



MICHIGANA

The Quarterly Magazine of the Western Michigan Genealogical Society

Volume 63: Issue 1 (No. 253) 2017

Western Michigan Genealogical Society



Online Searchable Databases
published by
Western Michigan Genealogical Society

Got Databases ?!
Western Michigan Genealogical Society
16
Celebrates Years Online

**We have passed 1,100,000 records in the Newspapers Database!!!!!!
And passed 2.9 MILLION records online!!!!!!**

Summary of WMGS Online Databases at 06 January 2017

Database

	# of Records
West Michigan Newspapers - An index to the Death Notices and Obituaries published in the <i>Grand Rapids Press</i> and <i>Grand Rapids Herald</i> from 1910 to today. It includes the listings of Engagements, Weddings and Anniversaries from the Saturday papers from today, going back in time to 1966. Starting on 25 January 2008 the index also includes the daily "In Memoriam" entries from the <i>Grand Rapids Press</i> , and also includes an index to the <i>Rockford Register</i> , and over 9,000 records from <i>The Northfield Advance</i> during the 1990s that are linked to scanned images of the notice. The clippings are used with permission of Advance Newspapers. Starting in April 2011 we are now including entries from <i>The Holland Sentinel</i> both ongoing and backwards as they are available. Update 4 January 2017 - added Articles, Obit and EWA from <i>The Grand Rapids Press</i> for September through December 2016, Grand Rapids EWA from 1949, and Obit and EWA from <i>The Holland Sentinel</i> for September through December 2016 - adding 22,338 new records. Also a number of transcriptions provided by researchers - watch for the "View Transcription" button on your results to see if someone has already transcribed the record you're looking for. (Note - the database file size on the server has now passed 500MB!!) THANK YOU to Pat Rademaker who has done the bulk of the indexing. Copies of Records from this database are \$5 each. Payment can be made by PayPal or by Cheque.	1,159,768
Kent County School Census - Index to the listings of Student and Teacher names in the Annual Census and Statistic Returns of Kent County Schools from 1903 - 1925. We can provide copies of the pages from these books which show students names and details, as well as details about the school attended. Copies of Records from this database are \$5 each. Payment can be made by PayPal or by Cheque.	232,359
West Michigan Church Records - In 1974, the Western Michigan Genealogical Society began the project of collecting and recording the church records in Kent County of those churches which were in existence before 1876. The records included baptisms, marriages, deaths and memberships where possible up to the year 1876. Copies of Records from this database are \$5 each. Payment can be made by PayPal or by Cheque.	102,049
Michigan - Index to the names of people mentioned in the first 61 years of WMGS' quarterly publication <i>Michigan</i> from 1954 - 2015. If you search and find a name, or an article you're interested in you will be able to order a copy of the page(s) the name is on. In many instances you'll be able to order a copy of the whole issue containing the page. This is identified on the Search Results page. Update 4 January 2017 - added the Name Index and Subject Index for 2015. Copies of an article from this database are \$5 each (or \$7.50 for a full issue when available). Payment can be made by PayPal or by Cheque.	200,882
Veterans - Index of the residents of the "The Grand Rapids Home for Veterans". 29 January 2007. Added another 1,769 records of the men's index to the database. Total Men's records now 10,946. Total including Women 13,697. All records that are on microfilm at the Grand Rapids Public Library are now listed in this index. Copies of Records from this database start at \$5 each for up to 4 pages. Payment can be made by PayPal or by Cheque.	13,241
World War One Veterans Census - A searchable database containing the names of Veterans of World War One who were born in Michigan and who served in the United States Army or Navy. The Great War records contain information about the Vet's parents, birth date and place, military service and other information. Copies of Records from this database are \$5 each. Payment can be made by PayPal or by Cheque.	9,916
WMGS Manuscripts - Update 14 September 2016 - added 74,307 records from another 592 manuscripts. Some files are larger than 10 MB, so please be patient if you download a large file. Some records are linked to PDF files that contain scanned images. Information in this database is free :-)	503,324
WMGS Members' Genealogy - Genealogy files made available by members of the society. Some are charts and some are family trees. Some are full family histories. Some are slowly being added to as the existing charts are entered. Update March 2017 - added 1,000 more records. Payment can be made by PayPal or by Cheque.	227,418
Black Monument Cemetery - Index to the names of people buried in the Black Monument Cemetery in Grand Rapids. The records include the names and dates that were placed on grave markers. Update 9 July 2010 - added a mechanism linking some of the records to the newspaper obituary in the Newspapers database. See this search for example. Update 7 November 2013 - added another 193 records. Some of the records have been added to the database. Thanks Marlene Fabbro!! Information in this database is free :-)	18,365
Farm Bureau News - An every name index to the Farm Bureau News, published in Grand Rapids from 1910 to 1926. Copies of Records from this database are \$5 each. Payment can be made by PayPal or by Cheque.	8,585
Michigan Census - A compilation of census indexes from 1860 to 1920. The indexes were compiled by Evelyn Sawyer, and include records from Kent, Ottawa, Barry, Newaygo, Mecosta and other counties from 1860, 1870 Federal Censuses and 1884 and 1894 Michigan Censuses. The indexes were compiled by Evelyn Sawyer who did much of the transcription, and provided the compilations for most of these records.	119,849
Kent County Deaths - Index to the names of people recorded in the Index to the deaths recorded in Kent County, Michigan. Update 4 January 2010 - added more records - total now 92,843. Included 2,364 records provided by Karen Blumenshine which included records like Gender, Age at Death, Birth and Death place, Cause of Death and Parents. THANK YOU to all who have done the typing. This page has extra details about the database and those who have helped. Information in this database is free :-)	97,785
Kent County Marriages - Index to the names of the people listed in the Index to the marriages recorded in Kent County, Michigan from 1845 to 1929. Information in this database is free :-)	166,844
Latzek Funeral Home - An index to the Registers of the Latzek Funeral Home in Grand Rapids from 1903 - 1962. If you search it and find a record that is of interest to you, we can provide a hand written transcript of it from the book. See the Search Results page for full details. Copies of Records from this database are \$5 each. Payment can be made by PayPal or by Cheque.	4,868
Chapman's 1881 History of Kent County - An every name index to the Chapman's <i>History of Kent County</i> , published in 1881. Search results are linked to scanned images made available by the University of Michigan Digital Library Production Service, which has provided searchable scanned images of many different books of Michigan History. Information in this database is free :-)	33,017
Goss' History of Grand Rapids and Its Industries - Index to the names of people in the 1906 Goss <i>History of Grand Rapids</i> . If you find a person you're looking for, you can click a link to download a PDF file that has an image of that page from the book in it. Information in this database is free :-)	9,585
Quigley - An index of Family Names and Articles from various Periodicals compiled by Maud Quigley. Information in this database is free :-)	10,072
Western Michigan Surnames and Queries - A place to post your queries of surnames you're working on, and find others working on the same line. Information in this database is free :-)	3,513
Total	2,921,440

The Stone House and Other Memories

by Jerry Hamelink

From the time I was eight till fourteen I lived in the summer and over Christmas vacation with Horse Clark, his wife Katy, and his father Pappy, at their small resort on Pickerel Lake just north of Newaygo, Michigan. Pappy had been born and raised north of there and this story is a collection of the stories he told me about his youth plus some of the experiences, like cutting ice, that I had with him growing up in the early 1950s. Pappy had been a real lumber jack and they had a small farm where they had collected rocks like everyone else along this latitude in Michigan.

43.3956° N, 85.4678° W

It is the Spring of 1866. The civil war has been over for a year now. Dad lost his left hand but he did come home—a lot of other dads didn't. We live on a small farm in Northern lower Michigan. The soil isn't real good. Too sandy. But it is good for growing two things. Potatoes and stones — especially stones.

Dad takes care of the potatoes when he isn't working at the saw mill. My little brother and I take care of the stones. When ever Dad plows the field there are more stones to pick up. Most of them are small enough that we can just throw them into the wagon. Some of the bigger ones we have to lift together. For the really big ones we use a "come along" and jack them up a ramp into the wagon.

Once the wagon is full, which is as much as we figure Bessy can pull, we take the stones back up to the house. There we dump them out onto the pile we are making for our new house. Right now we are living in a pretty small shack but Dad is building a nice new house. He is going to cover it with the stones from the field like everyone else does up here.

Dad is real proud of his work. He says it will last 100 years or more. That's hard to believe but what he has finished so far sure looks good. I can believe it will last at least 100 years. I know I won't. Heck, you're lucky to make it to fifty nowadays.

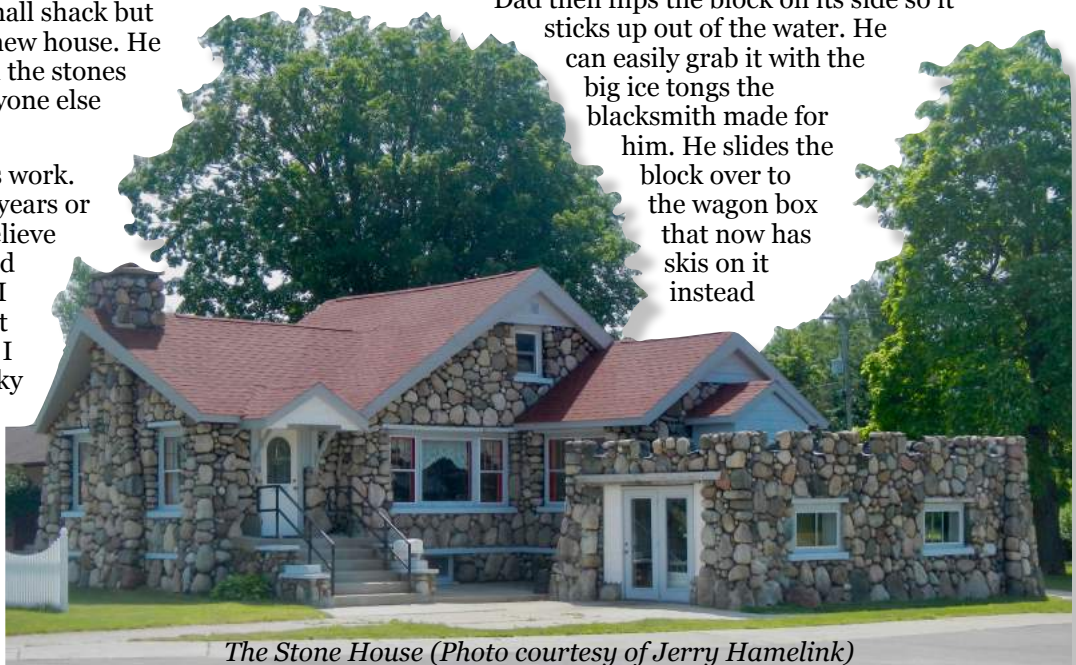
We do a lot more than haul stones out of the field. The most fun is making tomato juice at the end of summer. First we

pick several bushel baskets of ripe tomatoes from the garden behind the house. After mom boils some in water for a couple minutes, the skin will split which makes it easy to peel it off all the meat. Then we put them in a hand mill and squash them so all the juice comes out but all the seeds stay behind. Mom then puts the juice into glass Mason jars which she puts into our root cellar. We can have cold juice all winter or heat it up to make really good soup or spaghetti sauce.

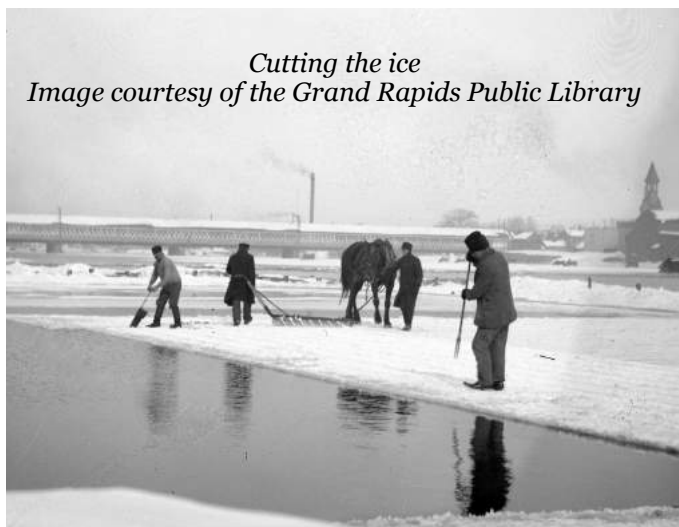
The hardest job is getting the ice for the year. We have to do it some time in February when it gets really cold and clear. Dad plows the snow off a bit of the ice on Emerald lake. That's the lake next to ours. We go there because it has the clearest water of the four lakes by us. The bottom of that lake is a soft, gushy, gray mud. Not sand like the other lakes. Dad calls it muck which is a good name for it. Pond weeds don't even grow in it — only this scratchy gray green weed with stubby leaves that Dad calls Chara.

To get the ice, Dad spuds a hole through the ice which is over a foot thick. He has to make the hole about 6 inches wide so it is big enough for us to get our ice saw through. Then he spuds another hole almost two feet over from the first one. The saw has a rod through it for a handle so my brother and I can each use one of the handles while Dad uses both at the same time. The saw rips through the ice very well. We cut two lines side by side exactly 20 inches apart. Every 15 inches Dad takes the spud again and cracks the ice between the lines until the block drops off and floats in the water.

Dad then flips the block on its side so it sticks up out of the water. He can easily grab it with the big ice tongs the blacksmith made for him. He slides the block over to the wagon box that now has skis on it instead



The Stone House (Photo courtesy of Jerry Hamelink)



Cutting the ice
Image courtesy of the Grand Rapids Public Library

of wheels. When the wagon box is full, we quit for the day and ride home. At home, we put the ice blocks into the ice house Dad built into the hill behind our house. It usually takes three days to fill the ice house up for the year. It's a lot of work but it sure is worth it when you can sneak into that ice house on a hot summer's day and get a nice piece of ice to suck on.

Summer is the best time. No school and lots of swimming and fishing. My brother and I just about live on or in the water all summer long. Heck, I don't remember when I learned to swim. Mom and Dad taught us how to swim before we could walk. We've got a nice little row boat. It's almost 10 feet long and has three seats. I usually do the rowing since I'm

bigger than my little brother. Most of the time we just fish for bluegills and perch because they taste the best. Sometimes we catch a bass which is really fun. Once we even caught a pike which was scary because of all his sharp teeth. We smashed its head with an oar to keep it from flopping around. We ate it that night but it didn't taste as good as the other fish and it had an extra set of rib bones which made it hard to eat.

Water snakes are the worst. They are not poisonous but they will bite you. A couple years ago I was dipping the rain water out of the boat when a little tiny water snake went swimming by the boat. I thought it was cute so I grabbed it. It wrapped itself around my finger which I liked but then it reared back and bit me! I smashed it against the boat. Ever since then I have tried to kill every water snake I see. I don't bother the other snakes. I like to see blue racers — they are really fast. I've even got a little pet brown snake that eats worms. I catch the worms under rocks or big pieces of wood. That's also how we get the worms to go fishing.

So life is good here. We may not be as rich as Mr Jenkins who owns the saw mill, but like Dad says:

"We got everything a man could want and even the stones are free."

About the author: *Jerry Hamelink is a retired scientist and professor. After writing many scientific papers, he's now trying his hand at periodical and magazine stories. He remembers gathering stones from the field and helping cut the ice when he was a boy.*

WMGS Writers' Group — Topics for 2017

Meets the third Tuesday of each month from 1:30 — 3:45 p.m. at the Dominican Center.

Check wmgs.org/writers_group.htm for more information on where to meet and who to contact. The Writers' Group holds supportive meetings for everyone who wants to learn more about organizing and writing family history. We take time to informally discuss questions relevant to each person's work, provide helpful, non-judgmental feedback on current or on-going writing projects, discover new research techniques, and have fun making new friends.

Genealogy is more than "names and dates." An ancestor's story or a personal memory are even more fascinating and enlightening. But some genealogists don't know how to begin, while others just need a deadline to kick start their creative juices. The Writers' Group can fulfill both of these needs.

March 21 - Contrast and compare how an aspect of life or an object was different "back then" from what it is now.

April 18 - Write a weather related storm story

May 16 - Relate a story that revolves around flowers and your family.

June 20 - Share the best things about Summer when you were growing up.

July 18 - Explore/use Google Earth and tell us what you found.

August 15 - Write about a naughty ancestor's unacceptable behavior.

September 19 - Write a school related story.

October 17 - Tell us about a Halloween experience.

November 21 - Write about an ancestor who served in the military.

December 19 - Annual pot luck "Christmas Talk Fest." Bring something delicious using a recipe from the past. We'll also brainstorm writing topics for 2018.

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.

All websites or books reviewed or mentioned in *Michigana* are provided as a convenience for our readers, and only for informational purposes. They do not constitute an endorsement or an approval by WMGS. WMGS bears no responsibility for the accuracy, legality, or content of the resource.

Change of Address {Temporary or Permanent}

If you will be moving to a new address permanently, or are 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.

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

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Inside back cover: Photos courtesy of Mary Rasch Alt

Back cover: Photos courtesy of Sister Michael Ellen Carling, Mary Rasch Alt, and the National Gallery of Art/NGA Images.

Comments? Questions? Send to:
michigana@wmgs.org or ruthgen@gmail.com

Michigan

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Western Michigan Genealogical Society

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

<http://www.wmgs.org> <http://data.wmgs.org> www.gotancestors.com www.commoncorners.com

Western Michigan Genealogical Society Publications for Sale

<i>Michigana</i> Index: An Index to Articles Vol. 18-1 through 35-3 (Sept. 1990)	\$3.00
<i>Michigana</i> Index 1965-1974	\$4.00
<i>Michigana</i> Index 1975-1984	\$5.00
Index of the 1884 State Census, Kent County, Michigan	\$25.00
Index of the 1894 State Census, Kent County, Michigan	\$25.00
1870 Census Index to the Townships of Kent County, Michigan	\$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, Michigan	\$6.00
Kent County 1860 Census Index & Heads of Families	\$5.00
Census Research Guide & Relationship Chart	\$3.00
Latzek Funeral Home Registers, An Index to 10 Vol. 1903-1906	\$3.00
Church Records, Michigan Room, Grand Rapids Public Library	\$4.00
Church Records Index, Volume 1 or Volume 2 (Each)	\$27.00
Solon Township Cemeteries and Death Records, Kent County, Michigan 1900-1952	\$10.00
Vergennes Township Cemeteries, Kent County, Michigan	\$6.00
Cemetery Records for Nelson & Spencer Twps., Kent County, Michigan	\$6.00
Bowne Township and Gaines Township Cemeteries, Kent County, Michigan	\$9.00
Ada Township Cemeteries and Lot Owners, Kent County, Michigan	\$6.50
Jamestown Township Death Records, Ottawa County, Michigan	\$12.50
Chester Twp., Ottawa Co. Michigan - 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	\$5.00
Index to WMGS Manuscript, Family History, & Geographical Collections 1995 Edition	\$8.50
Federal Land Patents - Kent County, Michigan	\$20.00
Index to Chapman's 1881 History of Kent County, Michigan, An Every Name Index	\$10.00
State Land Patents - Kent County, Michigan - Revised 2010	\$14.00
Vital Signs: German-English Vita Record Wordlist	\$6.95
How to Map Property Descriptions	\$10.00

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	1930 Federal Census	County Vital Records - Death
1850, 1860 & 1870 Federal Census	Census Checksheet Form	

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8 Family Record Sheets & two each of remaining 16 worksheets with instructions \$3.00

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

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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 self-addressed stamped envelope or go to www.wmgs.org**

For purchases, **send check and your order to:**

WMGS Sales, c/o Grand Rapids Public Library, 111 Library Street, Grand Rapids, MI 49503-3258.

Editor's Note

by Ruth Robinson Waybrant

michigana@wmgs.org or ruthgen@gmail.com

Have you sent in your 2017 WMGS Writing Contest entry yet?

There is still time — deadline is March 30th. Marlene Fabbro's winning entry from last year's contest starts on page 20—a World War II story taking place in the United States, Canada, and Germany. See page 25 for information on the 2017 contest:

~ A Sense of Place ~

Time keeps zooming by — how is everyone doing with their New Year's resolutions? I'm still working on my resolution from last year, making slow progress getting those old letters, documents, and photos scanned.

Michigana is currently looking for a couple of **proof readers**. If you know your way around commas, if those pesky misspelled words just jump out at you, if that sentence or paragraph could just be tweaked a bit to make more sense, **please contact me**. Four times a year I will check with you, email a few articles for you to peruse, proof, and send back to me with corrections.

In this issue, you will find:

- Information on the 2018 NGS Conference which will be right here in Grand Rapids (May 2018)
- Marlene Fabbro's story about Albert Grimm which takes place during the first half of the twentieth century. I can relate to the comment about the "ridiculous dry law" (during Prohibition) as I too have German ancestry.
- The importance of using many different kinds of maps in genealogy — "Cruisin' the Stacks" column.
- "Research from a Distance" — Part II of the story "Chocolate, Fruit, and Murder" by Al Dawson
- Catch up on the latest on DNA groups in Western Michigan (in Grand Rapids and in Ionia)
- And how delightful would it be to find out some of the personal information about your ancestors that is found in the story about the St. Stephen's church in Schoolcraft?

* * * * *

Upcoming issues include information on cigar stores and factories in Grand Rapids, memories of 9/11, a focus on World War I, Grand Rapids as *THE* furniture capitol of the United States (for over 100 years), plus using "Social Media" for genealogy. If you have any information you would like included on these subjects, please send them to me at:

michigana@wmgs.org or ruthgen@gmail.com



The above carefully designed Georgian Colonial with spacious grounds and old shade, built by the Jameson family, and recently owned by Mr. and Mrs. John F. Sweeny, has been sold to Mr. and Mrs. Charles E. Robinson who with their two daughters, Kathryn and Ruth are now residing in the property which is located at 303 First Street. The sale was made by Julia Sweeny, Realtor, Fenton.

If I were eligible for this year's writing contest, I would probably write about the house I lived in from second thru fifth grade—the one my sister and I were going to buy back when we grew up. After all, I had my very own private staircase up to my bedroom (probably originally the maid's room).

Or perhaps I would choose the American Legion summer cottage at Higgins Lake where we spent a delightful week every summer from the time I was in diapers until my children were in junior high - well over 40 years of summertime memories.

I look forward to seeing YOUR contest entry!

Above: House where I had my own private staircase.

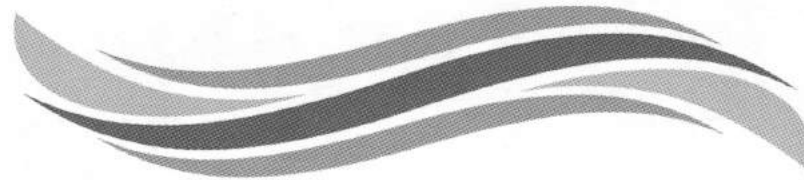
Below: Cottage at Higgins Lake



Photos courtesy of Ruth Robinson Waybrant

NATIONAL GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY
2018 FAMILY HISTORY CONFERENCE
2-5 MAY 2018 | GRAND RAPIDS, MI

Paths to Your Past



*Call for
Proposals!*

*Proposals
accepted until
1 April 2017*

In the nineteenth century,
the Great Lakes were major,
strategic waterways that

aided Americans moving West and immigrants coming from overseas through Canada to settle and develop the Midwest. Cheap land, mining, and the timber industry made the area attractive. The combination of water power from the rivers and rapids, together with access to grain and lumber, encouraged manufacturing and industry, including breweries, furniture, and cereal. Entrepreneurs flourished as Michigan became the center for the automobile industry, encouraging migration from the south and attracting an influx of new immigrants in search of jobs and the American dream.

Among the topics being considered by NGS are presentations on migration paths to the Midwest including waterways, trails, and railroads; records and repositories for Michigan, the surrounding states, and Canada; records generated by France, Great Britain, and later by the newly established United States as they fought for control of the Old Northwest Territory; land grants, deeds, and maps; and laws and court records. Conference tracks under consideration include:

- Ethnic groups: Dutch, German, Polish, French Canadian, Scandinavian, Cornish, African Americans, and Native Americans
- Immigration from: Europe, Eastern Europe, Canada, and Latin American countries
- Migration into and out of the area: from New England, New York, the Mid-Atlantic States, and the South, and later migration south and west
- Religious groups: Catholic, Lutheran, Congregational and United Church of Christ, Dutch and Christian Reformed, Quaker, and Amish
- Military records: forts, French and Indian War, American Revolution, Loyalists, War of 1812, Toledo War, Civil War, World War I and II, and the use of factories during wartime
- Occupations and trades: furriers, farming, fishing, mining, lumbering, brewing, shipping, and manufacturing
- Other organizations: Masons, abolitionists, prohibitionists, and unions

Proposals may also include presentations about DNA, and how to use DNA to solve genealogical roadblocks, as well as Internet websites, apps, and other technology tools.



NGS encourages proposals that demonstrate methods to help genealogists accurately identify ancestors through exhaustive research, proper source citations, analysis and correlation, resolution of conflicts, and sound reasoning and coherent writing.¹

Speakers who wish to submit lecture proposals may submit up to eight proposals electronically via:

www.ngsgenealogy.org/cs/call_for_proposals

The following information is required for each submitted proposal:

- Speaker's full name, address, telephone, and e-mail address
- Presentation title, not to exceed fourteen words
- Program brochure lecture summary, not to exceed twenty-five words
- Brief, but comprehensive outline
- Speaker biography, not to exceed twenty-five words
- Speaker's recent lecture experience
- List the national or regional conferences where you have presented this lecture in the last three years and where you are scheduled to present this lecture during the next year
- Identification of the appropriate audience level: beginner, beginner-intermediate, intermediate, intermediate-advanced, advanced, or all



Buildings old and new in downtown Grand Rapids

NGS members will receive first consideration as speakers. All proposals must be



"The American Horse" by sculptor Nina Akamu, at Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Photos courtesy of Ruth Robinson Waybrant

submitted electronically through the NGS website listed above between 1 January and 11:59 p.m. EDT on 1 April 2017. Syllabus material, due 15 February 2018, is required for each lecture or workshop presentation and will be included in the syllabus distributed to all conference registrants. Electronic presentation programs are expected from the speakers and they must provide their own digital projector. NGS will provide projector support, which consists of a VGA cable, cart, and power strip. Internet connections will not be provided.

Organizations are encouraged to sponsor a lecture and may submit proposals via:

www.ngsgenealogy.org/cs/sponsored_call_for_proposals

¹ Board for Certification of Genealogists, *The BCG Genealogical Standards Manual* (Orem, Utah: 2014): 2–3.

NGS 2018 Family History Conference, 2-5 May 2018 “Paths to Your Past” Grand Rapids, Michigan Call for Volunteers!

by Don Bryant, Western Michigan Genealogical Society

West Michigan has a "grand" reputation as a national conference destination. For decades, we have been known for our hospitality, welcoming vacationers and conference attendees to our area. I recently had a conversation with the vice president of sales for the host hotel in Grand Rapids and he reminded me how important local volunteers are to the SUCCESS of any large conference coming to town. Volunteers are our face, hands and feet. From my own experience I knew this was true, but it is reassuring to hear this again from a Grand Rapids hospitality industry leader.

Still a year away, the 2018 National Genealogical Society Family History Conference is already on the horizon. Planning has been going on for months. As the local host organization, we need to put our minds on building the team of about 80-100 volunteers needed to properly welcome and host thousands of visitors coming from all over. Grand Rapids, Devos Place, and the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel make up the stage; NGS the cast; and WMGS is seeking YOU, the supporting crew! If you love family history and want to be part of something special, you are invited! You do not need to be a member of NGS or Western Michigan Genealogical Society.

There are multiple volunteer “slots” to fill Monday through Saturday, April 30-May 5, 2018. We need conference bag packers, registration helpers, lecture room monitors, "Ask me" local hospitality concierges, and WMGS exhibit booth representatives. More details and specific volunteer assignments will be available after the 2018 program comes out later this year.

Maureen Nelson of Cedar Springs and Sue Irvine of Grand Rapids have teamed up to coordinate volunteer activities and are anxious to hear from you. They'd like to get your name on the list of volunteers now. Send an email to NGShelpers@wmgs.org to have your name added or even if you just have questions.

**Find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/wmgs.org
& online at www.wmgs.org**

Our Extended Family

Jessica Riley by *Bobbi Schirado*

Our newest WMGS Board member, Jessica Riley, is a second-generation genealogist. Her mother, Pat Riley — a longtime member of WMGS — introduced Jessica to family history. Whenever Jessica came home from college they shared mother-daughter time at membership meetings. They enjoy a mutual enthusiasm for finding dead people, researching local history, and even have “matching” notebooks. Next month they plan on taking a research trip to Louisville, Kentucky with stops along the way in Indiana.

Jessica enjoyed growing up in Southeast Grand Rapids and still lives in that section of the city. She graduated from Catholic Central High School, and went on to get her undergraduate degree in history from St. Norbert College in De Pere, Wisconsin, just outside of Green Bay. Continuing her education, Jessica graduated from Michigan State University with a Law Degree. She planned on practicing law, but fate intervened. Shortly after graduation, she took a trip to Guatemala and ended up choosing Frost’s, “The Road Less Taken.”

Becoming a lawyer would have been lucrative, but after meeting Mayan descendants living in impossible poverty and uncertain political situations, Jessica decided to dedicate her life to making a difference. For the past four years she has been employed by Global Gifts, a non-profit “Fair Trade” store. Started by three women from Calvin Christian Reformed Church, the company buys handmade products from all over the world. The artisans receive a fair wage before the product is sold. This allows women to get out of poverty and also have enough money to send their children to school and pay for food and housing. This is a proven economic model because it offers a global market for people in developing counties. Even though there is no yearly six figure income, her quality of life is far more rewarding. Jessica says she is, “Doing what I love, helping people improve their lives.”

Jessica has traveled to Guatemala three times over the last three years and is especially concerned with the

fate of rural families. She and two others make up the Board for a small non-profit, Mayan Rural Outreach. Its goal is to help children with scholarships and nutrition projects so they can remain in their small villages. Larger cities have high unemployment rates, drugs, and gangs.

While the people of Guatemala are closest to Jessica’s heart, she is also concerned about those in other nations. Amnesty International’s (AI) global mission is rooted in a fundamental commitment to the rights, dignity, and well-being of every person on earth. Jessica is a member of the Executive Committee of the local chapter of AI that meets at Plymouth UCC in Grand Rapids.

History has always been a big part of Jessica’s life. She is a member of the Grand Rapids Women’s Historical Council, and is the only paid staff member for the Grand Rapids Historical Society (GRHS). She takes notes and is the *Newsletter* Editor for GRHS. Last year Jessica won First Prize in the WMGS Writing Contest. Her experience makes her a natural to take over the Editorship of the WMGS *Newsletter* and join our Board of Directors.



Genealogically speaking, Jessica and her Mom are researching several “Old 300” families in Texas with the surnames of Tate, Means, and Philips. Bourke, Ham, and Bragdon are branches from the state of Maine. Pat especially likes researching their Garwood family in Quaker records.

Jessica’s paternal grandfather was adopted, but the family assumed that his birth heritage would still be Irish, or at least originate from the British Isles. DNA testing, along with some heavy adoption research, proved you should never assume anything. Her grandfather’s father was most likely Polish.

Jessica has been in a committed relationship for over a decade. Her six-year-old nephew, Roman, is the light of her life. She’s a doting aunt and spends as much time as she can with him. In her spare time she enjoys Zumba and anything to do with cooking. Her favorite relaxing evenings involve trying a new recipe, baking a tasty treat, watching a Foodie TV show, or reading about the science of cooking.

Library Notes

by Jennifer P. Andrew

Ichabod L. Quimby: Old Settler and Lumberman

In searching the early Grand Rapids newspapers for an obituary a patron requested, I came across lengthy articles in *The Evening Leader* and *The Daily Democrat* about the death of Ichabod Libby Quimby. Another article describing his funeral in great detail appeared a few days later.

Those of you familiar with obituaries and how they've evolved over time know that during the late 1800's and well into the 20th century, unless you were someone prominent in the community, obituaries were most often two sentence death announcements. I learned Ichabod's older brother, Amos, died on March 24, 1879 (coincidentally the same date Ichabod died ten years later). Amos was one of the sixteen founders of Second Congregational Church, one of its first trustees¹ and he was a foreman in his brother Ichabod's mill. He left a wife Phidelia and a teenage daughter, Amanda. However, his obituary simply read; "Died. In this city, Monday, March 24 at 3 a.m., AMOS QUIMBY, aged 42 years."²

Contrast Amos' obituary with that of his brother. Here is a portion of the article describing Ichabod Quimby's funeral:



Ichabod Libby Quimby
James H. Hooper Photograph
Collection 59 Photograph 286

During Mr. (Rev) Merriam's remarks, in which he alluded to the exemplary life of the deceased and his long and active business career, many shed tears. The Congregational choir quartette sang two selections which added to the solemn and effective character of the services. The remains were followed to the place of interment in Oak Hill cemetery by a large concourse of sincere mourners.³

Who was Ichabod Libby Quimby? I printed his obituary articles with the intention of adding them to his folder in the Local History Department's Portrait and Biography files. I then noticed we do not have a file for Ichabod Quimby, surely the man for whom Quimby Street must be named. There was a file for George Quimby, a relation perhaps? My interest was sparked and thus began my research.

Early Life and Career

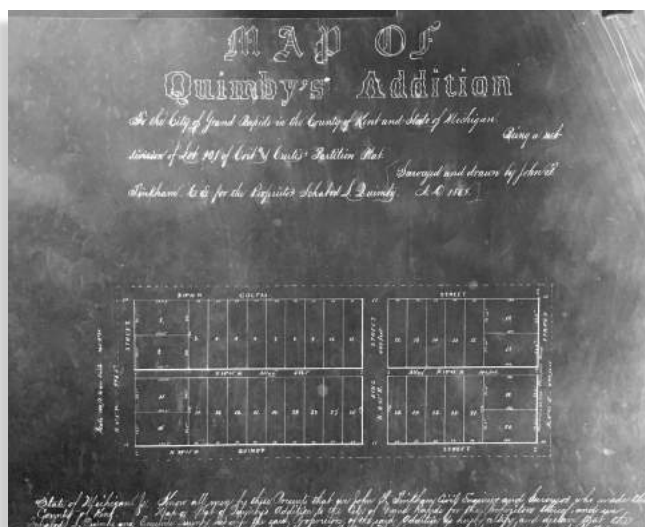
Born on December 8, 1823 to Samuel B. and Hannah Quimby, in Sandwich, New Hampshire, Ichabod Quimby spent his early twenties in Boston, Massachusetts, as an inspector in the hardwood business.

Upon moving to Wayne County, Pennsylvania around 1850, Ichabod met and married Emeline K. Bortree. While in Pennsylvania he worked in the manufacturing of shovel handles. Not long after, in 1855, Ichabod,

Left: In 1868 Ichabod platted the Quimby Addition on the Northeast side of Grand Rapids, giving Quimby Street the name it bears today.

"On this twenty sixth day of December one thousand and sixty eight before me a Notary Public in and for said County personally appeared John F. Tinkham Ichabod Quimby and Emeline Quimby his wife to me.

Know to be the persons described in and who executed this map or plat and dedication (?) thereof and acknowledged the same to be their free act and deed. And the said Emeline Quimby wife of the said Ichabod L. Quimby on a private examination separate and apart from her said husband acknowledged that she executed freely and without any fear of compulsion from any one. J.W. Pierce Notary Public, Kent Co. Mich."



Emeline and their son, George Irving (born in November of 1852), moved to New Baltimore, Michigan, along the shores of Lake St. Clair. Here Ichabod erected a mill for the manufacturing of long shovel handles. Shortly thereafter, in June of 1856, Emeline and Ichabod had a daughter, Clara. ⁴

Grand Rapids

Ichabod Quimby first appears in the Grand Rapids City Directories in 1868, living at 51 Ottawa. His brother, Amos, and his father, Samuel, also appear in the directory at that time, both living near Ichabod's newly constructed mill on Canal Street.

By July of 1870 the Federal Census shows Ichabod, his wife Emeline, their children, Emeline's brother Moses Bortree, Moses' wife, and the Bortree children residing at the corner of Quimby and Taylor with Ichabod's parents next door. The census also shows an addition to the Quimby family. Emeline and Ichabod had another daughter late in 1869, Ethelyn.

That same year The Grand Rapids Boom Company was founded with Ichabod Quimby as president, a position he held until 1874.⁵ As logs came down the Grand River they needed to get to the owning mill or sent toward the mouth and the mills farther downstream. Along the river, booms were created where logs could be funneled and sorted using pilings and gates. In the boom area "river hogs" sorted logs by the owner markings on each log. Logs were first fastened together with rope or chain looped through pins driven into the wood, then towed to the appropriate mill. Working on the booms paid about \$3.30 per day, or in today's value about \$70. The job was dangerous and proved deadly at times. ⁶

Besides New Baltimore, research suggests Ichabod was operating mills in Ionia County⁷ and Grand Rapids simultaneously for a number of years. He purchased a large area of timber land of white ash⁸ in Hastings Township, Barry County. The presence of the Grand Valley Railroad and the Thornapple River made the site ideal for a mill. Ichabod and two men (DeBrow and Sutherland) cleared the land and Ichabod removed his New Baltimore operation to this locale in March 1870 just thirty-seven miles southeast of Grand Rapids. They built a large sawmill, drying kiln, a store building, fifteen dwellings, and hired 30-40 men. In addition, they dug a well for this new village they named Quimby. Logs were floated down the river to the mill to be sawed, loaded onto railroad cars, and shipped to Jackson or Grand Rapids.⁹

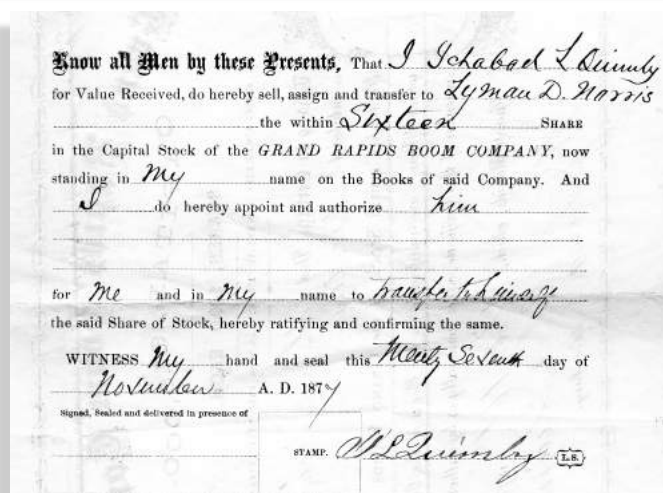
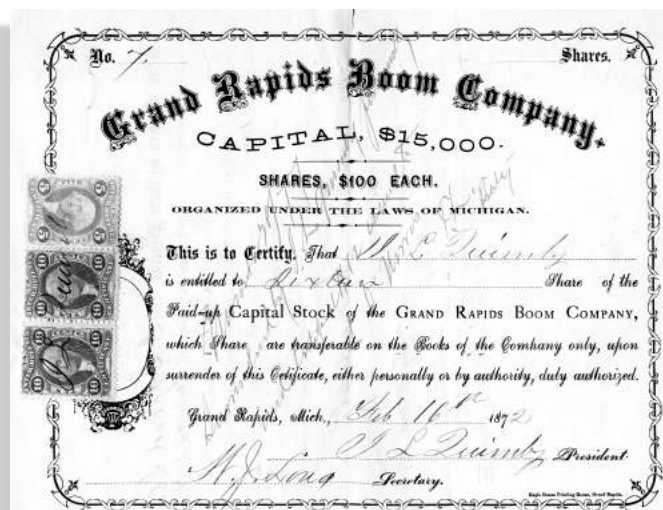
Right: Stock certificate for the Grand Rapids Boom Company sold to Ichabod Quimby. He was President of the company at the time so he appears as the purchaser on the certificate and also signed it as President. Quimby transferred these shares to Lyman D. Norris in November of 1877. Grand Rapids Public Library Ephemera Collection 216, Box 10.75

Misfortune

On November 12, 1873 the saw mill, kiln, store house, and blacksmith shop in Quimby caught fire and burned to the ground. Some speculated that the fire was set by Native Americans, as the mill and kiln were reportedly built on or near an Indian burial ground. The mill was not rebuilt.¹⁰

Fires were an all too common occurrence at the time and, unfortunately, Ichabod suffered at least three, including two at the mill in Grand Rapids. After a fire on October 21 of 1881,¹¹ fire struck again the following February; "the alarm of the fire from box 16 this afternoon was because of flames in I.L. Quimby's new mill on North Canal Street."¹²

According to his obituary, Ichabod suffered "financial reverses" in 1878. In 1879 Ichabod engaged Edwin F. Uhl as assignee for the benefit of his creditors. Ichabod and his son, George, continued to manage the mill with Uhl handling the estate. By 1887 all debts were paid. After Ichabod's death in 1889, George continued to manage the business and Uhl remained assignee.



The Quimby Mill on Canal Street is on the far right in this photograph. The photograph is not dated, but it is noted that the bridge in the photo is the second one built. The first was destroyed in the flood and log jam of 1883. Godfrey Anderson Photograph Collection 33, Box 11, Folder 31



Family

George outlived his father by only four years. In the short span of time between the death of his father and his own death, his wife Josephine died, leaving him with two young sons. In 1892 he married a Canadian woman, Bertha Cline (twenty years his junior). The Quimby Lumber Co. lost several hundred thousand foot of lumber and its kiln as the result of an ice gorge and flood in March 1893,¹³ and George himself died suddenly in May 1893 while traveling in Philadelphia.¹⁴

Married less than a year and only twenty-one years old, the young widow of George Quimby only appears in the city directory in 1893. Shortly thereafter, during the summer of 1893, the court appointed Clara S. Morley the guardian of her young nephews, Raymond and Irving.¹⁵ No record of Bertha Quimby can be found after 1893. It seems likely she returned to her family in Canada.

Following George's death, his sister Clara took over management of the business and kept Edwin Uhl on as assignee. In 1879, at age twenty-two, Clara had married William Luke Morley and, less than a year later, had a son, William. However, she is shown living with her four month old son and parents in the 1880 Census. Her husband does not appear to be living with her, nor does he ever appear to again. Her death certificate states she was divorced.

During the years following George's

death the mill operated at a loss. In 1900, Emeline, Clara, and Ethelyn brought suit against Edwin Uhl attempting to hold him liable for the losses. After a year of litigation the court ruled in Uhl's favor. That litigation ultimately led to the closing of the mill the same year. The case was appealed to the Michigan Supreme Court where the ruling was upheld.¹⁶

Life After the Quimby Mill

Ichabod's widow, Emeline, continued to reside in the family home at the corner of Quimby and Taylor Streets for ten years following the closure of the mill. Her daughters, Ethelyn and Clara continued to live with her, as did her grandson, Irving. Clara began work as a lumber broker, calling her business C.S. Morley and Son. She sold lumber locally and abroad becoming the only American representative for a mahogany importing business located in Liverpool,

England. At one point Clara traveled to a mahogany auction in England, noticeably the only woman who had ever taken part in such an event. When asked about her work Clara said, "I am not in this business for the love or glory of it, but because I must be. Circumstances forced me into business to take care of myself and my own."¹⁷ Clara died, unexpectedly, during surgery on September 29, 1905.¹⁸

Ethelyn, the youngest of Ichabod and Emeline's children, was very much a part of Grand Rapids society. She was often on the guest lists of high society parties highlighted in the local papers and made even bigger headlines in 1900 when she sued a clairvoyant

for swindling her out of more than \$800 in jewels and silk. Ethelyn sought the fortune teller's counsel during the stress of the Uhl trial and an ongoing illness suffered by her sister, Clara. The trial was a spectacle, not only covered by the local papers, but papers in neighboring states. In the end, the clairvoyant was convicted.¹⁹

On April 10 of 1910 a classified ad appeared in the Grand Rapids Press:

"Everything from attic to basement in the Quimby residence, southwest corner of Quimby and Taylor streets, must be sold immediately regardless of cost. Sale on now."

Shortly thereafter, on May 3, the Grand Rapids Press ran the story of a



Mrs. Clara S. Morley.

Left: This portrait ran with Clara Morley's obituary in The Grand Rapids Evening Press on September 29, 1905.

robbery that occurred in the, mostly empty, Quimby house. That same article states “this place recently was sold to the city as part of the filtration plant site.” The homestead was then razed, as it could not be moved intact, to make way for the filtration plant, which still stands today.²⁰

The same year the Quimby house was sold, Ethelyn married Frank Ruth.²¹ Emeline Quimby moved to Chicago to live with her daughter and son-in-law. She died a short time later in 1911 at age 80, having outlived her husband and her two eldest children.²²

A Toast to Ichabod

A number of months ago, coincidentally as I was researching the Quimby family, a gentleman from the soon to be opened Creston Brewery, on the Northeast side of Grand Rapids, contacted the Local History Department requesting a photograph of Ichabod Quimby. The new brewery sits on the corner of Quimby Street and Plainfield Ave. They had named a

beer for Ichabod Quimby and his history was to be part of the brewery’s website.

Interestingly, the brewery boasts tangible history of Ichabod. The bar top in the new brewery is a large piece of virgin white oak, rescued from a dairy barn near Hastings. This barn was built in the late 1800s from oak boards “undoubtedly” cut at the Quimby Mill in the Village of Quimby.²³

About the Author: Jennifer Andrew has worked for the Grand Rapids Public Library since 2009 and has been in the Grand Rapids and Special Collections Department since 2013. In addition to maintaining the library’s vertical files, she fills patron requests for reproductions of archival photos and processes archival collections.

All images: Courtesy of the Grand Rapids History & Special Collections, Grand Rapids Public Library

¹ *Second Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, 100 Anniversary 1869-1969.*

² *The Grand Rapids Daily Eagle.* “Died.” March 24, 1879.

³ *The Grand Rapids Daily Democrat.* “Funeral of Ichabod L. Quimby.” March 28, 1889

⁴ *The Grand Rapids Daily Democrat.* “Death of I.L. Quimby.” March 26, 1889

⁵ Baxter, Albert. *History of the City of Grand Rapids.* 1891 New York and Grand Rapids Munsell&Company, Publishers pg. 428

⁶ *The Muskegon Chronicle.* “The Grand Jam of 1883.” 12 July 2008

⁷ *The Michigan State Gazetteer Shippers Guide and Business Directory 1865.* 1864. Indianapolis, Indiana. George W Hawes Publisher. 3rd Edition. pg. 321.

⁸ *Detroit Advertiser and Tribune.* Items at Large. 17 March 1870

⁹ Greenfield, Doris and Weinbrecht, Joyce Fisher. *Hastings Township Rural Schools.* 199? The Barry County Historical Society. Rural School Book Shelf Committee.

¹⁰ *Detroit Advertiser and Tribune.* 20 November 1873

¹¹ Baxter pg. 190

¹² *Grand Rapids Daily Eagle.* “Fire.” 15 February 1882.

¹³ *Jackson Citizen Patriot.* “Rising Waters.” 13 March 1893.

¹⁴ *The Grand Rapids Press.* “George L Quimby Dead.” 16 May 1893.

¹⁵ *The Grand Rapids Press.* “Court Room Echoes.” 18 July 1893.

¹⁶ *The Grand Rapids Press.* 9 September 1903

¹⁷ *The Grand Rapids Herald.* “Woman Lumberman.” 16 November 1902

¹⁸ *The Grand Rapids Evening Press.* “Died From Shock.” 29 September 1905

¹⁹ *The Grand Rapids Press.* “Prey Of A Svengali.” 23 May 1900

²⁰ *The Grand Rapids Press.* “Board of Works Has Quimby Landmark on Hands” 10 May 1910

²¹ *The Grand Rapids Press.* “The Social Side.” 10 February 1910.

²² *The Grand Rapids Herald.* “Mrs. Quimby Dead.” 5 April 1911

²³ Wonder, Ben. “Setting the Bar: About the Beautiful Bar in Creston Brewery.” 7 October 2016. crestonbrewery.com

My ancestor, Greenfield Pote, was born in 1736 in Falmouth, York County, Massachusetts to William Pote from Marblehead, Massachusetts. The family story, repeated for several generations, stated that Greenfield was born, married, had children, and died in the same house. Records state that Greenfield married in Portland Maine (not Falmouth Massachusetts where he was born) and raised his children in Yarmouth and then Freeport, Cumberland County, Maine. It appeared to me that the Pote family was very mobile and the story a myth.

I traveled to Freeport where the historical society arranged for me to visit to the actual house, and also shared a folder of the house history. I discovered the house itself had been moved about 1775, but that still didn't explain all the differences. Elizabeth, the helpful archivist, showed me copies of old maps. While the house had only been moved once, the borders and the names of the state, counties, and communities had changed. Elizabeth explained to me the evolution of Maine, from Province of Massachusetts to State of Maine, York County to Cumberland County, Casco to Falmouth and then to Portland, and Yarmouth to Freeport. This enabled me to coordinate the dates of the political changes with the dates of the family vital statistics. Greenfield had indeed lived and died in the same house, which had been moved only once. Records relating to him, however, were connected to two states, two counties and four communities.

Thus began my habit of checking maps, especially historical ones. To my surprise, not only did I gain geographic knowledge, I gained understanding of other slices of my predecessors lives.

On a recent trip to New York City, I was investigating the proximity of some of my families who lived in an area at about the same time. One family was in Brooklyn Borough, New York City, another in Brooklyn, Kings County, others in Brooklyn, Long island. I thought it might be like Minneapolis-St. Paul or Buda & Pesh, communities divided by rivers. Historical maps and an obliging librarian again helped me understand the evolution and time frames of the names. Yes, they all lived in the same community for at least three

Cruisin' the Stacks by Susan J. Rabick Mapping Family History

generations. They were again all in the same place. It was the location names that changed.

Keep in mind that you may find that borders do change. Recently, a visitor to the library knew her settler's family farm was in a certain township but discovered his business five years later was in the city. The city fathers had annexed the area, and the settler

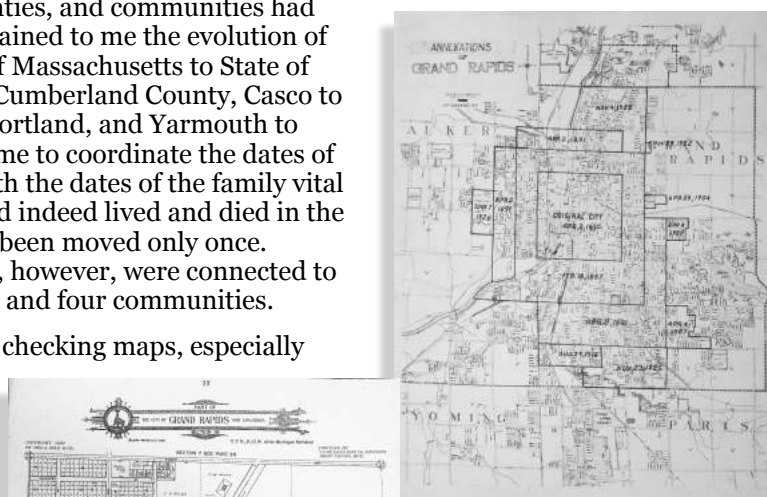
hadn't moved at all.

The genealogist made the discovery by looking through a township history with its maps. Another method would be to check the vertical file "Annexations" for dated, informative maps showing the city expansions and acquisitions. You can ask the librarian to help you locate the folder.

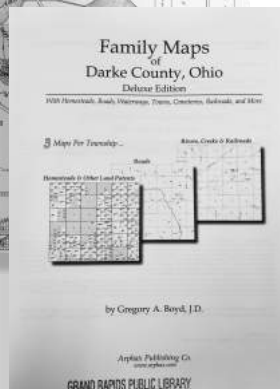
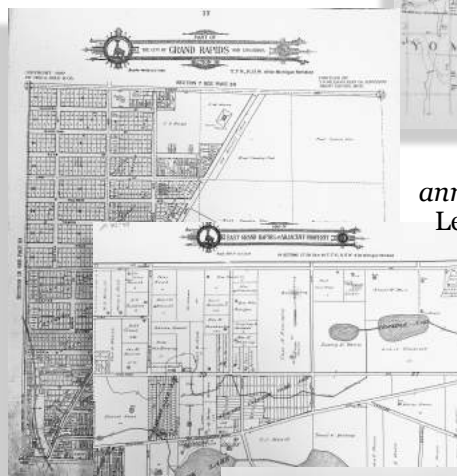
Parts of Rhode Island were claimed by Connecticut and Massachusetts. The southern border of Michigan was moved several miles. An

ancestor of mine joined the American military for the Revolutionary War in a New Hampshire town that now belongs to Quebec, Canada. I'm certain there are other examples; the above are ones which appeared in my family research.

How did Benjamin Lufkin meet his future wife Abigail Parker? Benjamin was from Gloucester Massachusetts, northeast of Boston on Cape Ann; Abigail was from Barnstable, southeast of Boston on Cape Cod. They are about 120 miles apart by road, a major trip in the 1600s. However, Benjamin was a fisherman and 'coaster' (a person who delivered goods by boat). A map shows very clearly that Boston Bay provided a relatively short, quick route for him, probably less than 60 miles. A map view helped me change my thinking about how my family managed.



Above: Map showing annexations of Grand Rapids
Left: Various maps helpful for genealogists.



On the fourth floor of the downtown Grand Rapids Public Library, there are several map sources to help researchers. Local people can find the family country homestead or their ancestral city home.

If your family resided in Kent County, check plat maps of the area. You need to know the township and locate the map box for it (ask a helpful librarian). Townships can sometimes be identified in the census or in directories. Each township has multiple maps from different years, some going back to the mid-nineteenth century. All owners are listed on their lot. How rewarding it is to see how big the farm was, who lived next door, and possibly drive to see where the farm used to be. Several other counties are represented in the collection as well.

For those who have family in Grand Rapids, the “Sanborn Insurance Maps” are wonderful for creating a picture of their home. They are also available in the majority of metropolitan areas throughout the U.S. The library has Grand Rapids books for 1952 on the shelf, with more on microfilm — a few going back to the 1860’s.

What I find intriguing is the detailed diagram of the property. One map I looked at had the Berean Baptist Church on the corner of Coit and Sweet NE. According to the code, listed inside the front cover, the church had steam heat, electric lights, steel trusses, and was brick. Next door was a two story home with a one story front porch and a chimney at the back. This was followed by a larger two story house that had been divided into flats and had a front porch and garage at the back of the property. Two blocks away was Plainfield Avenue with businesses described in detail. Since the maps were used for fire insurance, construction notations are extensive. Every drawing notes such things as skylights, a mansard roof, a water tank, stable, wired glass, etc. I didn’t see any outhouses.

I checked a Sanborn map for my Brooklyn ancestors when I was in New York City. My family resided in one of two, three-story wooden buildings among all the brick ones. It probably indicates a less prominent family, a valuable insight for me.

The archives in the Library have some very specialized maps. One woman corrected her perception of where the family homestead had been when she searched a large map, finally finding the right spot by locating a residence on the right road that had a stream through the property, consistent with the family story. A man was delighted to place his family home near the train tracks since the grandfather had been a train engineer.

I was also interested in the railroad maps in Michigan. I had pondered the story that my mother took the ferry from Ontario to come to Michigan to get married in 1935. She embarked from Sault St. Marie, Ontario and I couldn’t comprehend that the ferry went all the way to Detroit. Sure enough, there was a train available on the west shore of Lake Huron which would have taken her south.

One very old map, fascinating to view, shows bodies of water in lower Michigan in blazing white on a dark background. There are even maps of other U.S. places and foreign countries. Atlases are also available. If you are investigating a foreign county, also check the ‘how-to’ books on the shelf. They contain geographic and political maps showing changing borders and even give tips on where records may be held. One searcher

showed me that Northeastern Italy went through many changes and related how his ancestors coped with the differing governments in the nineteenth century. Grandpa Pete answered the question of where he was born with only the village name. The country on the census was sometimes Hungary, Austria, Slovakia, Czechoslovakia, or even Bohemia, depending on the year.

Online maps can be very useful. Quite often, while searching for a place, one can find period maps, sometimes through a link to a historical site. I especially like Google Earth which helps me grasp a sense of place. “Torrish” in Scotland has been reduced to a grove of trees on a two lane road, indicating its probable history as a remote, tiny village. I also

was amazed when I input three different names for Great Great Grandmother Margaret Johnston’s place of birth and childhood only to discover they were variations for the same place: Inverary, Argyle, and Tarbert, Scotland. She supposedly had the markings of being a “gentlewoman.” Tarbert turns out to be a castle in Argyle, near Inverary.

Maps help us find remarkable information, not only answers to specific questions, but often in revealing ways. Some can be accessed online, some are available only in libraries (books or originals), and some in



Above left: *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps on Microfilm.*

Below: *Bodies of water around Grand Rapids, Michigan in white on a dark background.*

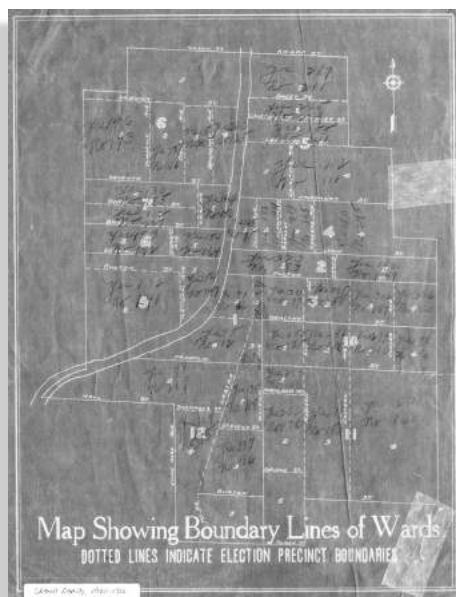


historical archives. The Library of Congress in Washington D.C. plans to share parts of its digital collection with the “Digital Public Library of America” (DPLA). They will begin by uploading 5,000 maps from three collections covering the Revolutionary War, the Civil War, and panoramic maps. Some of these are currently available on Library of Congress website.

Serendipity in genealogy is always a surprise and always fun. Two recent visitors to Tuesday’s WMGS helpers group found maps useful and I am including their stories here.

A young man was trying to trace a family who was found throughout the years in Kentucky. We noticed that two of the five children in a census were born in Ohio. This seemed very confusing to him. The librarian then produced an atlas and I showed him Ohio, across the Ohio River from Kentucky for much of its southern border. We identified the nearest counties where he could research both documentation and history that might explain the border hopping. I was reminded of Shirley DeBoer’s trick of using a small bowl when searching for information. When you can’t locate the citations for an event, invert the bowl over a map of the area and then research all the locations encompassed.

Hey! This is something I need to do. I can’t find my immigrants’ graves in (old) Stormont County Ontario. I know the border with (old) Dundas County was immediately to the east and the farm was close by it. I reminded myself that rigid political borders shouldn’t cramp my thinking about people’s mobility. I will now explore outside an area classification, and look in Dundas.

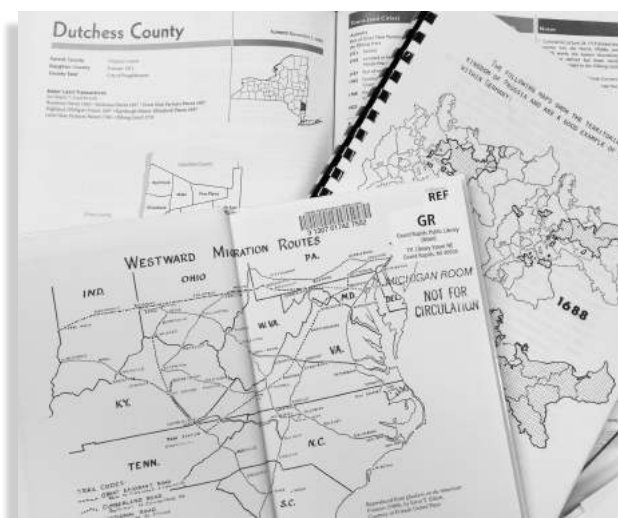


Grand Rapids map showing boundary lines of wards.

The other person was a woman who hadn’t been able to find early origins for her family. She knew they were early settlers of southern Ohio but didn’t know where they came from or why. She found a possible answer in *The Expansion of New England*¹ which tracks group migrations and institutions through sequential, dated maps. Commentary covers origins, leaders, motives, and problems as people moved north, south, and west into new territories, up to the Mississippi River. She had a single reference to Marietta Ohio. This community was described as originating in a barroom with eleven men in Boston Massachusetts who set up a settlement company. Now she might be able to research earlier sources. As luck would have it, she noticed the “Western Reserve, which Connecticut had specifically retained.” Another branch of her family likely settled in this northeast section of Ohio. By accident, she had acquired even more leads for possibilities in her research.

Putting people “in place” is not a goal. It is an avenue of understanding and reflection on our ancestors’ circumstances, motivations, hardships, experiences, and successes. Maps are a valuable tool in our quest.

Europe's changing borders can be difficult to navigate. There are "How To" books available for a variety of countries, or previous countries, which have invaluable information and maps showing changing borders and name. Check out interactive maps online showing changing borders. Maps at left are some of the many available at the Grand Rapids Public Library downtown.



About the author: *Susan J. Rabick is the WMGS Historian and a dedicated member of the “Tuesday Genies.” This group is made up of volunteers who index resources and help genealogists with questions on Tuesday nights at the GRPL. If you have questions or comments, contact Sue at rabickgns@aol.com*

¹ Lois Kimball Mathews; *The Expansion of New England; The Spread of New England Settlement and Institutions to the Mississippi River, 1620-1865* New England Historic Genealogical Society 2012 [original 1909].

In Memorium

Barbara Vander Mark

3/27/1950 - 1/15/2017

Barbara A. Vander Mark died in the hospital on January 15th at the age of 66. A native and long-time resident of Grand Rapids, Ms. Vander Mark graduated from Central High School's class of 1968 and attended Western Michigan University. She spent most of her professional life with the City of Grand Rapids, working in various capacities in the Police Department, Public Housing Office and City Assessor's Office. She had a sharp mind and high standards.

Ms. Vander Mark loved genealogy and local history. She maintained a website for public use full of noteworthy information on historic neighborhoods in Grand Rapids, street maps, fire barns, and public schools. She made presentations at the Grand Rapids Library, and assembled a book of local genealogy materials for the library. She took great pleasure in the company of her two cats, Scamp and Grady, and was inspired by the music of Celtic Thunder. Though challenged in later years by health problems, she never lost her active, inquisitive mind or her fighting spirit. Ms. Vander Mark is preceded in death by her parents, Frank and Mary Phyllis (Freeman) Vander Mark, and her brother, Allan. Other family members include her sister, Carol Jeanne, her aunt, Evelyn Venzke, of Hubertus, Wisconsin, and several cousins. Friends will organize a private service at a later date to honor her memory.

Pioneer Certificate Awarded! Have you researched your pioneer?

At a recent WMGS general meeting, Michelle Timmer presented Meredyth Althaus with a Pioneer Certificate for her ancestor George Seward Richardson. (See photo at right).

Congratulations Meredyth!

Eligibility: To qualify for a Pioneer Certificate, an applicant must be directly descended from an ancestor who settled in Kent County as follows:

- Pioneers (Prior to 1841) Gold Seal
- Settlers (Prior to 1881) Silver Seal
- Early Family (Prior to 1921) Blue Seal

For more more information about this program, check wmgs.org/pioneer.htm



Area Notes

Kutsche Office of Local History

by Mary Rasch Alt

Meet the New Director

West Michigan historical societies, commissions, and library staff were invited to meet Dr. Kim McKee, the new director of the Kutsche Office of Local History at Grand Valley State University.

"I'm very excited to serve as the Kutsche Office of Local History's director," said Dr. McKee. "During the summer, I had the opportunity to work closely with Dr. Melanie Shell-Weiss as we underwent the leadership transition. Part of this work included participating in the Oceana County community History Harvest in June. It was a pleasure to get to know the local community and witness the digitization of artifacts, papers, and memorabilia and participate in the oral history collection.

"Additionally, I spent the summer and fall months meeting with various individuals and community partners. I look forward to getting to know all of you as I continue in this role.

"Since its inception, the Kutsche Office of Local History has developed a strong reputation and focus that unearths and highlights the voices of diverse communities in West Michigan. It is my goal to continue this impactful work. I look forward to seeing you, not just at the Roundtable but at events throughout the year." (The Roundtable is an annual seminar sponsored by the Kutsche Office. The 2017 Roundtable is planned for March 23rd).

Sharing information

At this gathering to meet Dr. McKee, Gordon Olson, Grand Rapids historian, gave the audience a chance to share ideas and information on what they have been doing in the past year.

Coming prepared to share, I (Mary Alt) volunteered to speak first. I brought the 160th Berlin Fair book that Wright Township Historical Commission wrote in 2015. This

Right: Paul Kutsche, founding father of Kutsche Office of Local History, talks with Bobbi Schirado of the Western Michigan Genealogical Society.



Dr. Kim McKee, the new director of the Kutsche Office of Local History.

commission has a display at the Berlin Fair in Marne each year. Last year, they featured Centennial Farms in Wright Township and in July 2017, the feature will be "Wright Township's one-room schools."

I also shared the book written by Alpine Township Historical Commission with the National Weather Service for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Palm Sunday Tornado.

Both books are available at their respective township offices.

Don Doyle, of Alpine Township Historical Commission, shared the November 2016 program on "Native American Pathways."

Sue Irvine of the Western Michigan Genealogical Society told

everyone about the National Genealogical Conference that will be held in Grand Rapids in 2018 and how they are helping with the plans. She shared the wmgs.org website "Common Corners" that gives everyone in West Michigan plans that are being made by all historical societies and commissions in the area.

Walter Ewing, associated with the Tri-Cities Historical Museum in Grand Haven, told everyone about the research he did to write his book, *Footprints: Stories of Native Americans in West Central Michigan*. He first focused on the Grand Haven area, then learned he needed to include west central Michigan in his book.

"Personal narratives are so important," said Connie Laker, of the Holland Museum. "People need to know how they belong. Our programs are family focused and show how everyone is a part of their community."



Connie also told the group how their website was being held hostage by a guy in Bangladesh. That was something no one else had encountered!

Everyone agreed, we have trouble getting young people involved in our historical organizations. It was suggested to get students in high school and college to help with some volunteer work with the group, so that they might catch the historical bug and want to help for the rest of their lives!

From Ada Historical Society, Christin Whiles told the group how their focus shifted from running the museum to programs. They are recommitting themselves to the museum and its collections.

Gordon Olson summed up the discussion with the concerns every group has, e.g.; membership and getting publicity on programs offered by many groups. He warned that we must remember the importance of current history. We should all record what is going on in our communities today.

Oral History, getting it right

Dr. James Smither, director of the GVSU Veterans History Project, gave the group a talk on the importance of oral history and some of the recommended methods.

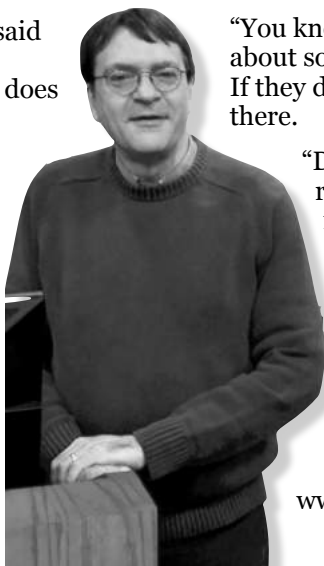
"Oral history is a very easy thing to do," said Smither. "It is just a conversation. Sometimes it goes well and sometimes it does not.

"Learn how to approach it, how to intervene. When you interview, you should get to know the subject and the audience you are serving.

"Look online for ideas. Video is easy to

Right: *Dr. James Smither, director of the GVSU Veteran History Project, gave a talk on how to get it right in an interview.*

Below: *Yvonne Williams stands next to her husband, Ken. They each told the group about Jenison Historical Association's activities.*



do if you can— and if you have a library, the staff can help you."

Smither gave a number of websites to review and find ideas for interviews. He showed the interviews made with some high school students and, to compare, the Veterans History Project at GVSU. There is an Oral History Association that has a website. He also recommended the Library of Congress website. These websites are listed at the end of this article.

"Basically, what you are doing is getting people to tell you their story. Remember both of you are nervous, so don't jump into the conversation too fast. Ask something very familiar: when and where you were born is a good starter.

"Most important is that you, as the interviewer, know your subject. What do you want to learn?

"Get a release form. The people you interview need to know what you are doing, so you can use and share this interview.

"Historians go where it leads them. In many situations, you will need to adjust. Make a list of questions, but leave it open-ended. You want the person to give you more than yes and no answers. Agree on a time table before the interview.

"You know what you want, but they might want to talk about something else. Let them! Honor their requests. If they don't want the interview online, don't put it there.

"Do not do an interview outside or at a restaurant. Do not talk over the person you are interviewing. Don't say, ah, huh, or yes. Talk clearly, slow down, and enunciate."

Paul Kutsche, founder of the Kutsche Office of Local History, was also on hand to greet local history organizations.

Websites to learn more about interviewing and local history:

www.gvsu.edu/vethistory/
www.oralhistory.org/web-guides-to-doing-oral-history/
www.loc.gov/folklife/familyfolklife/oralhistory.html

Kutsche Office of Local History website:
www.gvsu.edu/kutsche/
They are also on facebook.



About the author: *Mary Rasch Alt has been a feature writer for Michigana for ten years. The author of "Alpine Township," Mary has also published family histories and was a writer for the Grand Rapids Press for 20 years. Along with being a member of the Western Michigan Genealogical Society, Mary is a member of Alpine Township and Wright Township Historical Commissions as well as the Seneca County Historical Society in Ohio. Her favorite title is Grandma.*



Albert Grimm: Nazism and the Cold War Touch Grand Rapids

Marlene Fabbro

Note: The material for this story comes mainly from letters written by my grandmother's brother, Albert Grimm, and his wife and daughter to Grandma Cenzie and to my mother and to me over a period of 50 years. Added to the correspondence were the recollections of my parents in spending time with Albert and his wife and daughter. Historical facts of the times have been added to tell the whole story of a difficult but interesting time in our family and in twentieth-century history.

Albert Grimm watched with sadness as his brothers and two of his sisters left Germany for the United States. It puzzled him why they would want to go – first Joseph, who left home in 1888, then his favorite sister, Creszentia (Cenzie), in May of 1891. Next Karolina (Lina) left in 1898. Ludwig (Louis), too, was gone. Joseph wondered: Why? He himself loved the Fatherland. For him, it was a charmed country of wonderful music, good food and beer. He enjoyed nothing more than an evening of playing his zither, singing folksongs with his friends and family. But he did realize that he was fortunate to have a decent job, his own engraving business. So leaving Germany did not seem so appealing to him.

Albert's view of his homeland began to change after World War I (WWI). He never went to those bloody fields of France, but the defeat of Germany was a bitter blow, made all the more so by the demand of the Allies that Germany take blame for all the loss and damage done and pay heavy reparations. The Treaty of Versailles soon made Germany a very desperate country. During a period of hyperinflation (1921-1924) Germans saw their money become worthless. Albert watched with horror as his savings dwindled away. On June 1, 1920 he wrote to Cenzie: 'If things

here don't improve and the borders are opened, we will just have to emigrate, for I have not yet had the pleasure of eating my fill this year. It doesn't matter where one lives now (in Germany). The main thing is food. We had some savings, but what good is that with today's prices?' He goes on to list the cost of some items:

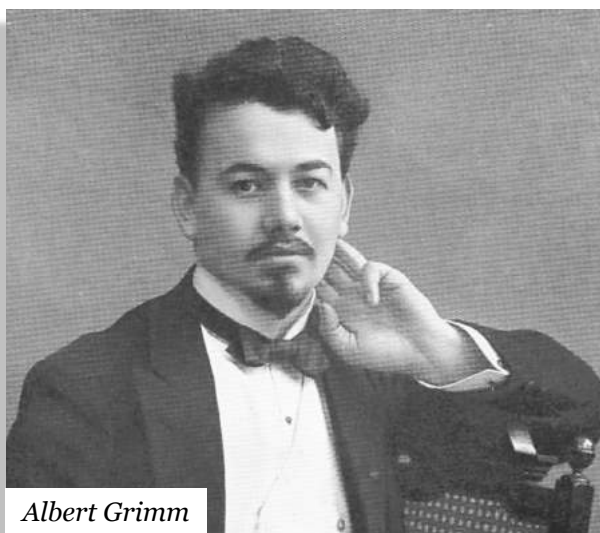
- 1 lb bread, 1.14 Marks and barely edible
- 1 egg, 2 Marks
- 1 lb rice, 12 Marks
- 1 lb flour, 6 Marks

A letter of November 3, 1922 relates how much worse things had become. Albert says he is now working on half days and lists the prices of those same food items:

- 1 lb bread, 90 Marks
- 1 egg, 31 Marks
- 1 lb rice, 145 Marks
- 1 lb flour, 210 Marks

He noted that "by the time this letter reaches you everything will surely cost double, and no work."

Indeed, things only deteriorated further. On November 1, 1923 in the city of Freital, a 100 Billion Mark note would buy 3 lbs of meat; bread was 3 Billion Marks a loaf. Two weeks later bread was 80 Billion Marks a loaf. Albert knew it was time to leave Germany.



Albert Grimm

Albert, his wife Meta, and their 11-year old daughter Liesl arrived in Quebec, Canada on 16 November 1928. The passenger information indicates Albert came to Canada under contract with an engraving company in Toronto.

By April of 1929 the family was living in Toronto, Canada. Meta wrote about how much they liked Toronto and expressed the hope that they could meet their relatives in the U.S. soon. Liesl was in school and learning English and she never forgot that language. Until her death in the late 1990s she could and did write letters in English to the family in Michigan, even though she knew no one in Germany with whom she could speak the language. Albert was working steadily. They owned a car and were thrilled to be able to visit Niagara Falls. But Albert was lonely for his Grand Rapids sister. He begs her to visit him and

promises that they would reminisce and “enjoy homeland melodies with zither, song, a good glass of beer.” Over the next seven years there are many letters concerning visits, with Albert and Meta always asking Cenzie to bring her grown children, John and Elsie, and their families. Albert also longed for his siblings to come – Lina and her husband and Louis and his wife, all of whom also lived in Grand Rapids. The American family obliged him as often as they could, and there are wonderful pictures of them all in Albert’s great garden with huge kegs of beer, laughing and enjoying family times.

The number of days his relatives could stay were never enough for Albert. There is only one trip of Albert, Meta, and Liesl to Grand Rapids noted in the letters, not until 1936. Albert had written earlier that he was not so interested in visiting the U.S. as long as that “ridiculous dry law”¹ was in effect.

Albert was busy during the early 1930s making his fortune, constantly trying to determine the best way



Liesl, Meta, and Albert in Toronto, approximately 1935

to invest his money. He worried about the value of the Canadian dollar and felt that the American dollar was safer. Albert asked Cenzie to get him some gold, perhaps a “few hundred dollars”, before Franklin Roosevelt’s Executive Order 6102 went into effect on May 1, 1933.² Money definitely had a hold on Albert. When Cenzie wrote that she fell on the ice on a sidewalk, he asked her, “Can you get something out of this?” and advised her to find a lawyer. When she told him that the depression caused her to lose her home and two others to foreclosure, he was very upset and chastised her for not confiding in him in time for him to have helped her. He told her that at the time she needed it he had \$6,000 he could have sent her (\$106,000 in 2016 money). But by the time he heard her sad news, he had invested his money in property.

For the first time, in 1934, Albert wrote about his quandary with regard to returning to Germany and if so, when. He feared what the future would bring. After a visit from Cenzie and her family he wrote: “Who knows if we will ever again get together for such a long and pleasant visit, for I do believe that next year will bring a change.”

In the summer of 1937, Liesl’s American relatives invited her to visit Grand Rapids, and this 18-year old was anxious to do so. After all the government requirements were met, Liesl spent several weeks in Grand Rapids with relatives who did everything possible to see that she had a good time. For the rest of her life she remembered Ramona Park and American movie stars!

Albert was still unsettled about going back permanently to Germany. He wrote “If I like it in Germany, I will definitely not come back again.” However, he also hoped that Cenzie’s son, John, who appeared to be doing well in his business, may someday visit Germany, “your Fatherland, where your mother’s cradle stood.” On August 13, 1936 Albert wrote: “After resigning from the business on August 8, I still have all kinds of things to take care of, so my plan is to depart from New York on August 27 or 29.”

On October 9th of 1936 Albert wrote to Cenzie from Leipzig that he had been in Germany for three weeks. He already has his return ticket for October 22nd. He had gone alone and was unsure if he thought the family should move back. He was looking things over and reported that “a lot of things are better here, but a great many things are worse. Food prices are very high and hardly affordable for a working man.”

Albert did not use that return ticket in October but stayed on in Leipzig into the New Year. Meta joined him there. He looked at possible land to buy, but the currency exchange rate was too poor to make this a good idea. He continued to write of the high cost of everything. Perhaps most telling and prophetic of all were his observations that “you have to weigh every word on the gold scale before you say it. It is possible

that things will get better here, but it's also possible they'll get worse. We will never get the freedoms here that I have over there. We were over there too long. It was only the German forest that drew us here, and the German promise."

From Toronto on March 13, 1937 Albert wrote to his sister, thanking her and her son, John, for telephoning him. He wrote: "Our decision whether to stay here or there is difficult, but it must finally be made." He returned only to put affairs in order and then planned to go back to Germany. He had so many details to tie up in Toronto, and he was hoping that Cenzie and John would be able to visit soon. He intended to transfer his financial assets to John, most of which were mortgages he owned.

A month later Liesl wrote to her aunt Cenzie that "my daddy has gone back to Germany." In a short time she joined her parents there.

By October of that year, 1937 Albert had decided that the return was a mistake. He attempted to leave Germany and return to Canada realizing that "I treated my freedom with contempt." He was stopped at the very last moment when he had obtained his passport and had already sent his luggage ahead. Since then he was constantly hassled by the police. They searched his house, took his cigarettes "without compensation. Can you imagine such a thing?" But that was just the beginning. He reported that "hardly a week goes by in which I don't get a service of process – at the moment there are 4 lying on my table – from the foreign office, customs office, department of revenue, tax office, rent office, police department, office of air-raid protection, etc." Even in the midst of this uncertainty and fear Albert still longed for a home in Germany. He told his sister he had a good buy on a lovely piece of property near water, mountains and forest. "It is absolutely gorgeous, but what good is this if you are not at ease there, if you are constantly plagued."

By 1939 things were looking dire. Albert said that Cenzie wrote of the prospect of war, but "apparently the agitation over this was not as great here as it was there." Of course, he acknowledged that "the newspapers here are not allowed to write much about it." He ends by saying that it is imperative that he return to Toronto to handle his business affairs, and he needs a notarized letter from Cenzie. It is assumed that this letter would convince officials – German and Canadian – that Albert was just visiting and intended to return to Germany.

Many years later Liesl wrote to John's wife, Virginia, to say that her father had been imprisoned for a time in Germany, his passport seized and cancelled. The reason given was his "unfriendliness to Hitler and showing friendship to Canada" (he had spoken out in a public tavern). He also refused to "Heil Hitler." Albert, Meta, and Liesl were all treated badly by their

fellow countrymen because they often spoke English. Their home was searched, and they were always suspected of being spies.

In November of 1939 Albert wrote "I will come to you as soon as I can", but he warned his sister that letters in English were all suspect and that she should never write anything about money.

One more letter exists from Germany before blackness descended over all. On March 21, 1941 Albert wrote that he and his family are well; and that while war has begun, their lives have not been touched by it. He was again looking at property to purchase and spoke of the farms around their home as thriving. He thought the war would end within a year and promised a return trip to Canada. He ended by saying "We are with you day and night in our thoughts and dreams."

Albert never returned to Canada and never saw his sisters or brothers again. The United States declared war on Germany on December 11, 1941. Zero letters could be sent or received until the end of the conflict.

While World War II in Europe ended officially on May 8, 1945, it was not until 1947 that the family in the United States heard from Germany again. There



Liesl, Johnny, and Marlies

followed many letters that were heart-wrenching. Albert, Meta, and Liesl had all survived; and the area in which they lived, Saxony, did not receive the bombing destruction of Western Germany. However, the end of the war saw Germany divided into zones; and, unfortunately, the Grimms ended up in the Russian Zone. That zone suffered the most, not from the war but from the Communist government installed there. First, there was near starvation, and later there was repression.

The first letter from Albert's family was written by his daughter, Liesl, in January of 1947. Her first words were "We are all safe." Liesl had married during the war. She and her Johnny had a little girl, Marlies. (See picture on previous page, taken in 1950).

It was Liesl who wrote the letters from 1947 until her death in the late 1990s. The early ones are hard to read. She speaks of the war years when they had no eggs, milk, cheese or meat, no coffee, tea or cocoa. She begs for food for her family and writes of the many privations. There is no clothing to be had. There are allotments of coal which only provide enough heat for one room in every house. Money which had been saved was confiscated when the war was over. The only way to get what was needed to survive was to barter — anything American was highly valued.

Children could not attend school because they had no shoes. Expectant mothers received one diaper for a baby. So many things were simply not available — no thread, no leather, no coffee, tea or cocoa, no cigarettes, cigars or matches, no lard, no shoelaces. Once a month there was an allotment of soap, which was mostly sand and clay. Potatoes were rationed to 20 pounds per person for a year. When people ran out they went house-to-house begging for the peelings. Meat was rationed at 7 pounds twice a month. Liesl wrote that the family ate only two meals a day, only one slice of bread a day. Electricity went off after 9:30pm. There were many suicides.

Albert, Meta, Liesl, and Johnny did what they could. They planted a garden and each of them carried water by hand from the river to water it during the summer of 1947 when a drought caused them to lose most of their planting. Meta was a very good seamstress so whatever clothing came from the U.S. was made over for members of the family. Albert and Johnny smoked leaves from a nut tree in the yard. The fruit from the trees on their property was canned, but sometimes that had to be sold to live on. Liesl tried to think of ways to help her family. Johnny was an engineer, and she wondered if he could come to the U.S.

and be employed by Cenzie's son, John, because there was no work in East Germany. She asked the family if they knew how she could sell her stamp collection.

She also wrote of the humiliations they suffered. She and her family, traveling on a train, were forced to move to a cattle car when Russian soldiers boarded the train. Each family could only have one room per person so they moved into Albert's house next door with another family. Every family with even one extra room was forced to take in refugees and, for some time, a woman with three children lived with Liesl and her family. Albert wrote, "The Russians say that 2/3 of Germans can starve, and the rest will be as we want them to be."

The Black Market thrived in East Germany, and it was possible to buy certain items; but Liesl spoke of the prices — flour \$17 a pound, butter \$140 a pound, material to make a suit \$2,400 a pound, wool \$500 a pound.

In 1946 Care³ packages from the United States began to be distributed in Europe. For \$10, an American could send a Care package to an individual. Cenzie's family then began sending such packages to family members in Germany.⁴ The official CARE package program ended in 1968. Cenzie's family often sent other packages to Albert and his family, at a cost of approximately \$100 to mail each package. Included items were chosen with care, and one such list of items sent by Cenzie's daughter-in-law in 1946 included many basic items. (See list on page 24).

CARE

COOPERATIVE FOR AMERICAN REMITTANCES TO EUROPE, INC.
50 BROAD STREET • NEW YORK 4, N. Y.

Non-Profit • Government-Approved

THE *New* CARE FOOD PACKAGE



for

ONLY \$10

YOU CAN SEND

21.37 POUNDS

OF FOOD TO

HUNGRY

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LIST OF CONTENTS

- 1 lb. Braised Beef
- 1 lb. Liver Loaf
- 12 oz. Luncheon Meat
- 2 lb. Shortening
- 2 lb. Sugar
- 1 lb. Apricots
- 1 lb. Prunes
- 7 lb. Flour
- 2 lb. Chocolate
- 2 lb. Dry Wh. Milk Powder
- 8 oz. Dry Egg Powder
- 1 lb. Coffee
- 6 oz. Soap
- ¼ oz. Yeast

DELIVERY GUARANTEED OR YOUR MONEY BACK

CARE's new, improved package contains 21.37 lbs. of food (40,963 calories). Now you can send this package to: AUSTRIA, BELGIUM, CZECHOSLOVAKIA, FINLAND, FRANCE, GREECE, ITALY, NETHERLANDS, NORWAY, POLAND, GERMANY (THE AMERICAN, BRITISH AND FRENCH ZONES AND ALL OF BERLIN). CARE has signed agreements with the governments of these territories permitting our packages to enter free of all duty, tax and ration regulations.

CARE delivers your package to the person you name or refunds your money. Delivery will be made as rapidly as possible from stockpiles already in Europe. Just fill in the blank below, mail it to CARE with your check or money order for \$10. That's all you do. . . . CARE takes care of the rest.

Paul Grimm *April 16 1947*

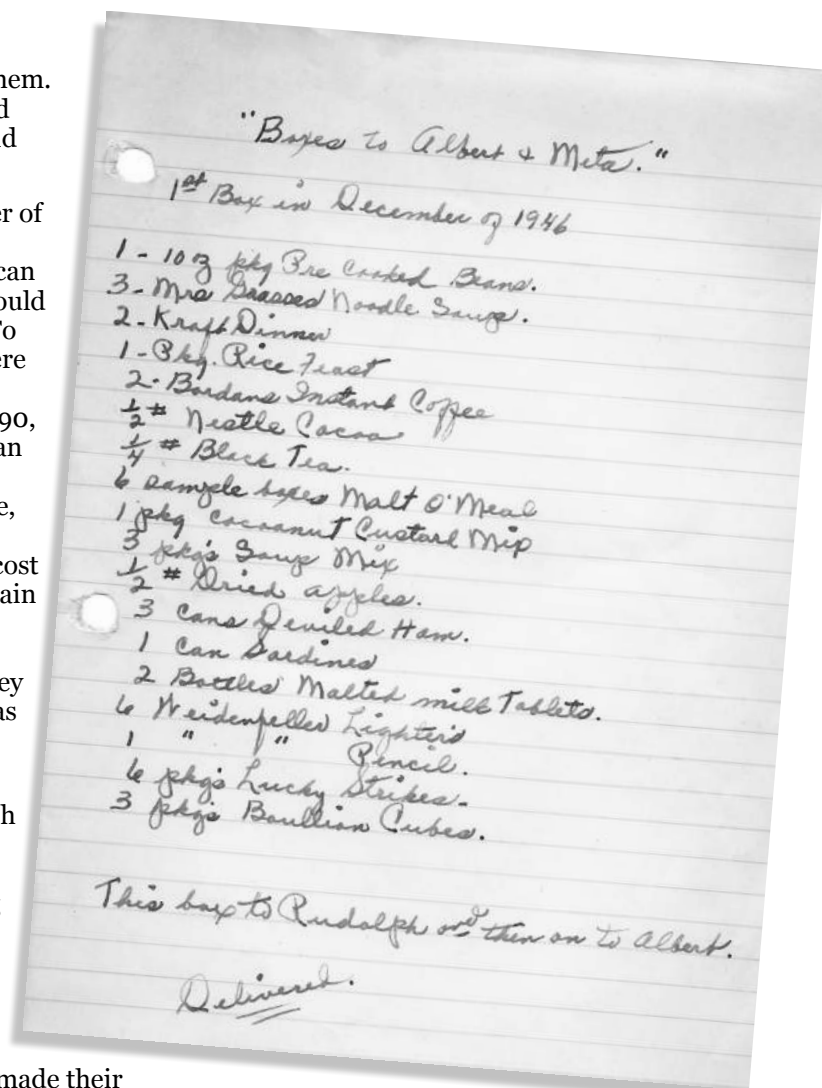
In no other way can you send so much for so little.

All boxes arriving in the Russian Zone were opened, and items were often stolen from them. However, the family continued sending food items and clothing throughout the 1950s and 1960s.

The Berlin Wall was torn down in November of 1989. While the world rejoiced and cries of "Freedom" rang out everywhere, the American family waited anxiously to see what Leisl would write about the changes in East Germany. To their great surprise, she wrote that there were indeed changes, but that most people were dissatisfied and depressed. On July 1st of 1990, their money was exchanged for West German money, and they lost so much. Now, after nearly 50 years, they could buy all the coffee, meat, cheese, etc. that they wanted, but the prices were extremely high, along with the cost of electricity, water, newspapers, bus and train tickets. Many had lost their jobs. Liesl said that the DDR (Deutsche Demokratische Republik) had been like a big prison, but they were safe and they had work. Now, there was crime, and so much poverty. Freedom, it seems, is relative.

While Liesl and her family struggled through the years in every material way, she also wrote so many accounts of good times they had with family and friends. There were big celebrations of every event from the first day of school for Marlies to family weddings where people would come from all over and stay for days. In the 1970s and 1980s they were able to do a small bit of traveling. Marlies and her husband, Klaus, made their home in the floor above Liesl and Johnny. When her mother became disabled in the 1980s, Marlie took care of her.

Albert Grimm did not live to see the unification of Germany. He died on May 23, 1958. In his youth, Albert longed for his homeland, his culture. He wanted to be surrounded by family, good German food and music. His daughter and her family fulfilled that dream.



About the author: Marlene Fabbro, mother of two and grandmother of six, has been a genealogist for 55 years. She graduated from Marywood Academy and Aquinas College, and recently completed a study of the genealogy of the donors of the stained glass windows at the Cathedral of St. Andrew in Grand Rapids.

This story is the second place winner in the 2016 Michigana Writing contest.

¹ Prohibition in the U.S. was a Constitutional ban on alcoholic beverages in effect from 1920 until December 5, 1933. "History of Alcohol Prohibition" National Commission on Marijuana and Drug Abuse.

² Executive Order 6102 signed on April 5, 1933, forbade the "hoarding of gold coin, gold bullion and gold certificates within the continental United States.

³ Smithsonian National Museum of American History: "CARE Package: In 1945, the newly formed CARE (then the Cooperative for American Remittances to Europe) initiated a program to send food relief to Europe, where large numbers of people were at risk of starvation in the wake of World War II. The organization obtained permission from the U.S. Government to send U.S. Army surplus "10-in-1" food parcels to Europe. The "10-in-1" parcels had been prepared for an invasion of Japan, which never transpired. Americans were given the opportunity to purchase a CARE Package for 10 dollars to send to friends or relatives in Europe. Packages were guaranteed to arrive within four months.

⁴ This package was addressed to Carl Grimm, a relative of Albert's in West Germany to be sent on to Albert.

2017 WMGS Writing Contest

~ A Sense of Place ~

Location, Location, Location. Our ancestors moved, settled and moved again. Place often determines occupation, educational opportunities, and even the materials used in building a home. For the 2017 WMGS Writing Contest, entries should focus on the Great Lakes Region (Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, New York, Ohio, Ontario, and Pennsylvania). Examples: You may choose to share the story of the family farm, home, or business and how its location changed (or didn't change) your family's history. Why did your ancestors come to a specific area? Why did they leave? Or, you may have a family story that took place in a park, by a lake, in court, at an event, in a church, etc. You may write about a family, an individual or yourself. Every story preserves history.

We would love to hear your story. Write it up and enter the 2017 writing contest!

WMGS has worked for over 60 years to educate researchers in evaluating and citing sources. Your story may inspire someone else to use new research techniques or discover a unique resource. The 2017 Writing Contest will recognize unpublished excellent genealogical writing by awarding substantial prizes. Prize winning entries will be published in *Michigana*. Like all submissions to *Michigana*, entries will be thoroughly edited before publication.

Information about submitting any article to *Michigana* can also be found in the latest issue of *Michigana*, or at wmgs.org.

Rules: Eligibility: All family historians and genealogists, except the *Michigana* Editor and judges, are invited to submit their favorite story for the contest. There is no entry fee and membership in WMGS is not required.

Deadline: Entries will be accepted between January 1 & March 30, 2017.

Length: Stories should be between 1,500 and 3,000 words in length. Please cite your sources by using endnotes, and attach copies of documentation when appropriate. Family group sheets and pedigree charts should be included if pertinent. Neither documentation nor charts will be included in the word count.

Formats: Email your entry in iPages, Microsoft Word, or as a PDF. **** IMPORTANT:** Send photographs or graphics separately as 300 dpi tiff or jpeg files. Email your submission to michigana@wmgs.org or ruthgen@gmail.com with "Michigana Contest 2017" written in the Subject Line.

Identification: Include the story title, your name, your mailing address, phone number, and approximate word count. This information will only be used to identify and notify the winners.

Notification: Contest winners will be announced at the May 2017 Membership Meeting and in the next available issue of *Michigana*. Winners do not have to be present to win. Prize winning articles will be published in future issues of *Michigana*. By submitting articles, authors are giving WMGS one time print and digital rights; copyright is retained by the author. Entries may not have been previously published. All prizes may not be awarded.

The prizes: 1st prize: \$100 and 1 annual WMGS membership (total value - \$120); 2nd prize: \$75 and 1 annual WMGS membership (total value - \$95); 3rd prize: \$50; 4th prize: \$25

Need help? The WMGS Writers Group meets the third Tuesday of the month and we would love to help you make your story the best that it can be. For information about location, time, and directions go to: www.wmgs.org

For further information or any questions about the Writing Contest, please contact the *Michigana* Editor at michigana@wmgs.org or ruthgen@gmail.com

All entries due by March 30, 2017!
Email to: michigana@wmgs.org or ruthgen@gmail.com

Area Notes

by Mary Rasch Alt Belrockton Dormitory, Belding's Museum

Belding's Museum is housed in the former three-story Belrockton Dormitory. Previous to 1935, it was home to the large number of single women who worked for the Belding Brothers in the silk mills. Both adults and children can enjoy this very intriguing and educational museum, where each dorm room has a theme to explain the history of the Belding area.

The Michigan registered Historic Site sign that stands in the front yard of the Museum explains the Belrockton Dormitory:

"Built in 1906, the Belrockton is the last remaining boardinghouse of the three provided by the Belding Brothers and Company for its single female workers. A major silk manufacturer during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the company employed hundreds of young women and earned Belding the title of "Silk City of the World."

Providing accommodations for one hundred residents and staff, the Belrockton Dormitory, a classical revival-inspired building, was erected at a cost of thirty thousand dollars. Following the closing of the company's silk mills in 1935, the "Bel" served as a residential training center for the National Youth Administration. In the 1940s the building became a



recreation center. The city of Belding purchased the structure in 1950 to serve as a community center. In 1987, it became the home of the Belding Museum."

The name Belrockton came from the three towns where the Belding Brothers manufactured silk: Belding, Michigan; Rockville, Connecticut; and Northampton, Massachusetts.

As you enter the former dormitory, you are taken back to a 1940s parlor, where there is a collection of artifacts, some of which came from Levi Broas, who was one of Belding's early settlers. His love of wildlife can be seen in the art form of taxidermy in the bird collection in the cases that came from his home. Next, you are taken to the Hotel Belding, which was built in the Victorian style. There is a general store to visit, a one-room school house, an early dentist office, a tavern and a former post office.

Naturally, the museum features the Belding silk industry, which started in 1887. Silk was imported from China and spun into thread here. Gladys Noah worked at the thread mill from 7 September 1909 to June 1914. She advanced to the "Big Doublers" at 15 cents per hour. In 1914, Gladys quit as her nerves were "wrecked".

In the Belrockton dormitory, two girls would share a room. Each room had a window, a closet and an electric light. The ladies enjoyed hot and cold water, bathrooms and steam heat. The furniture was supplied by the company and the ladies could decorate their rooms with pictures, pillows, and mementos



Above: The former Belrockton dormitory built for the Belding Brothers silk mills employees is now a three-story museum in Belding, Michigan.

Right: This former dormitory, the Ashfield, was named after the Massachusetts town where the Belding family lived at one time. It was one of three dorms built for the single ladies who worked for the Belding Brothers. About 100 workers lived in this three-story Victorian-style house. Today, the only remains of the Ashfield are the steps that lead to an empty lot on Harrison Street.



Right: *Single ladies were employed at the Belding Brothers silk mills and housed in dormitories provided by the brothers. Here the ladies are seated in the dining room of the Belrockton enjoying the meal served.*

Below: *In the Belding Museum, young people can see what telephones used to look like. Older folks can enjoy remembering how they used to work.*



Right: *This is the thread that was made at the Belding Brothers silk mills.*

Below: *Here are the ladies spinning the silk thread at the Belding Brothers silk mills.*



from home. A corner room was popular, there was a waiting list for those rooms.

There were libraries for the ladies stocked with the best literature. There were reading rooms and parlors for entertaining guests. Three meals a day were served in the great dining room where the original tin ceiling is still intact.

Going back to the late 1840s and early 1850s the fur trade in Michigan was replaced by the lumber industry. White pine had grown to over 200 feet tall and five feet in diameter. Saw mills were found along the Grand and Flat Rivers. By 1880, railroads were moving the lumber out of the area.

It is said that more money was made in Michigan from white pine than in California with the gold rush! Estimated earnings reached seven million dollars annually by 1869 in the Saginaw Valley area. The 1889 harvest was the greatest at 160 million trees cut.

The museum also displays how the Belding brothers went into the refrigeration business after silk went out of fashion in 1935. You can see the development of refrigerators from the first wooden iceboxes.



Third Floor is for children of all ages

“The Bel”, Belding Exploration Lab is the Belding Museum’s newest children’s hands-on museum located on the third floor of the museum. Children are welcome to discover the many themes presented in each room centered around Belding’s rich heritage, from flying an airplane to fishing on the Flat River.

One room has a Native American encampment. Other rooms give us an idea of what Main Street was like in the early to mid 1930s.

Having been raised on a fruit farm, I was happy to see another room dedicated to the apple industry.

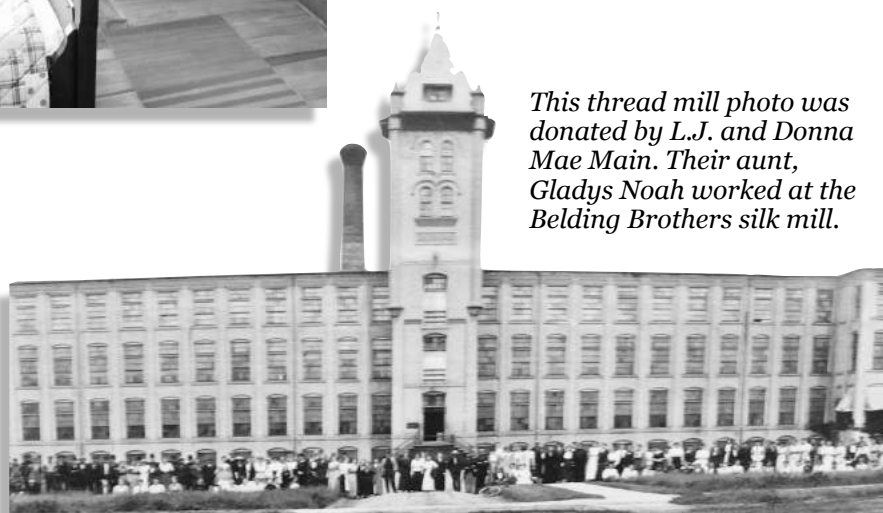
Give yourself enough time to enjoy the entire three-floors giving the story of the city and the area surrounding Belding. All ages can enjoy this very impressive museum.

[See next page for more pictures].



About the author: *Mary Rasch Alt has been a feature writer for Michigana for ten years. The author of "Alpine Township," Mary has also published family histories and was a writer for the Grand Rapids Press for 20 years. Along with being a member of the Western Michigan Genealogical Society, Mary is a member of Alpine Township and Wright Township Historical Commissions as well as the Seneca County Historical Society in Ohio. Her favorite title is Grandma.*

Photos courtesy of Mary Rasch Alt.



This thread mill photo was donated by L.J. and Donna Mae Main. Their aunt, Gladys Noah worked at the Belding Brothers silk mill.

Seminars Then and Now: Why Go??

by Don Bryant

At RootsTech 2013, I attended a session on Google searching by one of the foremost experts on the subject, Lisa Louise Cook (<http://lialouisecooke.com>). A short time into her talk, not only was I learning more tricks and tools of Googling, but I was blown away when she brought up on the screen a website as an example of web resources dedicated to particular families. And there it was - a website I had created for descendants and researchers of an ancestor of mine named David Thomson (1592- ca. 1627). That effort started back in 1997!

I was reminded that not only is it a small world; it is also changing fast. Google wasn't even around in 1997. It was reinforced by 16 years passing by and then a nationally prominent speaker using our little "tommies" corner of the world wide web as an example to an international audience of genealogists. It didn't change my life, but it did give me a boost of confidence and positive feeling that our sharing of our distant family research efforts was of value to others.



www.wellswooster.com/tommies

Research: From A Distance

By Al Dawson

Chocolate, Fruit, and Murder, Part II

Last time, we looked at online research tools in Western Michigan that helped me get started on doing research from a distance. We'll revisit some of those this time. Part I ended with my discovery of cousins who ran Sweetland Candies! [See *Michigana* Vol. 60: Issue 1, 2014]. In the same year that Chris Naum started his chocolate craft in Grand Rapids, 1919, another immigrant left that city, in a most unusual way.

Gerrit Streelman, from the Netherlands, came to my notice as he was the great-grandfather of Charlene Dawson, the wife of my first cousin, Terry. She had little information on this line, as her grandmother had died young. One of the first places I looked for Gerrit was at the Seeking Michigan website, as I knew I might find his death certificate there. And I did. Widower, wife mentioned by maiden name! Parents named. Occupation: Fruit Vendor. And the cause of death: "Gunshot Wound in Chest – Homicidal."

Gerrit was 55 years old when he died. He emigrated to the USA in 1889. He and his wife, Dora, who died of cancer in 1917, had nine children. They lived at 700 Vries Street SW. He was in the fruit business, buying and selling. He is referred to as a "huckster" - that term having then no negative connotation.

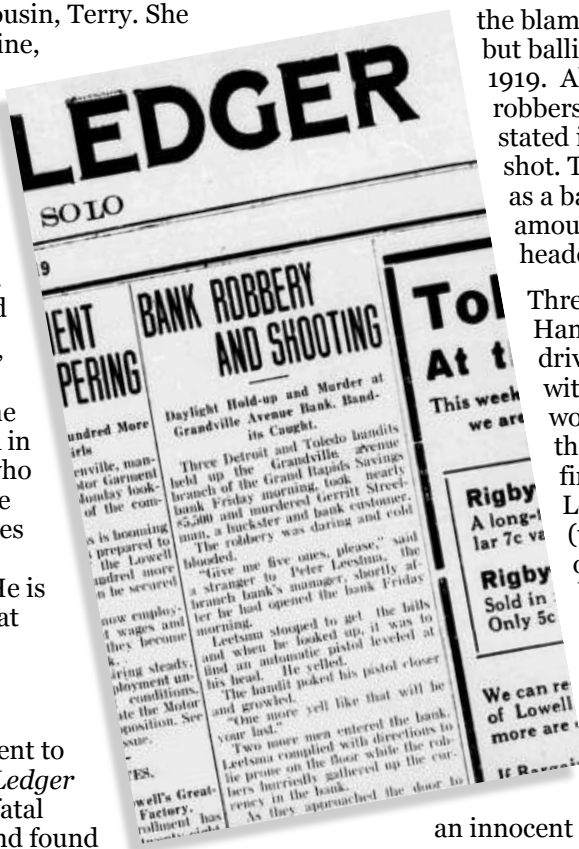
My research immediately concentrated on his death. I went to the first edition of the *Lowell Ledger* (Thursday the 25th) after that fatal Friday (September 19, 1919) and found

an amazing story, a week in the making.

Gerrit Streelman had a flat tire that morning, and so did not go to purchase fruit. Instead, he went to deposit money and get change at the Grandville Avenue branch of the Grand Rapids Savings Bank. With him was a farmer named C. W. Parker, from Hudsonville. They joked about the door being locked when it should be open. Gerrit pushed the door. When it opened, Gerrit stepped inside and saw a robbery was in progress. Shots rang out. Parker was not hit by the gunfire, but Gerrit staggered out to the sidewalk and died instantly. One of the robbers was known to Streelman; that robber was Tofi Leon.

It is not known who shot Gerrit, but the one gang member never caught, Tony Randazzo, got the blame. Leon is a more likely suspect but ballistics was an imperfect science in 1919. Also, although all three captured robbers agreed on few things, they all stated it was Tony who fired the fatal shot. The robbers got less than \$6,000, as a bank official had just taken a large amount of money to the bank's headquarters.

Three of the robbers, Tofi Leon, Ally Hamden, and Jad Merhige (the driver) were in custody in a few days, with Grand Rapids and Detroit police working together on the case. All three men had variations of their first names in other articles. Tofi Leon operated a shady barbershop (we assume not because of trees) on the East Side of Detroit and had been a barber in Grand Rapids. (*Grand Rapids Press*, p. 2, September 22, 1919) Gerrit Streelman had been a customer at the Grand Rapids barber shop. All the newspapers declared Gerrit to be a hero, not involved in the robbery, except as an innocent victim of circumstance.



No. 12262 Name *Ally Hamden* Alias
 Sentenced Sept. 26, 1919 Received Sept. 27, 1919 County *St. Clair*
 Min. Term 1 Yr. Max. Term Yes. Max. Recommended
 Offense *Robbery on foot with intent to rob bank*
 Owner of Real Estate No. What? No. in Bank Where?
 Drink? No. Smoke? Yes. Chew? No. Dope? No. Venereal? No.
 Paroled Discharged Remarks

No. 12263 Name *Jad Merhige* Alias
 Sentenced Sept. 26, 1919 Received Sept. 27, 1919 County *St. Clair*
 Min. Term 1 Yr. Max. Term Yes. Max. Recommended
 Offense *Robbery on foot with intent to rob bank*
 Owner of Real Estate No. What? No. in Bank Where?
 Drink? No. Smoke? Yes. Chew? No. Dope? No. Venereal? No.
 Paroled Discharged Remarks

No. 2873 Name *Tofi Leon* Alias
 County *Leont* Sentenced Sept. 26, 1919
 Not to Exceed *Life* Not Less than *Life* Recommended
 Crime *Putting prison in fear with intent to rob bank*

BERTILLON MEASUREMENTS

Height	1 M. 63-1	L. Foot	24-6
Eng. Height	5-4 3/4	L. Mid. F.	10-5
Out. A.	1 M. 65	L. Lt. F.	8-1
Tank	85-9	L. Fore A.	44-2
Head Length	17-9	Beard	Black
Head Width	15-8	Lips	Med.
Cheek Width	10-4	Chin	Round
R. Ear	6-2	Weight	124-134
		Height, Shoes on	5-5 1/2

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Age	28	1891	Born	<i>St. Clair</i>	Discharge and Date	<i>St. Clair</i>
Complexion	<i>Dark</i>	Hair	<i>Black</i>	Forehead	<i>Med.</i>	
Eyes	<i>Brown</i>	Nose	<i>6 over cast</i>	Mouth	<i>Med.</i>	

Michigan prison records proving that crime doesn't pay:
 Ally Hamden, Jad Merhige, and Tofi Leon

Tofi Leon was (according to the *Grand Rapids Press*, September 23, 1919) the most fluent talker of the gang. He tried to get the police to believe Randazzo made him participate, at gunpoint! This was after he had said he met the gang in the blue Chandler parked outside the bank. Tony Randazzo gave Tofi \$5.00 bill and asked to get it changed.

The story continues in the *Lowell Ledger*: September 25, 1919:

"Give me five ones, please" was how the robbery began. The bank manager looked up and saw a pistol in Tofi Leon's hand. A large blue automobile, with wire wheels, waited outside the bank. Since it was raining, the curtains being down and the top being up seemed natural. Jad Merhige was behind the wheel, hired by the gang to drive their getaway car.

Tofi's wife brought doubt upon his story that the roughly \$500 he had pinned on his clothing

when he was arrested was his own – saying he had but \$10.00 of his own when he left town.

When the prisoners were brought back to town (according to the *Grand Rapids Press*, September 23, 1919) the crowd cried "Lynch them!" And Tofi Leon was heard to say "they've got everything here but the band!" The three men pleaded not guilty, but as there is no honor among thieves, they soon started pointing fingers at each other, and at the mysterious Tony Randazzo. But the police did a good job gathering local witnesses: merchants on Grandville Avenue, car experts, and waiters at restaurants. The robbers were careless in their conversations and clues as to their escape plans were overheard. Other arrests were made, chiefly to get material witness information. These men were released (like the owner of the rooming house where they stayed). When the dust settled, three men were brought to justice.

Gerrit had a huge funeral on the Monday after his murder. It was held at the Grandville Avenue Christian Reformed Church. His nine orphaned children were mourners. The funeral sermon, by Rev. Y. P. De Jong, was in English and "Holland." The headlines called Gerrit a "plucky produce dealer" and a martyr. (*Grand Rapids Press*, September 22, 1919)

The trials were held, starting the week after the crime. All three men got life sentences and were sent to Jackson (Hamden and Merhige) and Marquette (Leon). Ally Hamden was released in 1933; Jad Merhige had Governor Alex J. Groesbeck do what the Michigan Supreme Court had refused to do: release him. Tofi Leon died in Marquette in 1924.

The hunt for Tony Randazzo had bad luck. Police narrowly missed capturing him in Detroit, with Ally Hamden. At that time only the name "Tony" was known. His full name, photo and characteristics were distributed throughout the area. (*Grand Rapids Press*, September 22, 1919)

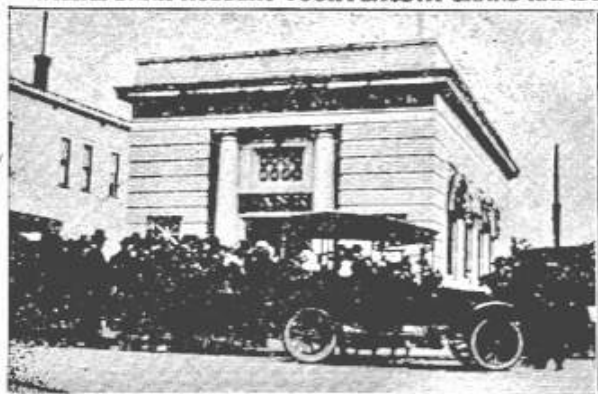
All sorts of social history can be gleaned from this murder case. Prison records from Marquette and Jackson show stark faces and details telling family history and Bertillon* measurements. They also gave information on transfers and, in one case, a death.

The most interesting side story was that of Jad



Image courtesy of Jamie Campbell

WHERE BANK ROBBERY TOOK PLACE AT GRAND RAPIDS



Merhige (aka John or Jay) – the Detroit taxi driver hired by the gang. He gave himself up to Detroit police, which was in his favor. He was out on bail for a while, starting in 1920, but in 1922 lost his appeal case and had to await a pardon. (*Detroit Free Press*, March 11, 1920, IBID, November 27, 1921, and IBID June 7, 1922,) Merhige's wife worked hard to get him released.

Of the many articles on this case that I read, some I found using online resources: like GenealogyBank.com, NewspaperARCHIVE.com and Newspapers.com. But many were found by a professional genealogist that I hired – from a distance – no shame in local help. She lived (at that time) in Lansing. Deidre Erin Denton, tickler of funny bones on “Twisted Twigs On Gnarled Branches

Genealogy” (Facebook), is an avid researcher of Detroit and Michigan Genealogy and is Social Media Director for Detroit Society for Genealogical Research. She found the prison and arrest records at the State of Michigan Archives. Deidre is one of the best! Deidre now lives in Washington DC, where she does NARA record retrieval for clients. I am also proud to say that we are distant cousins.

Nine Children Orphaned When Streelman Dies

Gathering in the rain about the home of Gerrit Streelman, whose life was ended by a bandit's bullet a few hours before, small groups of friends and neighbors of the murdered huckster offered condolence Friday to surviving relatives, plunged into sorrow by the tragic event.

Nine children, three of whom are married, are orphans as a result of the shooting of Streelman. The younger six, who resided at the dead man's home, were Gertrude, 14; Alice, 10; Donald, 7; Albert, 16; Welbe, 18, and Hattie. The three married are Joseph, 646 Crofton-st., S. W., and William, 628 Crofton-st., and Lenna.

The two latter sons are engaged, as was their father, in the huckster business. In late years Streelman had engaged in a sort of wholesale business. He came to this country with his bride 26 years ago and established a home in the south end where he resided the remainder of his life.

TIRE PUNCTURE CAUSES FATAL VISIT TO BANK

Had it not been for a small puncture in a tire of his automobile which he used in his business, Streelman might not have gone to the bank Friday morning.

According to his son, William Streelman, he had not gone to market Friday because of the puncture and after remaining at the home during the early hours of the morning left for the bank with cash and some checks of varied amounts. He counted the money on the kitchen table, arose and left the house. A few minutes later word of his death was received. The bank is about three blocks northwest of the Streelman

Grand Rapids Press
19 September 1919

Newspapers consulted include:

Bay City Times Tribune, September 20, 1919, p. 1

Detroit Free Press, November 27, 1921, p. 15 (Loyal Wife)

Kalamazoo Gazette, June 6, 1922, p. 3

Grand Rapids Press – various 1919 dates

Detroit Free Press, various dates (ProQuest)

You can find Gerrit's grave at:

<http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=114872876>

And remember!

Always read death certificates!

*Alphonse Bertillon was a French criminologist who first developed an anthropometric system of physical measurements of body parts, especially components of the head and face, to produce a detailed description of an individual. This system, invented in 1879, became known as the Bertillon system.

About the author: Al Dawson is a proud member of WMGS with Ionia and Kent County roots. He is also a member of two scion societies of The Baker Street Irregulars: The Younger Stamfords of Iowa City and The Bootmakers of Toronto. Mr. Dawson holds an MA in Victorian History (1973) from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He is a historical and genealogical consultant, currently based in Iowa. Busy at work on two books: "Breakable Bones" (a novel) and "The Trousered Princess: Hope Glenn of Iowa City, Chicago and London;" he hopes to have both published before the end of 2017. Al can be reached at Microfish7@aol.com. He is also a pretty good Mah Jongg player.

About the artist: Jamie Campbell is an artist and illustrator living in Peterborough, Ontario, Canada with her husband Kevin and black cat Tuna. She often posts her work on her Instagram account www.instagram.com/magicbeancreations and also has her own domain at www.MagicBeanCreations.com. She's always open for new work challenges when not wrangling her own whimsical projects.

Everything Has a Story

by Paula K. Vander Hoven

The Little Band That Held on Courageously: The Story of St. Stephen's Protestant Episcopal Chapel in Schoolcraft, Michigan, Part II

This is a continuation of the story of St. Stephen's Protestant Episcopal Chapel in Schoolcraft (See Michigana Volume 62, Issue 4, No 252, page 151). The outstanding feature of this mission was the fact that it was exclusively and wholly women's work, there not being a single male communicant in the mission and its status therefore was that of an unorganized mission. A little band of devoted women had labored through the years and built their church."

But in the end, the women couldn't sustain the impetus, and the congregation declined and died. In the fall of 1933, after being vacant for several years, the building was rented by the Assembly of God Fellowship¹ for \$5 per month. In the spring of the next year, that congregation purchased it for \$450. By 1973 it was purchased by a realty company, then became a dental office, and currently the building is used for a Chiropractic clinic.

It is unfortunate that the membership list and the history of St. Stephen's Mission, tucked in the cornerstone of the building in 1892, have not been recovered.² What follows is an approximate roster of members and summaries of their lives. As would be expected given the times, the stories of the women are closely tied with the stories of their husbands and fathers. Not many books recounted the accomplishments of women in those days!

When the building was dedicated in 1893, the members of St. Stephen's Mission ranged in age from eleven to eighty-two, with a nucleus of them in their twenties and thirties. They were married, single, and widowed. Some were the daughters and wives of prominent Schoolcraft businessmen and farmers; others lived much more modestly. Some had been long time Episcopalians; others were newer converts. There were family groupings: the Skinner/Smiths, the Chapins, Mary Chase and her daughter Clara, Sarah Allen Finlay and her daughter Alice, Anna Clark Pursel with Sarah and Isabella, Sarah Knight Hudson with her daughter Ellen and niece Minnie Monroe, and Kate

Snyder Underwood and Zenaide. A few of them had been born in Schoolcraft or nearby, but most had come from Pennsylvania, New York State, Vermont, Canada, and England. They were bonded in their joint worship, the celebrated sacraments, and Christian Education. This disparate group of women was brought together in their strong desire to establish themselves as a church in their community. They were further united by the pleasure of working hard together and enjoying each other's companionship as they accomplished that goal.

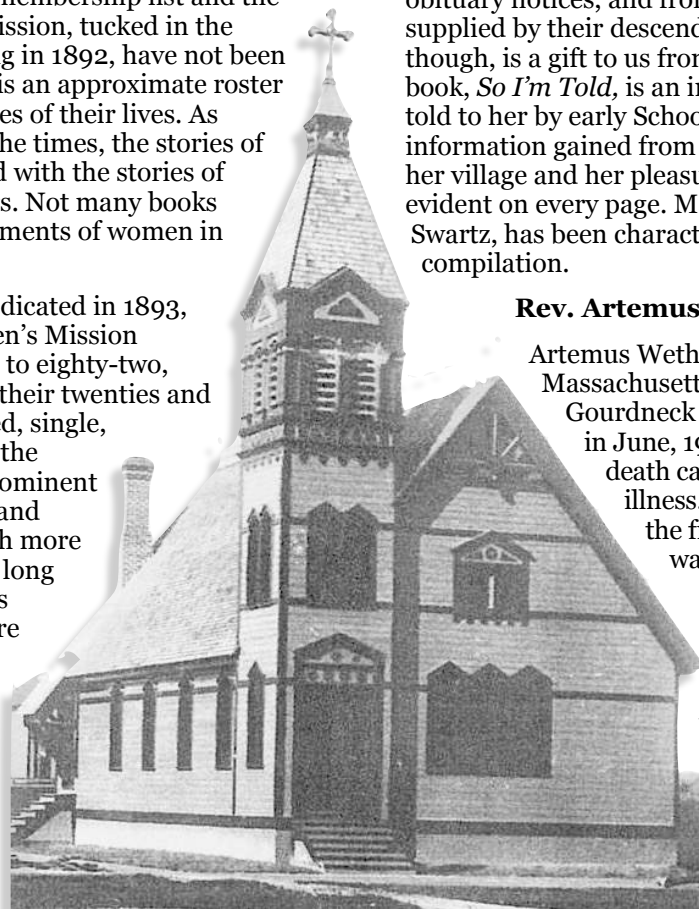
In 1894, Kate Underwood was President of St. Stephen's Mission with support from other officers: Caroline Duncan, Minnie Monroe, Fannie Snyder, Juliette Skinner, Sophie Smith, and Sarah Major. The next year Caroline Duncan became President and she was supported by some of the same women.

Much of the material about these women has been gleaned from newspapers of the day, principally the *Schoolcraft Express*, from public records, from obituary notices, and from materials and pictures supplied by their descendants. The heart of the story, though, is a gift to us from Mary Jane Swartz. Her book, *So I'm Told*, is an impressive collection of tales told to her by early Schoolcraft settlers, as well as information gained from local sources. Her love of her village and her pleasure at recording its history is evident on every page. Mary Jane's daughter, Harriett Swartz, has been characteristically generous in this compilation.

Rev. Artemus Wetherbee (1834-1929)

Artemus Wetherbee was born in Massachusetts in 1834 and died in Gourdneck Lake near Portage, Michigan in June, 1929 at the age of 95. His death came following a two day illness. During this last illness, for the first time in his life, a doctor was called to attend him.

Rev. Wetherbee graduated from schools in New Hampshire and New York State and taught school for five years. Twenty-nine when the Civil War began in 1863, he enlisted in the Twenty-First Regiment of the New York Volunteer Calvary. He was with General Sheridan in the Shenandoah Valley where



St. Stephen's Protestant Episcopal Chapel

he was taken captive. In the confusion of a daring escape he was fired on by soldiers from both sides but escaped injury. Discharged in August of 1865, he married Annie Thompson the next month. The couple had two children.

After attending Theological Seminary in Nashotah, Wisconsin, and being ordained an Episcopal priest, Artemus Wetherbee served as pastor of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Grand Rapids, at Cresco, Iowa, and LaGrange, Indiana before coming to Gourdneck Lake in 1883. Following that, he served various mission stations, including St. Stephen's Chapel. The small congregation had assistance from others as well, but Wetherbee was the priest who served them most often. Though he apparently never had that designation officially, the women of St. Stephen's considered him their pastor.

More about the women of St. Stephen's

(Verified members or close affiliates are noted by one asterisk, probable members by two).

*** Mary Bidleman Chapin (1842-1913)**

Mary, born in July, 1842, was the daughter of Valentine and Sophia Bidleman. Her father was a farmer in Bloom Township in Columbia County, Pennsylvania. Mary's brothers Ellis and Ramsey Bidleman settled on farms near Schoolcraft, and her parents also migrated to Schoolcraft before their deaths. Mary's sister Anna was the mother of Martha Arthur Chapin, and eventually Anna lived in Schoolcraft as well, with that Chapin family.

The day after Christmas in 1865 Mary wed Dr. John Chapin from neighboring Luzerne County, Pennsylvania. The couple had one son, Claudius B. Chapin, born in 1872. Dr. John Chapin had graduated from the University of Vermont in 1861, and had practiced medicine in Cambria and Benton, Pennsylvania for eighteen years. There he made his calls in that hilly region on horseback with an ingenious contraption on the back of the horse to carry his emergency surgical and obstetrical instruments, dressings and anesthetics. Later, though he was not a military surgeon, he did treat wounded soldiers at Gettysburg during the Civil War. Still later, he was appointed by the state of Pennsylvania to act as a witness at the execution by hanging of seven coalminers (known as the "Molly Maguires") in Bloomsburg in 1877.

In 1880 John, his wife Mary, and

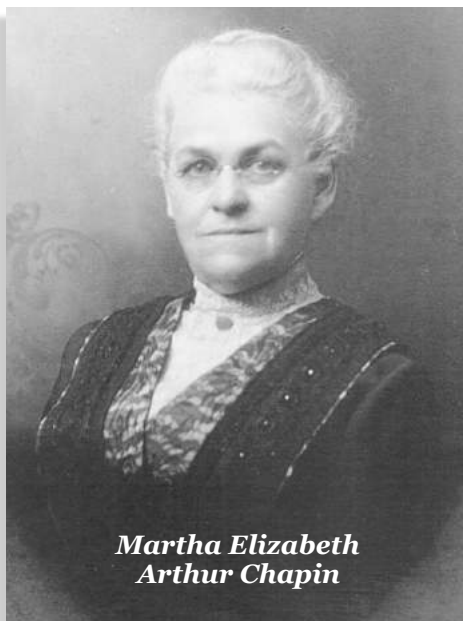


their son Claude followed others of the Bidleman and Chapin families from Pennsylvania to Schoolcraft where he became a physician and surgeon, traveling throughout the region on a well-recognized sturdy white horse with his medical cabinet behind him.

The Chapins first lived in a small home on Eliza Street near the present day Hayward Street. In 1892 he built a mansion adjacent to the first home, on the corner of Eliza and Grand.

On their twenty-fifth anniversary in 1890, John and Mary Chapin celebrated by inviting 225 guests to join them for an elegant dinner and orchestral music. Among the assembled guests and dignitaries from near and far was Sophia Bidleman, Mary's mother, who was ninety years old. The Rev. J. W. Bancroft, Episcopal priest and supporter of the early Episcopalians, was also present and spoke.

Mary Bidleman Chapin died in 1913 in Schoolcraft and is buried in the cemetery there. She was seventy-one.



Mary's son Claude was educated in Kalamazoo and at the University of Michigan where he completed his medical studies in 1897. The young Dr. Chapin practiced in New York City and Benton Harbor, Michigan. He died in Chicago in March, 1917 at the age of forty-four. His father survived them both and died in Schoolcraft in 1923. He was eighty-five.

****Martha Elizabeth Arthur Chapin (1854-1922)**

Martha was born in August, 1854 in Pennsylvania, the daughter of Robert Arthur and Anna Regin Bidleman Arthur. Her father had been born in Ireland and her mother was the sister of Mary Bidleman Chapin.

By the time she was six years old,

Martha and her younger brother William and their parents had come to Schoolcraft Township where they farmed. The value of the Arthur farm was listed at \$10,000, a considerable sum in those days.

Martha was married to A. Delbert “Del” Chapin, who was born in 1848, also in Columbia County, Pennsylvania. They made their home on Grand Street south of Eliza.

Delbert and Martha had a daughter, Lenora, born on June 2, 1882 in Schoolcraft and a son William, born in 1894, who died the next year.

Delbert was a harness maker and saddler. His shop was near the corner of Cass and Grand Streets in Schoolcraft, one block north of the brand new St. Stephen’s church. The fire of 1893 had devastated several buildings on that corner, but thankfully, he had moved his stock out of harm’s way. Martha’s brother William Arthur had a meat market adjacent to the harness shop, and he had rescued his contents as well. The church was not damaged.

Martha would have been about thirty-nine years old in 1893 when the chapel was built. Her son William would be born the next year. The Chapins were all staunch Episcopalians and she may very well have followed the family tradition.

Delbert passed away in Schoolcraft in September, 1921 and Martha died in December of the next year. For the final years of their lives her brother William Arthur had made his home with them.

The families of Dr. John Chapin, Delbert Chapin, and the Bidlemans had all lived in or near Columbia County, Pennsylvania, and they almost certainly knew each other.

***Lenora “Nora” Chapin Gilchrist (1882-1972)**

Nora was the daughter of A. Delbert and Martha Arthur Chapin. (More information on the family is under her mother, Martha Arthur Chapin). In 1894, when she was eleven years old, she was the organist for the St. Stephen’s Sunday School class shortly after the church was built.

Nora attended Schoolcraft Schools and graduated from high school. She would have been happy to become a nurse, but complied with her father’s wishes and did not follow that path.

Nora married Frank D.

Gilchrist on July 2, 1907 in Schoolcraft. Both Nora and Frank were twenty-five years old. Frank was the son of James Fingal Gilchrist and Helen Duncan Gilchrist. Frank attended school in a one room schoolhouse and went on to graduate from Kalamazoo College in 1901 when he was twenty. In 1901 and 1902 he was a reporter and City Editor for the *Kalamazoo Daily Telegraph* and was also employed by the *Kalamazoo News* and the *Grand Rapids Herald*.

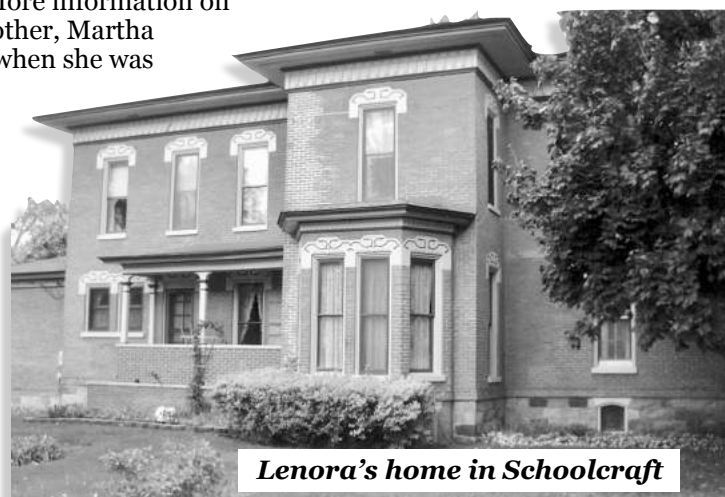
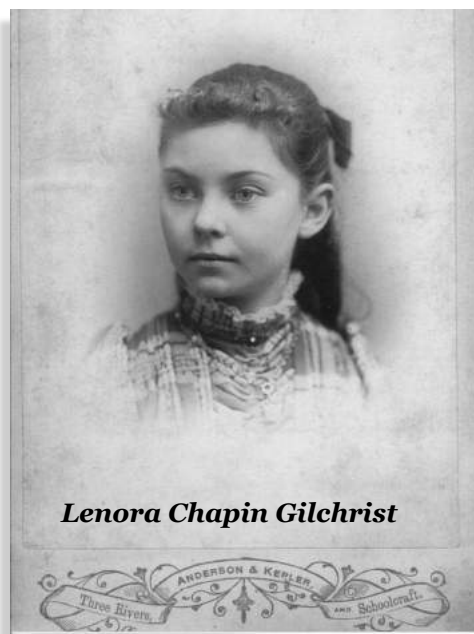
As newlyweds, Frank and Nora lived in the city of Kalamazoo. Frank worked at the Board and Paper Company, Kalamazoo Paper Company, and Bryant Paper Company. During that time two sons were born to them: Arthur in 1911 and Herbert in 1912. Next the family moved to Watervliet, where Frank was secretary and sales manager of the Watervliet Paper Company. Their daughter, Elizabeth was also born there in 1918. In 1929 the family moved back to

Kalamazoo where Frank continued to work in the paper industry. He retired in 1950.

At some point Frank and Nora returned to Schoolcraft and lived in her childhood home on Grand Street. In the early 1940s they purchased the brick home at 130 Grand Street - a stately Italianate home originally built by Thomas Nesbitt in 1884 for his wife Addie.

Frank and Nora were well off – leaders in the community. Frank was a big, stocky man, a formal person, who usually wore a three piece suit. Nora almost always wore blue dresses with matching jackets. She kept up her early interest in music, and had a baby grand piano in her home which she played for many years.

Upon their return to Schoolcraft she was active in the Presbyterian Church and the Ladies Library Association. Nora was a



genteel woman, and a kind-hearted one. She lived next door to the house which had belonged to her uncle and aunt, John and Mary Chapin. This house was later converted into Schoolcraft's funeral home. When funerals seemed sparsely attended, she would put in an appearance to show support for the family, even if she didn't know them well.

Frank died in Schoolcraft in 1964 at the age of eighty-two. Nora died on September 14, 1972 at the age of ninety at Bronson hospital in Kalamazoo where she lived the last years of her life.

****Mary Read Chase (1847-after 1920)**

Mary L. Read Chase was the wife of Dr. George N. Chase. By 1880 when Mary and George were in their early thirties, they arrived in Schoolcraft with their daughter, Clara.

Mary would have been forty-six years old when the St. Stephen's Chapel was founded in 1893. At that time Clara was twenty and Mary's sons, George and Robert, were twelve and nine.

Clara was chair of a program of entertainment for the Chapel in October, 1894. Following that, the family moved to Traverse City, Michigan, where Dr. Chase practiced medicine. Since there were already three very well-known and highly respected doctors in Schoolcraft during the early 1890s, perhaps Dr. Chase sought opportunity in Traverse City where they may have had relatives. In any event, by 1900 Clara and Robert were students there and George was a teacher. He died the next year. Dr. Chase's death occurred shortly after that, and from that time on, Mary and her daughter Clara lived together.

***Clara Chase (1872-after 1930)**

Clara, the daughter of Dr. George Chase and Mary Read Chase, was born in Michigan in 1872. A graduate of Mrs. Edna Chaffee Noble's Training School for Elocution and Literature in Detroit, she was sought out for her readings and impersonations. She gave a very well received rendition at a fund raising program for the chapel in the fall of 1894. She was twenty-two at the time. A year later she performed again, this time for the Presbyterians, and they charged 15 cents admission to hear her give a program of "pathetic, dramatic and humorous recitations."³

Clara's father was a physician in Schoolcraft, but apparently very shortly after her first performance, the family moved to Traverse City, Michigan. There Clara lived with her parents and two younger brothers, both born in Schoolcraft. Her brother George died there at the age of twenty. Clara never married and after her father's death she and her mother lived together. In 1930 when she was fifty-eight years old, Clara was a patient at the Traverse City State Hospital for the Insane.

***Caroline Hatch Stuart Duncan (1851-1916)**

Caroline, also called Cassie, was the second wife of Charles Clark Duncan. Her parents were Oscar and Eliza Hatch. Oscar died in Schoolcraft in 1870, after having been in business as a druggist for almost forty years. He was prominent in Schoolcraft in public and social life, and was one of the revered pioneers of the area.

Caroline first married David Stuart and had two surviving children, Edith and Maynard. She married Charles Clark Duncan in 1893 when she was forty-two and he was forty-seven. Previously married to Alice Frazier, Charles and his first wife Alice had two daughters: Edna who died a few days after her mother's death in 1891 and Mary who was nineteen at the time of her father's second marriage. Caroline Hatch Stewart Duncan and Charles Clark Duncan lived on Cass St. with her daughter Edith and his daughter Mary (both aged nineteen). Edith Stuart became a teacher in St. Joseph Michigan. Her brother Maynard married and made his home there for some time before living in Schoolcraft with his wife and three children.

Caroline Duncan was a strong leader in the church. In 1894, at age forty-three years, she was treasurer of the Women's Guild as well as Vice President of the Shakespearean Club in Schoolcraft. The next year she became President of St. Stephen's Mission.

It does seem as though Caroline's father, C. C. Duncan, was an all-around entrepreneur. His father and grandfather had come to the prairie in the spring of 1829 – among the very first settlers there - and he was born in Prairie Ronde in 1845. His father, Delamore Duncan operated the largest farm in Prairie Ronde Township. When Delamore died in 1870, Charles took over the operation. Educated in Kalamazoo County, he also studied in Chicago at Eastman Business College. Following that, he farmed over 325 acres. He was one of many men who were involved in banking in one way or another, at one institution or another in Schoolcraft in those years.

In 1893 Charles became Vice President of Kalamazoo County bank, a position he held until 1898. Then he became the sole owner of that bank. In the summer of 1897, he began to conduct business as a private bank named C.C. Duncan and Company.⁴

An able and progressive business man, Charles was recognized all over the state, and had his finger in many pots all over Michigan – including a sheep ranch in Walkerville (north of Muskegon) which was 150 miles from Schoolcraft. He carried out extensive farming operations, and was a stockholder in a piano company in Schoolcraft. At various points he was township treasurer and supervisor, and held other similar local offices. In September, 1894, he was a delegate to the Republican Convention in Kalamazoo. He voted for General Ulysses S. Grant, the Civil War

commander who became President in 1869, and for every other Republican President in his lifetime.

The Duncans were socially prominent. In May, 1895, Caroline was on the Reception Committee at an elegant event held at the Commercial House. The party was vividly described in the *Schoolcraft Express* as “by far the finest of the season” with “rapturous music, tables loaded with the luxuries of the season, and garnished with the most beautiful and seasonal flowers.” The forty guests, most of them well-known business and social leaders “tripped the light fantastic until the early hours.”

Caroline died in 1916 at the age of sixty-five and her husband died two years later in 1918 at his sheep ranch in Walkerville. He was seventy-three. He left a very large estate to his descendants.

***Mary Duncan Tucker 1874 - after 1920**

Mary, born in 1874, was the daughter of Charles Clark Duncan and his first wife, Alice Frazier. Mary’s older sister, Edna Adell Duncan, was born about 1870. In 1890, when Mary was sixteen, the Duncan family was devastated by three deaths within few days’ time. Her grandmother Duncan died on December 8, her mother on December 10, and her sister Edna, newly married and the mother of a two week old baby boy, died on December 18. In a period of ten days, her grandmother, sister and mother all passed away, leaving her father her only relative.

In 1893 Charles Duncan married Carolyn Hatch Stuart and Mary lived with her step-sister Edith and their parents. Most likely by 1895, but surely by 1900, Eddie Frazier, Mary’s younger cousin joined the family circle. At age twenty in May of 1894, Mary Duncan and her friend Drusa Sager from Flowerfield assisted Clara Chase in a program to benefit St. Stephen’s chapel. The next year Mary went to Boston to study music for two years. Returning home, she continued to use her musical training in Schoolcraft, where she presented a piano solo in a program at the Ladies Library Association in May, 1897.

But the East continued to call to her, and in November, 1899 Mary married Arthur Tucker from New Bedford, Massachusetts. He was twenty-six to her twenty-five and identified himself as a “capitalist.” Rev. Artemus Wetherbee officiated at the ceremony. Following their marriage the couple lived in Boston and Wellesley, Massachusetts, sometimes with his mother. By 1920

they lived in a boarding house with others, while Arthur pursued a profession in real estate. It appears that the couple had no children. While Mary was living in Boston her step-mother Caroline and her father Charles both passed away.

***Eliza Woodhouse Crossman Dyckman (1813-1905)**

Born Eliza Woodhouse on December 13, 1813 in Cooperstown, New York, her mother died before she was a year old. Her father remarried and subsequently had three sons and two additional daughters – Eliza’s step-siblings. The family moved to Michigan when Eliza was about twelve years old. Her step-sisters and brothers settled in the Lansing area, and her brothers were prominent in the area as real estate developers, an attorney, and the owner of a mill. Eliza was twenty-five years older than her youngest step sister.

At age 22 in 1835, Eliza married William Crossman in Dexter, Michigan, near Ann Arbor. He died before their third wedding anniversary. The couple had only one daughter, Mary Crossman, who died just before her third birthday. Suffering two deaths in very short succession, Eliza was left a widow and childless at the age of twenty-five.

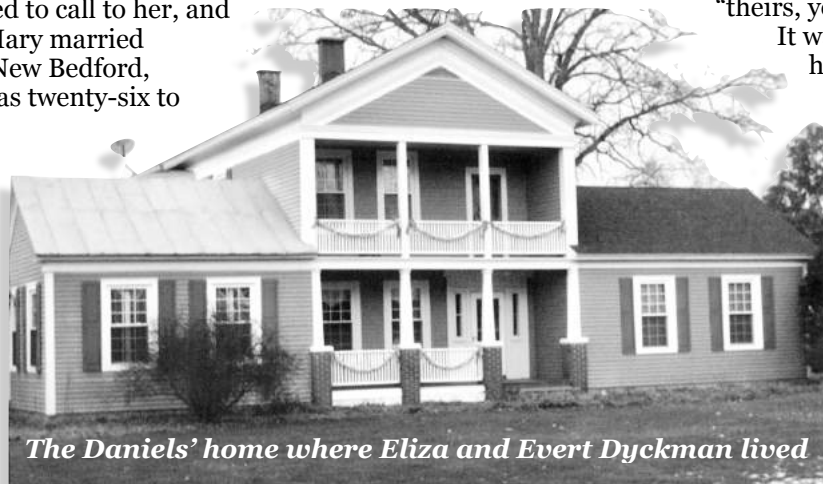
Six years later, in 1844, still in Dexter, Eliza married the widower Evert B. Dyckman becoming his fourth wife. He was forty-four and she was thirty-one. He was living in Schoolcraft in what was known as the Daniels home. She joined him there along with several of his children from his previous marriages: Aaron Smith Dyckman,⁵ born in 1826; Elizabeth, born in 1831; Esther, born in 1834;⁶ and at least two other daughters born in his first marriage to Harriet Hinkley; Teresa and Charlotte Van Vranken, the two daughters of his second wife, Almira Hobbs Van Vranken; Cecilia and Sarah Daniels born in 1834 and 1836 respectively to his third wife, Amelia Daniels,⁷ in her first marriage; and a daughter, Jennie⁸ born to them in 1843. In 1846, Eliza herself had a son, Clovis

Crossman Dyckman, making it a “theirs, yours and mine” family.

It was a full house—and a happy house, according to one of the daughters writing later:

“There was laughter in the house, and it was much like being at a party, or attending a boarding school.”

Evert was a jovial man, who brought joy to the home. He was known to say



The Daniels' home where Eliza and Evert Dyckman lived

about all his children:

“There are no own and ain’t own. They are all own.”

Eliza presided over the home and all Evert’s children as though they were *her* own. She also started recording the family’s births and deaths in a Bible which later generations continued.

Evert had added to the original Daniels home. (See photo on previous page). He felt that each of his daughters should have their own room, and though the rooms may have been small, they each did! They also had dresses alike — made from bolts of red and brown flannel fabric Evert brought home for them.

In 1878, at age thirty-two, Eliza’s son Clovis married a young Schoolcraft woman, Lucy Barnum. Sadly, he died of consumption a year later. Eliza had no other children, but some of her husband’s children lived nearby. Evert’s son Aaron Smith Dyckman was a prosperous fruit producer in South Haven, and his daughter Elizabeth later married Moses Cobb, a prominent Schoolcraft banker.

By all accounts, Evert Dyckman was a forward thinking genius who was involved in business and agricultural enterprises throughout West Michigan in the early years of its settlement. In his native New York state, while in his twenties, he was instrumental in the construction of the Oswego canal. He left New York in 1838 shortly after the death of his first wife, purchased a pony, and rode around Michigan searching for a location for his numerous operations.

Evert settled in Antwerp Township near Paw Paw with his seven children. There he owned 1,000 acres of farmland and built a grist mill and store and the Dyckman house, which still stands. He served as Clerk of Antwerp Township and Associate Judge of the Circuit Court.

In 1853 Evert purchased 600 acres of what became the city center of South Haven. He improved the river there, built a pier, a steam saw mill, a store, and several homes. While living in Antwerp Township near Paw Paw, Judge Dyckman married his second wife, Almira Hobbs Van Vranken who brought two daughters to the marriage. After her death, Evert and his family of children ranging in age from teenagers to a toddler, moved to Schoolcraft in the fall of 1841, where he lived the rest of his life.

On September 9, 1841 in Schoolcraft, he married Amelia LaGrave Daniels, the widow of Colonel Lyman Daniels and moved into the home her late husband had built. Lyman Daniels had been one of the very first settlers in Schoolcraft, arriving in 1831. One of the first lawyers in the area, Lyman dealt mainly in land acquisitions for eastern investors and in 1832 had built one of the first homes in the village of Schoolcraft. A year after the marriage of Evert and Amelia, she gave birth to a daughter and died shortly thereafter.

Evert met his fourth wife, Eliza Woodhouse Crossman, when he went visiting Amelia’s daughter Cecilia who was living in Dexter at the time.

Judge Evert Dyckman was a representative on the State Legislature from Kalamazoo County beginning in 1847, when the state capital was moved from Detroit to Lansing, and he took an active part in those proceedings. He worked hard to bring a railroad through Schoolcraft and organized road building. He had business interests in Schoolcraft enterprises, in distilling fine wines, buying and selling produce and merchandise, and in manufacturing.

Though elected President of Schoolcraft when the village was incorporated in 1866, principally Evert Dyckman was a banker. He held management positions in banks under several names as they appeared and then disappeared in Schoolcraft history. Ultimately, he was President of the private E.B. Dyckman bank from 1876 to his death in 1881. A wealthy business man, the members of his family were prominent in social affairs in Schoolcraft and beyond. Eliza was sixty-nine when she was widowed for the second time.

Eliza died in September, 1905 at the age of ninety-two. Three of Evert’s daughters, as well as her own much younger step-sister, were present at her funeral along with other relatives. Rev. Artemis Wetherbee officiated at the service, and burial was in Schoolcraft cemetery. Eliza had worked diligently for the founding of St. Stephen’s Chapel. She was eighty-one when the building was built and dedicated in 1893 and was a member until her death.

***Sarah Allen Finlay 1832 - 1920**

Sarah Allen was born on February 8, 1832 in Philadelphia, New York, and came to Barry County, Michigan with her father and her foster mother (who was also her aunt).

On December 23, 1852, when she was twenty years old, she married William Finlay. Pioneers in Schoolcraft, Hugh Finlay (William’s father) and his wife arrived on the prairie from Massachusetts in May of 1835 with eight of their nine children. The children ranged in age from one to nine years old, including two sets of twins. A final son was born soon after they put down their roots in Michigan. Hugh Finlay had arrived with fifty cents in his pocket, but as a carpenter at a time when homes as well as the hotel and the school were springing up in Schoolcraft, he did well.

With news of gold in California, some of the young Schoolcraft men went west. In 1850, Will Finlay and two of his brothers were among them. The eldest brother died in California, but Will and Thomas returned, “partially successful.” Soon after Will’s return he bought a farm adjacent to his parents about three miles south of Schoolcraft and married Sarah



Allen. That ended his western explorations. In a tragic accident with a threshing machine, William lost his right arm. After that, the family moved into the village of Schoolcraft. William managed a billiard hall where he also sold whiskey. (Or maybe it was a saloon where he also had three billiard tables.)

In 1870 the family was living in the village of Schoolcraft. Will Finlay was a wealthy man and a prominent business owner. At a time when wealthy men loaned money to each other informally, he made a loan of \$3,000 (a significant amount of money at the time) to another farmer. Will Findlay was also something of an entrepreneur. In 1891, he produced a shoe polish which he called Diamond Polish, and employed a traveling salesman to market it.

Sarah and Will had two children, a daughter Alice born in 1855 and a son William, Jr. born about 1860. Alice married Benjamin Shaw. She died in 1934 and William, Jr. died in 1939. Neither had children.

Sarah was a dressmaker. She affiliated with the Episcopalians in Schoolcraft in 1876, several years before the congregation was officially organized. She would have been sixty-one when the building was dedicated.

William Finlay died in 1907 at the age of eighty. Sarah died in March, 1920 at the home of her daughter Alice where she had lived the last five years of her life. She was eighty-eight years old.

***Alice Finlay Shaw 1855 - 1934**

Alice was the only daughter of William Findlay and Sarah Allen Findlay. Her father was a well-known businessman in Schoolcraft — the owner of a billiard hall which doubled as a tavern. She graduated from Schoolcraft High School in 1880.

Alice would have been thirty-eight years old and single when the building was dedicated. Her mother Sarah was very active in the formation and leadership of St. Stephen's Mission and Alice was a proud member as well. In fact, she may have been the last living member of the church when the building was sold.⁹

In September of 1900 when she was forty-five years old, Alice was married to Benjamin Shaw who was five years older than she. For at least the years from 1907 until her death in 1934, Alice was an active member of the Ladies Library Association. Her husband Benjamin died in 1921 and she lived as a widow for thirteen years. The couple had no children and the last years of her life she lived with her unmarried brother, William. Seventy-eight years old at her death, Alice is buried in the Schoolcraft cemetery.

Part III, in the next issue of Michigana will contain information about several more women who were active in St. Stephen's Protestant Episcopal Chapel.

About the author: For ten years, Paula Vander Hoven was pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Schoolcraft, Michigan. She wrote this article out of deep affection for the people of Schoolcraft and their stories, as well as for the strong women of that village.

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¹ It was called the Full Gospel Church at that time.

² Several people were helpful in trying to locate that document, especially Dr. Scott Mais, current owner of the building. Pastor Bob Monroe, Pastor Fred Betcher, Tom Amrorowicz, and Dr. Paul Northup also gave assistance.

³ *Schoolcraft Express*, May, 1895.

⁴ Or the Kalamazoo State Bank of C. C. Duncan

⁵ Aaron Smith Dyckman was referred to as "Smith"

⁶ His daughter Harriet, named for her late mother, was a baby when Evert came west and she stayed in New York State. Son Valentine, born about 1833 died in 1839 in Antwerp Township near Paw Paw. His death left Evert with only one son among his many daughters.

⁷ She was French, and taught this accumulated group of children to speak French.

⁸ or Jane

⁹ Evert Cooley related that when the Assembly of God congregation purchased the building, there was one surviving member living across the street from the church. That member may have been Lenora Chapin Gilchrist.

"French Spoliation" Stockings 1796

by **Susan J. Rabick**



William Pote

The poem on the following page was found among the papers of my paternal great grandmother Eliza Lufkin (Dennison) King. She was born in 1846 in Freeport Maine and her family had long been involved in fishing and trading along the east coast of America. Eliza's maternal great-grandfather was

Greenfield Pote (1736-1797) a part owner of a ship captured by French privateers.

"The "Freeport", built in Falmouth [Maine] in 1795, a 128 ton vessel valued at \$5000, set sail from Boston to Jamaica in February of 1796 with a cargo of pine boards, beef, bread, crackers, and fish. On February 15th she was captured by the French Republican cutter "Rights of Man" under the command of Capt. Augustus Love. The "Freeport" was taken to "St. Iago" [Santiago], Cuba, turned over to a "prize" court there, which confiscated her and then sold her [and probably her cargo] two and a half months later. Greenfield Pote, one of her three owners, filed a claim, which his son [William Pote, Eliza's grandfather] continued to pursue after his father's death."¹

This seizure came about because the United States was not repaying France for the debts incurred during the American Revolution. France, involved in its own revolution, was in dire need of the funds and authorized private vessels to capture American ships. Even though there were negotiations and promises of remittance, an understanding referred to as the "French Spoliation," the family never received payment.

I believe the stockings really existed and the story is true. William Pote, Eliza's grandfather, was very likely the captain of

the Freeport, and the poem indicates an intimate knowledge of the scene, probably passed down to her by her mother. The burial "40 years and more" is the correct timing and place for him as he died in 1847. The place, Harraseeket, is a tidal river in Freeport Maine where the cemetery is and where Eliza lived as a girl. The stockings went to the captain's granddaughter, a description fitting Eliza, and explains why she was given particular knowledge of the event.

Eliza L. D. King was born in 1846 and lived through the Victorian era when women often wrote romantic poetry. She died in 1927 and had at least one granddaughter before she died, so there was a great-great-great granddaughter of William Pote that she knew. Possibly because I am Eliza's great great-granddaughter, and William's 4th great granddaughter, I can't help but enjoy this poem of remembrance, and be touched by its reach across the centuries of my family history.

*I wish I knew what
happened
to the stockings.*



Photos of Eliza L. Dennison King, granddaughter of William Pote, great granddaughter of Greenfield Pote, great grandmother of the author. Photos courtesy of Susan J. Rabick.



About the author: *Susan J. Rabick is the WMGS Historian and a dedicated member of the "Tuesday Genies." This group is made up of volunteers who index resources and help genealogists with questions on Tuesday nights at the GRPL. If you have questions or comments, contact Sue at rabickgns@aol.com*

¹ William Pote Family Papers; William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor Michigan; the attempt to recover some money is documented in the catalogue introduction to the William Pote family papers.

“French Spoliation” Stockings 1796

*Laid away with a school-girl’s treasures
In a dainty perfumed box,
Mid relics of childhood pleasures
Is a pair of old silk socks.*

*Cut down for a little maiden,
Ragged in heel and toe,
They are yet with memories laden
Of a hundred years ago;*

*Of a gallant vessel taken
By a gay French privateer,
Of her captain and crew forsaken
As soon as land was near;*

*As they rowed away from the cutter
Toward a sunny tropic isle,
No farewell did the Frenchman utter
But he leaned, with a mocking smile,*

*Far over the cutter’s railing
And to the Captain tossed,
As if to deride his bewailing
For the vessel he had lost,*

*A pair of long silk hosen,
Flesh-colored and daintily clocked.
No taunt more fitly chosen
Could his victim’s rage have mocked.*

*Upon a fragrant hillside
By the Harraseekit shore
They laid the Captain when he died;
‘Tis forty years and more,*

*The blackberry vines above him
In tangled masses creep
And those who used to love him,
Around him calmly sleep.*

*And nought for the gallant “Freeport”
Ere came to him or those,
His heirs in the little seaport
But this pair of silken hose.*

*They tell of hopes that were kindled
For claims that are yet unpaid,
Of hopes that with years have dwindled
Like the socks of the little maid.*

*They tell of the life of the nation
Guarded by land and sea,
Through the century’s duration,
With unwavering loyalty.*

*“They can be once more made shorter”
The little maid says, “Just wait;
I am only a great-grand daughter.
They will do for a great-great-great.”*

*[Date overwritten]
Eliza Dennison King
18??[8/9;6/4/9]*

DIG (DNA Interest Group)

John William Pierce

Learn more about using DNA in your genealogy!

DIG — 3rd Thursday, 7:00–8:45 pm 4th Floor, Grand Rapids Public Library

There are now two groups in Western Michigan to help you with understanding your DNA results, DIG (DNA Interest Group) is sponsored by the Western Michigan Genealogical Society and the Grand Rapids Public Library. Meetings are held on the 4th floor at the main branch of the GRPL, the third Thursday of the month from 7 pm to 8:45 pm, featuring programs, podcasts, and open discussion on how to interpret and decipher your DNA results. Lisa Christensen recently showed how to make and use a “logic” spreadsheet to determine the paternal or maternal line that unknown DNA matches would belong in, making it easier to know how you’re related.

Both groups are free and open to everyone. Join us and bring your questions!

Ionia DNA Group — 2nd Saturday at noon Freight Station Museum, Lake Odessa

The second DNA discussion group is sponsored by the Ionia County Genealogical Society. They meet the second Saturday of the month at 12 noon before the regular monthly meeting. They meet at the Freight Station Museum, behind the Depot Museum, 1117 Emerson Street, Lake Odessa, Michigan. This group started in January 2017 and has many people who are new to understanding DNA results and how to navigate the home pages of the DNA web sites and data bases. Along with programs, the group will help anyone who needs hands-on help with downloading and uploading raw DNA to other sites and loading gedcoms (family trees) to the DNA sites.

**Western Michigan Genealogical Society
Budget Analysis December 2016**

	1/1/2016	12/31/2016
Balance - Cash PNC Bank	\$3,532	\$1,557
Balance - Business PNC Bank	\$40	\$40
Balance - Investment	\$59,266	\$64,159
Balance - Cash/Inv	\$62,838	\$65,756

	2016 Budget	2016 At Dec 31	% Rec'd/Expd	2015 At Yr End	2015 At Dec 31	% Rec'd/Expd	Year to Year
Revenue							
Membership Dues	\$8,000	\$9,885.00	123.56%	\$7,075	\$7,075	100.00%	140%
Donations	\$1,250	\$1,721.15	137.69%	\$1,406	\$1,406	100.00%	122%
Donations - 1812 Project	\$100	\$43.00	43.00%	\$532	\$532	100.00%	8%
Sales	\$1,925	\$2,762.01	143.48%	\$2,456	\$2,456	100.00%	112%
Sales Tax	\$110	\$112.97	102.70%	\$83	\$83	100.00%	136%
Search	\$10,000	\$8,184.71	81.85%	\$11,507	\$11,507	100.00%	71%
Seminar	\$6,000	\$6,104.34	101.74%	\$6,477	\$6,477	100.00%	94%
Bus Trips	\$6,900	\$9,661.00	140.01%	\$8,157	\$8,157	100.00%	118%
Certificates	\$100	\$170.00	170.00%	NA	NA	NA	
Lock-in	\$250	\$215.32	86.13%	NA	NA	NA	
Copier Reimbursements	\$200	\$393.60	196.80%	\$559	\$559	100.00%	70%
Investment Return	\$1,550	\$4,893.82	315.73%	(\$2,116)	(\$2,116)		
Investment Withdrawals	\$0	\$0.00		\$0	\$0		
	\$36,385	\$44,146.92	121.33%	\$36,137	\$36,137	100.00%	122%
Cash Revenue	\$34,835	\$39,253.10	112.68%	\$38,253	\$38,253	100.00%	103%
Expense							
Michigana	\$5,500	\$5,909.63	107.45%	\$4,921	\$4,921	100.0%	120%
Purchases for Sales	\$1,500	\$1,796.95	119.80%	\$1,226	\$1,226	100.0%	147%
Sales Tax	\$110	\$80.52	73.20%	\$120	\$120	100.0%	67%
Sales Reproductions	\$100	\$61.16	61.16%	\$0	\$0	NA	
Newsletter	\$1,500	\$1,668.72	111.25%	\$1,455	\$1,455	100.0%	115%
Donations	\$100	\$3,063.00	3063.00%	\$525	\$525	NA	
Programs	\$1,000	\$1,200.08	120.01%	\$801	\$801	100.0%	150%
Projects	\$1,500	\$1,030.89	68.73%	\$1,128	\$1,128	100.0%	91%
Internet	\$1,600	\$1,548.83	96.80%	\$1,594	\$1,594	100.0%	97%
Seminar	\$6,000	\$9,433.43	157.22%	\$6,612	\$6,612	100.0%	143%
Bus Trips	\$6,900	\$8,589.03	124.48%	\$7,738	\$7,738	100.0%	111%
Education	\$100	\$0.04	0.04%	\$0	\$0	0.0%	NA
Sumames	\$25	\$0.00	0.00%	\$0	\$0	NA	NA
Volunteers	\$800	\$784.07	98.01%	\$809	\$809	100.0%	97%
Manuscripts	\$100	\$515.65	515.65%	\$76	\$76	100.0%	679%
General Business	\$700	\$952.81	136.12%	\$663	\$663	100.0%	144%
Postage	\$1,000	\$275.45	27.55%	\$1,091	\$1,091	100.0%	25%
Insurance & Storage	\$1,200	\$1,618.00	134.83%	\$795	\$795	100.0%	204%
Copier	\$500	\$395.40	79.08%	\$1,849	\$1,849	100.0%	21%
Certificates	\$50	\$0.00	0.00%	NA	NA	NA	NA
Encumbered Donations to Libr	\$3,500	\$0.00	0.00%	\$2,929	\$2,929	100.0%	0%
Committees:							
Search	\$1,200	\$452.46	37.71%	\$1,779	\$1,779	100.0%	25%
Sales	\$500	\$51.91	10.38%	\$165	\$165	100.0%	31%
Public Relations	\$700	\$878.13	125.45%	\$670	\$670	100.0%	131%
Membership	\$200	\$685.00	342.50%	\$107	\$107	100.0%	639%
NGS 2018	\$0	\$237.27		\$0	\$0	NA	NA
	\$36,385	\$41,228.43	113.31%	\$37,054	\$37,054	100.0%	111%
Rev Over/Under Exp	\$0	\$2,918		(\$917)	(\$917)		
Cash Rev Over/Under Exp	-\$1,550	-\$1,975.33		\$1,199	\$1,199		

News & Notes

by Ruth Robinson Waybrant

Online Historical Directories Website

<https://sites.google.com/site/onlinedirectorysite>
Selected as one of the 101 Best Websites in 2016 by
Family Tree Magazine

<https://sites.google.com/site/onlinenewspapersite/Home>
Online Historical Newspapers Website

Types of Maps to check

Boundary Maps
Landowner or Cadastral Maps
Topographic Maps
Transportation Maps
Insurance Maps

For more information on these maps, check the
blog of Amy Johnson Crow:
www.amyjohnsoncrow.com/2016/05/05/5-types-maps-every-genealogist-know

More to know about finding maps online

Check *Genealogy Gems* from the Fort Wayne Library,
No. 154, December 31, 2016
Article: "Online Sources for Boundary Changes,"
by Allison DePrey Singleton

This article includes links to studying changes in
boundary lines over time, information from the
Newberry Library in Chicago, Illinois including
information on downloadable map files, U.S. County
Boundary Maps, and county boundary maps
available on FamilySearch.org

* * * * *

Free Map Sites

David Rumsey Map Collection
<http://www.davidrumsey.com>
Perry-Castañeda Library Map Collection
<http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps>
Osher Map Library
<http://oshermaps.org/search>
Library of Congress
<https://www.loc.gov/maps/collections>
Sanborn Fire Insurance
<http://www.loc.gov/rr/geogmap/sanborn>

* * * * *

**WMGS now accepting credit card
payments for dues, purchases at the sales
table, and the bus trip!**

Surname rankings

From a 1964 issue of *Michigana*:

Did you see the December 15th "THIS WEEK"?
Charlie Rice wondered about the most common
names in America and the Veterans Administration
reported what we've known all along ... SMITH
leads the field by a wide margin.

But would you have guessed that JOHNSON was
next? Then came Williams, Brown, Jones, Miller,
Davis, Anderson, Wilson, and Thompson for the
first ten most common names. (216 were listed in
the article).

Our members' names are: Adams #30, Clark #16,
Dean #198, Fox #114, Griffin #99, Lawrence #186,
Miller #6, Moore #11, O'Connor #209, Philips #37,
Simmons #90. Thomas #14. Sorry, Jo Robbins,
your AFFANTRANGER just didn't make the hit
parade.

For 2016, the fifteen most common last names listed
on www.census.gov were: Smith, Johnson, Williams,
Brown, Jones, Garcia, Miller, Davis, Rodriguez,
Martinez, Hernandez, Lopez, Gonzalez, Wilson, and
Anderson.

More information from the United States Census blog
about the most common surnames in 2016:

The growing Hispanic population has pushed
surnames reported by Hispanics up the rankings since
2000. Garcia was the sixth most common name, up
from eighth in 2000. Two more Hispanic surnames
are in the top 10 — Rodriguez and Martinez.

Census respondents reported about 6.3 million
surnames in 2010. Of these, only 11 were reported
more than a million times each. The vast majority —
62 percent — were reported only once.

"There is more surname clustering among Hispanics,"
Comenetz said. "Twenty-six surnames cover a quarter
of the Hispanic population and 16 percent of Hispanic
people reported one of the top 10 Hispanic names.
The pattern is similar for Asians and blacks." (Joshua
Comenetz is the assistant chief of the Population
Division's Population Geography staff and manager of
the surnames project).

* * * * *

WMGS newsletter going digital soon

Watch for more information. This will help the society
save money which can be used for projects. Do you
know that the WMGS newsletter is already available
online at the WMGS website?!?

<http://wmgs.org/news.htm>

WMGS Bus Trip
Wed-Thur, April 19-20, 2017
Allen County Public Library, Ft. Wayne
Staying at Econo Lodge
More information on wmgs.org

Area Notes

Sunfield Historical Society, Welch Museum by Mary Rasch Alt

Once you find Sunfield, Michigan, the museum is easy to find! The front is painted John Deere green and yellow as the first John Deere tractor in Michigan was sold there.

The Sunfield Historical Society "is a non-profit making, permanent institution, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, and exhibits, for purposes of inspiring children, connecting families, and strengthening our communities" in the Welch Museum they operate.

The Museum is a collection of antique items donated by area residents. "We get items every day," said Jan Sedore, of the Sunfield Historical Society. "A man called this week with a Civil War wagon that we are going to get out of his barn and put it on display." The Welch family donated the building to the historical society in 2010.

The 1860s Thorp family log cabin has been rebuilt within the Welch Historical Museum. Sunfield High School graduate photos from 1918 to 1963 line the walls of the museum and a restored 1927 Reo Sunfield fire truck will take you back in time inside this former hardware store (see photo on next page).

They are a "hands on" museum—almost everything can be examined carefully by hand. There are many displays that take you back to remember what life was like and to show your children and grandchildren how things have changed over time.

Their society archives are available for research at the Welch Museum. Here you will have access to research books, family histories, cemetery records, newspapers, death certificates, funeral home records, post cards and photos.

"Anyone can come in and research," said Sedore. "We have all of Portland's newspapers bound. Some are not even available on microfilm."

Next to the museum is the G.A.R. building. In the front is a Michigan Registered "Historic Site" sign stating:

"The G.A.R. was founded in 1866 as a veterans association to assist Union veterans and their widows and orphans. The G.A.R. and several of its allied orders have used this hall since its completion in 1899: Samuel W. Grinnell Post No. 283, G.A.R. (1899 to 1934); Woman's relief Corps No. 62 (1899 to 1925); Samuel W. Grinnell Camp No. 17, sons of Union Veterans, U.S.A., (1918 to 1925); Helen Edwins Tent No. 30, Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War (beginning in 1926); and Curtenius Guard Camp No. 17, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (beginning in 1983). In 1987 the hall was owned by the Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War. This marker was dedicated on Memorial Day (30 May) during the Michigan Sesquicentennial."

The long awaited book on the Sunfield Charter Members of Samuel Grinnell Post #283, located in Sunfield, MI will be available at the Welch Museum. It is 180 pages of history of the G.A.R. Post #283 and its original members. This book tells the story of the men and their families, who their parents were, who they married, the battles they took part in during the Civil

War and continues with their lives when they returned to their home and families. The Society is asking for a \$20 donation for each book. If you wish to have this book mailed to you, please add an additional \$5 for postage. Mail check or money order to: Sunfield Historical Society, PO Box 251, Sunfield, MI 48890.

Other books available at the museum are *The Sunfield High School History* and *Myrtie's Memories*.

Go online to see the many lists of family histories available, events that are sponsored by the society and more!

Feel free to call if you would like to set up an appointment to research or bring a group through the museum.

The coffee pot is always on, so they encourage everyone to stop by and enjoy the displays, they will bring back many pleasant memories. Admission is free, donations are appreciated. (See more pictures on the next page).



About the author: *Mary Rasch Alt has been a feature writer for Michigana for ten years. The author of "Alpine Township," Mary has also published family histories and was a writer for the Grand Rapids Press for 20 years. Along with being a member of the Western Michigan Genealogical Society, Mary is a member of Alpine Township and Wright Township Historical Commissions as well as the Seneca County Historical Society in Ohio. Her favorite title is Grandma.*



In the Welch Museum is an entire wall of items from around the world.

Above: The Native American display is very impressive with a buck skin shirt along with other items.



Above: The color of the Sunfield Historical Society's Welch Museum is John Deere green and yellow, because the first John Deere tractor is said to have been sold out of this building.

Right: Items from Hawaii

Below: At the barber shop display, one can sit and share the news of the day.



Welch Museum Galleries & Museum Gift Shop

Winter Hours starting in December:

Saturday-10 am – 2 pm

Summer Hours starting in April:

Monday - 10 am - 2 pm

Wednesday - 2 pm - 5 pm

Saturday - 10 am - 2 pm

<http://www.sunfieldhistoricalsociety.com>
160 Main Street, PO Box 251, Sunfield, Michigan
Call (517) 449-4895



Below: The "Boyer Fire Apparatus" inside the museum.



Western Michigan Genealogical Society
Grand Rapids Public Library
111 Library St. NE
Grand Rapids MI 49503
Websites: wmgs.org data.wmgs.org
commoncorners.com

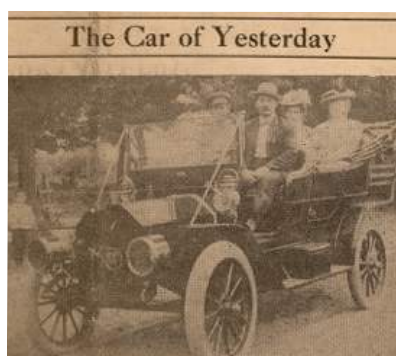
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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED



Coming in future issues

Cigars: Cigar Factories,
Cigar Box Factories,
and Cigar Stores
in the Grand Rapids area



A bit of
nostalgia



And more on
Michigan county and
township resources