Boer, CG

Departments

- 123 *Our Extended Family - Pam Swiler*
By Sharon Yentsch
- 124 *Village Square*
- 126 *News and Notes*
- 127 *Book Review - Finding Family: and My Search for Roots in my DNA*

*The Western Michigan Genealogical Society is dedicated to gaining
knowledge, teaching others about family history,
and preserving genealogical records.*



Grab Those Disappearing Stories!

'Tis the season of long drives, turkey and all the trimmings, menorahs, spruce trees and tinsel, and families gathering together. Genealogists are giddy at all the possibilities for finding new clues, listening to old stories and unwrapping new family traditions.

Aunts and uncles (especially great and great-great ones) may be the only ones who know that one specific, itty, bitty clue that will help you go back another generation on your family tree. Most of us are fortunate enough to have heard stories from our parents or grandparents about the "good old days." Aunts and uncles were often participants in them, but they were a little older or a little younger, and usually have a uniquely different slant on those same stories.

Each family member interacts with the others in a different way. In my mother's family there were three girls and one boy. All played musical instruments, but not the same ones. Two of the girls loved art as children, but only one pursued it as an adult. Only one daughter was really interested in family history, but that wasn't until she was married. There were nine years between the eldest child and the youngest. The two

oldest had only vague memories of driving from Grand Rapids to Newaygo almost every weekend to visit relatives. The other sister recalled those rides vividly because she suffered from car sickness.

All of the siblings and most of their cousins remembered great Aunt Elizabeth reading tea leaves, but only one recalled her talking about her first husband and how she had gone with him to visit friends at Crockery Lake. The eldest daughter remembered living in Ludington, but couldn't describe the house. The youngest painted clear word pictures of the parlor, kitchen and outhouse in detail. Different memories stick to different family members. As genealogists, we get the fun of listening to all of them.

Uncovering and then saving family stories is an important responsibility. Many historians suggest taking along old photographs or memorabilia to family gatherings. As well and jogging buried or almost forgotten memories, images may remind older folk of other diaries, letters or photographs that are hidden in attics or the far reaches of trunks or desks.

One of my most frustrating recent experiences with relatives occurred this year. A first cousin once removed called and asked if I might be interested in several photographs of my grandfather. Since he died when my father was only three, I enthusiastically said, "Yes." Kathy had recently gone through some boxes her older sister, Helen, had stored in her garage before she died. There were five in all, but Kathy only recognized some of the photographs in one, so she left the rest. Every genealogist knows the story - the other four went to the dump.

I'll never know what wonderful stories and clues went up in flames in the Grand Rapids incinerator. Sigh . . .

The one bright spot was the salvaged box. In it was the marriage certificate of my great-great-grandparents, William Burdette Monroe and Caroline Simons, photographs of their farm in Shiawassee County, and letters he had written while serving in Company E of Michigan 14th Volunteers during the Civil War.

There were pictures of my grandfather's younger brother Gaylord Theodore Joyce who died of a burst appendix when he was only 15. It was the first time that I realized that the "Ted," I'd occasionally heard about in family stories was really Gaylord. I'd never even thought to ask if there was a connection between the "two" people. Instead, I spent hours trying to find a Ted Joyce who might fit in as a distant cousin.

The only reason Kathy thought I might be interested in "old pictures," was because I repeated and repeated how interested I was in family history. Even then, she only thought I cared about my direct ancestors.

So, when you go to family gatherings this year, make sure everyone knows you love hearing about the past, and that you believe that *ALL* of your family's photographs and memorabilia must be treasured and preserved. *AND* make sure you *TAKE* photographs so the memories of today aren't lost.

*Wishing You Patience and Peace,
Bobbi Schirado*

Our Extended Family

~ Pam Swiler ~

By Sharon Yentsch

A resident of Lake Odessa for nearly 30 years, Pam Swiler is the founder of the Ionia County Genealogical Society (ICGS). Her 15-year tenure as president will end December 31, but she's not going far, and plans to work behind the scenes on various projects and support the Society's new leadership. She's also looking forward to getting back to her own research, since she hasn't had the time until now!

Pam first began researching in Ionia County when she decided to explore her husband's family history. She soon realized that there were few easily accessible genealogical resources available in Ionia County. While talking to John Waite, President of the Lake Odessa Area Historical Society, he suggested, "Why don't you start a genealogy society?"

He provided her with a space to hold their first meeting in the Depot Museum and off they went! ICGS currently has over 200 members from across the United States and Canada. They meet in a wonderful space in the Freight Station Museum, have created a fast growing

website packed with resources about Ionia County, and have recently started a Facebook page. Pam loves working with the wonderful board of directors and the membership. The Society sponsors field trips, research classes and networks with other area societies. The group has come a long way since its first meeting on January 11, 1997.

Another project Pam initiated is the *Rural School Newsletter*, a publication focused on old one room school houses in Ionia County. "Many people don't know we still have three rural schools that are active today in our county," she says. The newsletter is published three times a year and contains photos, class lists, stories and any history related to the schools. She adds, "This has been a fun project for me."

"One of our finest projects has been the First Families of Ionia County Society, which was also formed in 1997, and currently has over 300 members," she says. Like other pioneer programs, people apply for membership, and then are honored at an annual awards banquet in October. It is quite an event and she says ICGS has a wonderful committee that handles this task beautifully.

Pam has been a member of the First Families of Paulding County, Ohio society since 1995, WMGS since 1994, the Lake Odessa Area Historical Society since 1994, and a member of many other societies throughout Michigan. She was named Volunteer of the Year by the National Federation of Genealogical Societies in 2006.

Pam is married to Wayne Swiler and has one daughter, two step-sons and three step-grandchildren. She was born in Kalamazoo and moved to Kent County when she was about 16 years old. She graduated from Caledonia High School in 1972, and Grand Rapids Junior College in 1982. Over the years she worked for the Grand Rapids Public Schools for nearly 20 years as a school secretary and also for Hope Network in East Lansing in the pediatric brain injury program. At one time she worked for Practical Rehabilitation Services on a part-time basis.

Her life story is very colorful. She was raised by one family in Kalamazoo which was not her birth family or her adopted family. It took time to sort out a very complicated family history. She has three half sisters and four half brothers – all from the same mother but with different fathers. Her birth mother was married five times, however, Pam and many of the children were a result of other relationships.

"My birth name is Pamela Kay Price, and if you look at my birth certificate, it would say my father is Billy Leon Price. That is not accurate, however, since he was my mother's first husband." Her birth father was a sailor. "I met him when he was in his 80's just a couple of years before he died and he was a very nice man," Pam explains. She wishes she had had more time to get to know him better. Her maternal grandmother's life was also very complicated. She was married eight times and had three children. "My family history story has many mysteries which I am still trying to sort out," she adds, "It has been an interesting journey."

Pam is very active with the First Congregational Church of Lake Odessa, and serves on its Board of Trustees, the Historical Records Committee and Mission Board. She also serves on the Lake Odessa Community Library board. When she has some "down time," she enjoys scrapbooking and stamping projects.



Pam Swiler

The Village Square is a continuing column in Michigan. Much of our know-how is gained by discussion with one another and by passing on information just as our ancestors did in their village squares.

We include information on recent publications, resource addresses, websites of note, freebies, hints, etc. We also highlight the locations of unique resources in libraries, repositories and museums. Please share your hints and discoveries with us. Send them to WMGS, Village Square, 111 Library Street NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49503-3268.

MICHIGAN TO PRESERVE HISTORIC ELECTRONIC RECORDS. The State of Michigan has signed an agreement with a technology company aimed at preserving electronic records with historical value.

Officials say Michigan is the first state to sign a contract with Tessella, which specializes in digital preservation solutions, technology, consulting and research. The state has been seeking solutions for preserving its electronic records since 1977. The move provides significant cost-savings. Details of the agreement were not disclosed.

David Behen, chief information officer for the state, notes that “preserving electronic records will help ensure that future generations have access to historical documents of importance.” State Archivist Mark Harvey says preserving electronic records of historic value in the digital age is a “significant concern.” From *The Detroit News*: <http://www.detroitnews.com/article/20121105/METRO/211050376#ixzz2Badioze3>

MAKING LOCAL HISTORY DIGITAL, SEARCHABLE AND ACCESSIBLE. The Knight Foundation announced a one million dollar donation in support for the Digital Public Library of America, a groundbreaking project that will make our country’s local archives digital, searchable and freely accessible.

This project is working towards the day that users will be able to search any topic – be it the Civil War or the New Deal – and immediately pull up information including pictures, videos, oral histories, manuscripts and more from collections across the country.

Initially there will be seven pilot sites – with libraries and digital collaboratives in Georgia, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Oregon, South Carolina and Utah participating as “service” hubs.

The project will involve communities in creating content for their archives, whether providing context to or



tagging content, or actually bringing in items to scan and record. It should help accelerate libraries’ evolution from information warehouses to true digital community centers and content creators, a key focus of Knight Foundation’s Library Initiative.

Organizers launched this project because they began to see a paradox emerge: People expect information at their fingertips, but local collections that are rich in history and cultural heritage are increasingly inaccessible because of budget cuts and staff reductions.

Some big institutions are digitizing their collections and making them available, but at this point that’s an option only for the largest and best funded. Even then, many systems aren’t designed to work with others, so that users can simultaneous search archives across the country. This led 30 leaders from the world of libraries, museums, humanities and law to come together to try to address these challenges. With initial funding from the Sloan and Arcadia foundations, hundreds have been working on taking this from concept to reality during the past two years.

With Knight’s funding, along with support from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the technological foundation will be built to connect the seven regional hubs - the first physical locations of this ambitious project - and begin delivering services to libraries and archives.

The Village Square

These hubs will create the agreements between participating organizations and coordinate efforts within their states. They will also provide direct services. For example, if a library wants to start digitizing items but lacks the equipment or staff, the hubs will digitize up to 5,000 items for them. They will send a metadata “geek squad” to teach the staff how code and categorize the digitized materials. No place to store all the new digital data? The hubs will store it for you and provide you with a link to put on your website.

This project is not just about technology and data, it's about how these institutions use it to enable interaction between community members, professionals and materials of local and national relevance. Look for more information in April 2013, when the project will make hundreds of thousands of items first available to the public online. <http://www.knightfoundation.org/blogs/knightblog/2012/10/12/> By Jorge A. Martinez, director/IT at Knight Foundation

PRESERVE YOUR FAMILY STORIES. This year, as you decorate the family Christmas tree, or put up decorations for Hanukkah or Kwanzaa, slow down and think about each piece. Are there items that have been passed down through your family, hand-crafted by your children, or especially chosen by you for a specific reason? Are there decorations that have specific memories associated with them?

Consider ensuring that this information isn't lost to the ages by noting where these special ornaments came from or by detailing the stories that are associated with them. There are several methods of doing this:

- Create a notebook featuring your holiday ornaments. Take a photograph of each one, attach it to a sheet of paper and write information about the ornament on the paper around the photo. Slide the pages into acid-free sheet protectors and store them in a three-ring binder.
- Affix a photograph of each ornament to a 4-by 6-inch index card and write the ornament's story on the back of the card. Keep these in an index card file box and store it with your ornaments.
- Create a spreadsheet for your ornaments on the computer in a program like Excel. You might include fields for the approximate date of the ornament, a brief description, name of the person associated with it (child who made it; person from whom you inherited it; person who gave it to you), and significance. In this last column, you can note if you bought it for your first Christmas as a married couple, for example.
- Create a word processing file about your ornaments. You can insert digital images of them into the file and wrap your text around the photos. The bonus with this method is that you can print out multiple copies to share with family members!

In my family's boxes of Christmas decorations, I have some that were on my parents' tree when I was a small child, a few that were purchased by our foreign exchange student from Spain back in the mid-1990s that she left with us when she went back home, and some that my mother made. My two sons have an ornament for each of their Christmases that I have given to them and that they will take when they establish their own homes. Most of these are associated with some interest or milestone in their lives for each particular year.

So before you take those boxes back up to the attic or down to the basement and make your resolutions for 2013, consider resolving to document the memories that fill your mind each year when you bring out those cherished family holiday ornaments.

By Dawne Slater-Putt, ^{CG} *Genealogy Gems: News from the Fort Wayne Library*, No. 104, October 31, 2012



News and Notes

Shirley Hodges Receives Lucy Mary Kellogg Award

Shirley Hodges holds the Lucy Mary Kellogg Award as her husband, Clarence, looks on with pride.

Photograph courtesy of Roger Moffat.



The Michigan Genealogical Council presented the 2012 Lucy Mary Kellogg Award to Shirley Gage Hodges at the November 8, 2012 Delegate meeting in Lansing, Michigan. The Award is given annually to an outstanding genealogist in the State of Michigan. Shirley was nominated by the Eaton County Genealogical Society.

Shirley is a regular speaker at conferences and workshops and has spoken several times at WMGS membership meetings. She has taught classes in Community Education Programs and been a guest lecturer at Michigan State University, The Union Institute, and Davenport College. She has served as President and Vice President of the Eaton County Genealogical Society, the President of the Genealogical Speakers Guild (a national organization), and assisted as an advisor to Ingham and Ionia County societies. She is a columnist and editor. Shirley wrote a published a *Guide to United States Census, 1790-1930 and Williams Families and Individuals: Bits and Pieces, vol. 1.*

She has helped index records and preserve historic sites. Shirley has received the Eaton County Heritage Award and the Library of Michigan Genealogy Appreciation Award. Shirley Hodges continues to help genealogists throughout Michigan advance their research and preserve their families' histories.

Welcome to New WMGS Members

Below are the names of individuals who have recently joined the Western Michigan Genealogical Society for the first time. We welcome them as new members, and sincerely thank them for their interest in family history and willingness to support and volunteer in our organization.

1354	Theresa Tuttle	Grand Rapids	MI
1355	Jim Rademaker	Grand Rapids	MI
1356	Marcia Wiersma	Norton Shores	MI
1360	Deborah Johnson Wood	Grand Rapids	MI
1366	Robert Mains	Kentwood	MI
1368	Timothy Prindle	Wyoming	MI
1369	Marcia Thompson	Sparta	MI
1370	Nancy Provost	Grand Blanc	MI
1371	Jenny Shangraw	Rockford	MI
1372	Heather Godleski	Coopersville	MI
1373	Denise Fedko	Grand Rapids	MI
1374	Ruth Wayer	Big Rapids	MI
1379	Janet Sprague	Sunfield	MI
1380	Mark VanAllsburg	Grand Rapids	MI
1388	Louann Larsen	Grand Rapids	MI
1389	Patricia Hornbeck	Jenison	MI
1390	Beth McDermott	Grand Rapids	MI
1391	Mary Bernthal	Grand Rapids	MI
1392	Dorann Truax	Lowell	MI
1393	Dana Freas	Wyoming	MI
1394	Karen Stropkey	Twinsburg	OH
1395	Bob Overstreet	Everett	WA
1396	Al Dawson	Iowa City	IA
1397	Randall Stenholm	West Olive	MI
1398	Francina Roberts	Grand Rapids	MI
1399	Olga Matteson	St Johns	MI
1400	Laura Henry	Cadillac	MI
1401	Jeanne Beauvais	Grandville	MI
1402	Sara Vrugink	Grand Rapids	MI

Writing Contest

Be Sure to Remember the Michigana Family History Writing Contest! Check the last issue, or go to www.wmgs.org for the details. Have fun and write, Write, WRITE!

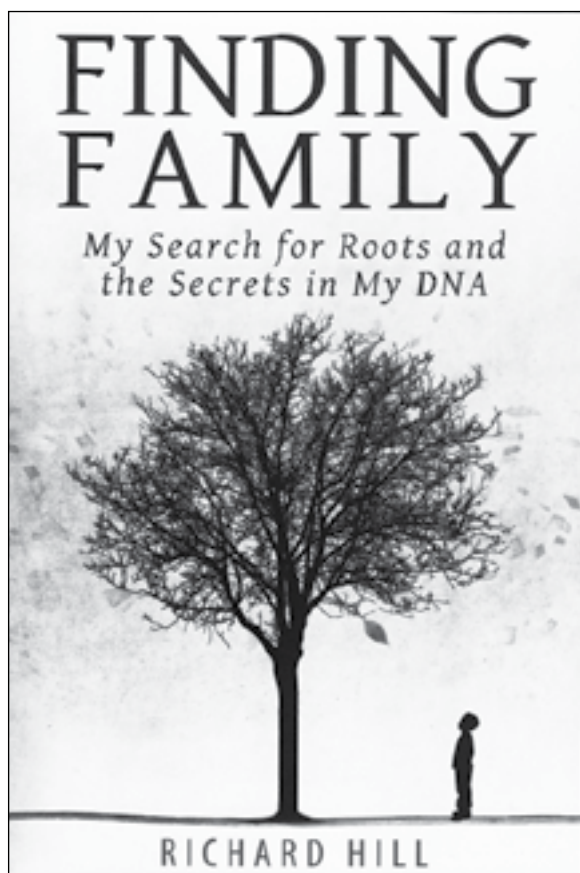


Finding Family: My Search for Roots and the Secrets in My DNA

By Richard Hill

CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform (August 17, 2012) 261 pages, softcover. Also available as a Kindle ebook. ISBN 1475190832

Many WMGS members have met Richard Hill personally. He has lived in Kent County for many years and has been a presenter at a WMGS membership meeting. He discussed his search for his biological parents, how traditional genealogical research helped him locate a sibling, and how DNA evidence identified his father.



Many encouraged him to write a book about his experiences and *Finding My Family: My Search for Roots and the Secrets in My DNA*, was the result.

You don't have to be an adoptee to enjoy reading this fascinating story. Richard includes his genealogical triumphs and his mistakes. Every family historian will certainly relate as he overcomes mistakes, returns to untaken paths, and makes brilliant, and sometimes not so brilliant deductions. It is also an excellent introduction into understanding the basics of DNA research.

This is a very personal book. It's sad, funny and heart warming. All of us seeking our roots will recognize his Ah Ha! moments as well as the sad disappointment when a terrific clue turns out to be nothing more than a red herring.

Richard was a teenager in the 1960s when he accidentally discovered he was adopted, and that sudden discovery is where the book begins. It is not a story of a child who dislikes his adoptive parents. He loved his a great deal. At the same time, he wanted to know more about his biological roots.

Growing up, college, relationships and parenthood took precedence until the 1980s, when he began his search in earnest. For over twenty years he searched for his biological family. It is a compelling odyssey. Like every genealogist's personal history mystery, readers are drawn in to his search for clues and wait impatiently for the solution to the genealogical puzzle.

Mr. Hill's story also shows the power of genetic genealogy, especially for adoptees and birth parents. It also emphasizes that DNA alone is not a magic potion that will answer all our questions about brick wall ancestors. Genetic genealogy is only another a tool. It is at its best when combined with a well-researched paper trail. In the case of adoptees with no hope of a paper trail, DNA might provide clues that will help point you toward the paper trail.

For more information about DNA testing, to view a video about the book, or to purchase it, go to Mr. Hill's website at www.DNA-Testing-Adviser.com.

Once you start reading this book, it's hard to put it down.

Bobbi Schirado



Cruisin' Through the Stacks at the GRPL

"County and Local Histories"

By Sue Rabick

Unexpected discoveries are part of the delightful lore and experience of genealogists. One of my personal surprises led to the title of this column and to the focus of this article.

At the WMGS October 'Got Ancestors?' seminar, our speaker, Curt Witcher, suggested using local histories to further genealogical research. While many of them don't focus on vital statistics, they often contain information that may be particularly relevant to your family. Learning about the migration pattern for your ethnic group, local possibilities for employment, the timing of the formation of a denominational church, the time frames and reasons for a neighborhood development, or seeing period pictures of places and groups of people your family might have known, adds substance to your searches and may give you clues for the next step in your research. The downtown Grand Rapids Public Library has many such histories.

While 'cruising through the stacks' one day, I spied a shiny new book on the shelf titled, *They Came to Mara...* Mara? A vague memory surfaced. How many places by that name are there? When I opened it, there was a brief history and the genealogies of early settlers of Mara Township on the northeast side of Lake Simcoe, Ontario. My only known connection with this Mara, was that my great-grandfather, James Cameron, once tried to sell land there. Although I knew James had been born in a township next to Mara, I had been unable to discover his parents' names. On page 117, of this book, I found the descendent chart for John Cameron, whom I identified as my g-g-grandfather, with James, my g-grandfather, and my grandfather Angus Cameron with his wife Ada Millar, my grandmother. There was new information about siblings and my great-grandmothers' second marriage was uncovered. Apparently, the land James had tried to sell was the original homestead.

When I told Julie, the librarian, about my thrilling breakthrough, she responded by showing me her

discovery in the book, *Saranac Area Centennial*. On page 54 there was an article and pictures of the fire department, including both her grandfather and great-grandfather, Don and Lyle Darby. On page 61, a photograph of a group of "Businessmen" includes Lyle. Plus, there was a brief chronological history of the community and lots of pictures that enabled Julie to envision what her family had experienced.

On a larger scale, I found a two volume set of books focused on a neglected part of Michigan, the Upper Peninsula. *Superior Heartland*, includes the history, stories, personality sketches and some genealogies for the early days in Baraga, Marquette, Alger and Schoolcraft counties. Letting the book open itself at random to page 551, I found a sketch of the period from 1915 to 1925. The impact of WWI, Prohibition, the Spanish Flu, automobiles, moonshiners and their relevance to the area is briefly discussed. Then, "The Fleury's" are introduced, with parents, children and pictures, along with the information on father Archie's employment. Written in an interesting, readable style and printed in a larger font, I was tempted to read more of the 850 pages, even though I have absolutely no one in my family who lived in the U.P. anywhere, at anytime.

Almost all the counties in Michigan have printed histories. If not in book form, they may be found on microfilms. On the shelves at the GRPL, the Michigan history books can be found in the 977.4 call number area. Be sure to look for titles other than "XYZ County History." The microfilms are located in a file drawer, and are generally in alphabetical order except when sparsely populated counties are combined. Ask the librarians for help if you have difficulty locating the county you want.

Researchers can also find useful histories for areas outside of Michigan. The Grand Rapids Public Library has specialized in those parts of North America where Michigan settlers originated. This means Southern and Western states are not well represented



County Histories and books that provide an overview of a specific township or city can be invaluable to genealogists. For example:

***They Came to Mara... (Pioneers of Mara Township Circa 1829-1900)* by The Corporation of The Township of Mara; 1993; 887 pages.**

***Superior Heartland: A Backwoods History, Set, Vols. I & II*, by Fred Rydholdm, Privately published, 1989. 1598 pages.**

in the collection. County histories for Eastern and Midwestern states may be found in different sections of the shelves, but still numbered in the 970's, typically near other resources for that state.

For example, the migration path for French-Canadian settlers comes down the St. Lawrence River, through Lake Erie, and into the Detroit River region, on both sides of the current international border. Knowing the history of the area makes you aware that "Detroit" applied to what is now Windsor, Ontario as well as what is now Detroit, Michigan until almost 1835.

The Windsor Border Region, is a good example of how "a collection of documents" can reveal a great deal about a family. On page 79, there is a marriage contract (prenuptial agreement) from the Detroit Notarial Records, (liber B, p. 96):

On 21 September 1777, "Before Philippe Dejean, notary public residing at Detroit, were present Jean Bte. Gignac also residing at the said place of Detroit, a native of the parish of Cap Sante in the diocese of Quebec, son of age of Joseph Gignac and of Magdeleine Galernau, his parents,.....and Sir Jean Bte. Le Beau, widower of the late Catherine Dudevoir stipulating for Lady Catherine Le Beau, their daughter, widow of Simon Bergeron deceased....."

This document refers to a couple about to marry, Jean Batiste Gignac and Catherine Le Beau. Also identified are his parents, his birth place, her parents, and her first husband's name as well as 'deceased before' dates for two other people. Like many official documents, it may take a while to decipher, but there is a wealth of information in the seven lines.

Genealogy is basically personalized history. Understanding the historical context of a family's presence gives flesh to the vital statistics. Seeking out county or community histories may give you vital general information but also often surprises you with specifics. Search the library catalogue, but if you don't find anything, it may be under a title you didn't expect, so *Cruise the Stacks*.

Sue Rabick is the WMGS Historian and a dedicated member of the "Tuesday Group." This group is made up of volunteers who index resources and help genealogists with questions on Tuesday nights at the GRPL. If you questions or comments, contact Sue at: rabick-gns@aol..com





Genealogists collect massive amounts of information along with wonderful family stories. We travel, talk to far-flung new found relatives, haunt local governmental offices for vital and probate records, and fill notebooks and file cabinets with papers and photographs.

The genealogical names and dates can be entered into databases, but family history is more than vital statistics. Claudette Darling is a long time member of WMGS. She took her genealogical research, a treasured family heirloom and her own experiences while researching and started writing. She ended up with a book. This is her story of the process.

How My Research, My Trip, and My Curiosity Turned into a Book

By Claudette Darling

Write a book? Me? No way. That's what I would have thought a few years ago, but certain circumstances changed all of that.

Genealogy research on my mother's side took me to my great-grandmother, Emma Pequegnat, who was born in Loveresse, Switzerland on 28 April 1861. Her mother had died when Emma was two-years old, and Emma was given to her aunt and uncle. The uncle, Francois Pequegnat, was a watchmaker. He and the family immigrated in 1869 to Elgin, Ill. I had Emma's handwritten note with this information, and ended up tracing the Pequegnat line back into the 1700's. Much to my delight, the old wooden trunk that the family used during their immigration was passed on down through the family to me, which further tightened my bond with my Pequegnat ancestors.

In July 2001, I took a trip to Germany, Switzerland, and Austria with a friend of mine. She was also into genealogy, and we decided to visit the home villages of our European ancestors. So, we drove to the small village of Loveresse, Switzerland, and located the church. A funeral was about to take place when we arrived. I took a couple pictures of the church and then headed for the cemetery. I found a tombstone for a distant cousin. A little old lady was tending to some flowers nearby, and was closely watching us—

probably wondering what two American tourists were up to. I tried to ask her if there were anymore Pequegnats buried in the cemetery, but, it turned out she only spoke French. So, I resorted to pointing to the Pequegnat tombstone, and with upturned hands, repeated my question. She suddenly became very animated! She came to me and grabbed my wrist, pointed to the time on my watch—then the church—then the tombstone, all the while repeating the Pequegnat name.

I realized she was telling us that the funeral taking place was for a Pequegnat, and I got a tingling sensation on the back of my neck, as well as a crop of goose bumps! We learned from the parking attendant that the funeral was for the last Pequegnat from the village of Loveresse. This incredible coincidence sent my mind reeling. I was no longer satisfied with just statistics. I wanted to learn what it was like for this family to move from a small, isolated, Swiss village to America. What was it like crossing the Atlantic in 1869? Just what did this French-speaking family endure when they arrived in their new homeland?

Well, when I returned home I checked out a gazillion library books, searched the internet, and ended up with files full of good information—shipping, early train travel, fashions, schools during the 1870's, the Elgin watch fac-

tory, etc. I even ended up with a picture of their ship during the crossing of the Atlantic. So, now what do I do with all of this stuff? Will it be thrown out after I'm dead and gone?

I started writing out the results of my research by concentrating on the facts. It was totally boring. I knew that my grandchildren would never read it. So, I experimented with adding narrative, and being more descriptive. After a lot of editing, I finally got the hang of it.

I ended up with a historical fiction book about the life of Emma Pequegnat. The old trunk used during immigration was among her effects when she died, and so I linked it to Emma throughout the book. The story starts on the day the Pequegnats leave Lovresse in late April 1869. Since the ship's manifest gave names, ages, and relationships, I was able to describe this family as they traveled through Germany to Hamburg, and embarked upon the

hazardous voyage across the ocean. My research gave me insight into the frightening ordeals this French-speaking family endured upon arriving in New York and traveling across America to Elgin, IL.

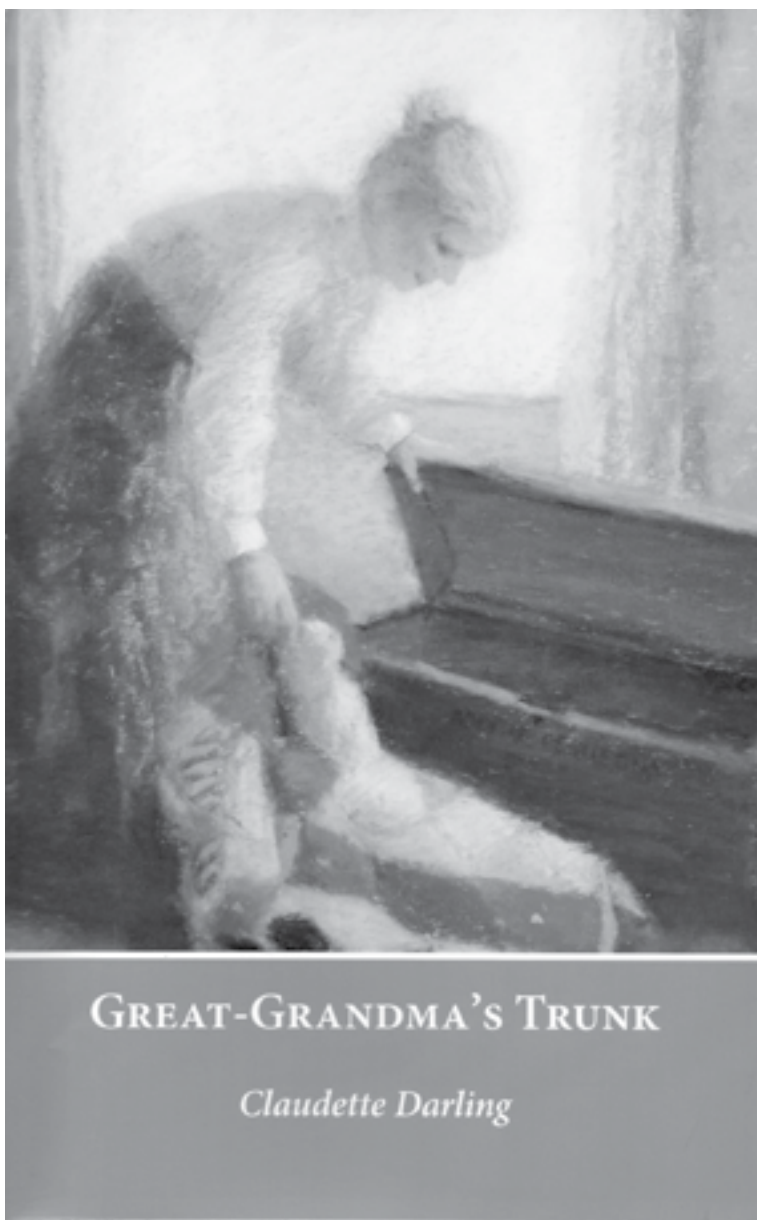
Emma's school experiences and life during the Victorian era are described in the second section of the book. Francois Pequegnat had a dispute with the watch company, and decided to move to St. Louis, Michigan to be among friends. In later years, Emma entertained her children and grandchildren by telling stories about their move—traveling by a covered wagon pulled by six oxen. This was good material for the book. Emma met her future husband, Frederick Schultheiss, around 1880. They went through a Victorian style romance, and then eloped on 4 March 1882. Frederick was well known in the St. Louis area for building barns, but they also farmed on land just east of St. Louis. They had seven children, and I learned about their lives and personalities from interviews with aunts, uncles, and cousins.

I finally finished the book in 2008. I'll be the first to admit that it was not easy at times, and I probably never would have finished it, except for the prodding of my oldest granddaughter, Julie Kalinowski. She was majoring in editing and publishing at GVSU, and she gave me the tips and encouragement that I needed.

All during the writing process of *Great-Grandma's Trunk*, I was under the mistaken assumption that it would only be of interest to family members. So, when I was finally done, I had it printed and bound in a large format—8 1/2 by 11 inch book. I had 75 copies made, and they were immediately snatched up by aunts, uncles, and cousins. Copies were loaned out to friends, and I received requests for more books. Julie suggested that I have it printed in paperback size. I went to Schuler Books to check out their Chapbook Press publishing system. They walked me through the process, I received my ISBN number, and *Great-Grandma's Trunk* came off the press.

Now, my book is for sale at Schuler Books, on Amazon.com, and I have copies printed for myself that I sell. I am amazed at how well it has been received. It seems as though anyone who likes historical fiction enjoys my book. I have even given a couple of "author talks," one at Schuler Books and one at our local Algoma Township Historical Society.

I would be happy to answer questions for anyone interested in having their family history published. You can contact me at Genealya@aol.com.



The Learning Corner

By Shirley M. DeBoer, CGSM

PLACES TO FIND A FEMALE'S MAIDEN OR MARRIED NAME

1. U. S. census records after 1850 include given names; as time goes by watch for daughter-in-law, mother, mother-in-law, sister, and father-in-law.
2. Church records: baptism, marriage, burial. Search PERSI, the PERiodical Source Index by surname and/or place name (location). There may be a number of pages of church records in a journal, but only the name of the church and location will be indexed in PERSI.
3. Diaries, letters and/or manuscript collections. Don't forget to "Google" the location and inquire.
4. Death records that include the female, that of her husband, children, parents, brothers and sisters. Birth records, especially FHL films (all U.S) and marriage applications and/or marriage records.
5. Check newspapers for obituaries, social columns, announcements, personal notices, etc.
6. Civil War pension records and widow's pension applications often contain a copy of the marriage record or written information concerning the date and place. They sometimes include children's names and birthdates as well as the death date and possibly a death record of each parent.
7. Tombstones carry maiden and married names; if you can, visit the cemetery in person.
8. Photographs often carry information on the back and sometimes the photographer gives a place.
9. Mothers, daughters and sisters were the letter writers; collateral relatives may have copies.
10. State libraries and archives; easily reached with on the Internet.

Using the clues below, fill in the crossword puzzle on the next page with the correct word. Each answer is a term that describes a woman or relates to her status.

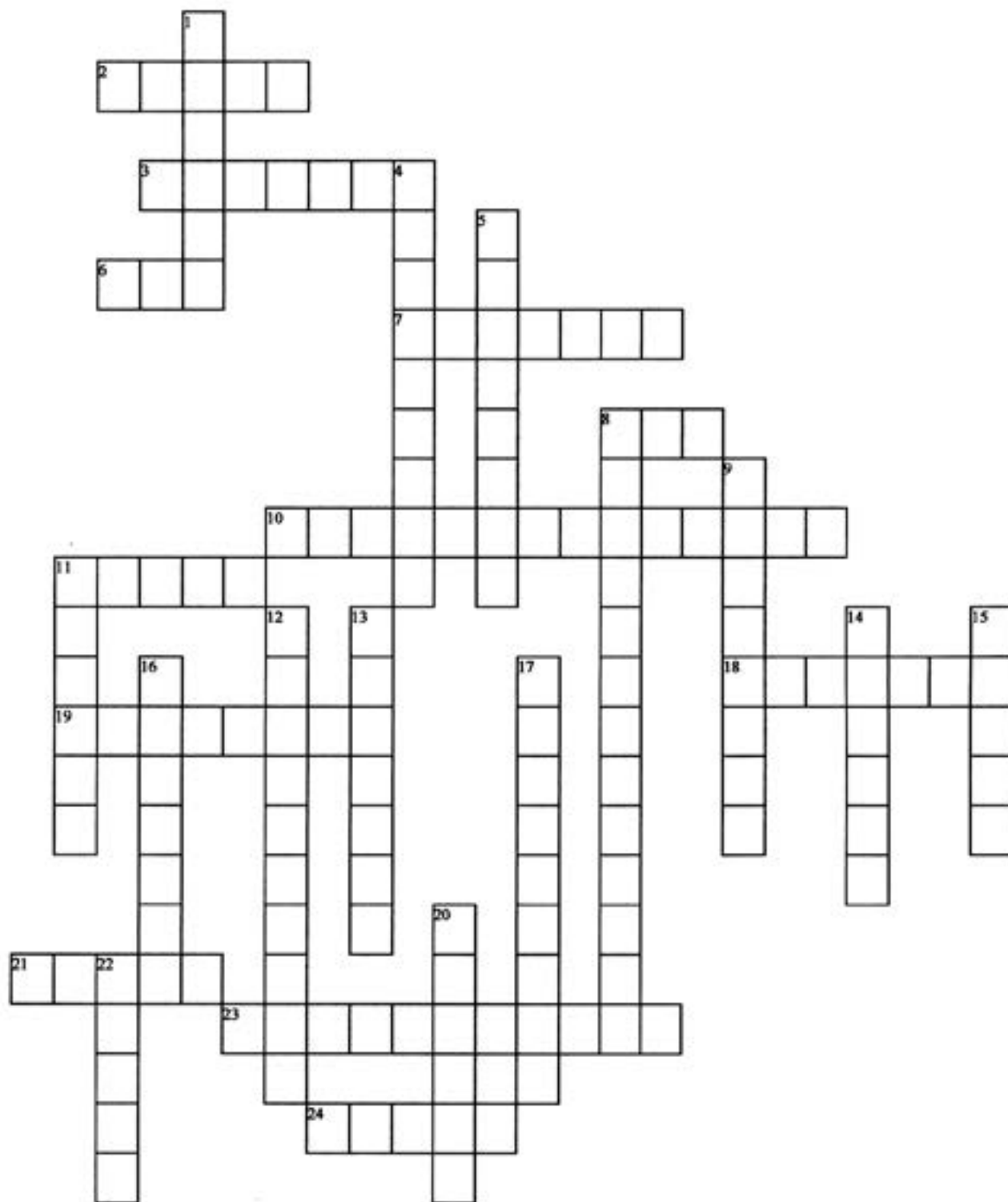
Across

2. an older housewife
3. bride selected by a man having seen her photograph
6. a goodwife
7. companion; woman who predeceased her husband
8. money given by a husband to his wife
10. court assigned woman to manage estate
11. property the bride brings to her marriage
18. widow with title or property from her husband
19. an unmarried woman who is regarded
21. widow's estate in her husband's property
23. society in which females are the heads of families
24. her sister's daughter

Down

1. women of doubtful reputations
4. woman named in a will to distribute the estate
5. female slave or indentured servant
8. the wife's stuff
9. a grandmother
11. unmarried young lady
12. original patentee of a federal or state land grant
13. husband's interest in deceased wife's property
14. woman in charge of a school, hospital or prison
15. name for a widow when her husband has deserted her
16. woman who assists in childbirth
17. woman who lives unmarried with a man
20. a widow
22. female servant

All About Women



Answers to the Crossword Puzzle will appear in the January/February/March 2013 *Michigana*.

Things We Can Learn from Church Records

By Pam Swiler

As a member of the Historical Records Committee for the First Congregational Church of Lake Odessa, I have had the pleasure of going through many of the records for this church. As I paged through documents dating back to the late 1800s, I thought about how many bits of information are available to those of us doing genealogical research. The following is one example of what I found and the information I gleaned from that data.

Reverend A.J. Pitman, the pastor at that time, sent out an undated letter, announcing a Recognition Service to be held on June 5, 1960. The letter was an invitation to the all friends and members of the church, but targeted the "charter members" or "those of the older generation." It noted that the service would be followed by a potluck luncheon, "at which time a history of the church will be given."

There would be a reading of the names of the "oldest and older members." There would also be a reading of the letters that were received from those who were unable to attend this special event. Many of us today would love to have been there to hear those names read. Mrs. Blossom of Portland, Michigan sent the following:

"Mrs. Blossom called via phone – saying she would like very much to be here today – but it is impossible. Her parents joined the church Feb – 1894 Mr. & Mrs. Hilard Andrewe – She joined the church a couple years latter. Lived next door to Ermal Garlingers parents. Can remember Ermal since he was one day old.

Sends special greetings to Edna Steele and all others who may remember her.

Hopes Mrs. Not knowing the present needs, would suggest a pair of Sterling Silver vases or candle sticks for alter, or a Baptismal Font. There would be ample funds for both.

Sincerely, Mrs. Anna Loomis"

(The question came to mind – What did the church end up doing? Further research is necessary to answer that question.)

Col. Sherman Strong, Retired writes:

"Dear Rev Pitman: Thanks for this kind invitation to help celebrate May 5. Expect I am among the oldest members in point of years tho not in service. Shall be with you in thought. Have recently suffered an attack of Coronary Thrombosis and my Doc advises it best not to wander too far from Patterson Army Hospital. Have so many pleasant memories. Shall be there in thought.

Am inclosing a small contribution in memory of the day.

Sincerely, Sherman Strong"

Eloile Miller from Glen Dale, West Virginia writes:

"Dear Rev. Pitman & Congregation: I do appreciate your kind invitation to return to Lake O and help celebrate this recognition Sunday. It's a wonderful thing to do. As I look back over our life together can very truthfully say we spent some of the happiest there. My neice and her husband have offered to drive me there in their new station wagon. But I do not feel equal to such a long trip. Kindly remember me to Anna Reiser and Katherine Laughlin and any others who may remember me. Inclosed a small gift.

Sincerely, Eloile Miller"

On the same letter...from Greenville, Mich.

"Dear Friends: Many thanks for the invitation to be with you on Sunday. Sorry but my health will not permit. Shall be thinking about you all.

Your Friend Searing."

May 30, 1960, Lola Avis Hoekstad of Traverse City, Michigan writes:



This is the Congregational Church in Lake Odessa, Michigan. It was likely taken before 1950, but the exact year is unknown. If anyone can be more specific, it would be appreciated. Photograph courtesy of the author.

"Dear Sir: Thank you very much for your invitation to my husband and me to attend your recognition service. We would like very much to be with you but have commitments to our First Congregational Church here. Please remember us to the Skentelburgers, any of the Healey Family who are present, and to any who admit that their memories go back forty five years or more.

Sincerely Lola Avis Hoekstad"

The church bulletin for that Sunday had the regular service schedule, hymns, and offertory. The unique part came with the sermon which was given by Rev. Wm. H. Skentelbury, Litchfield, Michigan. The bulletin stated, "Mr. Skentelbury is the son of the fourth pastor of this Church, Rev. W.H. Skentelbury."

The bulletin continued asking those in attendance to remain upstairs until the tables were set for dinner.

Included in the bulletin was a listing of the ministers who had served this church. They were as follows:

Rev. A.J. Phillips, Rev. J.W. Arney, Rev. J.A. Seibert, Rev. W.H. Skentelbury, Rev. T.C. Jones, Rev. W.J. Prestige, Rev. L. Stedmen, Rev. E.L. Prentice., Rev. A.H. Lash, Rev. J.L. Cook, Rev. Arthur E. Gay, Rev. George Start, Rev. E.A. Humphrey, Rev. Stephen J. Paull, Rev. John W. Winger, Rev. Glen McCarty, Rev. W.B. Patterson and the current pastor of the time, A.J. Pitman.

On the back of the bulletin was "The Oldest Christian Hymn" by Clement of Alexandria, about A.D. 200

The history was given at the dinner table by Mrs. Nettie Aldrich.

So, as you can see, a great deal of information can be gathered from a few simple letters and the church bulletin. We learned where people moved, people they remember from the church, the names of all the ministers who have served, who the historian was at that time, when people attended the church, some parents' names, and even the illnesses that had stricken some.

Each of these items are clues researchers can use to locate additional information. From this data, we can locate where people have moved to, and possibly died there. We can develop timelines based on some information, i.e. by finding out Ermal Garlinger's age that can tell us what year Anna Loomis lived next door to him. We had a beginning time period to work from because we know what date the celebration was. Many small pieces to this puzzle, can create a whole picture with time and patience. I encourage you to look into church records when doing your genealogy. You will find much more than just dates and names if you look hard enough.

Pam Swiler is a long time member of the Western Michigan Genealogical Society, and for many years was the President of the Ionia County Genealogical Society. If you have comments or questions she may be contacted at pkswiler@voyager.net

New Options for Michigan Research

By Bobbi Schirado, Jessica Miller and Kris Rzepczynski

Many Western Michigan Genealogical Society members traveled to Lansing several years ago to protest the closing of the Library of Michigan. Since then, a great deal of negotiation has occurred. The end result for researchers is generally positive, with new resources becoming available online, others moving from the Library to the Archives of Michigan, and some remaining where they were.

The transfer of the Abrams Foundation Historical Collection to the Archives of Michigan from the Library of Michigan is now complete! The last book to be brought out to the open stacks, already in the Archives' holdings, was the Michigan Genealogical Council's (MGC) excellent publication, *Michigan Surname Index*. The Archives staff feels that this is a fitting "thank you" to MGC for their support these last few years, and an appropriate bookend to the first book in the move, Barbara Brown's, *History of the Geiger Family*.

Location and call number information in ANSWER, the online catalog available at www.answercat.org, has also been updated to reflect these changes; an Archives of Michigan resource will read "Archives of Michigan – Michigan Historical Center (2E)" in the Location field in the catalog record.

Researchers are encouraged to stop by and visit the Archives, take a look around, and see all the changes. Please contact the Archives staff with any questions. One popular misconception is that because it is an archives, all the resources are in closed stacks. False! Approximately two-thirds of the collection is in open stacks, allowing researchers to browse and discover the resources they are looking for; the remaining one-third will be available for quick retrieval. The Abrams Foundation Collection includes all of the books related to other states and those focused on one or more family surnames. All of the heavy-use items, including family histories, local histories, and passenger list indexes, will be in the open stacks.

In the past, researchers would sign in and place coats, notebooks, etc. in a locker. That has changed. You may now take computers, legal pads, jackets, etc. in with you and use them in a designated area. There are separate desks in a restricted area for viewing original records where no outside items are permitted.

The check-in process has also changed. Be sure to

bring personal identification that includes a photograph, preferably your driver's licence or a passport. First time visitors now fill out a short form, have their photograph taken, and receive a card that looks a great deal like a Michigan Driver's License. This card will be presented every time anyone visits in the future.

In the Archives, researchers will find family histories, passenger list resources, military indexes, city directories, getting-started handbooks and manuals, and local history and genealogy resources for dozens of states. States with strong ties to Michigan and its early migration pattern have more resources available. These include the New England region, New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and the Canadian provinces of Ontario and Quebec. All of these resources fit seamlessly with the Archives' already existing foundational collection of Michigan state, county, and local histories.

All of the original resources that were in the Archives have remained there. The print resources that have



Archivist Jessica Miller and Senior Archivist Kris Rzepczynski at the Archives of Michigan. Both they and the other archivists are more than willing to help find the information researchers want. Kris Rzepczynski was recently elected to the Board of Directors of the Federation of Genealogical Societies. WMGS members are delighted and offer him our sincere congratulations.

moved to the Archives are a complement to the already-outstanding collection of manuscript source material for Michigan. These include such genealogically rich records as naturalizations, rural property inventories, state prison registers, county court case files, tax assessments, and Michigan vital records.

Most original records are kept in the vault where the atmosphere is kept at a safe archival storage temperature and humidity. There are 63 circulars that describe the Archives collections. They can be read or downloaded as a PDF at www.seekingmichigan.com. Review them before arriving as it helps researchers to organize their thoughts and saves time.

Once you go into the restricted area you may only use your notebook and pencils. In general, digital cameras are permitted, but check with the staff to make sure. There are a number of binders in this area that have indexes for specific counties or types of records. Some material in this area can be searched by you, but most things need to be retrieved by one of the staff members. They are very willing to do that, and will help in any way they can. The staff currently makes copies for you (20 cents a page), but soon hopes to have photocopiers for patrons use available.

It should be noted that not all original Michigan records are in the Archives in Lansing. Some are located at



Some of the shelves holding the Abrams Foundation collection. It includes books focusing on family surnames and those with information about states other than Michigan.



The Archives has two computers available and researchers may also bring in their own laptops. Free WIFI is also available.

the Archives location in Kalamazoo.

The collection transfer to the Archives of Michigan would not have been possible without the continued support of the Abrams Foundation, the Michigan Genealogical Council, the Records Preservation & Access Committee, and the management team of the Michigan Historical Center. Researchers with roots in the Great Lakes State and beyond owe a great debt of gratitude to these forward-thinking organizations.

With the uncertainty of the last few years now behind us, this is an exciting time for family history research in Michigan. We encourage researchers to stop by, take a look around, and perhaps discover something new. The staff is looking forward to assisting you in your family history journey, whether it takes you to Michigan, the Great Lakes region, or beyond.

The digital platform for the Archives can be found at SeekingMichigan.org. Including Michigan State census records, Michigan Civil War regimental records, death records (from the Library of Michigan) covering 1897-1920, and naturalization indexes for more than 30 counties, this online destination for Michigan research will continue to grow.

Access Information

The Archives are open Monday - Friday, 1 p.m. - 5 p.m. Regular Saturday hours of 10 am - 4 pm will begin January 5, 2013 The Archives is closed on state holidays. It is located at 702 W. Kalamazoo Street, Lansing, MI 48913.

Phone: (517) 373-3559 E-mail: archives@michigan.gov

Photographs in this article courtesy of Bobbi Schirado.

NEW! Searchable 1884 and 1894 Michigan Census Data Online At SeekingMichigan.org

More than 62,000 Michigan state census records from 1884 and 1894 are now available to search and print for free at www.seekingmichigan.org. The Archives of Michigan digitized records and placed them online. Researchers are now able to view them in the comfort of their own homes, in schools or at libraries.

"These records will help family history researchers track important data, such as more extensive information about women and children," said Jessica Miller, archivist at the Archives of Michigan. "In Michigan prior to 1884, only numerical data about women and children was collected."

The state of Michigan conducted its own regular and special censuses at various times throughout history. Between 1854 and 1904, they were conducted every ten years. Until 1884, census takers recorded names and occupations only for men over the age of 21. They collected only numerical data about women and children.

In 1884, however, the information collected expanded considerably to include, among other statistics, the names of all residents, their ages and the number of years they had lived in Michigan. The 1884 and 1894 state census records fill in gaps created when the 1890 federal census was destroyed in a 1921 fire.

Miller noted the collection of state census records is incomplete because many of the documents have been lost over time. She said two stories are told about why the state's copies of the schedules no longer exist -- they may have been donated to a paper drive during World War II, or destroyed in a 1951 state office building fire. A complete list of the counties and years available online can be found to the right, or online, at www.seekingmichigan.org under "Discover." Seeking Michigan is administered by the Archives of Michigan through the support of the Michigan History Foundation. The Archives of Michigan is grateful to the Library of Michigan and the Burton Historical Collection at the Detroit Public Library for their help in making these records available.

The building, located at 702 W. Kalamazoo, Lansing, is the Michigan Historical Center. It houses the Archives of Michigan and the Michigan Historical Museum. For online research assistance, please visit the archives site www.seekingmichigan.org and the Michigan e-Library, www.mel.org.

The Michigan Historical Center is part of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Its museum and archival programs help people discover, enjoy and find inspiration in their heritage. The DNR oversees the Michigan Historical Museum, 11 regional museums and the Archives of Michigan. Learn more at www.michigan.gov/michiganhistory.

Contact: Jessica Miller, 517-373-1446 or millerj61@michigan.gov

The Details:

The State of Michigan conducted its own regular and special censuses at various times throughout history. This collection of state census records is incomplete because many of the documents have been lost over time. It contains records from the following counties and years:

Baraga (1884)
Barry (1884, 1894)
Bay (1884, 1894)
Benzie (1884)
Gratiot (1894)
Hillsdale (1884, 1894)
Ingham (1884, 1894)
Iosco (1894)
Jackson (1884, 1894)
Kalamazoo (1884, 1894)
Kent (1884, 1894 missing
 some from Grand Rapids)
Keweenaw (1884)
Lake (1884)
Lapeer (1884, 1894)
Lenawee (1884, 1894)
Livingston (1894)
Menominee (1884, 1894)
Midland (1894)
Montcalm (1884, 1894)
Muskegon (1884, 1894)
Newaygo (1884, 1894)
Ottawa (1884, 1894)
Roscommon (1884)
Sanilac (1884, 1894)
St. Clair (1884, 1894)
St. Joseph (1884, 1894)
Washtenaw (1884, 1894)
Wayne (1884, excluding
 Detroit)

Probate Files at the Archives of Michigan and the Great Cornell Chase

Part II

By Bobbi Schirado

Recap from Part I

In Part I of the “Great Cornell Chase,” the goal was to determine Charity Cornell Herrick’s parentage. No vital record, nor any other source ever listed their names, and she was never included in any census after 1850 with anyone but her husband and children. All of the proximity clues strongly suggested that Obadiah Cornell and Perlina Ammy were her parents, but no definitive evidence had been found.

Frederic Herrick was Charity Cornell and Norman Herrick’s eldest son. His original probate records were discovered at the Archives of Michigan and proved to hold some clues that might help to identify Charity’s parents.

In the probate records we learned that Thomas Cornell, a known son, and Lucy Cornell Thorpe, a known daughter, of Obadiah and Perlina, had life insurance policies that were payable to Frederic. Warren Cornell owed Frederic money for a mortgage and Rua Ball owed him \$40 for a personal loan.

Initially there was hope that Warren Cornell might be another possible son of Obadiah and Perlina. Further research determined, however, that his parents were Benjamin and Mary Cornell.¹ Could Benjamin and Mary also be Charity’s parents?

Benjamin Cornell

Checking census records for 1860 in Savannah Township, Wayne County, New York helped confirm the relationship between Warren and Benjamin.²

Benjamin Cornell	72
Margaret	68
Lewis	27
Listed next to Benjamin:	
Warrren Cornell	35
Catherine	28
William L.	1
Benjamin	28

Lewis B. 5
All were born in New York.

Finding Warren or Benjamin (the son) in the 1850 census proved futile. However, Benjamin and Margaret are listed with Philip Cogden in Palmyra Township, Wayne County New York. Benjamin is 60, Margaret 58 and Lewis is 24. It would have been helpful to know where the others were in 1850, but either they were missed in the census completely, or the enumerator used either bad, or very creative penmanship.

The 1870 Walton Township, Eaton Township census does include the Benjamin Cornell who lived with Warren in 1860.⁴ Benjamin is listed right next to three families headed by Frederic, Obadiah and George Herrick - all sons of Charity Cornell. Several page later, Benjamin and Margaret’s sons, Warren and Lewis, also appear in the Walton Township census. This somewhat solidifies the connections between the family of Benjamin and Margaret Cornell and Charity Cornell, but the exact relationship is still unclear.

Also in the 1870 census, a man named Benjamin Cornell, born circa 1788, is living with Josiah and Julia Shotwell and their family in Fredonia Township, Calhoun County, just south of Eaton County.⁵ Michigan Death Records note that Benjamin Cornell, born about 1788 in New York, died 22 December 1871, in Fredonia Township. His parents were John and Catherine Cornell. He was a farmer, white and a single male.⁶ His marital state makes it unclear if this is the correct Benjamin or not. If it is, that would take the search back another generation.

Benjamin’s son, Lewis, died in the Village of Davison, in Genasee County, Michigan in 1913. He was 87, and his parents are named as Benjamin Cornell and Margret Emigh. All three were born in New York.⁷ Knowing Margaret’s surname may help in future research.

I now had proof that children of Obadiah and Perlina Ammy Cornell, and those of Benjamin and Mararet Emigh Cornell all settled in Walton

Township, Eaton County, Michigan, about the same time. So, instead of narrowing the search down to simply proving Charity was Obadiah's daughter, I now needed to prove that she either was, or was not Benjamin's.

Rua Ball

One of the other questions arising from Frederic Herrick's Probate Records, involved the identity of Rua Ball and her relationship to Frederic. Rua had borrowed \$40 from Frederic. Everyone else mentioned in the papers had either been a Cornell or a Herrick. Was Rua? This proved to be one of those tangled webs. Initially, no sign of a Rua Ball could be found in any census from 1850 to 1880. Since probate occurred in 1887, it was likely that whoever she was, she married after the 1880 census was taken. The 1900 census provided several answers. Rua Ball was enumerated with her son, Frank Raymond, in Fremont Township, Isabella County, Michigan.⁷

Frank Raymond	Head	40
Lenord F.	son	12
Harry	son	11
Ethel	daughter	8
Lura May	daughter	5
Rua Ball	mother	74
Julia Raymond	sister	48
Earl Schrib	step-son	17

Rua and both of her parents were born in New York. But Frank's mother was born in Ohio, and Rua indicates she only had one child, and that that child had died, so Rua was really Frank's step-mother. Both Rua and Frank had been widowed.

Armed with a new surname for Rua, the 1880 census showed that she too, lived in Eaton County, but in Carmel Township. This time finding her was difficult because her first name was spelled as "Rueah" Ball.⁸ Going back in time, she was again discovered in the 1860 Carmel Township with her husband Daniel Raymond.⁹ A little further down on the same census page, were Lucy Cornell Thorpe (Obadiah's and Perlina's daughter) and her family. To possibly learn more about Rua/Rueah Ball, I searched for her death certificate on www SeekingMichigan.org. And there she was.

Rua died in 1908, in Fremont Township, Isabella County. She was born in 1827, in New York, and her parents were Obediah Cornell and Pauline Amie. This was the first time Rua had been definitely connected to the family in any way.

The Next Plan of Attack

Thomas, Lucy and Rua children of Obadiah and Perlina Cornell, and Warren, Benjamin and Lewis Cornell, sons of Benjamin and Margaret Cornell all lived in Eaton County at the same time. Members of both families were connected to Frederic Herrick, Charity's son. It would be very unlikely if the two families weren't related. However, I still had no specific proof identifying whether Charity's father was Obadiah or Benjamin.

Since I'd had such great luck with Frederic Cornell's Probate Records at the Archives of Michigan, I decided the next step would be to look at any other Cornell, Herrick related surname records.

- Warren Cornell had probate records, but they were slim and provided no additional information.

- Ruby and Gertrude Cornell, two of Thomas Cornell's children, were the subject of Guardianship proceedings following their mother's death, but other than providing more information about Thomas' life, their file was unhelpful.

- Daniel Raymond had probate papers following his death in 1861, involving his three children and Rua Cornell his wife. There were no additional clues regarding Charity, but these records and subsequent court cases reveal that Rue suffered several spousal losses during her life.

- About 1865, Rua Cornell Raymond remarried David Bissett

www SeekingMichigan.org is an online resource provided by the Archives of Michigan. It allows researchers to see actual, rather than transcribed, death certificates. The certificate above was taken from the Internet.

and he became the guardian for Daniel Raymond's children as shown in guardianship papers. David dies in 1867, and his probate records are available, but shed no additional information about Charity or other Cornells.

- Sometime after 1870, Rua remarries again to a man named Jay Ball. Once again there guardianship papers for the youngest child. Apparently Jay Ball died before the 1880 census because Rua was listed as a widow there. There were no probate records in the Archives of Michigan for Jay Ball, nor have any death records been located.¹⁰

Having searched though the Cornell and Herrick records at the Archives of Michigan, and used SeekingMichigan.org several times already with a bit of success, I went back to search for any other relatives of Obadiah or Benjamin Cornell. I found one possibility.

Rhenna Shaw died 30 Apr 1906 in Parma, Jackson County, Michigan. She was 78, born in 1828 in New York, and a married housewife. Her father was Obadiah Cornell, born in New York, and her mother is Unknown. W.H. Morton was the informant. She was buried in Parma Cemetery on 3 May 1906.¹¹

Could there be more of Obadiah's children that could be identified from other sources? FamilySearch.org is another free resource with a wonderful online index. It did provide another possible daughter, Lydia Cornell Goodrich. She died in 1868, in Grand Ledge, Eaton County, was born in 1823, and her parents were Obediah and Janie Cornell. She was born in New York and Obediah's residence was also New York.¹²

Now there were two more possible children for Obadiah, one whose mother also seemed to be Perlina (Pauline), and the other whose mother's first name was Janie. Both were living close or in Eaton County when they died. No additional children for Benjamin Cornell were discovered.

One of the best ways to track a family is to look for them in the United States censuses every ten years, but before 1850, only the name of the head of the household is given. Before 1850, all other members can only be identified by their age brackets of gender, and it's a less exacting source. So the next research steps had to involve determining whether Lydia was a half-sister to Charity or not, and then trying to find Obadiah and Perlina's, and Benjamin and Margaret's families in the 1840, 1830 and 1820 New York censuses.

Frederic Herrick's probate records had certainly given us a lot more information about his family and relatives than we had had. It narrowed down and expanded options for identifying Charity's parents and created several new lines of information that needed further research. Part III will follow some of those options.

*To be continued in the January/February/
March issue of Michigan.*

Endnotes.

1 *Michigan Deaths 1867-1897*, index and images, FamilySearch, (<https://familysearch.org/pal/MM9.1.1.N3XG-7J7>: accessed 5 September 2012; Warren Cornell 27 August 1887.

2 1860 Savannah Township, Wayne County, New York census; Roll: M653_876; Page: 138; Image: 139; Family History Library Film: 803876. Ancestry.com. 1860 United States Federal Census [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA

3 1850 Palmyra Township, Wayne County, New York; Roll: M432_612; Page: 29A; Image: 64. Ancestry.com. 1850 United States Federal Census [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA.

4 1870 Walton Township, Eaton, Michigan; Roll: M593_670; Page: 341A; Image: 685; Family History Library Film: 552169. Ancestry.com. 1870 United States Federal Census [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA.

5 1870 Fredonia Township, Calhoun, Michigan census; Roll: M593_667; Page: 594B; Image: 13; Family History Library Film: 552166. Ancestry.com. 1870 United States Federal Census [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA.

6 Ancestry.com. Michigan, Deaths and Burials Index, 1867-1995 [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2011.

7 1900 Fremont Township, Isabella County, Michigan census; Roll: 718; Page: 6B; Enumeration District: 0069; FHL microfilm: 1240718. Ancestry.com. 1900 United States Federal Census [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA.

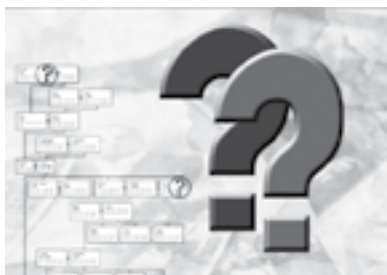
8 1880 Carmel Township, Eaton County, Michigan Census; Roll: 578; Family History Film: 1254578; Page: 200B; Dwelling 18; Family 19; Enumeration District: 71; Image: 0168. Ancestry.com and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. 1880 United States Federal Census [database on-line].

9 1860 Village of Vermontville, Eaton County, Michigan; Roll: M653_542; Page: 858; Dwelling 1384; Family 1362; Image: 362; Family History Library Film: 803542. Ancestry.com. 1860 United States Federal Census [database on-line].

10 All of the records referred to in this section of the article can be found as original documents at the Archives of Michigan. Eaton County has an extensive collection of court records there.

11 Death Record: "Michigan, Deaths and Burials, 1800-1995," index, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal/MM9.1.1/FHJ1-V4N> : accessed 26 Oct 2012).

12 "Michigan, Deaths, 1867-1897," index and images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/pal/MM9.1.1/N3DK-YY6> : accessed 18 Dec 2012), Lydia Goodrich, 02 Dec 1868.



The “Why” of Genealogy

As I’ve become more involved in the genealogy community and I’ve built up my own genealogy-related business, I find I am often asked to give interviews. I like being interviewed and I will reply to almost any request for an interview as long as the questions are genealogy-related and it helps bring more people into the family history community.

In addition, after moderating many panels for genealogy conferences and events, plus hosting my own radio show, it is fun to be on the other end of the microphone, as it were, providing my thoughts on genealogy.

The Question: Why Do You Do Genealogy?

Invariably, one question is almost always on the list provided by the interviewer: “Why do you do genealogy?”

My usual response “Well, why not do genealogy?” gets a few laughs, but really doesn’t stress the importance of why I and millions of others are obsessed with tracing their ancestry and heritage. Do you ever get so wrapped up in the “hunt” that you sometimes lose focus as to why you want to know more about your ancestors? Is “doing genealogy” such a large part of your life that the motivational factors sometimes defy description? Do you have trouble putting into words what researching your roots means to you?

I’m Not Crazy, I’m Just Genealogy-Obsessed

Many of my friends not only call me “genealogy obsessed,” but whenever I mention my latest find or how I recently visited a cemetery, they think it is just one more mile post on the road to “Crazy Town.”

They fear that I’ve become the equivalent of an ancestor “hoarder” and that they’ll have to tunnel through 20 years’ worth of genealogical records to find my body one day. When I use terms like “citing sources” or “ahnentafels” to them I may as well be speaking in tongues. The fact that I can draw a four generation tree of my family from memory does not mesmerize them. It only gives them hard evidence in the form of a written document to be used when and if I should be committed.

I don’t think it is really that bad. However, when I attempt to explain the things I do (which seem normal as a genealogist), I get frustrated. It is like trying to explain to someone why you follow a certain spiritual path or a specific faith.

Genealogy Is a Journey of Faith

Could the passion for genealogy actually be similar to one’s own faith, one’s own spiritual compass? In my eyes, faith is something that evolves over time, just as one’s pas-

sion/obsession for genealogy also evolves. Both represent a journey often to a destination unknown. Let’s look at the similarities...

- If we’re lucky, we discover genealogy when we are young, either through an older family relative or at school.
- Our family members may have stressed the importance of knowing our heritage, of telling family stories and sharing old photos.
- We may have dabbled with different hobbies in college, but we always came back to genealogy.
- We attend weekly or monthly gatherings where we meet with other genealogists and discuss what genealogy means to us.
- Our community has leaders and those who preach about various aspects of genealogy. Some are so popular that we pack classrooms and worship them as idols.
- We keep the family traditions and place them in context by explaining to others in the family the origins of certain customs and practices.
- Old documents and records not only feed our obsession, but we often hunger for more and are willing to volunteer our time indexing them and advocating for their unfettered access.
- You know another genealogist either when you see them or the minute you start talking to them. There is a certain kinship, a certain bonding as you swap surnames and discuss your brick walls.

See, it really isn’t such a far-fetched an idea after all. Genealogy brings meaning to our lives in so many ways that, again, we can’t often explain it, even to our close loved ones. It is a path, a journey and has its own strange practices and routines.

So how do you put all this in words when attempting to answer that “why” question? It might just be easier to “show” rather than tell. I’ve learned that once I can show a person photos, stories and how my ancestors fit into history, I get to see that arched eyebrow, or that glimmer in the eye. Then I know I’ve started to make sense.



Thomas MacEntee, Flip-Pal mobile scanner ambassador, is a genealogy professional specializing in the use of technology and social media to improve genealogy research and as a way to connect with others in the family history community. He shares his thoughts on why we search for our ancestors.

Sometimes SinS Yield Dividends: Who Was Ainslie?

By Al Dawson

The Beginning:

Arthur Conan Doyle and a Symposium

Toronto is one of my ancestral homes. My Smith great-grandparents, both born in England, came from Toronto to Detroit (where I was born years later) due to a lockout at a shoe factory. That factory (long gone) was two streets away from the Hotel Victoria in Toronto, where I spent three weeks in October, 2011, doing genealogy. At the end of my stay, I attended the SinS Symposium. When, I thought, I would concentrate on something other than genealogy. But fate had something special in mind for me! And I'd like to share it with you.

I learned from a fellow "Bootmaker" about SinS. I am unique among the "Bootmakers of Toronto," a society affiliated with the "Baker Street Irregulars," not for being an American member, but because two of my ancestors actually made boots in Victorian Toronto! If you are not familiar with Arthur Conan Doyle's, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, you might not know the connection. In the book, the heir to Baskerville Hall, Sir Henry, comes from Canada to Devonshire. One of the mysteries Sherlock Holmes has to solve is why someone stole just one of Sir Henry's boots, which were made in Toronto.

"A Study in Scandal" (SinS) was a symposium on the controversial aspects of Arthur Conan Doyle's career, and the world he lived in. Fittingly, it was held at the Toronto Reference Library, where I had spent many pleasant hours gleaning family clues from city directories on microfilm. It houses one of the finest collections of Sherlockiana in the world: The Arthur Conan Doyle Collection.

The symposium was four days long and included terrific speakers, like Chris Redmond, Lyndsay Faye, Peter Calamai and (by video link from Australia), Doug Elliott, just to name a few. We had a ghost-walk of Toronto, a banquet which featured a psychic, a world premier play written by Barbara Rusch (the Chair of SinS) and lectures which added to our knowledge of topics such as spiritualism, fairy photographs, the Piltdown Man controversy, the tragedy of Roger Casement and the 1908 Olympics.

The only down-side to our setting was that the library was (and still is) undergoing an extensive renovation. This was a minor annoyance during my two weeks of genealogical research as I often heard grunts and bangs from librarians moving shelves and materials to other floors. The

beautifully designed building has an open atrium - and glass elevators overlooking this canyon of knowledge. The library was briefly featured in the 2010 film, "RED." Anytime you walk the streets of Toronto you might see a film crew at work!

The Letters

But the real sorrow was that the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection was closed! To ameliorate this problem, librarian Peggy Perdue, who has responsibility for the collection, had arranged a special exhibit for us to see, containing several dozen items.

One item fascinated me: a letter written from Arthur Conan Doyle to someone named "Ainslie." I asked Peggy why the recipient's name was in quotation marks. She explained that this one-page letter was one of two purchased for the collection in 2004, at an auction run by Christie's. I later learned that a third letter was purchased by one of the "Bootmakers." Twelve letters, without envelopes, were part of Lot 91. Authentication had proven that the letters had been sent by Conan Doyle; but the recipient was known only by the one name: Ainslie. For more information on these letters I direct you to an excellent inventory by Sherlockian Randall Stock: http://www.bestofsherlock.com/ref/200405christies_lots.htm

The full literary treatment of the discovery is to be found in my article "The Identification of Ainslie" in *The Magic Door*, v. 14, no. 2 (Summer 2012), pp. 1,6,7. That is the publication of The Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection, Toronto Public Library. It is a worthy organization and you might consider joining. In my article you will learn of Ainslie's relationships with Oscar Wilde, Constance Wilde, Henry James, Sir James Barrie, Aubrey Beardsley, Walter Crane, Sarah Bernhardt and James McNeill Whistler (just to name a few) as well as a host of other famous Victorian and Edwardian figures.

But, never fear: this article is intended for hard-core genealogists, as a case study of how history, literature and persistence led me to the identity of the mysterious Ainslie and his fascinating family. There will, necessarily, be some overlap between the two articles, but I'll try to keep that to a minimum. And you will be treated to new ideas and information about the search and the discovery.

But I'm getting ahead of myself, and I guess the next thing to do is to tell you about the stupid thing I said in

Mena

Dear Ainslie

Have you ever been to
Jerusalem? If not would you
care to come with me? It would be
possible to do it in a few days there &
back via Alexandria & Jaffa - if
there is no quarantine

Yours very truly

Arthur Conan Doyle.

This is a copy of the letter sent by Arthur Conan Doyle to Ainslie that sent the author on his search. It was sent from Mena, Egypt, and mentions locations in the Middle East. The original can be found at the Toronto Reference Library's Arthur Conan Doyle Collection. Used with permission.

that room full of people, who were examining the special exhibits. There is a lot more to the story of what caused me to open my big mouth: but, while dinosaurs no longer roam the earth, lawyers surely do, and as my wife sagely says: this is funny in your lecture on this topic, but not for publication. If I ever get invited to come to Grand Rapids to give my PowerPoint presentation, you will get the entire backstory.

So in a room full of people that (with one exception) I admired, several of whom were speakers at SinS, a loud voice suddenly said: "I'll bet a genealogist could find out who Ainslie was!" And thus I was committed, or perhaps should have been.

Making a Plan

In retrospect, over a year after I made the discovery, I still marvel that I never had a doubt that I would be successful. I have often undertaken a genealogical puzzle for another person, but always with the caveat that a solution was not guaranteed. So what made me so sure this time? I think the answer lies in two directions: first I was in Toronto, a city that has always opened doors that led to my ancestors, both in Canada and in England. More importantly, I am not just a genealogist but someone trained in historical procedures, with an emphasis on Victorian society. As a student of history I have learned the important lesson of "taking my meals in the kitchen." While it is true

that I never lived in Victorian England (except genetically) – over the years I have continued to absorb more and more knowledge about this time and place. So I would be researching on my home turf, so to speak. If I didn't know of a particular person I might run across in my research, I knew where to look to find more about that individual. And I knew very well that Victorian society was, if nothing else, a series of connections.

When I got back to my hotel room I went online and learned all I could about the dozen letters auctioned off in 2004 at Christie's. I started thinking of ways to determine the identity of the unknown recipient. Immediately two problems came to light: "Ainslie" was both a given name and a surname in Victorian times, and in the 1891 Great Britain census (the one closest to the 1895-96 letters), I found a total of 828 people with the surname Ainslie in England, Scotland and Wales.¹ In another search I even found a man named Ainslie D. Ainslie, which I thought a bit superfluous at the time. But I wrote him into my notebook.

Then I took a shower, where I do my best thinking. By the time I was dressed for the SinS banquet I had developed a plan of action. I would look for:

(a) a male younger than Arthur Conan Doyle, who was born in 1859. (SinS reinforced the notion that ACD would never write to a woman as "Dear Ainslie.") From internal evidence in the letters, I felt Conan Doyle was writing to a younger person.

(b) a resident of Scotland or the North of England (again based on textual information.)

(c) someone involved in Spiritualism (mentioned in one letter) – if for no other reason the Ainslie letters SHOULD be included in the Collected Letters of Arthur Conan Doyle because of this evidence of ACD's interest in spiritualism long before the death of his son, Kingsley, in October, 1917.

(d) a man with economic (or occupational) freedom to travel.

And (e) (a guess) an artistic or literary man.

The list of possible Ainslies, based on the first two criteria, was now under one hundred individuals. I hoped the last three criteria would be helpful in sorting wheat from chaff.

The First Red Herring

One immediate candidate was Gilbert Hamilton Ainslie, whom I found in the 1891 census, born in Lancashire, about 1861. The census entry included the intriguing phrase: "Living on own means." Further search-

ing in Ancestry.com yielded a ship's record showing that Gilbert, age 57, landed in Quebec on November 22, 1920.² While this was not a year Conan Doyle was in Canada, anything about that country was bound to catch my eye! This document indicated Gilbert Hamilton Ainslie was born about 1863. Do I have to tell genealogists never to trust a census (and never, never a ship's manifest!) when it comes to someone's age?

However, when I looked at his occupation in the 1881 census it was Civil Engineer. He is listed as 22.³ What if this was the right Ainslie? He could have been the inspiration for the Sherlock Holmes story "The Adventure of the Engineer's Thumb" – published in 1892. So I continued to search for a link between the two men.

Cricket was the answer! The website www.cricket-archive.com gave me Gilbert Hamilton Ainslie's birthdate as January 24, 1859 (making him a few months older than Conan Doyle, who was born on May 22 of the same year!) Ainslie played on various teams associated with Charterhouse School in 1875 – 1876. Conan Doyle mentions the school in his non-Holmesian story: "The Mystery of Cloomber." ACD played cricket for the Marylebone Cricket Club, but at a much later date, and, of course was educated at Stonyhurst, in Lancashire, putting him in the county where Gilbert Ainslie was born, but at the time Ainslie was in Surrey (where Conan Doyle would later live!)

However, I could find no evidence that the two men ever met. Gilbert Hamilton Ainslie, I decided, was a red herring – so I bottled him up and placed him on a shelf for future reference.

The Wrong Ones

Quickly now: three examples of Ainslies that were more easily eliminated from my search. 1891 census: Walter Ainslie, born c. 1861, Howick, Northumberland. Occupation: blacksmith. He supported his widowed mother and four siblings. He was ruled out as lacking the economic means or leisure to travel. Same year, but in Scotland: Alexander Ainslie, born c. 1863, Fifeshire, St. Andrews. Occupation: railway surfaceman: a railway worker who kept the railway bed in good repair; essential work, but it ruled him out for the same reason.

James Ainslie, born c. 1867 in Whitby, Yorkshire (where Count Dracula landed in England!) was, like his father, a hopperman. This seems to be an occupation connected with railways and shipping and/or dredging. But, again, unlikely to be an occupation allowing one to run off to Egypt on a whim!

A few more went up on the shelf with Gilbert Hamilton Ainslie: a Thomas, who was a wine merchant and another Alexander, who was a student of medicine. Both were from Edinburgh.

The Right Ainslie?

By the end of October I had looked at all of these people, utilizing a number of genealogical resources. I kept coming back to one man, Douglas Ainslie [see photograph on the next page]. Confession being good for a Sinner, I'll admit that the facts that he was born in Paris, lived in a Scottish castle and was at Eton at the time of the 1881 census were mesmerizing! Ironically, he was not in the 1891 census. As I added more and more items to my Douglas Ainslie file I started to feel in my bones that he was the one. But, as my graduate advisor in Chapel Hill, all those years ago, cautioned me: "Feeling it in your bones is the onset of arthritis! Look for evidence! So I did just that.

Many sources listed 1865 as the year of Douglas Ainslie's birth. However, in his 1922 memoir, *Adventures Social and Literary*, he states that he was born in Paris on December 16, 1866. His father was Secretary to the British Ambassador. His mother was also from a diplomatic family, the Morgans, that had served in Russia. She was toying with the name of Augustus Grant Duff (Grant Duff was the family name) when a telegram arrived from a lawyer, informing the father-to-be that his maternal uncle, Mr. Douglas Ainslie had just died. Under the terms of the will, Mr. Grant Duff would inherit several properties, including Delgaty Castle in Aberdeenshire, if he would change his last name to Ainslie and name his first born son after the deceased man. Grant Duff immediately changed his own name to Ainslie Douglas Ainslie and his son was named Douglas Ainslie.⁴ You may remember that I had run across Ainslie D. Ainslie at the very start of my research efforts!

Douglas Ainslie?

Young Douglas was educated at Eton and Exeter College, Oxford and was a founding member of the O. U. D. S. – the Oxford University Dramatic Society. He was always destined for the diplomatic service, but instead followed another family tradition: literature. As a translator, poet and dramatist (as well as a dramatic critic), Douglas Ainslie made a small splash in that very large pond that was late Victorian England. The importance of Ainslie, however, was as a connection between a myriad of people in the Victorian and Edwardian periods, as well as the years between the two World Wars.

Douglas Ainslie knew Oscar Wilde, Walter Pater, Henry James, Somerset Maugham, James Barrie, Aubrey Beardsley (Douglas contributed to *The Yellow Book*), Walter Crane, Sarah Bernhardt, Edmond Rostand, Herbert Spencer, Benedetto Croce, Ignacy Jan Paderewski, Isadora Duncan, Lord Dunsany, James McNeill Whistler, Algernon Charles Swinburne and Virginia Woolf. Most of the people in this list (Barrie is a notable exception) grace the pages of "Adventures Social and Literary." There are also lesser-known lights, such as William Poel and Charles Conder, and rogues like the Marquis of Clanricarde. If you have Irish ancestry you will want to read about the last-named person and his father: between them they callously caused the emigration of numerous tenants.

But, of course, I was looking for Arthur Conan Doyle, and he is nowhere to be found in these pages, written eight years before ACD's death. Douglas Ainslie was perfect for the recipient of the letters, but where was the proof? Yes, he was interested in ghosts and spiritualists; yes, he travelled extensively, with diplomatic postings in Berlin, The Hague, and Paris, as well as trips to Italy, the Far East and America. What I longed for, however, was to see him at Mena House in Cairo in 1895.

Proof

The researcher trying to unravel a political mystery is told to "follow the money." For the genealogist there is a different mantra: "follow the family!" I spent some time getting sidetracked by Ainslie's younger brothers, Percy and Julian (who get dropped into "Adventures" in a manner not unlike the first mention of Mycroft by his brother, Sherlock!). Percy Ainslie was an author of literature for children, best known for "Bertie Linton, or Lost in Japan," "The Priceless Orchid: A Story of Adventures in the Forests of the Yucatan" and "Saved By a Secret: A Story of Siberian Exile and Adventure." With titles like these, he was surely a candidate worth researching; or so I thought. In the end, he was just another jar on my crowded shelf.

Julian was the kind of Englishman who does only one thing, but does it well. In his case, that one thing was shooting birds and animals. I next tackled Ainslie's father, also a poet – an investigation that enhanced my knowledge of Scottish themes, but got me no closer to my goal. But the father had an older brother and it was there that I struck gold!

Sir Mountstuart Elphinstone Grant Duff, Douglas Ainslie's uncle, had been Governor of Madras from 1881 – 1886. It is clear from several passages in "Adventures," that Ainslie adored his uncle and considered him one of the finest of political diarists.⁵ "Notes From a Diary" runs to several volumes, and is in the University of Iowa library. Grant Duff ends his last entry for the year 1895 with the following:

"My nephew Douglas writes from the Mena House Hotel close to the Pyramids; – 'I have been riding lately with Conan Doyle, the novelist, and find him excellent company.'"⁶

I was elated, but also nervous. I reported my findings to Toronto, but sweated it out until my own first-edition copy of Ainslie's "Adventures Social and Literary" arrived by mail from England. My ebook version was searchable, but lacked one thing. The Table of Contents told me that at the end there should be a genealogical table of the Duffs and the Gordons. Not only would this gratify my growing curiosity about this family, but it would also set my mind at rest that there might be more than one nephew named "Douglas" in a large Scottish family!

Literary Connections

Once I confirmed that Douglas Ainslie was indeed the only Douglas who was nephew to Sir Mountstuart Elphinstone Grant Duff, I started working on my paper for *The Magic Door*. It was not until I started writing *this* article that I returned to the chart for a more detailed review and found something of interest. Douglas Ainslie was related, through his Gordon and Duff ancestors, to another more famous poet: George Gordon Byron (later George Gordon Noel) – more commonly known to the world as Lord Byron.

Ironically, Byron's father had taken the surname of "Gordon" to inherit a Scottish estate, and Lord Byron himself added "Noel" to his list of surnames to inherit half the estate of his mother-in-law, Judith Noel.

Did Douglas Ainslie know of his connection to Byron? The genealogical chart was appended to his book, of course, but oddly there is no mention of Lord Byron in the text. However we know, from another Christie's auction, this one in 2002, Lot 146 / Sale 9515, that Douglas Ainslie received a copy of John Murray's book "Lord Byron and His Detractors," London: The Roxburghe Club ["Printed for Private Circulation"], 1906. It had the inscription: "To Douglas Ainslie Esq, with the Compliments of John Murray, March 5, 07."⁷

Living in the place that I do (Iowa City is a UNESCO-designated "City of Literature" – the only one in the United States) I was able to look at a 1906 Roxburghe Club edition of John Murray's book. My friend Kathy Hodson, who is the Special Collections Department Manager at the University of Iowa's Main Library, located it for me. Kathy knew how much this meant to me as she had been there the night I gave my first Ainslie-related presentation to the Iowa Bibliophiles.

Another item in my notebook that I revisited (always a good idea for genealogists!) yielded more gold. I had looked the first time at a passenger list (typed) for the Cunard liner "Caronia" arriving in New York on September 11, 1926.⁸ And I had puzzled over London passenger Douglas G. Ainslie, age 50, born in Paris, retired – was this my guy? At the Federation of Genealogical Societies Conference in 2012, I got hooked on using Findmypast.com and now have a subscription. They have the manifest at the English end! The "Caronia" left Southampton on the 4th of September. And it is handwritten! Ticket 11860 was held by Douglas Ainslie, 50 (OK, he is an old man shaving ten years off his age), but with "India Office, Whitehall" next to his name. Between the two documents lies an ocean, but I was no longer at sea about the identity of this passenger.

A few words on Googling. Did this help? You betcha! I have recently purchased Daniel M. Lynch's, Google Your Family Tree, and hope to teach myself some new tricks. But I'm already a firm believer in using Google to find clues to follow with other documentation. For example, now if you Google "Douglas Ainslie" with Conan Doyle as a modifier, you will (blushes) find references to my article and the local publicity I generated. But I added a lot to my Ainslie files using Google. Somerset Maugham, is a writer I always have to check to get the spellings of both his names! Being born without Google, Maugham consistently sent notes to Douglas AINSLEE, but included addresses that I was able to verify as belonging to my



Douglas Ainslie when he was an attache in the Diplomatic Service. Photograph originally printed in his book, *Adventures Social and Literary*, (London, T. Fisher Unwin. Ltd, 1922. Downloaded from Archive.org.

guy. A Google correction message first alerted me to their friendship.

Of course I seek more traditional documentation to add to my knowledge of Douglas Ainslie. Being retired has given me more freedom for travel, writing and assisting others. My supportive spouse, who is not a genealogist herself, tolerates my new obsession; especially when she remembers that period around 1988 when I spent many of my non-work hours learning about Jack the Ripper and other Victorian villains!

Future Research into Ainslie's Life

The Douglas Ainslie Letters (Collection 703) are in the Department of Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles. Ainslie came to Southern California in 1938 to spend his last decade in America. He died in Los Angeles on March 27, 1948.⁹

Very little has been written about Douglas Ainslie in the time since his death, and some of that has been distorted (a feeble attempt to correct the record was started in my Magic Door piece.) A trip to UCLA in the next year or two will add to the primary source documentation. Resources in Great Britain are also being explored. And we are seeking the other owners of the dozen letters to notify them of my research and ask them for help in finding more internal evidence to bolster my theories. Due to the Wilde connection (described at length elsewhere) it is possible that some of the Douglas Ainslie correspondence (especially pre-1895) fell into the hands of Victorian blackmailers like Charles Augustus Howell, the prototype for Arthur Conan Doyle's villain Charles Augustus Milverton. The game is still afoot!

In December, 1945, Douglas Ainslie wrote an article for *Esquire* that may be the last words that he had published. If your library has bound issues of this publication, "Quick Curtain at Drury Lane" is not to be missed. It will give you a feel for the man and his sense of humor. Since not everyone gets to live in a City of Literature: if you need a copy, please contact me at the email address below. As far as I know the *Esquire* article is not available online.

In 1908, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle wrote a short story entitled "A Pot of Caviare" set during the Boxer Rebellion in China. One of the people trapped in the siege was "young Ainslie, of the diplomatic service."¹⁰ Another Ainslie has been trapped inside twelve letters for 117 years. I am happy to announce that the process of his liberation has begun!

Endnotes:

1 Ancestry.com. 1891 England Census [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2005. 1891 Scotland Census [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2007. 1891 Wales Census [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2005.

2 Ancestry.com. 1891 England Census [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2005.

Original data: Census Returns of England and Wales, 1891. Kew, Surrey, England: The National Archives of the UK (TNA): Public Record Office (PRO), 1891. Class: RG12; Piece: 1694; Folio: 39; Page: 29; GSU roll: 6096804.

Ancestry.com. Canada, Ocean Arrivals (Form 30A), 1919-1924 [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2009.

Original data: Library and Archives Canada. Form 30A, 1919-1924 (Ocean Arrivals). Ottawa, Ontario, Canada: Library and Archives Canada, n.d. RG 76. Department of Employment and Immigration Fonds. Microfilm Reels: T-14939 to T-15248.

3 Ancestry.com and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. 1881 England Census [database on-line].

Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2004.

1881 British Isles Census Index provided by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints © Copyright 1999 Intellectual Reserve, Inc. All rights reserved. All use is subject to the limited use license and other terms and conditions applicable to this site. Appreciation is expressed to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for providing the 1881 England and Wales Census Index.

Original data: Census Returns of England and Wales, 1881. Kew, Surrey, England: The National Archives of the UK (TNA): Public Record Office (PRO), 1881. Class: RG11; Piece: 5058; Folio: 92; Page: 5; GSU roll: 1342220

4 Douglas Ainslie, *Adventures Social and Literary*. (London, T. Fisher Unwin. Ltd, 1922) pp. 16-19.

5 "Adventures" pp. 19; 191.

6 The Right Hon. Sir Mountstuart E. Grant Duff, G. C. S. I., "Notes from a Diary: 1892 - 1895" (London: John Murray, 1904) Vol 2, p. 301.

7 Website for the Christie's auction in 2002: <http://www.christies.com/lotfinder/LotDetailsPrintable.aspx?intObjectID=4020740>

8 Ancestry.com. New York, Passenger Lists, 1820-1957 [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010. Year: 1926; Arrival; Microfilm Serial: T715; Microfilm Roll: 3923; Line: 2; Page Number: 107.

9 Ancestry.com. California Passenger and Crew Lists, 1882-1957 [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2008-2011; Ancestry.com. California Death Index, 1940-1997 [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2000.

10 Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, "Round the Fire Stories" (New York: The McClure Company, 1908) p. 66.



About the author: Al Dawson is a genealogical consultant and lives in Iowa City, Iowa (a UNESCO-designated City of Literature.) He holds a Master of Arts degree in Victorian History from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Al serves on the board of the Iowa City Genealogical Society and is proud to be a member of WMGS, having ancestors from Kent and Ionia Counties. Al is married to Dr. Deborah V. Dawson, an endowed professor at the University of Iowa. They have one son, Dr. John Alexander Dawson, the second family member with a PhD. in Biostatistics (from the University of Wisconsin, Madison.) John is doing a two-year post-doc at UAB in Birmingham, Alabama. Al visited John while attending FGS in August, 2012. Al can be reached via Microfish7@aol.com.

The Ogden, Edison, Dowling, and Oakes Families

Part II

New York, New Jersey, Nova Scotia, Upper Canada (Ontario), Michigan Seventeenth – Twenty-first Centuries

By Sister Michael Ellen Carling, OP

In the previous issue of *Michigana*, Part I focused on the history of the Ogden, Edison and Dowling families and their histories in England, Ireland, Netherlands, New Jersey, Nova Scotia and finally Ontario, Canada.

Part II includes information about the Edison, Dowling and Oakes families and their move to western Michigan from Upper Canada. These families settled in Kent, Muskegon and Newaygo counties. The Edison family came to Walker Township in Kent County in the 1830s. The Dowling family first came to Walker Township and then moved to Muskegon County. The Oakes family first went to Newaygo County and then moved to Kent County.

The Edison Family.

Moses Edison

John and Sarah Ogden Edison had five sons and five daughters. Moses Edison was one of the sons. Moses married Jane Saxton.¹

Moses Edison and his family moved to Walker Township, Kent County, from Vienna, Ontario, Canada in 1839. The following is found in *Chapman's History of Kent County*; "The family of Edisons also came at an early day, and settled on Bridge Street." ²

In *Federal Land Patents; Kent County, Michigan*, among the number of those who patented the lands of Walker, the following appears: Moses Edison sec. 10, Aug. 20, 1839. Walker Township, Moses Edison purchased 80 acres at \$1.25 per acre for \$100.00 on 20 August 1839. The date of patent was 10 Nov 1841.³

John Edison

Moses Edison and Jane Saxton's son, John Edison, married Susan Haines.⁴ *Echoes of the Past; A Bicentennial History of the City of Walker, Michigan*, gives a very good history of the Edison family and their move from Canada to Walker. There is a portrait of John Edison and pictures of two of the Edison homes, as well as descriptions of the locations of other Edison family members' farms.⁵

The 1860 U.S. Census for Walker Township enumerated John Edison's family:⁶

Name	Age	Birthplace	Occupation
John	54	Nova Scotia	Farmer
Susan	48	Nova Scotia	
Elisabeth	27	Canada	
Sarah Jane	21	Canada	
Albert	15	Michigan	Laborer

John has a personal estate of \$900, and owns real estate worth \$9000.

The 1870 U.S. Census for Walker Township indicates John has done well for himself and his family:⁷

Name	Age	Occupation	Birthplace
John	64	Farmer	Nova Scotia
Susan	48	Keeping house	Nova Scotia
Sarah	30		Canada
Russell	25	Works on farm	Michigan

John owns \$18,000 in real estate, and \$2750 in personal property.

The 1880 U.S. Census for Walker Township verifies where John and Susan's parents were born:⁸

Name	Age	Birthplace	Birth Father	Birth Mother
John	79	Nova Scotia	New Jersey	N.S.
Susan	65	Nova Scotia	New York	N.Y.
Elizabeth Ann	48	Canada	Nova Scotia	N.S.
Sarah Jane	43	Canada	Nova Scotia	N.S.

John was a farmer, Susan was keeping house, and the daughters were at home.

My aunt and uncle, Robert I. and Gladys Thompson, evidently read the newspaper article that appears on page 151. It gives information on the house owned by John and Susan Edison. My Aunt Gladys then contacted Mr. Harold O. Edison. Here is the letter he wrote back to her.

June 17, 1974
Mrs. Robert I. Thompson
134 State Road
Newaygo, MI

Dear Mrs. Thompson: It was very nice of you to write to me. I did not have time to write to you because we have sold our 115 year old home and it is to be made into a funeral home so it will not be destroyed but will be in use a number of years.

I have visited the old cemetery in Vienna and the sight (sic) where the old Thomas Edison home was located. Our old farm was in the first concession along the lake.

I have heard of my Aunt (Sarah Ogden Edison) talking about the Dowlings but as a kid I never paid much attention to what she said. She lived to be very old also and she lived in this big house alone. That is why we have so many old things left.

We were to Fords Greenfield Village last week and presented to the museum the two large pictures of my grandfather and grandmother John and Susan Edison. They were very glad to receive them and they will hang in the old Edison home there.

Thanking you again for your nice letter.
Sincerely,
Harold Edison

This home John and Susan Edison lived in, is now the Alt & Shawmut Hills Chapel of the Heritage Life Story Funeral Home on Lake Michigan Drive, N.W., in Grand Rapids. It has been enlarged since the Edison's owned it. Their daughter, Sarah Edison never married. Sarah, is the aunt Herald Edison mentions in his letter. Her obituary is to the right.

The Dowling Family

John Dowling

John Edson and Sarah Ogden's daughter Mary, married Dennis Dowling. Their son, John Dowling, married Phebe Losey.⁹ John and Phebe also moved to Walker Township, in Kent County. *Federal Land Patents, Kent County, Michigan*, shows that John Dowlin purchased 80 acres at \$1.25 per acre for \$100.00 on 13 Aug 1839. The date of the patent was 10 Aug 1841.¹⁰

The U.S. Census, Walker Towhship Kent County census for 1860 lists the John Dowling family.¹¹

Name	Age	Birthplace
Dowling, John	49	Nova Scotia
Dowling, Phebe	45	New York
Dowling, William	18	Michigan
Dowling, Henry	14	Michigan
Dowling, Cassius	8	Michigan
Dowling, Melvin	6	Michigan

John and Phebe Dowling also had a son George E. Dowling who is listed in the 1860 census as living in the town of White River (Montague?).¹² He is 21 years old. His occupation is clerk. Henry, Cassius and Melvin will all move to Montague. William will live in Alpine Township.

OLDEST PIONEER OF WALKER TWP. IS DEAD AT THE AGE OF 89



MISS SARAH EDISON.

Funeral services will be held at 2:30 o'clock Friday afternoon for Miss Sarah Jane Edison, oldest surviving pioneer of Walker township, who died Wednesday at the family home on Bridge Street rd., Walker township. Burial will be in Greenwood cemetery.

Miss Edison had lived at the spot since 1848 when, at the age of three, she came with her parents from Canada. She celebrated her eighty-ninth birthday on May 21. She was the oldest member of the Edison family, which has held its family reunion yearly at Reeds lake. She was a great-granddaughter of John Edison, who came from Holland to America in 1737. The family moved to Nova Scotia during the Revolutionary war.

Surviving are a sister-in-law, Mrs. Albert R. Edison, three nephews, John A., A. St. Clair and Harold Edison, all of Grand Rapids.

This article appeared in the *Grand Rapids Herald*, 5 August 1926, on page 3. Courtesy of Joan Edison,

Harold Edison of Grand Rapids holds one of his favorite antiques, a silver water pitcher and matching goblets given to his grandparents as an anniversary gift. He says it dates between 1831 and 1881.

Putting history together

By Jolene Carpenter

Harold O. Edison's old family photographs, kitchen utensils and his great-grandfather's boots are part of a continuing saga.

Edison, who lives with his wife in one of the oldest farm homes in Kent County, is a third cousin of Thomas Alva Edison. He has accumulated more Edison antiques than any of his immediate family.

"Unique things but common things," says Robert J. Koolakian, curator of the Edison Institute, Greenfield Village and Henry Ford Museum. "These items have much to do with how the Edison saga turned out."

Koolakian recently spend a leisurely day with the Harold Edisons and his cousin Margaret (Edison) Vandermeer and her husband George. He spout bits of Edison anecdotes and stories while touring the centennial farm home on Lake Michigan Dr. NW.

HENRY FORD, who founded the institute in honor of his admiration and friendship with Thomas Edison, thought that much of his friend's early career had been ignored, said Koolakian. He wanted to see to it that it was brought to light.

So, Ford began tracing the Edison family lines. He founded the Edison Institute in 1929 and since has filled it with memorabilia and miscellaneous items that tell the Edison story.

Harold Edison's family history sheds considerable light on that story.



His ancestors lived in the same homestead in Vienna, Ont., as Thomas Edison's father did. Harold's great-grandfather Moses lived in that home and Thomas Edison's father and mother were married there.

That homestead was reconstructed in 1932 at the institute.

Thomas Edison's father and mother moved from Vienna to Milan, Ohio, where Thomas was born. Moses Edison, Thomas' uncle and Harold's great-grandfather, moved to Grand Rapids. He had six sons and established the centennial farm where Harold now lives.

"THAT WAS TRULY the split of the Edison family — between Milan and Grand Rapids," said Koolakian. "If it wasn't for Harold's collection, much of the lifestyle of the Grand Rapids branch of Edisons and the Vienna history would be lost."

Harold was first contacted by then-curator of the Edison Institute, William Simons, in 1937. Simons said he wanted to buy some of Harold's antiques. Harold told him no deal, and donated over 200 items.

"I did it so they'll be preserved," says Edison. "I had an old maid aunt who saved everything. When I was growing up, I didn't realize how significant some of these things were. I guess I took more interest than the others when I got older. So I inherited the house and everything in it."

So far he's contributed furniture, family photographs, documents such as wills and testimonials, early family books, textiles, such as patchwork quilts that were hand

embroidered in the Vienna home ("You can't put a price on these," says Koolakian), china, glassware, and pewter.

SOME OF THE ITEMS were common household goods and agricultural tools. Seed drills and flails have been saved from the Vienna farm. Trade items include Harold's grandfather's cobbler's chest which contains 70 or 80 antique tools.

Home items include kitchen utensils, old lamps, stoves and Harold's great-grandfather's boots, which had been handed down through the generations, and eventually wound up beside an old rope bed that belonged to Moses in Vienna.

Edison is keeping the rope beds for now, along with other items he wouldn't part with, like two steel framed pictures of his grandmother and grandfather. He also owns Thomas Alva Edison's earliest wedding picture.

"Have you heard the story about Edison's wedding day," said Koolakian. "Well, he was so routine and so pragmatic about his business, the day he was to be married he forgot and automatically got dressed for work. This was Edison. He was quite like that."

It is likely that Koolakian will continue to keep in touch with the Edison family. Harold says that the antiques that his sons and daughter do not want probably will go to the Institute.

"This kind of work is never done," says Koolakian, "there's always something new to be added to our collection. We just keep putting history together."

This article appeared in the *Grand Rapids Press* on Sunday, April 28, 1974. It was on page 12-E.

After reading it, my aunt Gladys contacted Harold Edison.

In the 1870 Kent County censuses the only child still living with them is Melvin.

Name	Age	Birthplace
Dowlin, John	60	Nova Scotia
Dowlin, Phoebe	55	New York
Dowlin, Melvin	17	Michigan

John was a farmer, Phoebe was keeping house, and Melvin works on the farm.¹² Three of John's sons lived in Montague in 1870. George E. was 30 and a lumberman.¹³ John had real estate worth \$25,000 and his personal worth was \$10,800. Henry P. was 24 and a superintendent. C.D. (Cassius) was 18 and was a clerk in a hardware store.

The 1880 Walker Township, Kent County Michigan also lists the family.

Name	Age	Birth	Birth Father	Birth Mother
John	69	N.B.	Ireland	New Jersey
Phoebe	65	PA	PA	PA
Melvin	27	MI	N.B.	PA

John and Melvin were farming. Phoebe was keeping house. John was suffering from rheumatism. Still in Montague in 1880, George E. was 40 and a lumber dealer. His wife Anna was 30 and they had a son William who was 4. Henry P. was 36 and a real estate dealer. Cassius was 28 and a book keeper. His wife Mary was 25.¹⁴



The Dowling tombstone in Montague, Muskegon County, Michigan on Dowling Street at Whitbeck Road commemorates the deaths of George E. and his wife Annie Dowling, Henry P. Dowling and John Henry Dowling. Photograph courtesy of Donald Dowling.

The Walker Township, Kent County State of Michigan census taken in June 1884, lists John and Phebe.¹⁵

Name	Age	Birth	Birth Father	Birth Mother
John	73	N.S	N.Y	N.J.
Phebe	68	N.Y	N.J.	N.J.
Melvin	31	MI	N.S	N.Y

Melvin was single. John and Melvin were engaged in farming.

The Grand Rapids Press, April 23, 1897, noted John's death in two places:

"Dowling – April 22 at his residence in Walker Township. John Dowling aged 87 years. Funeral Saturday at 1 p.m."

"John Dowling died last night at his home in Walker Township. He was 87 years of age and had lived in Walker Township nearly sixty years."

On the next day (April 24, 1897) the *Grand Rapids Herald* added this additional information: "Dowling – April 22, in Walker Township, of acute pneumonia, John Dowling. Burial, Greenwood."

The Sons of John Dowling, Muskegon County

John Dowling and Phebe Losey had five sons: George E. married Annie Wilson; William C. who married Fanny S. Bird; Henry P. (I've found no evidence he was married); Cassius D. who married Mary A. Haines: and, Melvin T. who married Ellen E. Wier.¹⁶

My uncle, Robert (Bob) I. Thompson, wrote to the Montague Museum inquiring about the Dowling family. This is the letter he received from the president of the museum, W.L. Lipka.

Montague Museum and Historical Assn.
10 – 21 – 1976

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Thompson,

The Dowling family no doubt was the most prominent family in Montague, especially in the early days.

There was George, Henry, Cassius and Melvin. George owned the plank house as you called it. He had a lumber mill with Edward Ferry, a shingle mill and the Dowlings owned thousands of acres of white pine along White River. Henry with a ner (sic) Franklin built our Franklin House (large Hotel which burned in the late 60's). Cassius or CD was Supt. Of the White River Booming Co., his daughter ner Marg DeWitt died about 6 years ago. Orreaine Dowling Hulbert daughter of Melvin graduated with me from Montague High School in 1920.

George Dowling started the Montague Masonic Lodge No. 198 F and AM. He also was Grand Master of the Masonic Lodges in the State of Michigan. They were all Republicans and very active in Montague and Muskegon County.

With the exception of Melvin, they died too young.

The house and carriage home of George is still here and Cassius home is here, both kept in good shape.

Regarding the logging locomotives probably were Covell Lumber Co. The museum also has a picture.

The museum is closed for the winter as we do not have enough money to heat, but come next June you folks must come over, write me so I can be with you and I can give you much more Dowling history and show you pictures, their homes etc.

W.L. Lipka

Montague Museum and Historical Assn.

President

My uncle also found several references to C.D. Dowling in the *Newaygo Republican* newspaper.

The *Newaygo Republican* for September 2, 1882 states "C.D. Dowling has commenced lumbering operations in a 15,000,000 pine stand in Lincoln Township to be hauled to White River and completed late in the summer."

September 28, 1882

"C.D. or Cassius Dowling has commenced lumbering 15,000,000 feet of pine in Lincoln Township, Newaygo County. Plans to dump in White River in 1883. Bought from Cook."

December 27, 1882, "D.P. Kembell, Fremont, has a job from C.D. Dowling to put 25,000,000 feet of logs from Lincoln Township in the main branch of White River. Lots of activity in the vicinity of Hesperia."

1883, "Sam Mena built a railroad seven miles long in Denver Township. Purchased a locomotive and track and equipment in October hauling logs for Ferry, Dowling and Co. Later a contract continued between Dowling and Sam Mena for 3 years to put 30,000,000 feet of logs from Lincoln and Beaver Townships in main branch of White River."

Muskegon

John Edison and Sarah Ogden Edison's daughter, Mary Edison, married Dennis Dowling. Their son, Pierce/Peress Dowling, married Mary Parker, and their son, Dennis Dowling, married Hannah Skinner.¹⁷

Anglican Church Records for Elgin County, Ontario, Canada, has a marriage record for Peeress Dowling to Mary Parker, both of Yarmouth, by banns, May 18, 1831, by Rev. M. Burnham; witnesses were Nelson Rees and William Parker.¹⁸

Dennis Dowling was born March 18, 1832, and baptized December 13, 1832. He was the son of Peress and Mary. The sponsor was William Parker. Anglican Baptisms, Elgin County.¹⁹

The Dennis Dowling family moved to Muskegon in Muskegon County. The family was enumerated in the 1860 U.S. Census.²⁰

Name	Age	Sex	Occupation	Birth
Dennis	27	M	Log scaler	Canada
H. Marie	24	F	Wife	Canada
Beidleo (?) E.	5/12	M		Michigan

The family is enumerated in Muskegon City in the U.S. Census for 1880.²¹

Name	Age	Birth	Birth Father	Birth Mother
Dennis	46	Canada	N.S.	Canada
Hannah Maria	43	Canada	Canada	Canada
Easton	20	MI	Canada	Canada
Dennie	18	MI	Canada	Canada
Caughall, Jennie	10	MI	Canada	Canada

As indicated on this census, Dennis and his son, Easton were lumber inspectors. Jennie Caughall was an adopted daughter. The Dowlings lived on Houston Avenue in the 4th Ward of Muskegon.

I contacted the Hackley Public Library, in Muskegon, Michigan, and Damien Rostar responded. He sent me the following newspaper clippings from the *Muskegon Chronicle*. The first was dated Monday, March 4, 1889, and appeared on Page: 2

Death of Dennis Dowling (1832 - March 3, 1889)

"A telegram was received in this city this morning announcing the death of Dennis Dowling, which occurred yesterday at Lake City. Mr. Dowling was an old resident of Muskegon and one of our best known woodsmen or land-lookers. For the past year or more he has been in the employ of the Thayer Lumber Company with headquarters at Lake City, in charge of their lumbering operations in that vicinity. A dispatch received Saturday announced that he was very sick. Nothing further was reported until this morning when word came that he was dead. His remains will be brought to this city, reaching here this afternoon.

Mr. Dowling was born in Canada and moved to Muskegon in the Spring of 1857. He engaged at once in the lumber business and has remained in it in various branches of the work and with different firms until the present time. He leaves a wife and three children."

A lengthy article describing the drowning of Easton Dowling on June 16, 1892, appeared in the *Muskegon Chronicle* on June 17, 1892. The drowning took place in Muskegon Lake. He is survived by his mother, Mrs. Dennis Dowling and his sister, Miss Dennie G. Dowling, a teacher in the seventh grade of the Hackley school. They live at 205 Houston avenue.

Six days later on June 23, 1892, the *Muskegon Chronicle*, had a headline stating, "Gave Up Its Dead, The Body of

Easton B. Dowling Comes to the Surface of the Lake.”

The *Muskegon Chronicle*, in June 24th, described Easton’s funeral.

“The funeral services of Easton B. Dowling took place at 10 o’clock this forenoon at the family residence on Houston avenue, and were attended by many friends. They were memorial services, Mr. Dowling’s remains having been buried yesterday. Rev. W.L. Anderson officiated, and floral offerings, with kindly condolences and expressions of sympathy, were many and sincere.”

Hannah Dowling saw both of her children die after the death of her husband. Her daughter, Dennie Grace Dowling, died in 11 June 1900. The *Muskegon Chronicle*, on June 12, 1900, printed a lengthy and informative obituary.

To The Home Beyond

Dr. D. Grace Dowling Passed Away After a Long Illness

Born in this city November 26, 1861

Graduated from Muskegon Schools in ’75,

Entered U. of M. in ’82

Teacher in Our Schools

Graduated from Hahnemann Medical College of Chicago

Dr. D. Grace Dowling passed away at her home, 40 Second street at 11 o’clock Monday night, June 11.

Dennie Grace Dowling was born in this city November 26, 1861. She was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Dennis Dowling. Mrs. Dowling survives her. Her father, who was a Muskegon lumberman, died in 1889. Graduated from the city schools in the Latin scientific course in the class of 1875, Miss Dowling went to Chicago where she spent the summers of ’77 and ’78 under the best teachers of that time in the study of what was then called elocution and in which she displayed exceptional ability. The intervening winter saw the beginning of her work as a teacher when she was placed in charge of the first primary department of the Nims school.

The next year she spent in preparation for a college education and in 1882 she entered the University of Michigan to work for a Ph.B. degree, Latin, Literature and Oratory, receiving special attention. In ’86, because of ill health, she left Ann Arbor, not being able to remain for the short time remaining to secure the degree which she had almost earned.

In the fall of that year, on solicitation of Manistee people who had heard of her work in voice culture, she went to that city to conduct some classes and a few months later upon completion of the lessons instead of returning home she took a position as eighth grade teacher in the Manistee public schools, which she held until called home by the death of her father three years later.

Then she resumed her teaching in the Muskegon schools, entering as a sixth grade teacher. In 1892 she resigned to go Oshkosh, Wis., to become principal of the Model School in the State Normal.

In ’93 the same ambition which always possessed her led Dr. Dowling to resign her position in Oshkosh to take up the study of medicine at Hahnemann Medical College in Chicago, from which she received her degree four years ago last March. Here she held high rank among the students and at the commencement she was the only one of those awarded prizes to receive marked commendation from the professors for her work.

She first located in Rogers’ Park where she remained six months and was doing well when the death of another beloved Muskegon woman physician led her to return to Muskegon and open an office in her native city and here Dr. Dowling succeeded in slowly building up entirely through her own efforts a

practice which was an enviable one. She endeared herself to her patients by her skill and devotion to duty, her well balanced mind and splendid judgment commanding admiration. It may be said that she was always truthful and honorable.

Dr. Dowling was a member of the First Congregational



This marker is on the Dennis Dowling plot in Muskegon at Oakwood Cemetery, just west of Getty and Nims streets. Dennis, his wife Hannah, daughter Dennie, Grace, M.D., and son Easton are all buried there. Photograph courtesy of Donald Dowling.

Church and until of late took an active part in the Sunday school work as normal teacher. While in Chicago she was a teacher in Dr. Gunsaulus' Sunday school.

She was a member of the Muskegon Woman's Club and Scandinavian Hive L.O.T.M., and the continued interest in her welfare manifested by these organizations showed the honor they always esteemed her membership.

Two years ago last November representing the Muskegon Woman's Club, she gave the address of the convention of the Michigan State Federation of Women's Clubs at Saginaw and her eloquence on that occasion is spoken of by club women about the state to this day; for in her appeal for her fellow working women she displayed such a great breadth of soul as she made a lasting impression on those who heard her.

Dr. Dowling was possessed of high ideals, both mentally and morally, and lived up to them even though at a sacrifice of worldly interests. She was true to her standard and even her illness was brought about through an errand of mercy. It was in August of a year ago that her health failed



Dennie Grace Dowling. Photograph, courtesy of the author.

and the last of September she went to New Mexico where she made a fight for life, a battle which she would not relinquish upon her homecoming a month ago. Her friends watched her illness with the deepest of sympathy and it was with reluctance that they finally admitted she could not return to health.

Her mother, the only relative she leaves, has the widespread sympathy of all who came in contact with her. Dr. Dowling had a nature bright and sunny and she was also of a poetic mind. As a gentleman who is one of Muskegon's prominent citizens was heard to say: "We owe something to her for having lived here."

Muskegon Chronicle, on June 13, 1900, notes Grace's funeral.

Briefly Mentioned

The funeral of the late Dr. D. Grace Dowling will be held from the house, 40 Second street, Thursday morning at 10:30 o'clock. Rev. A. Hadden will officiate. Mrs. Cassius Dowling, of Montague, has arrived to attend the funeral of Dr. D. Grace Dowling.

Hannah Skinner Dowling lived for 15 years after her daughter Grace's death. The *Muskegon Chronicle*, July 26, 1915, printed her obituary.

Mrs. Hannah M. Dowling, 205 Houston Avenue, for 56 years a resident of Muskegon, died at the Hackley Hospital late yesterday afternoon after a long illness: aged 80 years.

Mrs. Dowling was born in 1835 in Ontario, Canada, near Niagara Falls, N.Y. Her maiden name was Miss Hannah Marie Skinner. She was married in Canada, a year before coming to this city.

For over 50 years Mrs. Dowling has resided at her late home on Houston Avenue. She was a member of the First Congregational Church, and of the Women's and Women's Missionary society of the church. She was also a member of the Muskegon Woman's club.

She leaves three sisters, Mrs. Mary E. Oakes, of Erie, Pa., Mrs. Rachel B. Pace, of Vienna, Ont., and Miss Augusta Skinner of this city. Two nephews, Joseph and John Skinner of Muskegon also survive.

The funeral will be held tomorrow afternoon at 2:30 o'clock at the Julia E. Hackley Memorial Hall. Rev. Archibald Hadden, pastor of the First Congregational church will officiate. Interment will be in Oakwood cemetery.

The death certificates of Dennie Grace Dowling and Hannah M. Dowling can be viewed on the SeekingMichigan.org website.

Hannah Skinner Dowling's sister, Mrs. Mary E. Skinner Oakes, was the mother of my maternal grandfather, Henry R. Oakes.

Newaygo County and Kent County

John Edison and Sarah Ogden Edison's daughter, Mary Edison married Dennis Dowling. One of Mary Edison and Dennis Dowling's 13 children was Mary Ann. She married James Oakes. Their son Charles Oakes married Mary Elizabeth Skinner. Two of their sons, George Walter Oakes (married first, May Wantz, and second Bessie Miller), and Henry Oakes (married Ida May McCure) moved to Newaygo County, Michigan from Bayham Township, Elgin County, Ontario.



Mary Ann Dowling Oakes. Photograph courtesy of the author.

Mary Ann Dowling was born 1800 in Digby, Nova Scotia and moved with her family to Bayham Township in 1811. (See Part I in the previous issue). She married James Oakes about 1820, but I haven't been able to find a record of their marriage.

Mary Ann Dowling and James Oakes had four children that I am able to account for. Mary Jane married Andrew Raymond, Jane Ann remained single, Charles married Mary Elizabeth Skinner and Daniel died at age 10. From family stories, I believe that Daniel drowned.

Concluding Remarks

Although I began my genealogy search to see if I could find a family connection to Thomas Edison through the Dowlings, my research has led me to what I consider to be far more interesting. I have learned new information about the history, geography and migrations caused by the American Revolution, as well as about the Loyalists and their settlements in Nova Scotia, Upper Canada (Ontario) and finally, the return of their descendants to the United States, and in the cases mentioned above, to Western Michigan. My cousins and I (and the many other descendants) now bring this story into the 21st century.

Sister Michael Ellen Carling, OP, is a Dominican Sister in Grand Rapids, Michigan. She is an avid genealogist and is a member of the Western Michigan Genealogical Society and the WMGS Writers Group.



Endnotes:

1 Wheeler, William Ogden *The Ogden Family in America, Elizabethtown Branch Their English Ancestry: John Ogden, The Pilgrim and His Descendants, 1640-1906, Their History, Biography, and Genealogy*. Vol. 2; Chart 25. Privately printed; 1907.

2 *Chapman's History of Kent County*, Chas. C. Chapman & Co., Chicago, Illinois. 1881. Pages 1385 and 1388.

3 *Federal Land Patents Kent County, Michigan*, The Western Michigan Genealogical Society, Grand Rapids, MI. 1984. Page 20.

4 Tombstone of John Ogden in Greenwood Cemetery, Grand Rapids, Michigan, shows John married Susan Haines.

5 *Echoes of the Past: a Bicentennial History of the City of Walker*; Warren Versluis, Editor. The Historical



This is the churchyard of the Trinity Anglican Church in Port Burwell, Ontario. The Oakes family marker, has the following engraved on it. Charles Oakes, 1828-1905; His wife Mary E. Skinner 1838-1930; Marion Oakes, a daughter 1860-1877; Mary A. (Dowling) Oakes --Mother 1800-1877; and Jane A. Oakes ---Sister 1823-1890. Photograph courtesy of the author.

Committee of Walker Township, Grand Rapids, Michigan. 1976. Page 20. A portrait of John Edison is on page 106 and there are pictures of the Edison homes on pages 108, 109, and 181.

6 1860 Walker Township, Kent County, Michigan census; Roll: M653_550; Page: 535; Image: 540; Family History Library Film: 803550. Ancestry.com. 1860 United States Federal Census [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA.

7 1870 White River Township, Muskegon County, Michigan census; Roll: M653_555; Page: 893; Image: 193; Family History Library Film: 803555. Ancestry.com. 1860 United States Federal Census [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA.

8 1880 Walker Township, Kent County, Michigan census; Roll: M593_682; Page: 623B; Image: 412; Family History Library Film: 552181. Ancestry.com. 1870 United States Federal Census [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA.

9 *The Ogden Family in America*,

10 *Federal Land Patents Kent County, Michigan*, p. 70.

11 1860 Walker Township, Kent County, Michigan census; Roll: M653_550; Page: 512; Image: 517; Family History Library Film: 803550. Ancestry.com. 1860 United States Federal Census [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA.

12 1860 White River Township, Muskegon County census, Michigan; Roll: M653_555; Page: 893; Image: 193; Family History Library Film: 803555.

13 1870 Walker Township, Kent County, Michigan census; Roll: M593_682; Page: 618B; Image: 402; Family History Library Film: 803550. Ancestry.com. 1870 United States Federal Census [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA.

14 1880 Walker Township, Kent County, Michigan census; Roll: 587; Family History Film: 1254587; Page: 616C; Enumeration District: 122; Image: 0511. Ancestry.com and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. 1880 United States Federal Census [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA.

15 1884 Walker Township, Kent County State of Michigan census; Roll 2015; Page 5A; Archives of Michigan; SeekingMichigan.org.

16 *The Ogden Family in America*,.

17 *The Ogden Family in America*,

18 Anglican Records, Elgin County.17

19 Anglican Baptisms, Elgin County.Anglican Records, Elgin County.17

20 1860 Village of Muskegon, Muskegon County, Michigan census; Roll: M653_555; Page: 872; Image:

172; Family History Library Film: 803555. Ancestry.com. 1860 United States Federal Census [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA:

21 1880 Muskegon City, Muskegon County, Michigan census; Roll: 598; Family History Film: 1254598; Page: 287C; Enumeration District: 195; Image: 0106. Ancestry.com and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. 1880 United States Federal Census [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA.

Bibliography:

Baldwin, Neil. Edison: *Inventing the Century*. c. 1995.

Echoes of the Past: a Bicentennial History of the City of Walker, Michigan. Warren Versluis, Editor. Historical Committee. Grand Rapids, Grace Publications, c1976. 230 p., illus. (Good information about Moses Edison and his family, how they came to Walker Township from Vienna, Ontario, and their settlement in Kent County.)

The Edisons of Vienna: Being the History of the Branch of the Edison Family Which Resided in and around Vienna, Ontario. Lyal Tait, c. 1977. 64 p. (Good maps showing land in Bayham Township belonging to the Edison and Dowling families)

The Edisons; One Family, Twice Exiled, Ted Brush and Mead Stapler. (Highlander, 1976, Summer Issue # 43, pp. 3-16) Excellent article with hand drawn maps showing the journeys taken by John Edison and family from New Jersey to Nova Scotia, back to New Jersey for a visit and then to Bayham Township in Elgin County, Ontario. Finally, Thomas Alva Edison returns to New Jersey and locates only a few miles from where his great grandfather had lived before the Revolutionary War.

The Haggan Papers. Edited by Karen Bailey. Haggan, Ida L., 1897-1975. v. 1-3, Genealogies, v. 4a – 4c Occasional Papers. [St. Thomas, Ont.] Elgin County Library Board. (Biographical information about the Edison, Dowling and related families)

Josephson, Matthew, *Edison; a Biography*. McGraw-Hill, New York, c1959.

Pioneers: Settlers of Early Walker, Michigan. Edited by Merle Chrysler. Walker Bicentennial Committee, 1976. 36 p., illus.

The Loyalists of New Jersey; their Memorials, Petitions, Claims, etc. from English Records, by E. Alfred Jones, Newark, New Jersey, New Jersey Historical Society, 1927. Collections of the New Jersey Historical Society, volume X.



War of 1812 and Civil War Records at the Allen County Public Library

By Mary Rasche Alt

It's always a thrill to walk through the doors and up the stairs to the Genealogy Center at the Allen County Public Library, in Ft. Wayne, Indiana. There's always a sense of excitement for genealogists and it doesn't matter if this is your first time, or the tenth. After all, this is the second largest genealogical library in the United States. The anticipation of knowing that you have a good chance to find exactly what you're looking for creates an extra bit of energy that helps to insure an exciting visit to this great library.

The more you prepare at home ahead of time for your visit, the faster you'll walk. Review the online catalogue for related sources you want to consult. Make a list of what you want to find. The more you can do before you arrive will help to guarantee a successful visit. When you go to a library with as many collections and resources as the Allen County Library, researchers need a plan of attack.

The Western Michigan Genealogical Society was fortunate to have had Curt Witcher, Senior Manager for Special Collections at the Allen County Public Library, as the presenter at this fall's Got Ancestors!? Seminar. He reminded us to "Plan your work, work your plan."

"Successful genealogical research requires that one have meaningful strategies for finding, collecting, organizing and evaluating data," said Witcher. "The soundness of one's strategies and the consistent manner in which those strategies are applied will in very large part determine one's research success."

There is a wealth of information on the United States military and the wars they have fought at the Allen County Library. Taking Mr. Witcher's words to heart, be sure to ask yourself before you go, What do I know? How do I know it? What military information do I want to find for which war? What general military history do I want to learn more about? Witcher noted:

"Since the founding of our country, there has been some military activity or engagement in nearly every generation. From the Colonial Wars...to present day, every generation offers the opportunity to explore military records for data about our ancestors. Though some generations have more robust record possibilities than other, all eras invite researchers



The entrance to the Allen County Public Library in Ft. Wayne, Indiana.

to use military records to context ancestors' lives and, in many instances, provide key evidence of their ancestors' very existence. Google is an extremely powerful search engine—use it! New resources for all military engagements are continually going virtual.”

There are a number of different military records. Enlistment papers are evidence that a person served. Be sure to look beyond enlistment papers because they may only be the beginning. Histories have been compiled for almost all military units. Unit histories usually provide a description of battles, a listing of the unit's locations, and often note where the unit was on a weekly if not daily basis.

Almost all soldiers sent letters home to loved ones. Many kept diaries. These are like discovering gold when you find them! Even if your relative's writings can't be found, you may be able to find some written by others in the same unit. Another soldier might mention your ancestor and his comments are likely to give you a great idea of what was going on during your ancestor's military life.

A pension record folder potentially holds all kinds of information about your ancestor. It can include birth, marriage and death records. Most pensions were requested because of a medical condition, so health information is included. Some pension files include ownership of a home or business.

Not everyone who served qualified for a pension. “Pension records show proof of service and eligibility and contain consequential testimony,” said Witcher. Those testimonies can be very interesting! Letters are often included verifying the soldier's service, or include a recommendation that he deserves a stipend from the government.



WMGS member Claudia Day talks to Curt Witcher, Senior Manager for Special Collections at the Allen County Public Library.



The entryway to the Genealogy Center on the second floor of the Allen County Public Library.

As payment for military service soldiers were sometimes compensated with land. Those claim records are another genealogical resource. Many servicemen joined military and patriotic organizations following a war.

The internet continues to grow as a repository of military information. “Large quantities of data on all America's military engagements are available on the Internet,” said Witcher. “Entering anything from the name of the war, to the specific engagement, into any Internet search engine should net some meaningful results.

He also encourages researchers to remember those who remained at home. “Plotting our families' histories along a timeline will intersect with military activities. That is why military records are so important.”

When you learn which unit your person served in, go beyond the numbers. “Know who the commanding officer is,” encouraged Witcher. “Records can be found under their name. He describes some of the resources at the library:

“The military records at the Genealogical Center include most microfilmed National Archives service and pension records covering every conflict from the Revolutionary War through the Philippine Insurrection. Civil War regimental histories on microfiche and significant microfilmed Confederate records from state archives are also included. The excellent collection of related printed references contains adjutant generals' reports, lineage society publications, soldiers' diaries and more than several thousand unit, regimental and divisional histories. While much of the National Archives portion of this collection is now available on Ancestry.com or fold3.com, there are very consequential collections that are not online. The online monograph catalog and the microtext catalog should be consulted.”

While researching the Allen Co. Library website for this article, I had my first taste of reading a book online. It was thrilling and I couldn't get enough of it, as I looked at every name on my search list. "Family History Books" at the Allen Co. Library is a collection of more than 40,000 digitized genealogy and family history publications from the archives of some of the most important family history libraries in the world. The collection includes family histories, county and local histories, genealogy magazines and how-to books, gazetteers, and medieval histories and pedigrees.

When you are at the library, there are 30 Internet terminals and four catalog only computers. Witcher also suggests,

"Don't spend all of your time in the genealogy or local history collections. Make sure you note collections that might be outside the genealogy or local history room. Look into biographical collections, vertical files, picture files, government document collections, legal collections, newspaper collections and historical works collections."

The Genealogy Center of the Allen County Library was started just over 50 years ago. It contains more than 413,468 printed volumes, 659,680 items of microfilm and microfiche, and gives patrons access to a number of major databases. This collection grows daily through purchases, and from donations given by appreciative genealogists and historians.

There are more than 60,850 volumes of compiled genealogies that represent work already done on American and European families, plus nearly 5,000 genealogies on microfiche. There are also numerous family surname newsletters. The Center holds the largest English-language genealogy and local history periodical collection in the world with more than 6,100 current subscriptions and more than 10,100 total titles including *Michigana*. Individual articles may be accessed through a variety of indexes including the PERiodical Source Index (PERSI) compiled by the Genealogy Center staff.



The Allen County Public Library has a number of computer stations available for patrons. There is also a WIFI connection if you wish to use your own PC or iPad, and the Ancestry.com database is accessible from either the library's hardware or yours.



The Library has hundreds of books about the Civil War. These are just a sample.

When looking for veterans and their families, remember to look at the Center's Federal 1890 schedules of veteran and widows.

Witcher encourages us to "Never rest until the good is better and better is best." He also suggests, "Leave no stone unturned."

Want More Information?

Go online to see an orientation video, visitor's information and events at the library:

<http://www.genealogycenter.org>

Phone: 260-421-1225
Address: 900 Library Plaza,
P.O. Box 2270,
Ft. Wayne, IN 46801

Allen Co. Public Library Hours

9AM-9PM Monday - Thursday

9AM-6PM Friday & Saturday

12PM-5PM Sunday

Closed on Sundays from Memorial Day weekend to Labor Day weekend.

For many years Mary Rasch Alt worked as a reporter for the Grand Rapids Press. She is the author of Alpine Township and is a member of the WMGS Writers Group. You may email her at Alt7@aol.com.

All photographs in this article are courtesy of the author.

Publications for Sale from the Western Michigan Genealogical Society

MICHIGANA INDEX: An Index to Articles Vol. 18-1 through 35-3 (Sept. 1990) CLEARANCE	\$ 3.00
MICHIGANA INDEX 1955-1984 CLEARANCE (9 fiche)	5.00
MICHIGANA INDEX 1955-1964 CLEARANCE (4 fiche)	2.50
MICHIGANA INDEX 1975-1984 CLEARANCE	17.50
MICHIGANA INDEX 1985-1994	25.00
INDEX of the 1884 STATE CENSUS, KENT COUNTY, MI	25.00
INDEX of the 1894 STATE CENSUS, KENT COUNTY, MI	25.00
1870 CENSUS INDEX to the TOWNSHIPS of KENT COUNTY, MI	10.00
INDEX to the 1860 FEDERAL CENSUS of MICHIGAN'S (upper) NORTHERN LOWER PENINSULA	6.00
INDEX to the 1860 FEDERAL CENSUS of BARRY, COUNTY, MI	6.00
KENT COUNTY 1860 CENSUS INDEX & HEADS OF FAMILIES CLEARANCE	5.00
LATZEK FUNERAL HOME REGISTERS, an INDEX to 10 VOL. 1903-1906 CLEARANCE	3.00
CHURCH RECORDS, MICHIGAN ROOM, GRAND RAPIDS PUBLIC LIBRARY	4.00
CHURCH RECORDS INDEX, VOLUME I or VOLUME 2 (EACH)	27.00
SOLOM TOWNSHIP CEMETERIES and DEATH RECORDS, KENT CO. 1900-1952	10.00
VERGENNES TOWNSHIP CEMETERIES, KENT COUNTY, MI	6.00
CEMETERY RECORDS for NELSON & SPENCER TWPS., KENT CO. MI	6.00
BOWNE TOWNSHIP and GAINES TOWNSHIP CEMETERIES, KENT CO. MI	9.00
ADA TOWNSHIP CEMETERIES AND LOT OWNERS, KENT CO. MI	6.50
JAMESTOWN TOWNSHIP DEATH RECORDS, OTTAWA CO. MI	12.50
CHESTER TWP., OTTAWA CO., MI - DEATH AND CEMETERY RECORDS	7.00
INDEX of MICHIGAN SOLDIERS OBITUARIES - CIVIL, SPANISH and WWI	3.00
THE MAIN GENEALOGICAL SOURCES IN THE GRAND RAPIDS PUBLIC LIBRARY, MAIN BRANCH, FAMILY HISTORY ROOM - RECENTLY UPDATED	5.00
INDEX to WMGS MANUSCRIPT, FAMILY HISTORY, & GEOGRAPHICAL COLLECTIONS 1995 edition	8.50
FEDERAL LAND PATENTS - KENT COUNTY, MI	20.00
INDEX TO CHAPMAN'S 1881 HISTORY OF KENT COUNTY, MICHIGAN, An every name index	40.00

STATE LAND PATENTS - KENT COUNTY MICHIGAN - REVISED 2010

NEW 14.00

AVAILABLE IN PACKAGES OF 12 SHEETS FOR \$.75 OR 50 SHEETS FOR \$2.50

4 Generation Charts (numbered)	1880 Federal Census	Genealogical Correspondence Log
4 Generation Charts (unnumbered)	1900 Federal Census	Genealogical Search Log
Family Record Sheets	1910 Federal Census	County Vital Records - Birth
1800, 1810 & 1820 Federal Census	1920 Federal Census	County Vital Records - Marriage
1830 and 1840 Federal Census	Census Checksheet Form	County Vital Records - Death
1850, 1860 & 1870 Federal Census		

BEGINNER'S PACKAGE: 8 Family Record Sheets & two each of remaining 15 worksheets with instructions \$3.00

ANCESTRAL CHARTS: For 5, 6, 8, 12 & 15 generations - \$2.00

TO ORDER: MICHIGAN Residents ADD 6% sales tax. Postage & Handling \$2.00 for first item and \$.75 each additional item. CANADIAN residents add \$3.00 for the first item and \$1.25 for each additional item. Prices are subject to change without notice. Please allow 6 - 8 weeks for delivery. For a list of all items for sale, **INCLUDE A LONG SASE ENVELOPE OR GO TO WWW.WMGS.ORG. FOR PURCHASES SEND CHECK AND ORDER TO: WMGS SALES, c/o GRAND RAPIDS PUBLIC LIBRARY, 111 LIBRARY STREET, GRAND RAPIDS, MI 49503-3258.**

Western Michigan Genealogical Society
Grand Rapids Public Library,
111 Library St. NE,
Grand Rapids, MI 49503
website: www.wmgs.org

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

**NON-PROFIT
US POSTAGE
PAID
GRAND RAPIDS, MI
PERMIT No. 209**



**Best Wishes for a
Joyous Holiday Season**

from

www.wmgs.org