



PIONEER RECORD

Newsletter for the Midland Genealogical Society

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Midland Genealogical Society Programs for 2009 - 2010

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

Programs for the meetings are as follows.

September 16, 2009 meeting 7:00 Library Lounge

Library of Michigan. Discussion on summer research if time permits.

October 21, 2009 meeting 7:00 Library Lounge

Publishing your genealogy via the internet by Fran Hartnagle.

November 18, 2009 meeting 7:00 Library Lounge

TBA

What Really Happened to the 1890 Census?

By Gloria Kunding

Many genealogists lament the loss of the 1890 census that was destroyed by a fire in 1921. Like a locked windowless room, the lost information that could have shed light on our ancestors lives remains in darkness. Where were they living then? What about the child who died at an early age? Where did their oldest child live before getting married? What was that child's occupation? These questions and many others could have been answered if those census records had survived. Was there a conspiracy? What **really** happened to the 1890 census? This is the most important question of all.

Except for the addition of several new ones, the eleventh census of the United States asked the same questions as the one in 1880. It included a greater number of subjects than any previous census or any following it. The amount of industrialization, migration to the west, immigration, and different population characteristics were things revealed by it. On farms and homes, there were questions about ownership and amount of debt. For military service, the names of Union soldiers and sailors were recorded and the length of service along with their residence and names of the widows of those deceased. Questions of race included new categories of Negro, Chinese, Japanese, Indian, white, mulatto, quadroon, and octoroon. Also it asked whether an individual spoke English.

The Department of Interior was in charge of the census at this time. Formation of a national Census Bureau

didn't occur until 1902. The official census date was June 1, 1890; but it actually began on June 2, 1890, because the first was a Sunday. There were over 175 supervisors employed and subdivisions of 4,000 inhabitants or less were assigned to each of 47,000 enumerators. These individuals were appointed without taking an exam. Special agents enumerated Indians, manufacturers, mines, transportation, fisheries, churches, insurance, education, taxation, debt and wealth.

In cities of 10,000 or less, the census was to be completed in two weeks. The census taking was mostly finished by July 1, 1890. A change in the population schedule designated a separate sheet for each family. Detailed maps listing every street or road were given to enumerators for the first time during this census. The maps would help them stay within their subdivision's boundaries. The original schedules were sent to Washington D.C., and the local county clerks were not required to keep copies at their offices like they did for all previous censuses.

Data processing of the 1890 census was done on the state-of-the-art electric tabulation system invented by Herman Hollerith, a former Census Office employee. Census sheet information was

(Continued on page 4)

The Presidents Letter

Laressa Northrup is again our program director. You can expect a year of significant and interesting programs. As always, your input of leads to programs will help to get programs that are useful in your research. For my current work I could use help with Polish and Russian Empire records and translations.

I had fun this summer helping with Posen province genealogy (German controlled 1772 to 1920) Today's Polish Poznan is a province in West-central Poland. Albert Pruss (also Prus and Preuss) has ancestors just over the boundary from my wife's Balcirak family and two counties (Kreis) from my Linde family. Within the last decade the LDS micro-filming project has been active in this part of Poland copying church records including Pruss's ancestors. Al's wife found a web site for the "Poznan Project". Volunteers have entered over 400,000 marriage entries from records (1835-1884) from Churches in Posen-Poznan. In the town of Lekno she found the 1879 marriage of Anton Preuss to Mary Jablonska.. It was put on line in 2008.

In your dues request envelope was a request to help reverse some unfortunate plans underway in Lansing. Our governor has decided to move the library materials out of the current Library of Michigan building and use the building for an innovation department and other uses. I understand the plans are to store the Michigan related genealogical materials and disperse the out of state materials. Several of our members took part in the hands about the library demonstration to publicize our support retaining the genealogy collection intact and accessible. There will be an update at the September meeting.

Kate and I are now on a trip out West for the birth of a grandson in Arizona. Dawson was born August 14. The birth of grandson, Everett, in June was the reason for a trip to Oregon. In July our younger son was married in Minnesota. An expanding family always leads to more genealogy research.

MGS President, Bob Mass

From The Editor...

Welcome to the 30th year of the Pioneer Record. I am happy to have been a part of this publication and will continue to provide content that interests you.

This year, I am also taking on the duties of webmaster for the society. I have experience at this so it is not a big chore. I am open to suggestions on improvements to our society's web pages.

I am looking for more articles on some of Midland County pioneers. If you have an article to contribute, please email me at the address on the newsletter.

Last year, I reported that one of our members, Nancy Lackie had cancer and was being treated. She was reported to be in remission for a short while, but the cancer

has returned and she is currently going through an aggressive treatment plan. Please keep her in your thoughts and prayers.

Programs for this year are not yet finalized. If you have a program you would like to do, please contact Laressa Northrup. I will update the website, when I receive more information from her.

I am trying to increase the number of members receiving the newsletter electronically. This lowers are production and postage costs. It will also provide you with a color copy.

*Walt Bennett
Editor*

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

On August 7, 2009 the dues renewal letter was sent out to our members. We ask to have the dues by September 7.

Please remember to contribute to the NARA jar which funds the efforts of the National Archives to microfilm more records for genealogists and historians. The jar will be passed around at the monthly meetings.

I will have the Midland Genealogical Society pins with me at the meeting, they are \$5.00 each and I encourage each member to purchase one.

I am looking forward to seeing everyone September 16th the meeting will be "sharing of summer genealogical experiences" and discussing the Library of Michigan.



Hot on the trail.

MEMBERSHIP DUES 2009-2010

The collection of MGS membership dues for 2009-2010 will conclude at the September 16th MGS meeting. If your dues are not paid by the end of September, this may be the last Pioneer Record you will receive. Dues may be paid by mail to : Midland Genealogical Society, Linda Fisher, 3772 N M-30, Sanford, MI 48657. Dues for an individual are \$14.00; for a family they are \$17.50.

3 Words to the Wise

No doubt you are aware of the recent demise of a growing number of newspapers. A source that we take for granted may not be available to our descendants, future records of our family history. This means we will have to provide more evidence to help them continue their search.

Practice these three Cs.

1. Compile your memories— Journals, diaries, and memoirs are forms that will be able to be read. Tape your voice but understand that your descendants may not be able to hear it due to the rapid development of media. Have the genealogical work that you have done documented and

in the form that will be decipherable. (Well, do your best.)

2. Collect your evidence—Photos (with identification), legal documents, receipts, obituaries, school records, awards, club membership cards, newspaper articles, art you have created, anything that shows how you lived your life.
3. Communicate to someone who is likely to survive you where the above materials can be found.

Make this your legacy, it will be treasured.

Sally Matyshak, Co-editor of Gems of Genealogy from the Bay Area Genealogical Society, Green Bay, Wisconsin.

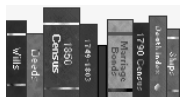
Downriver Genealogical Society

The Downriver Genealogical Society Library has moved to a new location, The Library is in the Taylor Community Library at 12303 Pardee Road, Taylor, Michigan.

They also have a new email address, downrivergensoc@hotmail.com, to be used for inquiries.

The society includes these areas: Allen Park, Brownstone, Ecorse, Flat Rock, Gibraltar, Grosse Ile, Lincoln Park, Melvindale, River Rouge, Riverview, Rockwood, Southgate, Taylor, Woodhaven and Wyandotte.

The library officially opened on August 12, 2009. Their hours are: Tue., Wed. and Thurs. from 1:00—5:00 pm. Staff members are in the library to assist you.



BOOKS FOR SALE

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.)

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".

transferred to a card that was hole-punched in different areas for answers to the questions. Afterwards the cards were run through a tabulating machine that had metal pins which went through a hole in the card to complete a circuit. This counted the answers to different questions. Using hand calculations and primitive counting machines, employees processing data from the 1880 census took almost ten years.

After generating complaints of inaccuracy, a population count of about 63 million was reported by the Census Office. Accusations of intrigue and fraud were plentiful, and a recount was demanded. Because of a rivalry between industries in St. Paul and Minneapolis, businessmen were accused of bolstering the census with over 1,100 false names. The Minneapolis businessmen were hit with nineteen indictments in federal court.

New York State officials were also accused of name adding. A new census was taken in New York City between September 19, and October 14, of 1890 because New York City officials felt the 1890 census undercounted the city's population. The enumeration was done by New York City policemen and yielded 13% more inhabitants than the June census. Name, street, address, age, and sex, policeman/enumerator, and police precinct were questions asked on this census. (The LDS library has this census' lists on microfilm.)

A fire in March of 1896 badly burned the 1890 special schedules of crime, death, pauperism, deaf, dumb, insane, blind, and parts of the insurance and transportation schedules. The Department of

Interior ordered that the damaged portions be destroyed before all of the final data from them could be published. The general population schedules survived and were stored in an unlocked file room on pine shelving in the Commerce Building's basement. Continuous requests to congress by the Secretary of Commerce and others for an archives building went unheeded.

On January 10, 1921, smoke was found coming into the file room from the boiler room about 5:00 p.m. The fire department was notified and the building evacuated when the smoke in the basement became dense. It hampered access to the basement by the fire fighters. They literally flooded the basement with water after holes were cut in the fireproof concrete floor above, which had prevented the fire from reaching the rest of the building. The fire was out by 9:45 p.m., but water was still poured into the basement until 10:30 p.m. Windows in the upper portion of the building were opened to air out the smoke. With the exception of the watchmen, everyone left for the night. No efforts to rescue any of the records stored in the basement were attempted.

In the morning, employees discovered that some of the earlier and later census records stored in a basement water-tight and fire-proof vault had some damage from water seepage through a broken wire-glass door window and beneath the floor. However, the 1890 census was not stored in the vault and sustained heavy damage. About 25% of the schedules were burned completely, and 50% of what was left was damaged by smoke, fire, and water.

The Census Bureau estimated that a month would be required to save even a small portion and more than two or three years to copy all of the fire-damaged records. About 10% of the 1910 census schedules were water-damaged. These were to be dried and copied. The 1790-1820 and the

1850-1870 census records were stored on the fifth floor and were not damaged. The 1920 census was housed temporarily in another building.

No one knows how the fire started. Many theories and rumors sprang up as to what happened. Claims of a careless cigarette or lighted match by an employee caused the fire. Shavings from a carpenter shop or spontaneous combustion were others. An accusation of conspiracy to cheat families out of estate claims by destroying proof of heirship was also made. After an extensive investigation was concluded, the cause of the fire could not be determined.

The fire brought forth a renewed effort by census officials and congressmen to establish a National Archives for the safe storage of records. A bill was sponsored that banned smoking from some government buildings. Others feared for the Declaration of Independence stored in an unsafe similar manner at the State Department.

By the beginning of February 1921, the damaged 1890 census records were temporarily stored elsewhere. Rumors circulated that destruction of the records by congress was imminent without any attempt to salvage them. Historians, national genealogical organizations, and others wrote to Herbert Hoover, who was the new Secretary of Commerce, and to the Librarian of Congress as well as other government officials to halt this destruction. A national movement by state and local genealogical groups was threatened if congress tried to destroy the census records. Herbert Hoover suggested that it would cost less to build a fire-proof archive building than to pay extra watchmen to guard the national records. However, nothing happened in congress in either arena. In May of 1921, the census records

were transferred from the warehouse back to the census building.

No more was heard of the census records between 1922 and 1932. At the end of 1932, the Librarian of Congress received a list of unnecessary business papers scheduled for destruction from the Chief Clerk of the Census Bureau. One of the entries on the list was for “Schedules of Population 1890, Original.” The Librarian of Congress did not designate anything on this list as “permanent and of historical value.” The list was sent to Congress who approved the destruction on February 21, 1933. On the previous day, the cornerstone for the National Archives Building was laid by President Herbert Hoover.

When the records were actually destroyed is unclear. Census Bureau files note the destruction by the Department of Commerce in 1934 apparently without the approval of the Geographer. Other records report the destruction in 1935. In 1942 and in 1953, fragments of the 1890 census were discovered at the Census Bureau and sent to the National Archives. They are from Illinois, Alabama, Georgia, New Jersey, Minnesota, North Carolina, New York, South Dakota, Ohio Texas, and Washington D.C. The National Archives has these records on several rolls of microfilm along with many rolls of microfilm of the special schedules that listed the Civil War veterans. The names in these population records total 6,160 out of an original 63 million.

At the Census bureau, who deemed the 1890 census records useless? Why didn't the Librarian of Congress or someone on the staff question their listing for destruction? They simply fell through the cracks of government bureaucracy. Why was there silence by historians, genealogical groups, and others? There must have been no publicity on their impending destruction. It is like the records were “shuffled off to Buffalo” under the table. Was this done on purpose?

In all probability, these waterlogged and fire-damaged records were moldy and in a badly deteriorated state by then. Maybe they were a health hazard to keep. It is too bad that the schedules were not sent back to their respective county clerks shortly after the fire. At the local level, historians and genealogical groups could have generated enough interest in having volunteers each copy a page or more if the government didn't have money to pay for copying. The locals would have been familiar with the names in the area enough to decipher them—even if they were difficult to read after being waterlogged. Other records that were totally destroyed in the fire could have been reconstructed by volunteers using plat maps and city directories—possibly even interviewing families still living in the area who were there in 1890. Definitely a big job but “doable” as small pieces with enough interest and help.

Since our State of Michigan Library's collection is now under a similar threat of “destruction-by-scattering,” we as historians and genealogists will have to keep tabs on what is happening to those records. We do not want them to “disappear” in five or ten years after the hubbub has died down like the 1890 census. History must not be allowed to repeat itself.

1890 Census form appear on page 7

Sources

Beine, Joe. “1890 New York City Police Census.” Ancestry.Com. 2004

<http://www.genealogybranches.com/1890nycensus.html>.

The National Archives. “First in the Path of the Firemen (The Fate of the 1890 Population Census)” Prologue. Spring 1996. <http://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/1996/spring/1890-census.html>.

U.S. Census Bureau. “History: 1890.” April 20, 2009

http://www.census.gov/history/www/through_the_decades/1890/census.html.

The 1890 census collected the following information^[2]:

- address
- number of families in house
- number of persons in house
- names
- whether a soldier, sailor or marine (Union or Confederate) during Civil War, or widow of such person
- relationship to head of family
- race, described as white, black, mulatto, quadroon, octoroon, Chinese, Japanese, or Indian
- sex
- age
- marital status
- married within the year
- mother of how many children, and number now living
- place of birth of person, and their father and mother
- if foreign born, number of years in US
- whether naturalized
- whether papers have been taken out
- profession, trade or occupation
- months unemployed during census year
- ability to read and write
- ability to speak English, and, if unable, language or dialect spoken
- whether suffering from acute or chronic disease, with name of disease and length of time afflicted
- whether defective in mind, sight, hearing or speech, or whether crippled, maimed or deformed, with name of defect
- whether a prisoner, convict, homeless child, or pauper
- home rented, or owned by head or member of family, and, if owned, whether free from mortgage

The Search For A Face

Last winter in February, in the midst of the harsh winter, the volunteers at the Library received a request-for-help letter forwarded to us from the Isabella GS. was the lucky person to open the mail that day and found the following letter.

I instantly thought, "OH, how do I answer this?" With some suggestions from friend/genealogist Betty Bellous, we set up a plan. First, consult all the resources in our library obit index book, cemetery records book, census, city directories, phone books) and see where this information would lead us.

The first thing Betty did was communicate with Mr. Mondani via e-mail, saying that I would respond within a few weeks. I found in the obit book a reference to the death of Edward Capyak, killed in action. The actual article was in the MDN on May 10, 1945, pages 1 and 2. It was a very brief announcement and contained a photo of him in uniform. It did not photocopy very well, so I knew we had to keep on searching for a photo. The article did mention his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Steve Capyak. Our cemetery records book indicated he was buried (or at least there is a stone) in Old Calvery Catholic cemetery on Eastman Road with his parents, Steve and Anna who died in 1974 and 1971, respectively. I then looked at the obits for these two people. Very sadly, neither of them even mentioned (after 25 or 30 years) the death of their son, Edward, in the service of their adopted country. The father's obit revealed the address of 3827 N. Perrine Road. Then I consulted the current phone book and found a William J. and a T. Capyak living at two residences with addresses very close to the first address. "WOW" I thought, "one of these must be a relative". Would William J. be a-nephew, a brother??

Out of curiosity, I consulted the 1930 census. The family was there in Larkin township, with three or four daughters, and Edward age 9, but no William, so I assumed him to be less than 80 years old.

Betty, her sister Marion Berry, and I had a consultation about what manner would we approach Mr. Capyak. Two votes for a hand written letter of introduction and one vote for a cold telephone call. In this day and age of scams, and especially because of the sensitivity of this request, my choice was the letter followed by a phone call. I certainly did not want to cause any pain to anyone. In my letter I enclosed a copy of Mr. Mondani's original letter telling why he wanted the information and hopefully, a photo of Edward. I said I would follow up in a few days with a phone call if I did not hear from him (William J.)

I mailed my letter on Monday, February 23, and tried to wait patiently. By Saturday I had not heard a word. so I called on the phone. An elderly voice answered, I identified myself, and asked if he had received my letter re Edward Capyak. I asked if he might be a relative; he answered "yes, Edward was my older brother". Judging from the 1930 census, William J. was just a young teen when his brother went to war and was 'killed.' As far as I can ascertain, they were the only boys in the family. We talked a few minutes and restated my request for a photo. He said there might be one in a box in the basement; he would try to find one. I begged a little, but didn't want to be too insistent because after all, he was the one doing a favor.

The next week passed, without hearing anything. Betty and I discussed what, if anything, would be the next approach. Then in Friday's mail came an envelope from the T. Capyak, who was William's daughter. It contained a photo of Edward in battle garb, but it was very small in size. The father and daughter had gone to the basement to search together. As it happened, Betty had just stopped by, and we were both excited to see the photo.

I quickly mailed a letter to Mr. Mondani with the photo and copies of all the info we had found in the newspaper. I thanked him for his interest in preserving the brutal history of WW II, even though he had not been born yet. I later found out that his interest had been sparked and kept alive because his father had actually witnessed the events surrounding the battles of April 1945 in Italy. I also thanked by letter both Mr. Capyak and his daughter for their cooperation in sending the photo.

About a week later I received another envelope from the daughter, and this time the

photo was a wonderful one of just Edward's face, again in uniform. Even though it was a black and white photo, I could almost see his clear blue eyes. My emotion at this point was that he almost could have been my own brother.

So, once again, an envelope was sent to Mr. Mondani, and I sent Mr. Capyak's address in case he wanted to respond and thank him personally.

Later in March I received by mail a note from Mr. Mondani (copy enclosed). He also enclosed an 8 page article written by a newly found American friend who was in the same battle as Edward Capyak. These two men had met for the first time in 2003 when the American was on a holiday in Italy and visited Mr., Mondani.

Both Betty and I have felt a great sense of accomplishment in being a small part of Mr. Mondani's project in trying to locate relatives of these American soldiers killed in this little town in Italy 65 years ago. It is a great tribute to Mr. Mondani to want to tell the story to his Italian students. I feel like we found a new foreign friend. Who knows -if we ever traveled to Italy in the region around the Secchia, Panaro, and the Po Rivers, we might visit Carlo Mondani.

As an addendum to what Betty and I did, Marion Berry also contributed. She contacted Smith-Miner funeral home to see if they had any record of a burial for Edward Capyak, because of a headstone in the cemetery. The only info they could find was that a casket arrived in December 1945 bearing his name. They had no record of a funeral or memorial service. There was no mention of same in the newspaper around that time.

I hope you readers can feel from my words the impact this short-lived project has had on my life. I was only the connector person between two families separated by an ocean, who will probably never meet, but who have shown their love and respect to each other because of terrible circumstances 65 years ago.

Jo Brines

(Continued from page 6)

Dear Mrs. Hoff-Grambau,

I found your email address on MiGen-Web website. I am 47 and I am interested in military history. I live in Bomporto, a small town located in the province of Modena, North Italy.

On 22/23 April 1945, Modena was liberated by 1st Armored Division, US Fifth Army. During the street fighting, some M4 Sherman tank were hit and burned by German bazooka fire. Among the American fallen soldiers was Tec4 Edward S. Capyak of Midland County, Michigan, KIA on 23 April 1945.

I want to give a name and a face to those fallen soldiers. For this reason I ask you if in the Obit of Tec4 Capyak there is a photo or good indications to

come into contact with relatives.

My intention is to publish info and photo through computer slide projections in the schools ("scuole medie", children 11 to 14 years old). On the local history book, only the names and photos of the partisans and civilians appear, the names and photos of the fallen American soldiers remain unknown.

My gratitude to American soldiers: many of them lost their lives for the liberation of my country and the return of the democracy.

Thanks in advance for your time and effort.
Carlo Mondani

21 March 2009

Dear Mrs. Brines,

Words are inadequate to express my thanks and sincere appreciation for the picture and

newspaper article about Tec4 Edward S. Capyak you sent me. Thank you from the depth of my heart. Also thanks to Mrs. Betty Bellous and to the Capyak's brother.

I agree with your condemnation of the war and I hope, like you, that the world can exist without wars.

Here enclosed there is an article written by John Imbrie of Boston, Ma., a friend of mine. He was with 10th Mountain Division during WWII and on 21 April 1945 he was wounded in my town, Bomporto located 14 km NE of Modena, by a German grenade fragment. On 23 May 2003 we met in Bomporto.

Thanks again
Sincerely
Carlo Mondani

Genealogy Room Statistics

July 2008—June 2009

Each year, we report to the library board statistics that show how many visitors we have in the Genealogy room. These statistics from the sign-in sheet located on the desk in the Genealogy room. It is important that you sign this when visiting the room as it substantiates our activities and contributions to the room.

This past year (July-June) we have provided 634 volunteer hours. This may be reduced due to several illnesses. The volunteers take a count of persons in the room at 2 pm and again at 4 pm. The total for this is 890. The sign-in sheet count totaled 1400 persons. This includes visitors from 9 cities in the Tri-City area. Other Michigan visitors are listed as coming from Alma, Ann Arbor, Birch Run, Benton Harbor, Breckenridge, Cass City, Dearborn, Fenton, Grand Rapids, Highland, Iron River, Kawkawlin, Lansing, Linwood, Mt. Pleasant, Munising, Oak Park, Plymouth, Rhodes, Shepherd, Spring Lake, Troy, Weidman, White Lake.

Visitors from other States include: Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Washington, Wisconsin.

Citizenship Records

Some of the best records to use for tracking your immigrant ancestors are citizenship records.

When an immigrant came to the United States, they were required to complete a series of papers if they wanted to become a citizen. The citizenship process was completed in two steps. First, individuals completed a declaration paper, which stated that the immigrant intended to become a citizen of the United States. After usual waiting five years, individuals completed the second step and filled out a naturalization or petition paper, which was the final step to becoming a citizen. These papers can contain helpful genealogy information such as: birthplace and birth date of the immigrant, date and port of entry in the United States, the name of the ship in which the immigrant traveled, their physical description, or even the names of the immigrant's wife and children. Some papers contain very little information while more recent papers may contain a lot of information.

These records are referred to by a lot of different names: declarations, intentions, citizenship records, naturalizations, petitions, and immigrant papers. They all refer to the same set of records.

When researching an immigrant, it is wise to first check for the name in the naturalization indexes. If the individual was naturalized, their declaration of intention document is usually attached to the Naturalization Certificate. There were many

immigrants who declared but never filed for final citizenship, so ALWAYS check the Declaration of Intention indexes if the individual did not appear in the naturalization indexes.

There is a webpage with links to many online searchable Naturalization records at:

<http://home.att.net/~wee-monster/naturalization.html>.

Michigan used to have all immigration records at the county level. They have all since been transferred to the state archives. In other states, these may be held locally.

Another document is a Naturalization Deposition. This is statements made by witnesses to support an immigrant. This document can provide a character reference for the person.

Minor children could derive their citizenship from their father when they father naturalized.

From 1855 to 1922, women became citizens automatically if they married an American citizen. After Sept 22, 1922, a woman who married a citizen could skip the declaration of intention and file for a US Citizenship petition. If they married a non-citizen, they had to start with the declaration of intention.

The declaration of intention requirement ended in 1952. Currently it is optional.

Coming Events

Sept 19, 2009 "2009 Family History Month Seminar" Library of Michigan, Lansing, 9 am—4:15. Topics include:

- Introduction to the Library of Michigan
 - Newspapers, A Valuable Research Tool
 - Township Records
 - Mich List Website
 - Lies, Sex, Illiteracy, and Money - Why You're Not Finding Them in the Records
 - The Joys of Genealogy
 - Using Court House Records
 - St. Albans Records
 - Genealogy at the Archives of Michigan
 - Genealogical Resources at the Grand Rapids Public Library
 - World War I & II Records
 - American / Michigan Indian Records
 - Documenting Your Sources
 - Using Ancestry.com
- Michigan Military Records

<http://mimgc.org/pdf/2009MGCseminar.pdf>

Sept 26, 2009 "4th Annual Family History Festival" Burton Historical Collection, Detroit Public Library.

This free all-day event has something For every genealogist.

Lorretto Dennis Szucs, Vice President of Community Relations for The Generations Network, will be the keynote speaker discussing "What's New in Genealogy."

Concurrent sessions will feature local experts and such nationally recognized genealogists as **Dr. Deborah Abbott** (an expert in African American genealogy) and **Christine Rose** (noted researcher, author, and lecturer).

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Registration begins at 9:30 a.m. and a reception from 4:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. concludes the festival. You may bring a lunch or order one from us in advance.

Further details will be posted on the Detroit Public Library website as they become available.

Oct 2-4, 2009 "State History Conference" Mackinaw Island, Michigan. By the Historical Society of Michigan. <http://hsmichigan.org/meetings.php>

Oct 10, 2009 "Bloomfield Hills Family History Genealogical Seminar" to be held at Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day - Saints, 425 Woodward Avenue, Bloomfield Hills, MI. (north of Big Beaver, south of Lone Pine) A day-long program, beginning at 9:00 a.m. with hourly classes with the last class at 4:00 p.m. There will be several parallel sessions offering a wide variety of historical and genealogical information. We will be offering a selection of over 70 lectures. <http://mimgc.org/pdf/2009BloomfieldHillsFHC.pdf>

Oct 17, 2009 "2009 Annual Polish Research Seminar" Polish Genealogical Society. Troy, Michigan. Open to the public. 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. The featured speaker is **Stephen Barthel** and a Polish lunch is included. Registration is required, for details visit <http://pgsm.org/>.

Nov. 6-7, 2009 "Got Ancestors?" Western Michigan Genealogical Society. Grand Rapids, Michigan. Open to the public. Registration is required. Mark your Calendar. You'll not want to miss this! The featured speakers are "**The Genealogy Guys**" - **George G Morgan** and **Drew Smith**. This is an all day seminar with 2 tracks. <http://gotancestors.com/>

MICHIGAN GENEALOGICAL COUNCIL REPORT

by **Faye Ebach**, MGS delegate

This has really been a busy, busy summer for society members and for the MGC. On July 13, the day prior to our scheduled July 14 council delegate meeting in Lansing, Governor Granholm issued an executive order dissolving the Department of History, Arts and Libraries effective in 60 days. In addition, as many of you know, this order transferred the Library of Michigan to the Department of Education with directions to evaluate and implement cost saving measures. Library services, collections, documents, etc will no longer be available for circulation and many, if not all will be transferred to other locations. The non-Michigan Genealogy collection will be eliminated or transferred.

During the July 14 Council meeting, officers for the 2009-2010 year were installed. Newly installed President is Cynthia Gros-tick. Under her direction, Council delegates discussed several plans to deal with the changes affecting the Library of Michigan. One proposal, which actually came to fruition, was the "Hands Around the Library" rally that was held in front of the Capitol Building on the morning of August 5. Over 500 persons attended that rally, with 9 members from our MGS in attendance.

Following the rally, the MGC and many of our society members have been contacting our legislators regarding overruling the governor's order. The MGC has placed all the current information regarding legislative action on their web site: <http://www.mimgc.org>. On Thursday September 10, the Library Association of Michigan is hosting a rally at the Capitol Building in Lansing at 10:00 AM in support of actions in the legislature to overrule the governor's order. Hopefully we will have good news to report at our September 16 MGS meeting in the Grace A. Dow Library Lounge at 7:00 PM.

Reminder: the MGC sponsored Family History Month Seminar is scheduled for Saturday, September 19 from 9:00 am to 4:15 PM at the Library of Michigan. Registration is available on the council website: <http://www.mimgc.org>

Looking Back in Midland County

Taken From *The Midland Sun* October 28, 1898 p. 1

(One of the candidates on the ballot
for the 1898 election)

Ira Fales

Union Silver Candidate for Prosecuting
Attorney

Mr. Fales was born at Warsaw, Jefferson county, Pa., September 5, 1851. He began the struggle of life by learning the shoemaker's trade, having worked for Samuel Warner and J. S. Allen of this place. He came to Midland first in 1869, remaining over a year, and for four years up to September, 1874; worked in various states of the union at his trade. Most of his education was received in our schools, being one of Prof. M. E. Belcher's students. After leaving school he accepted a situation with E. W. Davis in a grocery store, a short time later beginning the study of law with D. W. Hitchcock, remaining with him until admitted to the bar in 1880. Was agent of the American express company over three years, resigning that position to form a partnership with W. D. Gordon, which continued seven years. The first office ever held by Mr. Fales was that of township clerk of Midland township, and was a great aid to him in meeting the expenses of board, etc. while studying. He has often been heard to express a grateful feeling toward the people of Midland township for the assistance and expression of confidence in electing him to this office at a time when he was having such a hard struggle. In 1884 he was elected supervisor of Midland township, and now holds the office of city attorney, serving his fourth year in that capacity; also holds the office of justice of the peace, having been elected for the full term of four years. As city attorney and supervisor Mr. Fales has been a champion of the people and opposed to betrayal of official trust, and has done much towards correcting evils and waste in city and county legislation. Mr. Fales is no bigot in his political, religious, or social views, according to his opponents the same honesty of purpose that he expects from them. Believing thus, he cannot but deal honestly with all classes in the transaction of the business of the office of prosecutor, and his past action is a strong indication of what he will continue to do towards keeping down the expenses of the office. His early schooling and professional life are a guarantee that Ira Fales would be the man who would protect the people's rights and also their pocketbooks from injustice in any form.

Taken from *The Midland Sun* January 8, 1897 p. 8

Stearns

Miss Mary Gotham spent vacation with her parents.

Mr. and Mrs. J. Voorhees are paying friends here a holiday visit.

Messrs. Murbeck and Hitsman of Lee spent Tuesday with friends here.

Mrs. F. T. Gibbs spent Christmas with her sister, Mrs. Coleman of Alma.

Mrs. Mahanay is in very poor health. She went to Midland recently for treatment.

Mr. and Mrs. L. Whitney have moved into the new house on W. D. Conrad's place.

L. Whitney has exchanged his trotter "Gray Doll" for a draft horse of the Clyde(s)dale stock.

Mrs. Gotham has returned from Alma where she has been taking medical treatment, considerably improved in health.

Mr. and Mrs. W. D. Conrad and Mr. and Mrs. Pernell spent a very happy New Year day as the guests of Mr. and Mrs. F. T. Gibbs.

Our school re-opened Monday after a four weeks vacation, Miss Edith Bacon our former teacher resuming her position as teacher.

Taken from *The Midland Sun* November 18, 1898

LaPorte

Born, to Mr. and Mrs. Charles Clason, a son.

Mr. and Mrs. George Wickham have started for Minnesota.

Mrs. Orsin Johnson has been visiting relatives in Hemlock.

Frank MaChette of Saginaw is visiting

friends and relatives here.

Mrs. Jennie Williams of Detroit is visiting friends and relatives here.

The Midland county farmers' institute meets here the first of next month.

J. W. Ippel of Saginaw was in town Monday, enjoying the hunting season.

Harvey Cramton, who went to Vanderbilt to work in the woods, returned home sick last week.

Mrs. Aikens of Marlette, who has been visiting her mother, Mrs. E. M. Rix, has returned home.

Homer

Lee Camp is working for Mr. Barnes.

John O'Brien and wife are visiting Mrs. Coleman.

Geo. Lamont and wife are visiting relatives in Ohio.

There was a box social at the Marsh school house last week, proceeds to go towards buying curtains.

Thieves are plentiful in this town on both rivers. Mr. Kebbleback had some \$25 in money, a corn sheller and some bags stolen lately, and last Wednesday night someone took four of Mr. Russ' best sheep. Chickens have been stolen from several places; also cattle.

Family Tree Maker

**** NEW VERSION ****

Family Tree Maker 2010 is now available. A review on this new version will be written in a later issue. You can purchase this from the Ancestry store online or your favorite software store.

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Pioneer Record

Midland Genealogical Society
Grace A. Dow Memorial Library
1710 W. St. Andrews Drive
Midland, MI 48640



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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 Grace A. Dow Memorial Library, 1710 W. St. Andrews Dr., Midland, MI 48640.