



PIONEER RECORD

Newsletter for the Midland Genealogical Society

Volume 34 No. 2

MIMGS.ORG

Nov 2013

In This Issue

The Old Connecticut Path	1
The Presidents Letter	2
Editorial Comments	2
Membership	3
Library Info	3
Books for sale	3
Shrouded in Mystery—Hart's Island	5
Eastmans News	7
Coming Events	8
MGC Report	8
Looking Back in Midland County	9
MGS Officers & Society Information	10

Midland Genealogical Society Programs for 2013 - 2014

Meetings are scheduled on the third Wednesday of the month unless otherwise noted..

Programs for the meetings are as follows.

****PLEASE NOTE LOCATIONS****

November 20: Library Lounge, 7 pm.
Floyd Andrick. From Switzerland to Michigan.

No December Meeting.

January 15, Library Lounge, 7 pm. Library resources and update.

February 19, St. John's Episcopal Church. 7 pm, "The Life of Johnny Reb" by Marion Berry.

The Old Connecticut Path

Yvonne Ashworth

The Old Connecticut Path is the first of any trail leading west from settlements in Connecticut around the Atlantic coast, extending to the interior of Connecticut. This Path was originally established by the Native Americans as footpaths. It would be utilized by the earliest settlers of the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

The earliest settlers widened the Path during cattle drives which allowed the Path thereafter to be used more effectively as a trade route and for transporting goods from other settlements established along the Charles and Connecticut Rivers while also serving as a route for explorers such as John Oldham to penetrate into the interior of Connecticut.

Later, a group from Watertown would follow this route when they relocated to a settlement in Wethersfield.

The Old Connecticut Path was also used by the Reverend Thomas Hooker to lead his congregation from New Town (now Cambridge, MA) to what is now known as Hartford, CT.

This trip took two weeks, with 160 head of cattle, along a very demanding trek.

Thomas Hooker was a Puritan colonial leader who founded the Colony of Connecticut after dissenting with the leaders of Massachusetts, who would later become a leader in Christian suffrage. He and his congregation were original founders and settlers of Hartford, and utilized the Old Connecticut Path frequently in their necessary travels.

As of 1643 the Path received its official name from villagers in Sudbury and in the year 1672 after a postal system was established, the Old Connecticut Path became the very first postal road.

It was well thought out by Native Americans long known for establishing footpaths using the easiest of routes while avoiding obstacles when possible.

This Path led west along the north bank of the Charles River, from New Town(Cambridge) to Watertown passing through what is now known as Waltham and Weston, southward and curving to Sudbury and on to Wayland, extending on to the Bay Path and headed west into Marlborough, Worcester and Brookfield to the Connecticut River.

(Continued on page 4)

The President's Letter

Decision made! After much discussion during the past year a motion was made at the October 16 MGS meeting that we schedule future general meetings at Williams Hall, St. John's Episcopal Church. Members present approved the motion following a brief discussion. Many favorable comments recommended the change in venue due to favorable parking, easy access to Williams Hall, good acoustics, ease of location at intersection of W. St. Andrews and Saginaw roads, plus a relaxing atmosphere, i.e., no pressure to exit building after 8:30 PM as occurs when meeting at the Library Lounge.

With the advent of fall it makes one realize that 2013 is rapidly coming to a close. Time to reflect on what has been accomplished as well as not accomplished. Our program co-chairs have done an excellent job planning stimulating programs for the year. Many members have expressed an interest in participating in MGS sponsored field trips to Allen County Public Library in Fort

Wayne and/or to the Family History Library in Salt Lake City. These trips have yet to be arranged. As we approach the coming holiday season maybe one or two members will offer to coordinate one or both of these proposed field trips. Both of these libraries not only offer excellent opportunities to research ancestral history but provide unforgettable experiences in either of these research facilities.

I have been enjoying the beautiful fall colors for they are fleeting. Fleeting always results in leaves falling, covering the ground with a colorful blanket. I mowed the grass and leaves for hopefully the last time earlier today. What really amazed me while doing this fall ritual was all the maple seeds covering the driveway and walkways. They were all over and crunchy to walk on. My sturdy broom was a great help in cleaning up the seeds. Made me wonder what percentage of these seeds actually end up sprouting and producing a sturdy tree. We genealogists are constantly looking for descendants that our ancestors have sown.

Faye Ebach

Genealogists
don't hold
grudges.

They remember
facts.



Great Uncle Bertrand didn't have a computer in 1880, so how will you find him on line?

From The Editor ● ● ●

There seems to be a lot of new information going online for genealogists everyday. Keep checking the familysearch site for the latest updates. There are also several free sites that have information but take a lot of looking to find it. I use Google as my main search engine because it returns the results that I am looking for. I find that Bing keeps trying to install on my computer as a default but I never have good luck with it. Bing tries to predict what you are looking for based on previous searches even though there is no relevance.

Have any of you had a chance to catch the new Genealogy Road-

show program on PBS? I hope that the show will continue as it promotes the hobby and also may give you clues as where to look.

The society is looking for new members. Maybe you know someone who has an interest in researching their roots or someone that needs a hobby. Bring them to a meeting and we will help show them resources available and get them started.

Remember when you visit the gene room at the Grace A Dow library in Midland to sign the register. This provides numbers to the library concerning room use and helps justify our existence.

Walter Bennett, Editor

MEMBERSHIP DUES 2012-2013

Statements for the 2013-2014 dues were sent out in mid August 2013 and will be due by the first meeting in September 2013. Dues are not expected to change and can be sent to the following address:

Midland Genealogical Society,
P.O. Box 2421, Midland,

MI 48641-2421. Dues for an individual are \$14.00; for a family they are \$17.50.

Membership

I have processed twenty-nine returns for membership so far. There are four new memberships. Three are out of the Midland area.

Please make a notation if you have a change in phone, address or email. This helps to make sure we get the updated information to the Pioneer Record chairman Walt Bennett.

See you September 18.

Beverly Keicher

Membership Chair

Library Renovation Alert

The renovation of the main lobby at the Grace A. Dow Memorial Library has begun. The library's full range of check-out services are still being offered from a temporary location in the lobby. Patrons have access to the elevator that goes to Youth Services on the lower level or the Mezzanine on the upper level. Patrons are asked to follow the signs. The temporary check-out desk will be in place through December.

The lobby renovation is one component of the \$3 million renovation project now happening at the library through a gift from the Herbert H. & Grace A. Dow Foundation.

Online resources through the library

http://www.midland-mi.org/gracedowlibrary/web_gateways/genealogy.html

The library has several online resources available. Some require you to enter the number on your library card. Ancestry library edition only works within the library, not just on the library computers but also on your notebook computer while in the library. To get to it, go to the link above and select Ancestry.

One of the other gems here is the Midland Historical Newspapers from 1870 thru 1922. This is searchable so it will provide you with every occurrence of the search term.



B O O K S F O R S A L E

The following books, published by the Midland Genealogical Society, are available for sale at any meeting, at the Midland Genealogy Room, Grace A. Dow Public Library or by mail. Price of each book is \$20.00 plus \$3.00 for postage and handling.

Midland County Obituary Index (#1) – 1872-1927. The book consists of 16,000 abstractions covering 55 years from the Midland Times (1872 -1875), The Midland Sun (1892 -1924) and the Midland Republican (1881-1927). The soft bound 238 page book is 8 ½ by 11 inches.

Midland County Obituary Index (#2) – 1928-1950. The book consists of about 8,000 abstractions covering 22 years from the Midland Republican (1928 - 1937) and the Midland Daily News (1937 - 1950). The soft bound 238 page book is 8 ½ by 11 inches. Note: Both Obituary Books (#1 & #2) are available as a package of \$35.00.

Midland County Obituary Index (#3)-1951-1982 This book consists of 30,900 entries including about 4000 maiden names covering 22 years extracted from Midland Daily News. The 387 page, 8½ by 11, soft bound book consists of two volumes A through L and M through Z. The set costs \$40 plus \$5 postage and handling.

Midland Pioneers, edited by Ora Flaningham. This book is a compilation of the most interesting genealogical, historical and humorous reprints from newspapers published in the Pioneer Record. The book is 6 by 9 inches, soft bound, 259 pages. (Out of print, but orders being compiled at Genealogy desk.)

Midland County, Michigan Marriage Records 1855-1910 including Groom & Bride Indexes. The book is 8.5 by 11, soft bound, 320 pages. \$30.

A collection of "Some Midland Michigan County Records" have been compiled and extensively indexed by Ora L. Flaningham. It is available in PDF format on a compact disc from the Midland Genealogical Society. The collection is mainly out of print books from our society, Harold Moll, and Ora Flaningham. Included are: "Midland County Cemetery Records" 1981, "Midland County Michigan Census 1850-1894 (1983)", "Midland County Michigan Obituary Index 1872-1927 (1994)", "Midland Pioneers", vol 1 (1999) & vol 2, "Midland County Michigan Probate Index 1850-1900", Early Saginaw Valley History", Bethany Indian Mission 1843-1855", Bethany Indian Mission 1851-1868", "In the Wilderness With the Red Indians", "Account Book of Charles H. Rodd", "Indian Build a Birch Bark Canoe", and Index to First Families of Midland County". The cost of this CD is \$25 shipping included in US.

To ORDER A BOOK write: Midland Genealogical Society BOOK: P.O. Box 2421, Midland, MI 48641-2421.

(Continued from page 1)



Then the route threads past the northeastern shore of Lake Cochituate and then west to the Connecticut River opposite Hartford.

Presently there are historians and volunteers mapping the Path since it has, for the most part, been largely obscured from view with only minor traces remaining.

When first established, the path took two weeks to complete from start to finish. Guides were used by the Massachusetts Bay Colony settlers to show them the way, with travel through forests and land difficult for most to follow.

Today, with the advent of GPS and cellphone technology, those wishing to follow roads which parallel the path may be guided utilizing Every Trail which is an iPhone/Android application available for free. The upcoming completion of mapping the exact route should yield the ability to leave vehicles behind and provide

an experience for those who desire, the capability of walking into the world seen by pioneers, since most of the path remains pristine and undeveloped.

While there is some discussion as to the exact layout of the trail in its entirety, it is generally known that Thomas Hooker and his party as some point and juncture, followed through the Tankerhoosen Valley enroute to what would become Hartford. This would indicate that the journey would have followed what is now Route 30

and part of the Hartford Turnpike, which is a former Native American route from old villages along the Connecticut River to a significant settlement in the Stafford Springs area.

Currently the Path, with parts now known, follows the contours of the land for relatively easy walking with rivers crossed at fords where the water is wide and shallow. Streams are crossed in the highlands where they can be stepped across easily. Wetlands are skirted with beaver dams serving as reminders of their use as bridges. It travels over bridges from centuries past, deep within the woods known as the “Last Green Valley”, known as an area between Sutton, Massachusetts to Tolland, Connecticut. Ancient homesteads as well as historic homes remain on the Path as do stepping stones placed by pioneers over 375 years ago.

Sources:

<https://sites.google.com/site/oldconnecticutpath/>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Old_Connecticut_Path



Shrouded in Mystery-- Hart Island, New York

by Yvonne Ashworth

There exists an island, shrouded in mystery for decades, located off into Long Island Sound and within the borough of the Bronx, long subject to many myths and stories alike.

This one mile long and half a mile wide piece of land has been used as a prison camp for Confederates, a quarantine area during the cholera epidemic of 1870, a women's asylum, a Nike missile base, a boys workhouse, a state prison facility and a drug rehabilitation facility. It is also the site of the world's largest tax funded Potters cemetery.

Originally called Lesser Minneford Island back in the late nineteenth century, the island was purchased by New York City in February, 1869. Formerly, Thomas Pell had purchased the land from Native Americans in 1654 after which the island had seen action from the on and off skirmishes with Britain.

In the closing months of the Civil War, 3413 Confederate soldiers were housed on the island of which 235 died. They were buried on the island along with Union soldiers which had passed away from disease. In 1941 they were disinterred and buried at Cypress Hills Cemetery in Brooklyn per the orders of the Federal government. Of all of the Civil War era buildings constructed on the island site, the only building remaining is the shell of the old Union Army stable. All other remnants of that area have long disappeared from hurricanes and age.

After the purchase of the island in 1869, the city began using it for the site of a Potters Cemetery. Immigrants, with no relatives to claim their remains, deceased infants or newborns with impoverished parents, the elderly with no survivors and AIDs victims are among the buried. Later, amputated parts were also added to the mass graves in coffins labeled accordingly.

The majority of the mass graves in trenches prior to 1913 were children under the age of five. The Potters Field now occupies one hundred and one acres as of the statistics from 2008. As of 2010, the Hart Island Project has been established to assist those with deceased children or relatives buried on the island. The Department of Corrections now running the island does not allow relatives to visit gravesites and at this time, no definitive burial sites can be confirmed for many due to the fact that records are missing or incomplete. There are searchable data bases for the years of 1980-2011 available via subscription services through the Hart Island Project.

During the era where the island was used as a women's asylum, there was also a tubercularium to isolate those with the contagious disease. It has long been rumored that medical experiments were taking place upon the patients at the facilities, none of which may be proven since many medical records on the island were destroyed in a fire set by vandals back in the late 1970's when the island was no longer inhabited.

In 2008 several people were allowed to tour the island with the supervision

of Department of Corrections personnel. Photographed were the shells of the few remaining buildings such as the "Dynamo Room" marked 1912 which was part of the boys workhouse facilities, a chapel, abandoned Nike Ajax missile silos, a butcher shop, the wardens house when it was used as a state prison, and multiple cottage-like buildings. Within these buildings it was discovered that abandoned medical records from multiple years were present along with prison records, previously used coffins, coffins of the disinterred, and other remnants such as bedsteads, old books, various pieces of clothing, grenades and other military items. Via a walk around these buildings and the island site it was also discovered that open and exposed trenches with adult coffins were present.

In the past, burial trenches were recycled and reused after two or three decades to allow for decomposition of the remains. Now some of the historical buildings are being razed to make room for new burials at taxpayer expense. There are no markers and no ceremonies, and prisoners performing the burials are paid fifty cents an hour for their services. Sometimes a wooden cross or other items are left with a notation by prisoners to mark those they deem special due to the circumstances of their death.

Hart Island and the Pier on Fordham Street are restricted areas. The public has been granted one tour by the New York Department of Correc-

(Continued on page 6)

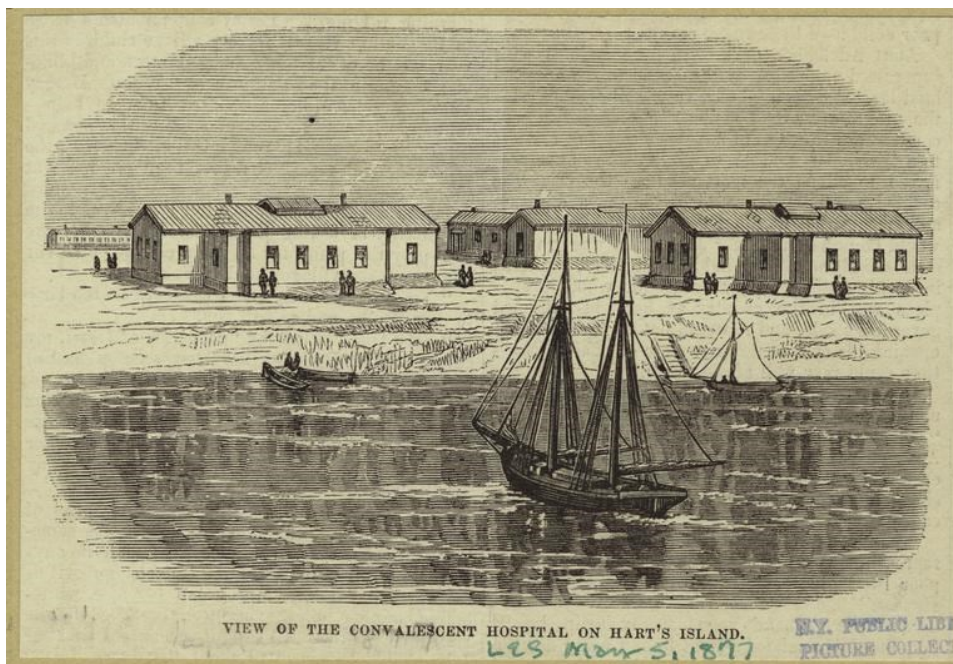
(Continued from page 5)

tions which took place in the year 2000.

Visitors, however, were not granted access to the burial areas but they were granted the ability to see

interred on the island, a task made difficult since this same department has not been forthcoming with records. It is this very situation which has resulted in the shroud of mystery

behind this island as the State of New York allows a prison system to dictate



buildings, the silos and the peace monument erected back in the 1940's.

There have been numerous hearings and public requests to gain access to the burial areas and at this time, there has been no relief for those with children or relatives buried on the island.

Visitation is only with the supervision of Department of Corrections personnel and access is only to a gazebo area well away from the mass graves, a policy which has been in place since the 1970s. To gain access to the island, one must have the ability to prove a relative or child is

the access of a cemetery funded by tax dollars. It should be noted, however, that this same system had no problem granting access to the crew shooting the movie, "The Saint of Fort Washington" where several Department of Corrections officers were filmed performing a burial. After public outcry, that same year (1993) no further filming was allowed on the island.

The cemetery itself continues to spread across the island and around the ruins.

To request information on records of those interred, contact:

The Municipal Archives

31 Chambers Street

New York, New York 10007-1210

Phone number (212) 788-8582

Sources:

HartIsland.net

NYpress.com/lost_on_hart_island

Gizmodo.com

wikipedia.org/wiki/Hart_Island

UPDATE:

MGS Tax Exempt Status

Faye A Ebach

During the summer of 2010 the genealogy community became aware of a new IRS requirement that all non-profit organizations with IRS tax-exempt status needed to file a 990-N form for each fiscal year regardless of annual gross receipts. Our treasurer at the time, Dave Russell, explored MGS's tax-exempt status and whether our society was covered as a member society in the Michigan Genealogical Council (MGC). MGC reported their 501 (c) (3) tax-exemption did not apply to or include any member societies. The board discussed the pros and cons of having an IRS non-profit 501 (c) (3) tax-exemption and concluded that members, particularly those members who make donations to the MGS, need the MGS to have IRS tax-exempt status as a non-profit. Therefore, our MGS treasurer pursued and obtained 501 (c) (3) tax-exempt status for MGS effective October 14, 2010.

Unfortunately, this tax-exempt status was revoked earlier this year due to an error in filing the IRS 990-N form. After numerous discussions with IRS agents, filing of required forms, responding to numerous requests, and payment of a required fee of \$100, our MGS IRS tax-exempt status as a non-profit 501 (c) (3) organization has been reinstated and is effective as of November 15, 2010. The IRS required 990-N forms have been filed for MGS fiscal years July 1, 2011-June 30, 2012 and July 1, 2012-June 30, 2013.

The on-going saga of dealing with the IRS for several years is now history. Members and individuals who make or have made donations to MGS can use their contributions as a deduction when filing individual federal income tax forms.

The Canadian Great War Project

The Canadian Great War Project is intended to promote interest in Canada's participation in World War 1, commonly referred to as the Great War, to research the Canadians who participated in the Great War 1914-1919 or other nationalities who served in the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF).

The site contains "Attestation Papers" (enlistment paperwork) for Canadian soldiers of the First World War that have been scanned and indexed. The forms documenting a soldier's circumstances of death and final burial are often also available scanned on the Library and Archives Canada site, but the system for finding them is very nonintuitive. The Canadian Great War Project web site appears to be easier to use.

The Canadian Great War Project is a work-in-progress. That is, currently more than 159,681 entries of individual soldiers are available online. New data is being added to the site frequently. The goal is to eventually identify every Canadian man and woman that served in World War One but the project will not be complete for some time yet. If you do not find someone that you are looking for, you might check back again in a few months. Volunteers are encouraged to join in the effort of indexing and adding new records!

You can see for yourself at: <http://www.canadiangreatwarproject.com>.

Alex Haley's "Roots" to Return to Television as a New Miniseries?

Deadline.com is reporting that the History Channel is taking on one of most celebrated TV programs of all time, blockbuster 1977 miniseries *Roots*. This will not be a re-run. Instead, it is planned as a brand-new series. The cable network

expects the new eight-hour *Roots* miniseries will be broadcast one or two years from now.

The History Channel reportedly has acquired rights to the 12-hour original from Mark Wolper, son of *Roots* executive producer, the late David L. Wolper, and to the book the mini was based on, *Roots: The Saga Of An American Family*, from the estate of author Alex Haley. Mark Wolper is on board as executive producer.

New Parish Records available on TheGenealogist

The following announcement was written by TheGenealogist.co.uk:

TheGenealogist has continued to add to its extensive collection of parish records with the release of almost 385,000 new individual record transcripts covering a wide variety of counties in England. The records cover the period from the mid 1500s to 2005.

This major addition of baptisms, marriages and burials include many famous and also notorious ancestors. In our Essex records, we uncovered the family history of shadowy highwayman, Dick Turpin, born in Hempstead, Essex, baptised in 1705, as Richardus Turpin, in the same parish where his parents had married. He started life as a butcher, but came into contact with the 'Essex Gang' and embarked on more clandestine, criminal activities.

The new Parish records give details of his early family life with his brother and two sisters in the early 1700s. Tracking him down proves easier now than the authorities experienced at the time! He subsequently changed his name to John Palmer, but after a lengthy time evading capture, his real life and identity as a poacher, burglar, horse thief and killer was exposed following a letter Turpin wrote to his brother in law and he was

executed in 1739, but his legend continues to this day.

The new parish records added cover the counties of Bedfordshire, Devon, Essex, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Middlesex, Rutland, Shropshire and Westmoreland, it's an addition of a substantial amount of individuals around the country. The newly added records cover a range of baptisms, marriages and burials in these counties.

Mark Bayley, Head of Development at TheGenealogist comments: "We are committed to constantly adding new records to the website. The new parish records are a continued response to our customers requests for more parish records and pre-1837 information. We've got much more in the pipeline coming through in the next few months. You may find your own Dick Turpin in the records!"

The latest parish record releases are part of a concerted ongoing project on TheGenealogist with many more Parish Records due in early 2014.

Online Newspaper Archive Passes the 7 Million Page Mark

The British Newspaper Archive is a partnership project between the British Library and DC Thomson Family History (formally known as brightsolid online publishing). The project has now achieved a significant milestone, as described in this announcement:

The British Newspaper Archive (BNA) passed a giant milestone today, as page number 7,000,000 was added to the site at www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk.

Since its launch in November 2011, the BNA has been committed to transcribing thousands of pages a day. With a target of 40 million pages by 2021, this 10-year project is the biggest digitisation of newspapers to take place in the UK.

Report of MGC Meeting in September

Jo Brines

The Michigan Genealogical Council had their September meeting at the Grand Rapids Public Library. It was my first visit there and was very impressed by the size and the beauty of the building, which is a combination of very old and a fairly new renovation/addition. The genealogy area takes much of the 4th floor, and includes material also of historical records.

The speaker of the day was Jim Jackson, a MGC delegate for both Calhoun and Kalamazoo Valley societies. His topic was ‘Self Publishing or Revitalizing Society Publications.’ He has been involved with four/five such publications. He gave the advantages of this newly accepted way of publishing: print only as needed, no inventory, not much cost, instantly available on Amazon, B & N, Kindle. There are five companies who print online, and detailed about the one he prefers – Create Space. Several attendees have used this method and are satisfied.

Kris Rzepczynski from the Archives sent a report. New additions to Seeking Michigan web site – 1. Index to MI death records 1921-1952, with actual images 1921-1937 with 75 year restriction on access to MI death records. The Archives staff will make available another year, every January. The index may not be available now, but will be very soon. 2. Archives has reached an agreement

with Family Search to digitize and index all MI naturalization records. These will not be available until later.

President Tom Koselka mentioned that Detroit Public Health Department (birth and death records) is now closed. These records will now be at the Wayne County Public Health Dept.

Several attendees at the recent Federation of Genealogical Societies conference in Ft. Wayne gave comments, for the most part very good. FGS will be matching individual society donations to the War of 1812 Pension digitization project, up to \$50,000. This \$1 will become \$2 and then become \$4 because of the Ancestry.com match. Money not spent/needed from the MI Breakfast at the conference was given to the project and amounted to almost \$500.

Also mentioned: 1. There is a Dell Discount Program for members of societies belonging to FGS (we are a member). Visit <http://www.dell.com/mpp/FGS>. 2. FindMyPast.com offers FGS members a discount off FindMyPast subscriptions. 3. Our MGC past president, Cindy Grostick, was presented the FGS Award of Merit for her leadership/guidance of the Council during the time of great turmoil over the displacement of the genealogical collection from the Library of Michigan. (My note: she did wonderfully well in a very stressing situation.) A special MGC newsletter was prepared by the Council newsletter editor for “pick up” at the FGS meeting. It was very impressive and consisted of 28 pages and included info on almost 80 societies plus some libraries.

Coming Events

April 5, 2014 Indiana Genealogical Society Annual Conference. ACPL, Fort Wayne, Indiana. <http://www.indgensoc.org/conference.php>

Apr 26, 2014 Lansing Family History Seminar. Lansing family history center. 421 E. Saginaw, East Lansing, MI.

May 1-4, 2014 “Genealogy without Borders—Ontario Genealogical Society Conference”. This will take place at the Brock University in St. Catherine’s, Ontario (near Niagara Falls) .

July 18-19, 2014 Abrams Foundation Family History Seminar. Archives of Michigan. **Michael Leclerc**, Chief Genealogist, Mocado.com will be the featured speaker for the 2014 Abrams Foundation Family History Seminar at the Archives of Michigan.

August 1-2, 2014 Midwestern Roots Family History and Genealogy Conference. Indianapolis, Indiana. <http://www.indianahistory.org/our-services/family-history/midwesternroots>.

Oct 10-11, 2014 Got Ancestors? Western Michigan Genealogical Society. 60 years! Are We There Yet? With Dick Eastman.. <http://gotancestors.com/>

April 30-May 3, 2014 Annual OGS Conference. Sandusky, Ohio. <http://www.genex2014.org/>.

Looking Back in Midland County

Hon. Henry Hart

(Portraits and Biographical Sketches of Midland County Michigan, 1884)

Hon. Henry Hart, Judge of the 21st Judicial Circuit of Michigan, resident at Midland, was born May 13, 1840, in China, St. Clair, Mich. His line of descent is purely American, the ancestors of his parents having been born in the state of New York. His father, Silas S. Hart, was a native of Long Island, and was born July 20, 1804. His mother, Maria (Hart) Hart, was born July 27, 1807, in the western part of the Empire State. Her demise occurred in June, 1875. The death of the father took place in September, 1870.

Not long after the event of their marriage the parents of Judge Hart settled in St. Clair Co., Mich. The Peninsular State was then in its Territorial days, and they were among the pioneer element whose labors and efforts established the prosperity and rank of one of the best sections of Michigan. They located in primeval forest, built a humble home and devoted the strength of their lives to the progress and advancement of the place of their choice, and the community of which they were a part, which they lived to see in a condition that creditably rivaled the old-settled places in the East. They reared their family of five children in the pursuit of labor on the farm, which was alternated by attendance at the common schools.

At the age of 15 years Judge Hart went to Mt. Clemens and became a member of the household of R. P. Eldridge, attorney. He remained there about 20 months, engaged in alternate labor and study. He became respectably proficient in scholarship and engaged in

teaching a district school in the winter prior to his reaching the age of 18 years. He pursued that calling six winters, spending the remainder of the years in the pursuit of agriculture, save one summer when he attended school at St. Clair. He determined upon the profession of an attorney and returned to Mt. Clemens, where he read law under the direction of Mr. Eldridge, and in the fall of 1863 he matriculated in the Law Department of the University of Michigan, where he was graduated in the spring of 1865 with the degree of B.L.L. In July following he fixed his residence in Midland, where he entered upon his career as an attorney and in a brief time secured a substantial practice and a firm hold in the confidence of the community, to which he proved a valuable accession.

Judge Hart was married Feb. 4, 1869, to Maria Parsons. She was born April 17, 1844, in China, and is the daughter of William and Lavinia (Weeks) Parsons. Two children, Ray and Mary, constitute the issue of this marriage, the one born April 21, 1872, and the other Feb. 27, 1876, at Midland.

His public life commenced in the fall of 1866, when he was appointed Justice of the Peace to fill an unexpired term. In the fall of 1866 he was elected Prosecuting Attorney of Midland County, and in 1868 was re-elected to the same position. In the fall of 1870 he was elected Circuit-Court Commissioner, and two years later was his own successor by re-election. He was elected Representative from his district in the autumn of 1874 and discharged the duties of the position through the session of the winter of 1874-5. His personal service in the Legislature included the Chairmanship on the committee on Municipal Corporations, and he officiated as a member of the Committee on Enrollment and Engrossing of Bills.

In the spring of 1875 he resigned his post as Representative to render himself eligible to the position of Circuit Judge, which he has since held continuously. His circuit includes the counties of Midland, Isabella, Clare, Gladwin and Gratiot.

The character and career of Judge Hart afford a lesson of intense significance to the aspirants of the times. The traits by which he is characterized have won for him his unwavering popularity, and substantiated his position in public life from the outset. His course has been marked by no comet-like brilliancy or spasmodic prominence. He has kept the even temper of a man of inflexible principle, sound judgment and manly dignity. The two latter characteristics make him eminent on the Bench. His bearing is always compatible with the character of the position he occupies, and his perfect self-poise secures the utmost degree of harmony in the sessions over which he presides. The advocates who plead in his courts acknowledge the power and the influence of his unwavering demeanor; and his entire official record is marked by the traits which distinguish him. His deliberation amounts merely to dilatoriness, but the character of his decisions is evident from the favor they meet in the higher tribunals. He is an excellent jurist, an impartial judge and an admirable exponent of law. The rectitude of his private character, his dignified solicitude for the faithful discharge of the trusts confided to him, his manner and methods in the management of his judicial obligations and connections render him conspicuous. His official position sought him out at the threshold of his prime, and his character and acts have made his subsequent career one of credit to himself, and reflects honor upon his constituency.

Pioneer Record

Midland Genealogical Society
P.O. Box 2421
Midland, MI 48641-2421



MGS Officers

President	Faye Ebach	faeae@charter.net	835-7518
Secretary	Mary Eichhorn	jama9312@prodigy.net	835-7823
Program Chairs	Bob Snyder	rcsnyder2@earthlink.net	839-9644
	Linda Kennedy	tomlindak2@chartermi.net	225-1784
Membership Chair	Bev Keicher	bevjoank@netscape.net	631-9455
Treasurer	Fran Longsdorf	pstrlongsdorf@live.com	832-2838
MGC Delegates	Faye Ebach	faeae@charter.net	835-7518
	Jo Brines		832-8312
Historian	Nancy Humphrey	nanphrey@sbeglobal.net	631-5123
Hospitality Chairs	Linda Fisher	fisherl@tm.net	687-9131
	Thora Goodnight	tgoodnight@charter.net	832-0294
Web Master	Walt Bennett	wgbennett@gmail.com	631-5247
PR Editor	Walt Bennett	wgbennett@gmail.com	631-5247

Pioneer Record is published quarterly (Sep., Nov., Feb., & Apr.) by the Midland Genealogical Society. Queries are free to members and should be sent to: PIONEER RECORD, Midland Genealogical Society, P.O.Box 2421, Midland, MI 48641-2421. We welcome genealogical material which would be of interest to the general membership. Articles to be included in PR should be submitted to the above address by the 15th of August, October, January and March.

Information about Midland Genealogical Society

The MGS meets on the 3rd Wednesday of Sept., Oct., Nov., Jan., Feb., Mar., Apr. & May at 7:00 PM in the lounge of the Grace A. Dow Memorial Library, 1710 W. St. Andrews Dr., Midland, MI 48640. Visitors are always welcome. Watch the Midland Daily News or local Midland MCTV channel 5 for upcoming speakers, dates and times.

Membership dues are \$14.00 for single and \$17.50 for a couple and can be paid after July 1, but must be paid by Nov. 25, to continue receiving the Pioneer Record. Dues may be paid at any MGS meeting or may be sent to the Membership Chair, Midland Genealogical Society, P. O. Box 2421, Midland, MI 48641-2421.