



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.

April 21, 2010 meeting 7:00 Library

Lounge "Clark Historical Library Holdings"

May 19, 2010 meeting 6:00 Carriage

House Annual Meeting and Potluck. Floyd Andrick will be presenting "Burial Customs"

Threads of Silk

By Gloria Kunding

Opportunities for women to work outside of the home were few in the later part of the 1800s and early 1900s. The family farm was where most women worked. "Polite society" frowned upon a woman working outside of the home. It implied that she was incapable of getting a husband, or that her husband could not provide for his family.

In the mid to late 1800s, women usually worked as a teacher, nurse, domestic, or a seamstress; and in the early 1900s, as a telephone operator or a store clerk. It wasn't until the industrial revolution of the late 1800s that more job opportunities for women became available as factory workers. In Michigan during this time period, the silk mills in Belding provided many young women with such a chance for employment.

The silk industry began in Michigan shortly after Hiram and Mary Belding moved to a farm near Patterson's Mill from Ashfield, Massachusetts. Two of the Belding sons, Hiram and Alvah, moved with them to Michigan and began peddling silk thread and other items to add cash to the family's paltry farm income. Still living in Ashfield, Massachusetts, their brother, Milo Belding, obtained the silk thread for them to sell.

In 1863, the two Belding brothers left Michigan for Chicago, Illinois, and formed Belding Brothers and Company with Milo and another brother, David.

Starting as a distributor, their business venture grew to become a manufacturer of silk thread used for hand and machine sewing, darning, and crocheting. By the late 1860s, they had expanded into silk cloth used for linings, petticoats, veils, and dresses. In a short while, their business had grown to include several silk mills in Rockville, Connecticut, and Northampton, Massachusetts. Their venture was very profitable, and they won many prizes for their quality goods at shows both nationally and internationally.

The village of Patterson's Mill was renamed Belding in 1871 in hopes of attracting industries to locate there. Since the Belding brothers owned one fourth of the property in the village of Belding, they decided to build a thread mill there in 1885. They reasoned that the cost of wages and maintenance for their employees would be less expensive in Belding than in the east.

Once the mill was built, it was sold to George Richardson of Chicago, who was a former Belding Brothers and Company manager. This was done so the Belding brothers' name would not be connected to it if the mill wasn't a success. The directors of both companies were closely bonded

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The Presidents Letter

Choices in life are always a good thing. If you join the board of our society this year you have the choice of either the office of president or the office of secretary. Wilma will take either office. I know you are all literate or you would not be reading this note so writing up a few notes from the board meeting should be possible for all of you. If you are able to do your own genealogy then heading up a genealogy society should be easier than finding that ggg grandmother in Pennsylvania or New York. The day and time of the board meetings are worked out to fit everybody's schedule. The society really needs one more volunteer.

The marriage book preparation is at the index extraction and proofing step. I plan to have a preliminary copy printed and ready to be seen and checked at our April meeting and later in the Genealogy room. Everyone should inspect their family's marriages that took place in Midland County in 1855 – 1910. A page was inserted for corrections. Most of the indexing will be done automatically using the "Access" computer program. The footnotes still need a bunch of editing work.

In May my brother and I will be off to Germany to see our "Mass" homeland and meet some distant cousins. We will also visit our

"Linde" homeland in Wielkoposkie Poland that was called Posen province when part of Prussia. We plan to inspect records at the National Archive in Poznan. Visits will be made to a dozen villages noted in vital records for Lindes, my wife's Derezynskis and a couple of friends. I recently found on a LDS microfilm the 1877 death record for a ggg uncle Carl Linde that lists Retz as the birthplace. A church book claim that the German-protestant records are still in the Catholic church office in Recz (Reetz)(Retz) in the former NE corner of Brandenburg. Hopefully a brick wall will be broken in a giant, ancient, red brick church.

The annual meeting is scheduled for May at the carriage house of the Midland County Historical Society. At the meeting the new officers will be elected and the budget approved.

I have enjoyed being one of your officers for seven years.

MGS President, Bob Mass

From The Editor...

As we wrap up another year, let us not forget, that we have another year ahead of us. I wish to thank those that volunteered for positions on the board. Thanks also to those that provided programs for our meetings.

There is a new website that I recently found. It is called familynotices.org. This website is for you to place obituaries and family notices. You can put both old and new obituaries here and is free to use. The obituaries will never disappear from here as they do at the newspaper and funeral home sites. This is a new site and does not yet contain many records, but I believe that this site will grow.

I would like to remind everyone that our

monthly meetings are open to the public. You are encouraged to bring a friend to the meeting. This can help our membership grow.

We also need to do what we can to prevent the collection at the state library from being lost and inaccessible. Other states are looking at Michigan and Massachusetts and deciding if they want to do the same. This state collections could be lost forever. If we lose this fight, then other states will dispose of their collections, also.

Walt Bennett
Editor

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Membership activities have slowed down as we reach the end of this year. In August you will be receiving the dues renewal letter the same as last fall. This system works well and we appreciate your participation. If you have already paid your 2010-2011 dues in advance and we do not catch that let us know.

If you have any ideas on recruiting new members please let me know. *Linda Fisher, Membership Chair*

GENE TOONS by Wendell Washer



I know I hid my ancestors here somewhere!

MEMBERSHIP DUES 2010-2011

Statements for the 2010-2011 dues will be sent out in early August 2010 and will be due by the first meeting in September 2010.

Midland Genealogical Society, Grace A. Dow Memorial Library, 1710 W. St Andrews Drive, Midland, MI 48640. Dues for an individual are \$14.00; for a family they are \$17.50.

Family Tree Maker 2010

For those of you that have contemplated purchasing the upgrade for The popular Family Tree Maker program, here are the enhancements that have been added.

There is an enhanced family view. This allows you to see more information about individuals in the pedigree view as well as information about the parents of the couple. You now have the ability to quickly add facts on the person tab. You can now quickly add basic facts such as birth, marriage and death from a drop-down list. There is a new relationship window which gives easy access to relationship facts, notes and media items. Previously, when you closed the program, you would lose the history list that showed when sources, media items, or individuals you had. Now the history of your changes and additions is saved even after the program closes.

Source Citations can be replaced by an existing source citation without losing any links to individuals or media items.

You can now download your online ancestry.com trees directly into FTM, by either merging it into an existing file or starting a new one. You can also view new statistical information about your tree.

The relationship calculator now has the ability to display multiple relationships for an individual. There also is an enhanced spell check that will look for errors in all facts.

The family group sheet has been redesigned and improved image support. The wording of the register and Ahnentafel reports now have a more narrative feel. Kinship reports now list multiple relationships.

You can now include source information with a chart. Sources are numbered and displayed at the end of the chart.

You can select a group of individuals in a chart and then export them as a separate tree or delete them as a group. You can enter your own brief place names to use in reports and charts. You can also change the order in which items in your book appear by dragging and dropping them in the book outline. You can also use duplicate names for book items.

You can now scan images directly into FTM. Also, create slide show presentations using images you've included in our tree. Select multiple media items at the same time.

In the Places workspace you can access and modify GPS coordinates. You can select your own locations in the map and store their GPS locations. Show the locations of an individual's life events on a



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. Flaningam. 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 Flaningam. 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.

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To ORDER A BOOK write: Midland Genealogical Society BOOK: Grace A. Dow Memorial Library, 1710 W. St. Andrews Dr., Midland, MI 48640.

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to one another as friends and business associates. The Richardson Mill was bought by the Belding brothers in 1907 and renamed Mill No. 4.

In 1890, a second mill, known as the Red Mill, was constructed in Belding because business was good and labor plentiful. A weaving mill appeared there in 1901. It was called the White Mill. In 1909, a converted building became a second weaving mill known as the Electric Mill.

The mill construction projects grew the village of Belding from 562 people in 1880 to 4,119 in 1910. Besides silk, industries that manufactured ice boxes (later refrigerators), shoes, and baskets located there. However the silk mills employed more workers than all the other factories in town.

Seventy-five percent of Belding's workforce labored in the silk mills. That amounted to 1,200—one fourth of the town's population. Of the four silk mills, 500 were employed in the larger one and 250 in the smallest.

The buildings offered a well-lit, spacious, and clean work environment. The mills had state-of-the-art heating, humidity control, and ventilating systems—much better than their southern and eastern counterparts.

Raw silk imported from Italy, china and Japan was used in the many production processes.

The separate silk strands were paired (doubled), twisted and spun until the thread was the proper weight for embroidery, general sewing, crocheting, or weaving. Once the finished thread was dyed, it was wound on bobbins, spools, or woven into cloth.

Some jobs in the silk mills were done by hand. Raw silk skein sorting, and finished silk skein labeling were a few. The rest like spinning, reeling, spooling, and doubling were done by machines that workers had to watch.

The average unskilled worker could be trained within a few weeks to weave silk material. Usually a worker graduated to operate four looms at once as their skills increased. The mill required workers with manual dexterity and good attention since they needed to watch for broken threads and empty shuttles while the machinery was in operation. The work was long and tiring. It was also potentially dangerous with exposed moving machinery parts.

Workers put in ten or twelve hour days five and a half days a week. It amounted to fifty-six hours a week in 1909—a drop from sixty hours in 1900. Mostly single young women under thirty years of age made up about three-quarters of the workforce. Some high school students were allowed to work on Saturday mornings and after school. The women workers held jobs such as spoolers, weavers, winders, and labelers.

Mostly married men who were older than the majority of the women workers held jobs as plant superintendents, division heads, loom fixers, warpers, and dyers. Women as well as men could work as lower level supervisors. Except for skilled operators sent to Michigan from their eastern mills, ninety percent of the workers were from Michigan and neighboring states. Ten percent were immigrants.

The local population provided some silk workers, but the others had to be recruited from the rest of the state. Company agents went on annual trips by train as far as two hundred miles to recruit new workers. The recruiters touted the good wages, desirable working conditions, and quality company boarding houses as drawing points. Other methods of recruiting

for available jobs were ads in local newspapers and word-of-mouth from travelers, friends, and family.

The Belding brothers realized that an intelligent and respectable class of young women needed a proper place to live in order to feel comfortable leaving home to work a great distance away. They built three upscale boarding houses in Belding. They were named "The Belrockton," "The White Swan," and "The Ashfield." Each dormitory could house one hundred and twenty-five women. For married workers, there were sixty homes available to rent.

The dormitories housed only single women, and there was a waiting list for a room in one. They were located near the mills on big lots. There were six spacious parlors in each and a large dining room. Two women shared a bedroom. Every house had central steam heating, bathrooms on each floor with hot and cold water, and electricity. The house provided bed linen and there were laundry facilities for residents' personal laundry. The meals were plentiful and delicious. Silk workers who weren't house residents could cheaply buy a lunch there as well.

A matron supervised each boarding house. However, women could have male guests visit in the downstairs parlors, and female guests could have Sunday dinner or spend the night. Residents had to be in by 9:30 p.m. with lights out at 10 p.m. On Saturday nights, residents were permitted to stay out as late as midnight.

Beginners made six dollars a week for sixty hours of work. Room and board at the dormitories cost two dollars a week. When wages went to eight dollars in 1914, room and board was two-and-a-half dollars. Skilled workers were paid at piece rates. A job in the silk mills paid

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higher wages than those of a country school teacher or a house-keeper. Mill work was easier than farm work which paid little or nothing on a family farm.

The mill workers earned less than workers in the automobile factories, but they enjoyed steady employment because their products were in constant demand. Spring and fall were the busiest times for the mills. They closed for a two week summer vacation, one week at Christmas, and occasionally for repairs.

Working in the mills gave young women financial independence; and for some, a chance for an education. Some women supported parents or children as well as themselves. While others saved their wages to go to business school or normal school.

The dormitory and mill life gave young women social opportunities as well. Many joined church groups and choirs, the Red Cross Society, socialized, and shopped with friends. Their wages bought the latest fashions; and many rural girls, now living in a town, had more opportunities to meet young men. Promenading downtown while dressed in their best was a weekend past-time for many young couples. They attended church socials, roller skated, and went on picnics. Many girls took a train home on weekends.

The mill girls blended in with the townfolk and were well-respected. This was unlike mill working women in other parts of the country who were rough with crude behavior. Belding was proud of their women mill workers.

After demands for silk products began to diminish nationwide, the Belding mills merged with Heminway Silk Company in 1925 and became Belding-Heminway. Shortly the Corticelli Silk Company acquired it and that merger became Belding-Heminway-Corticelli. In April 1931, their mills were closed in several other states. Parts of the

Belding, Michigan, mills were being remodeled to accommodate the work diverted to them from the closed mills.

In 1932, the mills in Belding were closed and the operation moved to Putnam, Connecticut, because they offered the company a bigger tax break than the town of Belding. The closing shocked the community, but Belding eventually recovered and thrived as other industries filled the void left by the silk mills.

One mill and two of the boarding houses were demolished. The other mill buildings were used by other industries or as warehouses. In 1986, The Richardson Mill building was converted to apartments. The Belrockton dormitory became the Belding Museum and the Community Center. A public library and hospital funded by the Belding brothers are still much in use by the town.

Even though the era of the silk industry in Michigan has come and gone, it has left behind a legacy for those whose female ancestors worked as mill girls. Those workers helped support the family on the farm in lean times. They made working women acceptable to society. Most of all, they led the way for future generations of women with their ability to gain employment in fields previously off-limits to them.

Sources

"Belding Brothers & Company, Silk Manufacturers." Library of Michigan. 2003-2010.

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Dr. William Burtless, M.D.

A prominent Physician and Surgeon in Midland during the 1800's was William O. Burtless, M. D. He was born near the city of Jackson, Michigan, the son of James B. and Susan (Carnes) Burtless. William Burtless grew to manhood in Branch County, Michigan. While growing up, he assisted his father on the farm while not attending school. He became interested in the Civil War and enlisted on January 10, 1864, in Company M, 11th Michigan Cavalry, under Capt. Frisby. This regiment was assigned to the Western Army and fought in North and South Carolina, Georgia, Kentucky, Tennessee and Virginia. Dr. Burtless was wounded in a skirmish in Kentucky on April 12, 1864, and also during an attack on Saltville, W. Virginia. He was made a prisoner and was incarcerated in the hospital of Libby Prison for three months. He later rejoined his regiment at Louisville, Kentucky and served the remainder of his period of enlistment as a Corporal.

After being mustered out in July 1865, he went to Tecumseh, Lenawee County, Michigan where he completed a course of study and passed a year at the Baptist College at Kalamazoo. In the fall of 1871, he enrolled in the literary department at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor. He withdrew from the University at the end of his sophomore year in the spring of 1873. He next, went to Auburn Michigan where he became involved in a mercantile and lumber business with Ira Swart. Ira was married to William's sister, Hattie in 1871. She died in 1877. After two years, William entered the Medical Department of the University of Michigan and graduated in the spring of 1878 in medicine and surgery. In July of that same year, he began his practice in Midland. He belonged to the State Medical Society and the American Medical Association.

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Dr. Burtless owed a fine residence and grounds in Midland with several building lots variously located around town. He also had paid to have a telephone wire strung down Main Street to his residence. He also owned 155 acres of farming land. He held a third interest in 2000 acres of timber lands in Larkin Township and had claim to 130 acres of land adjoining his farm. He was also a member of the Star Flouring Company at Midland and was a co-owner of the Midland Flouring Mills with the Reardon Brothers.

His medical office was located in the Reardon Block. On the 22nd day of April 1881, Dr. W. E. Burtless and Dr. J. H. Lyon entered into agreements of partnership and was known as Burtless and Lyon. The firm changed again in 1882 to Burtless & Herries but Dr. Lyon continued with the practice. William remained in practice here for 5 years. In January 1883, he went to St. Clair, Michigan in the interest of the Oakland House Sanitarium as house physician and remained there until it closed.

Dr. Burtless was married in 1874 at Tecumseh, to Sarah, the daughter of Dr. J. S. and Sarah Hamilton. She died in January 1875 after giving Dr. Burtless and son, Earl. Earl died when 11 months old. He married a second time on June 22, 1877 to Emma C. Blodget, daughter of Charles S. and Laura P. Blodget. They had a daughter Hattie who also died at 11 months of age. Emma was the sister of Mrs. Lyon. Emma passed away in 1898. He married for a third time in 1901 to Miss Ellen Potter Whiting, daughter of Congressman Justin P. Whiting, of St. Clair. They raised a daughter, Susan.

William's father, James B. Burtless

was a farmer in Midland Township and was the son of William and Mary (Petty) Burtless, natives of New Jersey. James B. was the eldest of 9 children and was born in Seneca County New York on April 8, 1822. At the age of 21 he came to Jackson County Michigan and purchased 103 acres of land. He improved 18 acres and sold the place. A year later, he moved back to New York State and worked a farm on shares for four years. He returned again to Michigan and settled for a year in Lenawee County. He bought a farm in Branch County and lived there for almost ten years, after which he sold out and in February 1864, he enlisted for the Union in the First Michigan Light Artillery. He served until the close of the war. He then, bought a farm in Bay County Michigan and stayed there until January 1881. He sold the farm and moved to Midland and lived with his son, Dr. Burtless for two years. He then bought 40 acres of land in Midland Township where he build a residence.

He was first married in Lenawee County, Michigan on February 25, 1846 to Susanna Cairnes, a native of New York State. Their children were William E., Hattie and Charlie. Susanna died on December 23, 1859 and Mr. Burtless married again to Jeannette Cameron Fray, in Sanilac County, August 19, 1874. They had two children, Latona A. and Erie. Erie died when 3 years old. Jeannette died in November 1879. He married for a third time to Sarah A. Fleming. She was the daughter of John and Wilhelmina Fleming and the widow of David Stephens.

James father, also William Burtless was born near Trenton, New Jersey in 1795. He came to Seneca county, New York with his father John Burtless when he was 7 years old. They were among the first to live in this community, where John had purchased a section of land three miles southeast of the village of Seneca Falls where he remained until he died. William also resided on this estate and died there. William was one of ten children and he was the second born. When the family came to Seneca county, they were very

poor, but at the time of John's death, John was very well-to-do.

William's wife Mary Petty was born in New Jersey in 1801. She came to Seneca with her parents when she was 6 months old. After marrying William Burtless, they had 9 children, which included 8 sons and o daughter, all of which reached maturity. Charles B. was the youngest and was a dairy farmer in Seneca Falls, New York and was born Dec 25, 1844. William Jr, who had lived in Midland, Dodson, lived in southeastern Kansas, Martin E. was a resident of Cayuga County, New York. Phebe married William Schwartz and lived in Bay City, Michigan. Nehemiah died in White Willow County, Nebraska. John Wesley had a business in Auburn, New York. Henry was wounded in the seven days fight in front of Richmond during the late war and fell hands to the enemy and was never heard from again. He was a member of Berdan's Sharpshooters of New Jersey. Mahlon was a Union Soldier and died soon after his discharge from injuries he received during the war.

William Sr. died in 1870 and Mary died in 1878. William was a devoted member of the Wesleyan Methodist Church and helped to build the first Methodist Church in Seneca Falls.

Sources:

(found on Google Books and Heritage Quest)

"Portrait and Biographical Sketches of Midland County, Michigan", 1884

"Portrait and Biographical Record of Saginaw and Bay Counties, Michigan", 1892

"Portrait and Biographical Record of Seneca and Schuyler Counties, New York", 1895

Coming Events

April 28– May 1, 2010 “Follow your ancestral trail”, by the National Genealogical Society. TO take place at the Salt Palace Convention Center, Salt Lake City, Utah. For further information see http://www.ngsgenealogy.org/cs/conference_info.

May 8, 2010 “English Research”, presented by the Huron Shores Genealogical Society. To be held at the Grace Community Church in Oscoda, MI. 1-3pm. Speaker is Edwina Morgan from the Library of Michigan. Contact them at www.HuronShoresGS@yahoo.com.

May 14-16 2010 “Essentials, Innovations and Delights”. The Ontario Genealogical Society. Conference 2010. This is being held at the Double-Tree Hotel near the Toronto Airport. For further info see torontofamilyhistory.org/2010/.

June 25-27, 2010. “Upper Peninsula History Conference”. Sponsored by the Historical Society of Michigan and being held at Menominee. For further info see www.hsmichigan.org.

August 18-21, 2010 “Rediscovering America’s First Frontier”, Federation of Genealogical Societies annual seminar. Co-hosted by Eastern Tennessee Historical Society and Kentucky Historical Society and will be held in Knoxville, Tennessee. For further information see www.fgs.org/2010conference/.

Sept 24-26 “State History Conference” Sponsored by the Historical Society of Michigan and held in Frankenmuth. See hsmichigan.org

Nov 5-6, 2010. “Got Ancestors?!” Sponsored by the Western Michigan Genealogical Society and held in Grand Rapids, Michigan. See www.gotancestors.com.

MGC Report

The Library of Michigan is reporting a huge budget crisis. 23% cuts as well as 1/3 staff reductions by October 1, 2010. The decision as to what the library holds will be based on what the statute states under which the library was established many years ago. The library collection will be built as a Michigan History Collection. The non-Michigan collection is still under question by the Dept. of Education. The library will not be a genealogy library. The library will no longer be a regional depository for federal documents. The collection currently has about two million items. The decision should be made by October 1.

Sandy Clark is interested in continuing a relationship with the Michigan Genealogical Council and would like to find housing for the collection on the Archives side of the library.

There is a workshop for anyone to attend on Saturday, May 15 at the First Presbyterian Church, which is a short distance from the library. The workshop is to help with programs, president responsibilities, and other topics. It starts at 9:30 a.m. and there is no fee. Bring your own lunch. Registration form will be sent by email.

Group Trip

Would anyone be interested in attending the seminar “Rediscovering America’s First Frontier”, sponsored by the Federation of Genealogical Societies and the E. TN Historical Society & Kentucky Historical Society, Wednesday, August 18—Saturday, August 21 in Knoxville, Tennessee. Plus an open house at the E. TN. History Center (Not LDS affiliated) on Tuesday afternoon. Brochures in the Genealogy Room. Call Jo Brines 832-8312.

Programs for 2010-2011

The planning for next seasons programs will soon begin. If you have an idea for one of the programs, please send to “Program Chair” at the society address shown on the back cover of this newsletter.

Nominations for 2010-2011

Here are the nominations for the following offices.

President: Wilma Diesen

Treasurer: Dave Russell

Historian: Fran Longsdorf

Program Co-Chairs: Bob Snyder and Linda Fisher

MC Delegates: Faye Ebach and Bev Keicher

Membership Co-Chairs: Dona McArdle

We still need to find another Co-Chair to work with Dona McArdle and we still need to find a Recording Secretary. No one has come forth even after all of the calls have been made.

Ingham County Genealogy

The Ingham County Genealogical Society has completed phase 1 of the digitization of two Mason, Ingham County Newspapers. The Ingham County News 186901934 on 5 DVD’s and The Ingham County Democrat 1876-1915 on 4 DVD’s.

They also have vital, burial and cemetery records from various townships on CD’s. See the bulletin board for more information.

A Look at the Decade: 1890-1899, Part Two

By Juliana Smith

The Economy

Remembered fondly as “the Gay Nineties” in retrospect, the 1890s weren’t all that gay for many people. 1893 marked the beginning of a four-year-long depression in the United States. Britain and Europe’s economic woes preceded troubles in the U.S. and led to a reduction in investments in the United States. Economic policy, with heavy reliance on the gold standard, also contributed to the depression, as did the overproduction of agricultural products from a growing farm belt. Farmers had been moving westward with the new ability to transport produce via expanded rail systems and the additional goods drove market prices down.

The Philadelphia and Reading Railroad collapsed in February and more than 15,000 companies and 500 banks would follow leading to a sharp rise in unemployment. Double-digit unemployment rates peaked at an estimated 18 percent in 1894 and would remain high through the crisis.

People were desperate for work and in 1894, Jacob S. Coxey led a protest march from Massillon, Ohio to Washington, D.C. Beginning with one hundred men, five hundred arrived in Washington demanding work on public projects. They were denied and the Coxey was arrested for trespassing when he tried to speak. “Coxey’s Army” was one of several groups planning to march on Washington, but it was the only sizeable group to complete the journey. (The image in the upper right corner is Coxey’s Army traveling by canal.)

In Chicago, George Pullman had cut pay for his employees by 25%. Employees living in “Pullman City” paid

rent to Pullman—a rent that remained static despite the pay cuts. The hardship this created pushed three thousand Pullman workers to strike. It was a “wildcat” strike (without the approval of the union), but some American Railroad Union workers followed in support, refusing to move any train with a Pullman car, unless it carried mail. Since most trains by this time had Pullman cars, this affected the railway system across the country. Eventually a federal court ruled that the strike was illegal and federal troops were called in. Violence ensued as riots broke out and in a violent confrontation with soldiers on July 7, many rioters were killed or wounded.

War

In 1895, Cuba was fighting for its independence from Spain and support for the cause was growing in the U.S., fed by newspapers that found that headlines relating to the conflict gave them a boost in sales at the newsstand. The U.S.S. Maine, which had been sent to Havana to protect U.S. interests, exploded on 15 February 1898, killing 266 sailors on board and matters quickly escalated. Although the cause of the explosion was never discovered, the newspapers were quick to blame Spain and after the Spanish rebuffed U.S. demands that it grant Cuban independence, war followed.

American Naval forces under Commodore George Dewey, were deployed to the Philippines where they attacked and destroyed the Spanish forces in Manila Harbor. Further defeats in the Philippines and in the Caribbean by both Naval and Army forces, (which included Theodore Roosevelt and his “Rough Riders”) convinced the Spanish government to sign the Treaty of Paris on 10 December 1898.

As part of the treaty, the U.S. purchased Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines

from Spain for \$20 million. However, in the Philippines, the Filipino forces (former allies in the Spanish-American War) had begun to resent American forces. After finally becoming free of Spain, they did not want another occupation, and on 4 February 1899 the Philippine-American War began and would continue for three years at a terrible cost of lost Filipino lives.

In Africa, another war was beginning as the British and the Boers began the Second Boer War in 1899. Here again, the forces of imperialism and nationalism clashed in bloody conflict. For years, Uitlanders (foreigners) had been flocking to the Transvaal (South African Republic) following the discovery of gold in 1886. Threatened by the newcomers, the government restricted the vote to naturalized citizens and began taxing mining interests.

Forces of Nature

Disaster struck the southern U.S. in August 1893, when a hurricane struck Savannah, Georgia, and then moved northward over the Sea Islands to Charleston leaving more than 1,000 dead and 15,000 homeless in its wake. Another storm in October of that same year struck Cheniere Caminada, near Grand Isle, Louisiana, killing half of the resort town’s 1,600 residents.

In 1895, the UK and much of Europe the year was off to a very cold start. In February a record cold temperature of -27.2C (about -17F) was recorded in Braemar, Aberdeenshire, Scotland. The “Great Freeze” of that winter disrupted transportation on the waterways as canals and rivers froze.

1896 was a year of severe weather in the U.S., with more than forty “killer tornadoes,” across the country. In St. Louis, Missouri, an F4 tornado cut a half-mile swath through the city. More than 255 people lost their lives in St. Louis and East St.

Louis, and descriptions of the damage from the East Saint Louis Journal paint a picture of “death and desolation.”

In November of 1896, two storms converged off the New England coast. Despite the warnings of bad weather, the SS Portland left Boston, Massachusetts, bound for Portland, Maine. The entire ship and all of her passengers were lost to the storm, which became known as the Portland Gale. The storm brought hurricane strength winds that washed away houses and destroyed boats along the New England coast from Massachusetts to Maine. The loss of ships and wharves hurt the fishing industry of the region.

Between 12 and 14 February 1899, a blizzard ravaged much of the U.S. from New England to Florida. The Newark Daily Advocate (Newark, Ohio) from 15 February 1899 reported that freezing temperatures had devastated the Florida and Georgia citrus crops, and the record cold temperature of 6.8 degrees Fahrenheit chilled Charleston. Cape May,

New Jersey, snow levels measured forty-three inches after fifty-two hours of continuous snowfall. New York City recorded sixteen inches, while neighboring area measured the precipitation in feet. Even the port of New Orleans was iced over.

Innovation and Invention

Despite financial troubles brought on by the Panic of 1893, the country put on its best face as the World’s Columbian Exposition of 1893 opened in Chicago, Illinois. More than 27 million visitors attended this world-class event, taking advantage of railroads to converge on Chicago to explore the various venues filled with the latest mechanical innovations, agricultural advances, and cultural treasures. Buffalo Bill’s Wild West Show thrilled audiences as food and exhibits from around the world amazed spectators.

In 1892, AT&T had opened the first commercial long-distance phone line from New York to Chicago. It could only handle one call at a time, and the

price was steep, even by today’s standards—\$9.00 for the first five minutes.

On a snowy day in 1895, a group of men and their “horseless-carriages” gathered in Chicago for the first ever automobile race in America. The race took more than ten hours on a fifty-five mile course, averaging around seven miles per hour. Bicycle mechanic turned inventor, Frank Duryea won the \$2,000 prize, sponsored by the Chicago Times-Herald.

In London, England, traffic on the London Bridge had become a problem. While there were bridges crossing the Thames to the west, there were none to the east. With population growing on east end of London travel on London Bridge was sometimes delayed for hours. A new bridge was needed and in 1894 the famous Tower Bridge opened. At the time of the opening, it didn’t receive the warm welcome you’d expect, but it has since come to be a beloved landmark of the city.

Census 2010: Your Mark in History

We all have one – a census record that marks a big find, a turning point in our family history research. But what if your ancestor hadn’t bothered to answer?

Every day, Ancestry.com members search hundreds of thousands of census records dating back to 1790. And they’re rewarded with details about their own family histories.

By participating in the 2010 census, you’ll pass on that legacy for future family historians. Plus you’ll be doing your own community a favor today – official census counts help influence community policy and decisions that benefit us all.

Be sure your children, grandchildren, their children and beyond have the opportunity to make the same kind of finds about you by filling out your 2010 census form and returning it in the postage-paid envelope. It only takes a few minutes today to have a lasting impact on tomorrow’s researchers.

Learn more about the 2010 census at www.census.gov. And search for your

family’s historic responses in the [U.S. Federal Census Collection](http://www.ancestry.com) at Ancestry.com.

Facts about the census

- Ancestry.com is the only place online where you can find every recorded name from every available U.S. census from 1790 to 1930.
- Census documents are the most widely searched documents on Ancestry.com
- From 1790 to 1960 the U.S. census was taken door to door so you can see who was living next door and learn about what life may have been like on your street when your ancestors lived there.
- In 1930 the largest recorded population of foreign-born citizens hailed from Italy.
- The 1850 census was the first one in which enumerators were instructed to record the names of every person in the household.
- In 1840, census takers recorded the ages of revolutionary war pensioners and the number of individuals engaged in mining, agriculture, commerce, manu-

facturing and trade, navigation of the ocean, navigation of canals, lakes and rivers, learned professions and engineers; number in school, number in family over age 21 who could not read and write, and the number of insane.

• Slave’s full names were rarely listed in census records before the 1870 census – the first U.S. census following the Civil War.

• The 1870 census was the first to specifically ask whether someone was an Indian or Chinese.

• Census responses can act as clues for additional family history research. In 1900, the number of children born and still living are both recorded for mothers, which could lead to birth and death records not known of before. In 1930, the age at first marriage is included – this information coupled with the birth year listed can help a researcher determine if this was the first marriage for both husband and wife.

**By Ancestry.com 16 March 2010
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1921 Immigration Laws

Overview

The United States has a long history of welcoming immigration. The Statue of Liberty encourages the "huddled masses" from the various nations to find refuge in her arms. However, following the horrors of World War I, Americans started to feel nervous about opening their doors to refugees and immigrants from around the globe. The Emergency Immigration Act of 1921, also known as the Johnson Act, worked to ease their fears by putting a limit on the number of immigrants allowed into the United States.

Function

Legislators wished to get a handle on the overwhelming number of immigrants seeking financial strength and political stability in America. They accomplished this through the Emergency Immigration Act of 1921. This act restricted the number of immigrants by putting a cap on those from each foreign country and limiting immigration to 3 percent of the number of each na-

tionality already in America in the 1910 census.

Geography

At first glance, the 1921 act was clear cut in permitting only 3 percent of each existing immigrant group into the country. However, legislators wrote some geographical caveats into the laws. For instance, the law upheld the prohibition of immigrants from the Asiatic Barred Zone, a triangular-shaped area covering Asia and parts of the Middle East. Therefore, the law made it impossible for almost any immigrants from Asia to enter America. On the other hand, it exempted countries in the Western Hemisphere from the percentage-based cap. The law put no cap on immigrants from these countries.

Significance

The impact on the immigrant population because of this act was slow but monumental. It did give wives of legal immigrants and their children (under age 18) permission to enter, which may explain the relatively high number for the first few years after the bill was put into place. However, in the following decade, the immigrant population had gone down 3

percent from 1910. Between 1930 and 1950, the immigrant population fell by almost 5 percent.

Influence

World War I had a great impact on the writing and passing of the 1921 Act. The war left many Americans jaded and distrustful of the foreign population. In 1917, Congress passed a law establishing the heavy restriction on immigration. It established the Asiatic Barred Zone, which the 1921 law supported. Furthermore the 1917 law barred a whole list of types of people, including the disabled and criminals. This 1917 law acted as a catalyst for the 1921 act.

Effect

The Emergency Immigration Act of 1921 spurred a number of laws that followed. The Immigration Act of 1924 continued the quota-method of immigration limitation, further restricting the numbers. It also included Japan in the Asian countries to be barred. Both the 1921 and 1924 laws were the catalyst for the 1965 Immigration Act, which did away with these quotas.

By Tiffany Silverberg 13 January 2010
Ancestry Magazine

Proposed 2010-2011 Budget

Income		Expenses	
Dues	\$ 1,400.00	Membership	
		Rent	\$ 280.00
Interest	\$ 107.00	Program	\$ 400.00
		Hospitality	\$ 20.00
Projects		Committees	\$ 40.00
Research	\$ 100.00	Officer Expenses	\$ 25.00
Obit Books	\$ 40.00	Books for the Library	\$ 600.00
Mail & Handling	\$ -	Memorials	\$ 100.00
NARA	\$ 100.00	FGS & MGC Dues	\$ 85.00
Misc Donations	\$ -	State Fees	\$ 20.00
Pins	\$ -	MGC Meeting Mileage	\$ 265.00
Marriage Records	\$ 1,150.00	Projects	
Midland Co. Rec's CD	\$ 500.00	Research	\$ 20.00
		Shipping	\$ 10.00
		NARA	\$ 100.00
PR Subscriptions	\$ 14.00	New Book & CD	\$ 1,600.00
Stamp Donations	\$ 380.00	Pioneer Record	
		Printing	\$ 500.00
		Postage	\$ 5.00
		Other	\$ 50.00
Totals	\$ 3,791.00		\$ 4,120.00

Looking Back in Midland County

Taken from the *Portrait and Biographical Album of Midland County Michigan 1884*

John Sias

John Sias, lumberman and farmer, resident at Midland, was born Dec. 23, 1830, at Dover, Maine. He is the son of Samuel and Ann (McLean) Sias. His father was born in New Hampshire and followed the double occupation of a farmer and lumberman, to which he was reared. Mr. Sias owned a fine farm of 75 acres about three miles from Dover. He was married May 15, 1853, at Dover, to Catherine O. Maddox, a native of Ellsworth, Hancock Co., Me., and the daughter of John H. and Eliza Maddox. Of this union ten children have been born—five sons and five daughters. One son is deceased. They were born in the following order: Warren L., a merchant at Midland; Frank; John, a farmer in the township of Midland; Freddie, Ada B., Maud H., George A., and Lottie.

In the fall of 1860 Mr. Sias removed from Maine to Michigan and at once engaged in lumbering at Midland. In company with his brother, Samuel Sias, he bought extensive tracts of pine land, and after conducting their affairs jointly three years, they dissolved. In 1866 Mr. Sias formed a business relation with Fred Babcock, which existed three years. On its termination, he continued the management of his business alone. His real estate includes 3,000 acres of pine land and a farm of 500 acres on sections 19, 20, and 21. This includes 300 acres cleared and improved, and in first-class farming condition. It is largely devoted to stock-rearing. The herds on the place comprise a fine lot of graded Durhams and about a dozen thoroughbreds of the same breed, also some fine Southdown sheep. The place ranks among the most valuable and best conducted in the county. The buildings, orchards and farm fixtures generally give evidence of the character of management that has placed the property in its present most creditable condition. In his lumber interests Mr. Sias employs about 100 men. He is a stockholder in the Salt & Bromide Company at Midland.

Taken From *The Midland Sun* Fri. January 8, 1897 p. 8

LaPorte

(Dec. 30th, 1896)

Mrs. Sam'l Frost is dangerously ill.

Mrs. Annable, wife of the postmaster at Sly, is ill.

A son was born to Mr. and Mrs. Rodney Beden, Tuesday, Dec. 22.

The masquerade ball at Hutchins' hall was a success financially.

The infant daughter of Jas. D. Ostrander is recovering from a serious illness.

The first week of January will be observed in the M. E. Church as week of prayer.

The Misses Avice and Lotta Tebbel are spending the week with relatives at Smyrna, Ionia county.

A daughter of Mrs. Mary Wiley met with an accident on Christmas Day resulting in dislocation and fracture at the elbow. Dr. Franklin reduced the fracture.

Mrs. Chas Clason's brother from Riverdale spent Christmas with her and other relatives. Mrs. Clason's sister and family are spending the holidays here.

Married, at the residence of Hugh Garrett, sr., Thursday, December 24, J. S. Chamberlain of Saginaw and Miss Florence Howe of Dorr. The couple will reside in LaPorte.

The Christmas trees at the school house on Thursday evening were heavily loaded. A pleasing program was rendered by the pupils of both departments, and the audience, for so large a one, very appreciative.

A very pleasant party met at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Cruthe Gould on Friday eve-

ning, Dec. 25, to celebrate the 10th anniversary of their marriage. Some very useful, if not elegant pieces of tinware were important factors of the happy occasion.

Fred Brown of Endora, Canada, C. F. Keho of Saginaw and B. F. Franklin, jr., of this place, students of Saginaw valley medical college, came out Tuesday evening to spend a few days at the home of Dr. Franklin. Although most of the time was spent in hunting the young men made acquaintances with and friends while here, and their verdict was "a royal, good time."

(Jan. 7, 1897)

Mrs. W. H. Marcy, who has been ill for some time, is slowly recovering.

Our school received a very appreciable visit from Rev. B. Reeve on Monday.

The bad roads do not prevent the observance of the week of prayer at the M. E. church.

Mrs. E. C. Hutchins, with her little daughter Beatrice and sons Leo and Bertie, is spending a couple of weeks at Saginaw.

Miss Rich acknowledges the receipt of a handsome lady's work box and Mrs. Burchard, an elegantly bound volume of "Lalla Rookh," from their pupils.

Mr. and Mrs. W. G. Winslow departed yesterday for Byron, Genessee county, where they will reside. Mr. Winslow has rented his farm to Leonard Cron for one year. They will be sadly missed by a host of friends.

On Thursday, Jan. 1, Arthur, a young son of Jno. Rice, living two and one half miles south of LaPorte, met his death by the accidental discharge of a shot gun while hunting. The body was not found until two days later. The funeral was held on Monday.

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.