

# PIONEER RECORD

MIDLAND GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Volume I, No. 3

November 1980

## THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It was marvelous to see forty people in attendance at both our September and October meetings. If you weren't with us...we missed you and we sincerely hope we see you on November 19th when Trudy Witt will share knowledge gained at the seminar in Salt Lake City, Utah this past August.

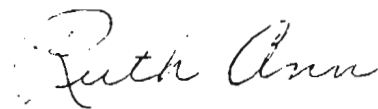
Looking back...in September, we related our summer finds and encouraged others starting out in their quest for family history.

In October, Mike Hayes, County Clerk of Midland, told us of the vital records available and mentioned naturalization and old chancery records that might be beneficial as well. Also speaking was Peter Schewe of Bliss Abstract Co. Given any time slot, an abstract company can tell one what happened to a particular piece of property. They have 492 books dating back to the 1860's with such records. Both of our speakers were most interesting and informative and during a short break, members were busy examining the sample of books Mike Hayes brought from the Courthouse, with good results for more than one!

Between these two meetings, we kept busy as well. With great results...all the known cemeteries in Midland County have been read! Now the checking of township, city and sexton records begins.

And looking ahead into next year... On January 21st., we have the opportunity to hear Mr. Kim Dammers, Director of the Museum of the Great Lakes at Bay City, Michigan. His topic..."Bay County History Highlighting the Lumbering Era."

See you in the library,



## MICHIGAN GENEALOGICAL COUNCIL

Attending our first meeting of the Michigan Genealogical Council in Lansing was a bit like coming into a movie in the second reel. It took us a while to figure out what was going on. By 10:15, though, Pat had a new Worden correspondent.

The Council has several on-going projects. We brought back cards so that members of our group can contribute to the giant surname index being assembled. MGC is also planning to index all of the names in the bicentennial collection of Michigan ancestors of 1876 and their direct line descendants.

A new project adopted at the meeting is a cooperative effort with the Genealogical Society of Utah aimed at filming church and cemetery records.

MGC also adopted a new constitution and by-laws at this meeting, calling for six meetings per year beginning in January (2nd. Thurs.)

Wilma Diesen  
Pat Worden  
Delegates, MGC

#### TRIPS & TRANSPORTATION

Have you been wanting to do some genealogy research at a distant library and wish you had someone to go with (also share your findings)? Here's your chance! The newly formed Trips & Transportation Committee (co-chaired by Ben & Jo Brines) is coordinating groups going to Saginaw, Detroit, Lansing, Ft. Wayne and Mt. Pleasant. If you would like to be a part of these groups and did not sign up at the September meeting, please call Jo or Ben, 832-8312, for more information.

#### WHERE ARE YOU GOING? WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?

We would like to introduce a new feature in our newsletter. Since many of us have researched in different parts of the country, it seems we may have gained information about ways and means of going about our search most effectively in a given place. The purpose of this column will be to share what we know and to ask for information when we plan a trip to a place new to us.

Within the past two years I have done research in parts of Connecticut, Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Ohio. In the next newsletter I will share one of those experiences. Please share your experience with us too; or, ask a question about research you would like to do...maybe someone else has been there.

Bari Birkhimer

#### RESEARCHERS

Midland Genealogical Society members who are willing to research in the Midland area, for a fee, are as follows:

Esme Gehoski, 4964 S. Carter, Auburn, 48611, 662-6322  
Bernice Freer, 3715 Cambridge, Midland, 48640, 835-4515  
Diana Butcher, 660 E. Olson, Rt.9, Midland, 48640, 835-4528  
Wanda Nelson, 1915 Lambros, Midland, 48640, 631-1930  
Harriette Miller, 4610 Jefferson, Midland, 48640, 835-4866  
Audrey Pomranky, 857 E. Olson, Midland, 48640, 835-5304  
Ed & Bari Birkhimer, 3213 Swede Rd., Midland, 48640, 631-5161  
Marilyn Watkins, 3716 Blarney Dr., Midland, 48640, 631-5337

"Twice happy is the man who has a hobby...he has two worlds to live in."

### CANADIAN RESEARCHERS

An index to the land records of Ontario, Canada, from 1783-1915, is on microfiche. Although Salt Lake does not have these records as yet, they are now available at the Archives in Toronto.

Also, 30% of Quebec Parish Records have been filmed. These are available through inter-library loan at the local L.D.S. (Mormon) Church. (Source: Bea Hodson, Librarian L.D.S. Church, Midland, Mi.)

### FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

Having trouble seeing public vital records? Ask to fill out a "freedom of information" form. While searching in the records of the town officials in Niagara County, N.Y., Mrs. Donna L. Benedict of Wayland, Mi., found "that when an official started to get 'up tight' about whether or not she was going to let me see the records, I merely asked them if I could fill out a 'freedom of information' form. It was amazing how fast they turned over the books for me. One official pretended to look for a form and then finally said, 'Well, I know I used to have some of those forms around here, but I'll let you look at the books anyway.'"

### NEW MEMBERS

No.

- 168 - WHITAKER, Cynthia, 1218 E.St.Andrews, Midland, 48640, 631-6567
- 169 - VOELKER, Clarence, 300 Sinclair, Midland, 48640, 835-5718
- 170 - VOELKER, Elaine, 300 Sinclair, Midland, 48640, 835-5718
- 171 - WATKINS, Marilyn, 3716 Blarney Dr., Midland, 48640, 631-5337
- 172 - NOLD, Helen, 673 Saturn, Midland, 48640, 496-3217

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Following is a portion of a letter recently received from Sherry Dammann Huntington of Lincoln Park, Mi. regarding a cemetery located in Larkin Township:

"There is a burial spot in Section 12 of Larkin Township. I have been told that there are possibly 16-18 graves. It has been referred to as the Hubbard Pioneer Cemetery. I have extensive knowledge of one grave and very limited information on two others. I am very willing to share all that I know.

"Buried in the 'lost' cemetery in Section 12 is: My Great-Grandfather, Wilhelm Gustav Johann Joachim Dammann; he was born on 25 August, 1858 in Cammin, Mecklenburg/Schwerin, Germany. He immigrated to the United States in 1881, settling in Zilwaukee, Saginaw County, Mi. Wilhelm Dammann married Carolina Johanna Dorothea Kruger on 18 November 1882 at St. John's Lutheran Church in Zilwaukee. They resided in Zilwaukee until 1892-1893, when they moved to the just beginning town of Hubbard, Midland County, Michigan. They were the parents of seven children. Wilhelm was a farmer and a carpenter; he built the Christ Lutheran Church in Hubbard. I have searched the books that contain the minutes of the Larkin Township Board Meetings (this was done at the home of the Larkin Township Clerk, Ruth Robel), and I have found many entries on my Great-Grandfather, Wilhelm (William) Dammann. He was a Tax Assessor, a Constable, a

a Path Master, and an Overseer of Highways in Larkin Township. He died on 29 August, 1908 in Larkin Township after accidentally drinking carbonic acid. Photography is one of my many interests and I took many pictures of the minutes. The pictures are so clear that you can actually read the minutes from my photographs! These books of Larkin Township Minutes are extremely interesting; they are over-flowing with historical and genealogical data!!! I felt very privileged to be allowed to examine them!

"Also in the cemetery is the grave of the first wife of Mr. Fred Behling and his mother's grave. I do not know their names or the dates of their birth or death."

#### QUERIES

#141 - Wanda Schad Nelson, 1915 Lambros, Midland, Mi. 48640 seeking genealogical data on Elizabeth SCHAD BECKER b. ca. 1850 in New York State, daughter of Jacob SCHAD & Elizabeth GOODING, m. in the Ubyly, Michigan area, lived in Saginaw, Michigan late 1800's with her husband. After his death, she moved to the Chicago area. Sons: George, Rudolph and there may be other children.

Please type or print your queries and proofread for clarity. This service is free and available to subscribers. Submit your queries to Mrs. Richard Erratt, 108 Hunters Ridge, Midland, Mi. 48640.

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The following material was gathered by Mrs. H. H. Dow and included in the book Stories of Men Who Travelled Through Midland Before 1835 by Harold W. Moll and Norman G. Moll, April 24, 1956. This book is in the Grace A. Dow Memorial Library, Genealogy section.

"The first white man to come into Midland County was sent here by the Government in 1831 to supervise the lands, but he was killed by the Indians. His name was Porter.

"John A. Whitman was the first white settler to arrive and stay in Midland County. He came in the fall of 1835 and built his house on Section 1, Ingersoll Township, which now is in Saginaw County. Our present Mayor is his grandson.

"Dr. Fitzhugh came here from New York State in 1835 and bought 600 or 700 acres of land for which he paid \$2.50 an acre, but he did not settle here. He went back to New York State, and about 1838 sent his son, Charles Fitzhugh. Mr. Fitzhugh owned a part of the old Ball farm, all the land down to the old water works back through where the old Baptist church used to stand, the point across the Titabawassee River, the Herbert Sias farm and the Dow property back through East and West Park Drive down through Midland Park. Mr. Fitzhugh gave what is now Fitzhugh Park to Midland County for a cemetery.

"In 1836 the Wymans came and settled on the Fitzhugh lands, now the Herbert Sias farm. They lived in a little log house. Mrs. Wyman planted the seeds for some of the fruit trees which are now in Mr. Sias' orchard. When the Wymans came here there was nothing but woods for miles, their nearest white neighbors being twelve miles away. In 1837 Mr. Wyman moved to Saginaw to educate their children. They returned to Midland County in 1851 and settled on the

farm now occupied by Ray Farnham. Their son, John Wyman, lived on the Chippewa river farm as long as he lived. Their daughter Julia was the first white child born in Midland County.

"Charles Cronkright moved to Midland County in 1857 and located on the Chippewa River. They afterwards moved to Saginaw, but now live in Homer Township.

"Charles Rodd, a half-breed, came here about this time and established a store and trading post with the Indians. The store was on the Ball farm, across from the Dow Chemical office. Mr. Rodd's daughter married one of the Wyman brothers.

"In 1843 Joseph Townsend settled near the forks, now Midland City. When the first school was built, the Townsend children were about the first to attend school. Most of the other scholars were Indians. Mr. Townsend died in 1849, the first white man to die in Midland County. Iantha, wife of Albert Sidelinker, now living, is the granddaughter of Joseph Townsend.

"The first schoolhouse in the County was built in 1850 and Henry C. Ashman, a half-breed, was the first teacher. It was built of logs in true pioneer style and stood on the Herbert Sias farm.

"Solon Rumrill came in the early 40's and cleared a little piece of land and built a small house on the site of the Community Center. Mr. Rumrill was the first Register of Deeds and the first Postmaster of Midland. He was the first white male child born in the Saginaw Valley. Mrs. Alfred Price is his daughter.

"William Vance, now the oldest living permanent settler, came to Midland in 1849. When Mr. Vance came, there was only twenty-seven people, men, women, and children. He and John McLane, who came in 1851, cleared the land for Midland City in 1852.

"In 1859 Charles Blodgett came. He located on the banks of the Tittabawassee River where Bailey bridge spans the river. Mrs. Ed. Lyon is the daughter of Mr. Blodgett. He cleared the forest until he had forty acres of land. When they came here the only settler within the present City limits was a half-breed, Charles Rodd, mentioned above. Mrs. Lyon remembers Midland as The Forks. Her father taught the Currier school at the Bluffs, one of the first schools. Mr. Blodgett lumbered extensively.

"The first Indian school was the Indian Mission on the Indian Reserve across from the chemical plant, known as the Ball farm.

"In 1852 John Larkin and family moved to the Bluffs, which is now Midland City. They stayed six weeks and then moved here. Mr. Larkin cleared a piece of land and built a log house where the Dow Chemical Works now stands. This was the first structure built here. The family lived in this house for three years, in true pioneer style, entertaining the lumbermen and sharing all they had with all. Then he bought sixty acres from the American Fur Company and later built the residence we remember, which stood where the Baker and O'Brien Blocks now stand. In 1858, he built a little steamboat, called the City of Midland, to run between here and Saginaw, but this boat became so warped that the river was not deep enough for it. He then bought the Belle Seymour, the first boat to run between Midland and Saginaw."

MEMBERSHIP/SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION:

The Midland Genealogical Society meets the third Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the Grace A. Dow Memorial Library Lounge unless otherwise announced.

Dues are \$5.00/year or \$8.00/family. Members will receive the Midland Genealogical Society's newsletter, PIONEER RECORD, at no additional cost. Non-members may subscribe to the newsletter at a cost of \$3.50/year or \$1.00/copy. The newsletter will be printed quarterly, September, November, February and April.

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Membership Application

Midland Genealogical Society  
1201 Glendale  
Midland, Mi. 48640

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Paid: \_\_\_\_\_ \$5.00 \_\_\_\_\_ \$8.00

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Midland Genealogical Society  
1201 Glendale  
Midland, Mi. 48640



*Marilyn Watkins*  
*3716 Blarney Dr.*  
*Midland, Mi. 48640*