

Kansas Kin

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Hartford House at Riley County Historical Museum, one of several prefab houses carried on the 1855 Steamship Hartford.



**Kansas Kin is a semi-annual publication
of Riley County Genealogical Society**

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Kansas Kin is included with membership.

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Cover photo credit: Holly Hill, Chapman Center, Kansas State University.

Holly Hill is a third year MA student in the Department of History at K-State. She is also a graduate assistant at the Chapman Center for Rural Studies, where she helps with the new websites and any research needs that come her way.

The mission of the Chapman Center includes strengthening rural Kansas communities while advancing student learning. The CCRS fosters engaged undergraduate research and digital scholarship.

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***Kansas Kin* Mission Statement**

Collect, preserve and share information
for researching Kansas family histories.

A Message From the Editor

Dear Readers of *Kansas Kin*:

Amanda Arnold. Judge John Pipher. Hiram Palmer. Have you heard these names? These three people, among others, arrived on the Steamship Hartford that ran aground near Manhattan, Kansas, in 1855. The ship brought some of the early settlers of the town. Manhattan now has a school named after Amanda Arnold. Hiram Palmer has a descendant living in Manhattan.

Are you descended from any of the earliest settlers? Researchers at the Riley County Genealogy Research Library will be glad to help you find out!

In this issue, Bill Richter writes an article about discrepancies in genealogical research. I think all of us have run into this problem. Richter makes some recommendations for dealing with such discrepancies.

Holly Friesen would like us to know that the article on Lestle Wilbur Newcomer on page 18 of this issue, was written while she was in college. In 1988, *Lestle Wilbur Newcomer: The Kansas Man* was the recipient of the Jessie Perry Stratford Award for Excellence in Historical Writing by the Butler County Historical Society.



In *Kansas Kin*, we help you find information and stories of people who lived before you. We do this because we want to make your family tree come alive!

Please consider writing an article of genealogical significance for us!

Judy Regehr, Editor

In Memoriam: Janice May

Janice May was born January 28, 1941, in Ashland, Kentucky. She died March 19, 2024, in Manhattan, Kansas. She married Lowell May in 1963. They lived the Army life, making friends all over the world.

Janice and her daughter, Elizabeth Martineau, wrote an article for the May 2023 issue

of *Kansas Kin* on the stained glass window that the family reclaimed from a church in Lewisville, Indiana.

Janice is survived by her husband Lowell May, who has written a book on the history of the Concordia Kansas POW Camp from World War II, and has also spoken and written on the subject for Riley County Genealogical Society. Janice is also survived by a sister, two daughters and two grandchildren.

"The City of Many Names:" The Legacy of the Hartford Steamboat Immigrants in Manhattan Kansas

By Holly Hill

(See cover photo)

Introduction

On June 3rd, 1855 Chestina Bowker Allen, member of the third company sent by the New England Emigrant Aid Company, wrote in her diary, "The City of many names ... is now permanently named Manhattan." Established only a few months before, the fate of the town then called Boston was precarious. Whether or not the fledgling town on the Prairie would survive depended on good weather, lots of luck, and a chance to outcompete surrounding towns for settlers, roads, transportation, and businesses. Without the perfect combination of conditions, Manhattan, KS, could have ended up like the hundreds of other ghost towns founded during westward expansion. One fateful event not only renamed the small town, but also helped ensure its chance of survival: the Hartford Steamboat crash. This ill-fated steamboat voyage became a much-needed boost during the early settlement of Manhattan, doubling its population and infusing the New England community with allies in the Free State movement.

Launched from Cincinnati, Ohio, the Hartford voyage held many meanings. For the lead investors of the voyage, this vessel was a business investment intended to serve as conduit for trade between Fort Riley and Kansas City. Andrew Mead, one of the lead investors, hoped to settle a town called Manhattan near Fort Riley, in what is now Junction City, to serve as a trade conduit on the Kansas River. If founded, this town would have become a major source of competition for Boston. For the one hundred or so pro-temperance and anti-slavery settlers on board the Hartford, a desire to support the Free State cause may have played a bigger role than economic motivations.

Dreams of financial gain through river trade were dashed along the sandbars of the Kansas River in 1855. As the boat ran aground 20 miles before its destination, close to the town of Boston, it became evident that the Kansas river would not support steamboat navigation that deep into Kansas territory. Yet, the values of the passengers matched well with those of the recent settlers of Boston. The Boston Town Association invited the Cincinnati and Kansas Land Company to join their settlement, dividing the land equally between the groups. The CKLC agreed to this generous deal provided the town change its name from Boston to Manhattan.

Just as the confluence of the Big Blue and the Kansas River define the physical landscape of Manhattan, Kansas, the confluence of the settlers supported by the New England Immigrant Aid Society and members of the Cincinnati and Kansas Land Company proved to be the major defining factor in the early settlement of Manhattan, Kansas. Today, the names of original members of the Hartford Steamboat crash are written on our buildings and streets as a reminder of their lasting influence on the town. Below, we profile three members of this group whose impact on Manhattan remains today.

Amanda Arnold (1837–1923)

Amanda Arnold was born in 1837 to Rezin and Maria Arnold of Cadiz, Ohio. She was the seventh of the eleven Arnold children who survived to adulthood. When she was 18 years old, she boarded the *Hartford* steamboat alongside her father and one of her older brothers. They survived the arduous thirty-day journey from Ohio, and upon arriving in

Continued on next page.



Amanda Arnold. Photo courtesy of the Riley County Historical Society & Museum.

town, became founding members of Manhattan.

On their Manhattan homestead, Amanda assisted her mother in teaching her younger brothers. At the age of 19, she was hired as Manhattan's first public schoolteacher in 1857. Her first class numbered sixteen children on its busiest day, and they met in an old land office on the 100 block of Poyntz Avenue. Her three-month contract stipulated a salary of \$15 a month.

When Bluemont Central College opened in 1860, Amanda enrolled as one of its first students. She went back to teaching after acquiring higher education. She taught for decades, seeing hundreds – if not thousands – of Manhattan children pass through her classroom. It was noted in 1894 that she had “a wonderful kindergarten. Some of the nicest children in the city attend and the children are well pleased.”

Amanda never married or had children.

In 1983, the 60th anniversary of her passing, Amanda Arnold Elementary School was named in her honor..

She lived with her brother Benton until his death in 1908. On November 21, 1923, Amanda passed away in a local hospital after years of poor health at the age of 86. At her funeral, Reverend Parkinson spoke on her legacy, saying, “[N]one of us will leave the world a richer heritage than Amanda Arnold did.” They rang the salvaged *Hartford* bell, saved from the fire that destroyed the steamboat, in memory of one its last passengers. In 1983, the 60th anniversary of her passing, Amanda Arnold Elementary School was named in her honor.

Judge John Pipher (1811–1900)

John Pipher was born in Chester County, Pennsylvania on August 26, 1811. He married his first wife Eliza, with whom he had two children: John W. Pipher, who also came on the *Hartford*, and Sallie Platt Brown. The family later moved to Ohio, first to New Lisbon and then to Cincinnati. Eliza died there, and John remarried widow Nancy Straub. It was there in Cincinnati that he became involved in the Free-State movement and became one of the original investors in the *Hartford* steamboat.

Pipher did not actually ride the *Hartford* all



Tombstone of Amanda Arnold in the Sunset Cemetery, Manhattan, KS. Photo: Holly Hill.

the way to town. He debarked in Kansas City alongside Andrew J. Mead and Hiram Palmer, other leaders of the Cincinnati and Kansas Land Company, going ahead to prepare for their group's arrival. Being a leader of the Cincinnati group, he played a crucial role in combining settlements and the founding of Manhattan and ensuring its success.

He served many roles in early Manhattan. Among other things, he was the first postmaster, he owned a store, and he was elected as judge multiple times. As Justice of the Peace, he investigated the election fraud that made Ogden the seat for Riley County. His work ensured that Manhattan was named the permanent county seat of Riley County. One early Manhattan settler recalled that the judge's son became known as "Hand-Picked Watermelon John" due to selling watermelons at their store. Others recalled that the judge was a genial man, as one early KSAC student reminisced, "Quite vivid in my mind is the picture sitting in front of his grocery store on an old board sidewalk... Judge Pipher had plenty of

time to talk and visit with one as we passed along as business did not worry him greatly."

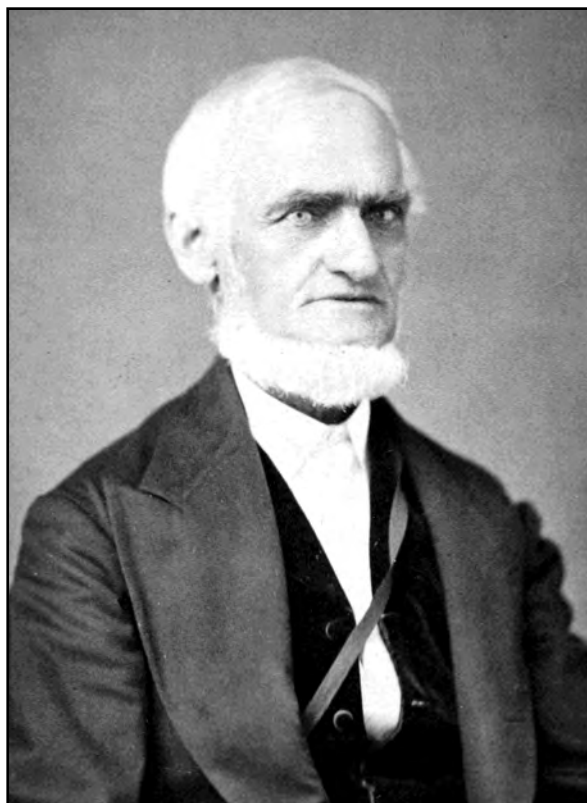
Judge John Pipher died on June 13, 1900. He was 88 years old.

Hiram Palmer (1802–1864) & Benjamin Franklin Palmer (1830–1891)

Though perhaps less well-known than the previous spotlights, the Palmer family still played a crucial role in founding Manhattan. Patriarch Hiram Palmer was one of the men that originally invested in the *Hartford* steamboat. He debarked in Kansas City alongside Judge Pipher and Andrew J. Mead and made the journey overland to prepare for the *Hartford's* arrival.

Hiram was originally from Chester County, Pennsylvania. At some point, he moved to Ohio, where his children were born. Hiram and his first wife Margaret Messler had a son, Benjamin Franklin Palmer, born in 1830. Hiram married his second wife, Maria Orr, with whom he had at least six more children.

Continued on next page.



Judge John Pipher. Photo courtesy of the Riley County Historical Society & Museum.



Judge John Pipher's tombstone in Sunset Cemetery, Manhattan, KS. Photo: Holly Hill

Though a founding member of the community, Hiram left Manhattan after only a few years. He went back to Ohio, where he died in 1864.

However, his eldest son Benjamin remained in Manhattan. With his wife Hannah, he had 7 children. As a Civil War veteran, he became a member of the Lew Gove Post of the Grand Army of the Republic. He was an active member, and the newspapers recount his Memorial Day tasks for each year: in 1889, he was “to trim soldiers’ lot” and in 1890 he was assigned “decorating Hudson’s grave.”

Interestingly, it is noted in the papers that he attended a local séance held by Henry B. Allen, a medium from Vermont. The spiritualism movement became popular in the mid-19th century. Some of the evening’s “manifestations” to which he may have been subjected include having his tie removed, being tapped on the head, or slapped in the face.

He died on January 22, 1891, at his home on 4th Street. His descendants continue to live in Manhattan today through his daughter, Maria Reyer.

A lasting legacy

Because the Kansas River proved unnavigable, the Boston Town Association and the CKLC joined forces, creating a viable community through their combined efforts. Although the Hartford burned in 1855, the legacy of this fateful steamer and its passengers remains in Manhattan, KS. Fixtures of Manhattan, such as the Poyntz Avenue business district, are the direct result of the commercial ingenuity of Hartford passengers. Street names like Vattier, Hartford, and Pipher also recall these early town founders.

Today, visitors can tour a salvaged and restored Hartford House at the Riley County Historical Museum, one of the ten prefabricated houses that were originally transported on the steamboat. While rudimentary, these homes were an important luxury during a time when most inhabitants of the community lived in dugouts, or worse. The original Hartford bell, rung in 1923 in honor of Amanda Arnold, is also on display at the Riley County Histori-

cal Museum, Manhattan, KS.

<https://www.rileychs.org/hartford-house.cfm>

Land Acknowledgement

The Chapman Center acknowledges that the state of Kansas is historically home to many Native nations, including the Kaw Osage, and Pawnee, among others. Kansas is currently home to four federally recognized Native nations: the Prairie Band Potawatomie, the Kickapoo Tribe of Kansas, the Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska, and the Sac and Fox Nation of Missouri in Kansas and Nebraska. The recognition that Kansas history begins and continues through indigenous contexts is essential.

Holly Hill is a third year MA student in the Department of History at K-State University.



B.F. Palmer’s broken gravestone in Sunset Cemetery, Manhattan, KS. Photo: Holly Hill.

Exploring a Discovered Document:

The Stockman Family Record

William L. Richter

The practice of genealogy has changed tremendously in the past few decades. Perhaps the most dramatic change has been the power, reach, and flexibility of the internet. When I first became interested in finding ancestors, in the early 1960s, scarcity of information was the major challenge. Today, the problem can seemingly be too much information. I can click on a few “hints” in Ancestry.com and with a few key-strokes add numerous new ancestors to my family tree. The challenge becomes one of checking and verifying added information.

When one discovers a new family history document, the internet can be a valuable resource for providing additional information concerning the new names. But the document can also be a valuable resource for correcting internet errors, resolving discrepancies, and filling information gaps. This is an account of my exploration of just such a document, nearly two centuries old. Though the family whose lives it reveals were not my ancestors, the document had been in my possession, hidden, for more than six decades.

The Discovered Document

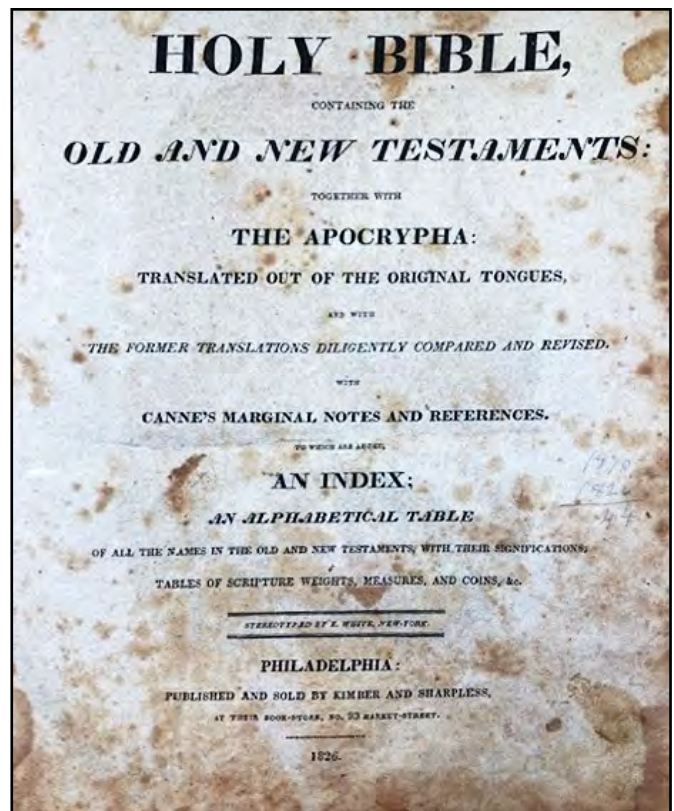
During 1966-1967, the first year my wife and I taught at Kansas State University, I was invited to direct a program in Washington, D.C., the following summer. The Washington Citizenship Seminar was sponsored by the national YWCA and included approximately 45 college students from all over the United States. The students worked at internships during the day and had classes in the evening, a few times per week. Academic credit was provided through the graduate school of the US Department of Agriculture, an entity I had not previously known to exist.

We often had guest speakers for our class sessions. The two I remember most clearly

were Senator Mark Hatfield (R-OR), whom I had known while growing up in Salem, Oregon, and a first-term Congressman named George H. W. Bush (R-TX). Years later, Hatfield and Bush both were speakers in K-State’s Landon Lecture Series.

During a visit to the office of Senator James Pearson (R-KS), I learned of the Library of Congress Surplus Book Program. We were able to go to a building that housed thousands of books, select the ones we wanted, and have them sent (using the Senator’s franking privilege) to Kansas State University. We sent several boxes of books that ended up either in the K-State libraries or political science department.

Continued on next page.



The title page of the Stockman Bible that contained the family records. Photo: Joan Smith

ment holdings. We were able to keep for ourselves a few books that were not needed by either the university or the department. One of these was a large, leather-bound Bible, published in 1826 in Philadelphia. It is large in format, with pages 8.5" X 11" and approximately 3" thick. We thought that the Bible should at least be preserved.

Fast-forward to February, 2024. As part of a household downsizing process, I decided we might finally part with several old books in one of our book cases, including some I had inherited from grandparents and earlier ancestors. I sent emails to our children and grandchildren to see who might want which items. As I was looking through the books to prepare descriptions, I discovered in the middle of the old Bible something I had not previously noticed – a 4-page document, entitled “Family Record” that was apparently at one time bound in the Bible. The pages contained the names, birth and death dates, and other information for the family of a man named David Stockman. On a separate page in the front of the Bible are written the names of David Stockman and Sophia Stockman. The handwriting on most of the entries in the family record appears to be the same as that of the David Stockman who signed the Bible.

Exploring the Document

Who were these people? This was clearly their family Bible. How did it pass out of their possession and end up in the Library of Congress Surplus Book Depository? Linda and I recalled a David Stockman who served as Budget Director under President Ronald Reagan. Could he possibly be related to this earlier David Stockman? I could not answer all of these questions, but should be able to find answers to some.

My first step, I decided, was to transcribe the handwritten entries in the family record. To do so, I first used a magnifying glass to look at the document itself. I then decided to scan each page and save the images as j-peg files. This made it possible to enlarge the images to examine the writing in much greater detail than could be done with the magnifying glass.

Scanning also made possible the reproduction of the images, as illustrated at the end of the article. I provide here what I believe to be a true transcription. The transcribed handwritten entries are in italics. In a few places, I have added corrections or comments in brackets.

Transcription

Page 1: “Marriages” [The family have recorded here not only David Stockman’s marriages but also his and his first wife’s birth information.]

David Stockman & Sophia Waskey was Marid [sic: were married] June the 29th in the year of our Lord 1806.

David Stockman & Elizabeth Waskey was Married [sic: were married] [June] 7th 1838 In the year of our Lord 1838.

David Stockman was born in the year of our lord 1783. The 25th day of April.

Sophia Stockman Born March the 11th, 1785. Deceased the 2nd of May 1837 – Aged 52 years and 22 days.

[See pages 14 and 15 for Images 1 and 2.]

Page 2: “Births”

Joseph Stockman, Son of David Stockman & Sophia Stockman, was born February 28th at 6 O’Clock Am [a.m.] in the year of our Lord 1808.

Caroline Stockman, Daughter of the above named parents was born the 22nd of May at 11 O’Clock in the morning in the year of our Lord 1810.

Louisa Stockman, Daughter of the above named parents was born June the 7th at 4 O’Clock in the morning in the year of our Lord 1813.

Page 3: “Births”

William Perryman Stockman Son of the above named parents was born April 19 at 6 O’Clock Pm [p.m.] in the year of our Lord 1816.

Eleanor Stockman Daughter of the above

named parents was born the 23rd of October at 7 O'Clock Pm [p.m.] in the year of our Lord 1819.

Evaanne [Eva Anne?] Stockman Daughter of the above named parents was born 26 of March at 6 O'Clock Pm [p.m.] in the year of our Lord 1822.

Mary Malinda Stockman Daughter of the above named parents was born the January 24th at 6 O'Clock in the evening in the year of our Lord 1826.

Martha ann [Ann] Sophia Stockman Daughter of the above named parents was born the 9th of August 6 O'Clock in the morning In the year of our Lord 1828.

[See pages 16 and 17 for Images 3 and 4.]

Page 4: "Deaths"

Elizabeth Waskey Born 1789. Deceased 1857 Aged 68 years.

Ellen [Eleanor] Stockman Died May 11, 1863 Age 40 years 7 months And 7 days.

David Stockman Dide [Died] October 9th 1864 Age 81 years 5 months And 16 Days.

Martha Ann Soppia Stockman Born Aug. 9, 1828. Died April 6 1900. [This last entry is written in a different hand from the earlier ones. It also represents Martha Stockman's second middle name as Soppia rather than Sophia.]

Summary

The document tells us a lot about David Stockman and his family. He was born in 1783 and married Sophia Waskey on June 29, 1806, when he was 23 and she was 21. They had eight children – two sons and six daughters – over a period of twenty years, from Joseph in 1808 to Martha in 1828. Sophia died in 1837, when she was 52 and David 54. In 1838, David married Elizabeth Waskey. She died in 1857, age 68, and he in 1864, age 81. The document also provided the death dates of two of the children.

What might Ancestry.com and other internet sites add to this preliminary picture...?

Exploring the Internet

What might Ancestry.com and other internet sites add to this preliminary picture of the David Stockman family? I know I have only scratched the surface of available internet resources, but even preliminary exploration has helped to add details to the picture. Using my own Ancestry membership, I created a David Stockman tree on Ancestry.com. It did not take long for that tree to accumulate some of the little green "leaves" known as "hints." Clicking on those hints led me to three "other member" trees. They provided me a lot more information than I have space to share here, but it included the facts that David, Sophia, and Elizabeth were all born in Frederick, Maryland, married in that area, and buried in cemeteries in Maryland. The family trees (at least some of them) tell us that Elizabeth was Sophia's younger sister. So, when she married David in 1838, her brother-in-law became her husband and her nieces and nephews became her step-children.

Ancestry provides information concerning the parents and grandparents of David and his two spouses. David's parents were immigrants from Germany, as were the grandparents of Sophia and Elizabeth. Ancestry also provides lots of additional information on several of the children of David and Sophia – whom they married, names of children, whom they married, etc. I also found on Ancestry email links for the owners of other family trees. I tried sending messages to two of those owners, both of whom appeared to be Stockman descendants. I received a reply from one of them and we have been in email correspondence.

The internet also helped to answer the question whether Reagan Budget Director Da-

Continued on next page.

vid Stockman was a descendant of Family Record David Stockman. I simply did a search on “David Stockman, Budget Director.” That led me to a Wikipedia article on David Alan Stockman (born November 10, 1946), who was a US Congressman from Michigan (1977-1981) before becoming Director of the Office of Management and Budget (1981-1985). The Wikipedia article mentioned that he was the son of Allen Stockman and Carol “(née Bartz)” Stockman. A further search on his parents’ names led to Find-A-Grave sites that indicated that his paternal grandparents were also German immigrants – but long after the time of the Stockman family of the Family Record. So, no, there was not an identifiable relationship.

What About Discrepancies?

Given the wealth of information the internet can give us, it is sometimes tempting to ignore or overlook discrepancies. Or, we can regard discrepancies as disappointments. We should do neither. Discrepancies are valuable discoveries, since they can often lead to correction of errors. Even when they are not easily resolved, they can lead us to dig more deeply into family history and other documents to seek clarification.

When discrepancies between the written document and the online source is discovered, how might they be resolved? We might normally assume that the written document is more authoritative than online sources. Online family trees may have copied errors from elsewhere. Census takers may have recorded names or other information incorrectly. But errors can also occur in written records, so it is sometimes difficult to know which source to trust.

These challenges are illustrated by five discrepancies between the Stockman Family Record and online sources:

1. Marriage date for David Stockman and Sophia Waskey.

Two online sources give the date as June 21, 1806. The Family Record quite clearly gives it as June 29th, 1806. Even if the vertical

line in the 9 could be mistaken for the number 1, the “th” confirms that it could not be that number. June 21 was a Saturday that year, June 29 a Sunday. More online exploration might resolve the uncertainty, but I favor the June 29 date in the document.

2. Marriage of David and Elizabeth.

Some online family trees list Elizabeth’s last name as Schultz. The Family Record quite clearly gives it as Waskey. There was apparently another David Stockman, who lived in Ohio, and who married an Elizabeth Schultz. Some researcher apparently picked up this wrong information and it was copied into other trees. The document serves as an authoritative correction to the internet in this instance.

When Sophia died in 1837 at age 52, she left her widower, David, and eight children, ranging in age from 9 to 29. The four youngest, all girls, were 9, 11, 14, and 18 that year. Their Aunt Elizabeth may have helped take care of the children from the time of Sophia’s death, and perhaps even before, if she died of a long illness. Whatever their feelings for one another, it appears to have been a very practical solution to this household challenge for David to marry his deceased wife’s younger sister a year or so after Sophia’s death.

3. Louisa Stockman’s Birth Date.

Louisa, the third child, is listed in the Family Record as having been born on June 7, 1813. Online sources, however, list her birth date as February 7, 1813. In this case, it is more difficult to attribute the discrepancy simply to a careless researcher. At least some of the online trees cite the *Maryland, U.S., Births and Christenings Index, 1662-1911* as authoritative for that date. So, which is correct? I lean toward the Family Record, but this is something that will require more digging.

4. William Stockman’s Middle Name and Birth Date.

The Family Record lists the name of the second son (fourth child) as William Perryman Stockman. Online sources list him as William Perry Stockman or William P. Stock-

man. Given the “-man” ending on the name Stockman, it is possible that this was merely a handwriting error. A close investigation of the written entry possibly shows that the writer started to strike out the ending, but that is not certain. Again, this discrepancy calls for more exploration, but I tend in this case to lean toward “Perry” rather than “Perryman” as the middle name.

Online trees list only a year for William’s birth, and that only a rough estimate based on later census entries. The document in this case provides a clear date.

5. **Eleanor/Ellen Stockman.**

At first glance the Family Record seems to indicate nine rather than eight children. There are the eight whose birth dates are given on pp. 2-3, plus Ellen Stockman, whose death date is given on p. 4. Some online trees list all nine as children of David and Sophia. I initially thought that Ellen might simply have been another name for Eleanor, who was born 23 October 1819. However, that explanation seemed not so simple, given other information in the Family Record.

If Ellen “*Died May 11, 1863 Age 40 years 7 months And 7 days,*” as the Family Record indicates, that would have placed her birth date in 1822, in or near October. Perhaps Ellen was a different name for Eva Anne

Given the wealth of information the internet can give us, it is sometimes tempting to ignore or overlook discrepancies. Or, we can regard discrepancies as disappointments. We should do neither. Discrepancies are valuable discoveries, since they can often lead to correction of errors.

(Evaanne), who has an 1822 birth date, but in March. If not, it appears unlikely that Ellen would have been born less than seven months after Eva Anne. Clearly, some of the information in the Family Record is erroneous. My guess at that point was that Ellen really was Eleanor and died at age 42 rather than 40, but more exploration was needed.

Find-A-Grave has Ellen Stockman being born October 23, 1819, and provides a photo of her tombstone in Jefferson United Methodist Church Cemetery in Frederick MD. This confirms that Ellen and Eleanor were the same person. My initial hunch was right. However, the Family Record was incorrect in its listing of her age at time of death. She was 43 years, six months, and 19 days old when she died, almost three years older than the Family Record indicated.

Conclusion

What genealogical lessons might be drawn from this exploration? Some thoughts:

1. Be open to the discovery of old documents and be open to the exploration of their genealogical implications.
2. Finding someone else’s ancestors can be as much fun as finding one’s own.
3. Use the internet to enrich the story told by the found document, but be wary of possible errors.
4. Also be wary of errors in the document itself.
5. Treat discrepancies as opportunities for further exploration.

See next 4 pages for pictures of the records found in the Stockman Family Bible.

FAMILY RECORD.

MARRIAGES.

David Stockman &
Sophia Waskey was
Married June the 29th
in the year of our
Lord 1808.

David Stockman
& Elizabeth
Waskey was
Married 7th 1838
In the year of
our Lord 1838

MARRIAGES.

David Stockman
Was Born in the year
of our Lord 1783 the
25th day of April

Josiah Stockman
Born March the 11th
1785 Deceased the
2nd of May 1837
Aged 52 years and
22 days

FAMILY RECORD.

BIRTHS.

BIRTHS.

Joseph Stockman
 Son of David Sto
 ckman & Sophia
 Stockman was born
 February 28th at 6
 o'clock in the
 year of our Lord ~~1808~~
 1808

Caroline Stockman
 Daughter of the above
 named parents was
 born the 29th of May
 at 11 o'clock in the
 morning in the year
 of our Lord 1810.

Louisa Stockman
 Daughter of the a
 bove named parents
 was born June the 7th
 at 4 o'clock in the mo
 rning in the year of our
 Lord 1813.

FAMILY RECORD.

BIRTHS.

William Perryman
Stockman Son of
the above named Par-
ents was born Apr.
17th at 6 O'clock Pm
in the year of our
Lord 1816

Eleanor Stockman
Daughter of the above
named Parents was born
the 23rd of October at 7
O'clock Pm in the year
of our Lord 1819

Evaann Stockman
~~Stockman~~ Daughter of
the above named pa-
rents was born 26 of
March at 6 O'clock
Pm in the year of our
Lord 1822

BIRTHS.

Mary Malinda
Stockman Daughter
of the above named
parents was Born the
January 24th at 6 O'c-
ck in the evening in the
year of our Lord 1825

Marianna Sophia
Stockman Daughter
of the above named
Parents was Born Jan
9th of August 6 O'c-
ck in the morning in
the year of our Lord
1828

FAMILY RECORD.

DEATHS.

Elizabeth Worsley
Born 1789
Deceased January
17th 1859
Aged 68 Years,

Ellen Stockman
Died May 11th 1863
Age 40 years 7 months
And 7 Days

David Stockman
Died October 9th 1864
Age 81 years 5 months
And 16 Days

DEATHS.

Martha Ann
Soppia Stockman
Born Aug. 9, 1828.
Died April 6, 1900.

Lestle Wilbur Newcomer (1901—1980) The Kansas Man

A Brief Biography

By Holly C. Friesen, his granddaughter

It was September 26, 1966. Many of the more than 400 delegates of the International Bridge, Tunnel and Turnpike Association (IBTTA) were seated in the upper chambers of the Vatican for their annual convention in Rome. As might be expected, they were nervous.

Few of them had ever seen a Pope, let alone meet in his presence. And the Kansan—L.W. Newcomer—a strong Presbyterian—was no exception. This 65-year old native of Alexander, Kansas, had begun to share his engineering knowledge of highway construction and turnpike operations with Italy more than ten years ago. This advising occurred during the preliminary planning stages of the Autostrade, called “The Highway to the Sun.” Although he had received many thanks from those abroad, the recognition he was about to witness during the last days of his reign as President of IBTTA would be the high point of his long and successful career.

He was to be one of the principal speakers on the program that day where he would deliver a dissertation on “The Brotherhood of Man.” Upon learning that it was Pope Paul’s 69th birthday, he asked the proper manner of extending greetings, but was informed hastily by his Catholic Brethren that such things “just aren’t done!” Since an address on the brotherhood of man was too serious a subject to link a birthday greeting, Newcomer decided to handle it in his own way.

On completion of his speech, the Pope stepped

down from his throne to personally congratulate the speaker. With formalities behind him, Newcomer dismissed protocol and said to the Pope: “I wish you a very happy birthday, your Holiness.” With surprise and decided pleasure, Pope Paul VI replied, “Ah, you know?!”

At the close of the formal ceremonies the Pontiff insisted on granting L.W. and Mabel, his wife, a private audience. Then he made what was considered one of his rare public presentations: a silver-gold medallion, representing his travels in the U.S., India, and Monte Cassino. The inscription in Latin is translated “My Hand to Yours.” In doing this, he cited Newcomer as honored above many “For International Leadership and Accomplishments,” noting that transportation and communications are essential steps to bringing the world peace. (1)

He received similar awards such as one for “World Leadership,” presented by the Italian Government, and his second coveted medal

commemorating the 10th anniversary of the Autostrade. However, L.W. considered this medal as “frosting on the cake.” It became a shining fixture in the Newcomer home that reminded everyone how even the Holy Father himself was wholly captivated by L.W., one of those special light-hearted people who can and do always manage to inject gaiety and human warmth into the dreariest of proceedings. (2)

The Master Storyteller concludes by adding the final touch to his own story:

Congressman Kluczynski said



Lestle Wilbur Newcomer, also known as L.W. or “Newc”

to me after the audience with the Pope: “Newcomer, you did yourself proud today, and I’m proud of you.” The following day, however, he tempered that remark with, “This week you are a big shot in Rome. However, Mr. President, remember this when you get back home. You’ll be just like I am when I come back home from Congress after some big accomplishment, and your wife will be just like my wife. She’ll take it all out of you by saying: ‘Honey, carry out the trash!’”(3) Amid the attention he received, he admitted this thought kept him humble.

Lestle Wilbur Newcomer was born November 23, 1901, in Alexander, Kansas, to Dilliard Sidney and Catherine Osborne Newcomer. His father and mother, both children of Civil War veterans, lived in a sod house on their Kansas homestead of one hundred and sixty acres. His father had been born and raised in Indianapolis, Indiana, and his mother in Decatur County, Iowa. They met in Indiana and after their marriage, they settled south of Alexander in Rush County where the two oldest sons were born. Lestle Wilber or L.W. was the ninth of ten children. (4)

His parents were strong, sturdy pioneers, who raised their children to value good hard work, the Bible, an abiding faith in God, and to appreciate and cultivate a good sense of humor. His father, a silent, lean fellow, worked railroad construction and farmed the land, grew sweet clover and acted as country mailman. From him, L.W. learned the importance of work and responsibility to family. His mother, Catherine Newcomer, was the social, outgoing, witty one, and L.W. inherited her nature. Catherine Newcomer was a great storyteller and it seemed that L.W. captured this quality as well. The one memory his wife Mabel recalls, besides the heavy, black satin dress his mother always wore, was how their household seemed to vibrate with chatter, business, and LOTS of laughter. This positive upbringing would support him all his life. (5)

L.W. entered Kansas State Agricultural College in Manhattan, Kansas, in the fall of 1919. Along with regular freshman classes, he im-

mediately became involved in sports: tennis, baseball, and basketball. All through his life he would demonstrate a loyalty to his school that earned him the name “Mr. K-State.”(6) He helped recruit football players, and set the record of life-time attendance to the K.S.U. basketball and football games.

In 1919, he pitched for the freshman baseball team and the next summer for an independent team in Arcadia, Kansas, while at the same time working a job for the State Highway Department. He considered himself 50% self-sufficient and was happy to make more money in baseball that summer than he did on the job.

Carl Newcomer, his eldest brother and a Kansas legislator, was a great influence on L.W.’s life. Carl is described in the local paper as “level-headed, practical in all his ways, plain as an old shoe and has no time or patience with fancy doodads in government...”(7) In 1938, he was one of the Republican candidates for governor. Carl helped L.W. financially through college and treated him like his own son.

When William Jardine, came into office in 1918 as president of Kansas State Agricultural College, it was during a period of turmoil, unsettled by war. The school had survived an influenza epidemic and was experiencing economic readjustments from the 1920’s depression. L.W. got in on the beginning of the progressive boom in his field of study: engineering. KSAC had begun to shake the “silo tech” image and the “Mechanic Arts” label, which described carpentry and blacksmithing, and call this area of study “Engineering.” By the year 1923, when L.W. graduated, the Engineering Experiment Station on campus was cooperating with the U. S. Bureau of Public Roads to solve road surface problems. (8) L.W. would return in 1932 to receive his second Civil Engineering degree and present a thesis on several original designs for the surface of roads.

His involvement on campus included being an active member of the American Society of Civil Engineers, installed at Kansas State Col-

lege in 1922. He was in the founding chapter of Sigma Phi Epsilon, later becoming an officer. (9) Later in his life, he served as President of the K-State Alumni Association and was chairman of the University's national century endowment drive.

Ira Graham, one of his fraternity brothers from El Dorado, bragged about his hometown and convinced L.W. to come and work for a year as a design engineer at the White Eagle Oil Company in Augusta, Kansas. He worked there from the time he graduated in 1923 until April 1924. Then, he took a similar job with the Chicago Elevated Railways for six months working to construct a line from Evanston to Niles Center. Finishing this work, he was hired as bridge-project engineer for the Missouri State Highway Department. ElDorado drew him back again, this time because of Ira Graham's sister, Mabel, whom he courted and finally married June 24, 1926. (10)

Mable recalls the first time she met L.W.: "Ira would come home and talk about Lestle Newcomer, who he thought was the funniest man he had ever known. So, one weekend, he brought 'Newc' home for the night. When he got up the next morning, he realized he had forgotten his comb. He asked Ira if he could borrow his. Ira told him to go down the hall and into the front bedroom and he would find it. I was in the front bedroom getting ready to go someplace. He came in and this is where I met him—in the bedroom! We really laughed about this later on. Well, right away he knew that he would like to be with me more, so we started going out together..."(11)

Mabel Graham was born in El Dorado in 1905 and after graduating from high school, attended Missouri Christian College, where she studied music. Her father, Ora Graham, was very talented musically and played the fiddle for dances, along with the trombone and piano. Mabel became an excellent pianist. Her musical ability would bless many all through her life.

Mabel's father had died four years earlier, leaving his wife and six children. L.W. was like an adopted father and became a tremendous

help and support during their growing-up years.

The couple's first daughter, Joan Catherine Newcomer, was born the year the stock market "crashed" in 1929, and the Newcomers found themselves in the midst of a depression. L.W. rose to the occasion and not only looked after the affairs of his family, sister Madge, and friends, but also hired college boys and men to help work on the roads and bridges that needed rebuilt. L.W. invented, built and patented a portable rock screen for sizing materials to put on the road and Butler County used it during the first welfare program of 1931, which he also initiated. He directed work for over 500 unemployed men. They gathered rocks and crushed them in L.W.'s home-made "Bituminous Mat" to form a very durable, interlocking surface of road that was ready for the layer of oil.(13)

Some did not appreciate L.W.'s efforts to provide work for the unemployed and looked at it as accepting charity. He was threatened more than once, but in spite of some unpleasantness, most were grateful to be doing something.

In 1931, when Joan was two years old, L.W. became the County Engineer at the age of 29. Everyone was delighted and there were two things to celebrate now, as Mr. and Mrs. D. S. Newcomer, the early Kansas pioneers, celebrated their 55th wedding anniversary. Meanwhile, Mable's two brothers, Ralph and Robert, were making headlines. Ralph Graham was attending KSAC, and as a freshman Sigma Phi, was notably rising to the status of "All-American" in football. Robert was fast becoming a composer and the Newcomers attended musical events at the Municipal Auditorium where they saw Robert's first opera "Sisters of Mercy." In January 1933, Mr. and Mrs. Newcomer were the proud parents of a seven-pound baby boy, Graham Newcomer. L. W. was quoted as saying:

"My son is almost certain to be an All-American someday. He is already crooning and that is one of the first pre-requisites of a great athlete."(14)

Much later, their family was completed when a little girl was born and they named her Janet. She was spunky and full of good humor, just like her dad.

Besides entertaining family members and friends with his talent for recalling past experiences and events, L.W. possessed a poet's heart. His rhymes may not have always matched the rule books, but the heart was there. He penned hundreds of poems to his children and friends, but mostly to his beloved wife. This typified the strong love they had for each other, which grew as the years went by. Written to Mabel, June 24, 1940:

Fourteen years ago today
We stood up straight & said our "say,"
The words were said
The "deed" was done,
And you still are the only one. (16)

Those who came in contact with the Newcomers and Grahams always sensed the sincerity of friendship that at all times embraced them. Mabel was a decided complement to L.W. Understanding and full of good works, she was content to be the graceful hostess behind the scenes, never resenting her husband's professional successes, but always cheering him on. (17) L.W. was a family man and to show his humor, he cut out clips of cartoons from the newspaper and put them on the refrigerator. Many people benefited from his humor and good advice, which they sought throughout his life.

Their love was to be tried in the coming years when L.W. volunteered to serve in World War II as a Lieutenant Commander to a group of Seabees in the Pacific. During his two and a half years overseas, Mabel and L.W. wrote a letter to each other every single day.

As it turned out, even when "Newc" was away, he still managed to make the news. One of

the close personal friendships he made while in the South Pacific was a war correspondent Ernie Pyle. In a column he wrote, Pyle described his friendship with "Newc" Newcomer as something "that just grew on the strength of this Seabee being a super-swell guy"(18) He goes on to say... "Newc' is tall and skinny. He has a hook nose with knots on it, which he says he got from never turning his back on a good fight. He is the 'old shoe' type. He cusses or philosophizes, as the occasion warrants, in an accent that couldn't be anything but prairies. He is Kansan clear through, and proud of it."(19)

When not building airfields, roads, camps or the other things Seabees built, Lt. Commander Newcomer was telling tales about his state. He was Kansas' best "chamber of commerce" for promoting a positive image.

As a public works officer of the island, he managed to rig running water and indirect lighting fashioned from gasoline tins to help light the tents. The camp was tight and clean. He remarked to correspondent Alvin McCoy, of the *Kansas City Star*, April 9, 1945: "There's not a whole lot more we can build here...I'm ready to shove off for Kansas."(20)

Continued on next page.



The Newcomer Family at home in 1945

It was good he at least had the Seabees to talk to, for during this time, his favorite friend and brother, Carl Newcomer, died.

During the war years, Newcomer had learned much about building fast and well under pressure, and cutting the “fluff” to get to true business. This served him well later when he served as office and contract engineer for the Turnpike. He was involved with the 236 mile turnpike built across Kansas in one year and ten months, and that was a record! The road system set the model for other states to follow. L.W. Stayed involved with the Kansas Turnpike for seventeen years until his retirement in 1972. (22)

All three Newcomer children grew up and attended K-State. Joan married a California man and had four children; Janet married an air force officer and had three children; and Graham married a small-town girl and had four children. Grandchildren were Newcomer’s greatest blessing and joy, besides watching K-State win at football.

Joan’s youngest son, Tim Sistrunk, had an incredible ability to write at an early age. He expressed his feelings about his granddad in this sixth grade essay:



Newcomer and grandchildren Dana, Holly and Tim in 1966.

“My grandfather is a tall, strong-faced man with a skinny lip and a broad smile. He has eyes that twinkle and are a pleasant shade of blue with a whitish-grey brow set over it. His face bears no scars of age and his nose, although slightly large, lightens his appearance considerably. Bearing an air of importance with him, I will always respect and love him very much. White hair hugs his head and a slender part slides through the head. He has somewhat big ears and pulls his left ear every time he is thinking. (I think Truman did that to show intelligence.) His leadership and the knack to get people to do what they probably did not want to do (sometimes a slight thump helps) have won him many awards. I see him in a blue suit of a Naval Uniform with a Wild-Cat tie on. He’s really a K-State fan.” (23)

The affections of his grandchildren brought tears to his eyes. The awards and honors got him into *Who’s Who in America*. Rather than developing vanity, “Newc” took it all in stride. He jokes about himself in this poem:

WHO’S HE

Time passes on from then to now,

Before men realize:

As new things come and take a Bow,

The “Past” from Mem’ry flies.

A leader of your kind, one day,

You are, with certain Pride;

Then Time comes whisking on its way

New leaders with its Tide.

So, Honored Men of Proud “Who’s Who,”

Be happy as can be;

That honors have been given you,
for soon you’ll join “Who’s He?” (24)

This was written shortly after his one year term as President of the International Bridge, Tunnel and Turnpike Association.

In 1971, Mabel retired as Church organist, with honors, after 28 years of dedicated service. L.W. would be 70 years old in November of that year, and in accord with the state’s age requirements, he complied, and retired also.

The highlight of his retirement party was

the announcement of the establishment of the L.W. Newcomer Scholarship Fund for engineering students at KSU. At the grand and glorious celebration with friends and associates, Governor Robert B. Docking formally announced “Newc’s” retirement, effective December 1, 1971. Newcomer was one of the oldest employees of the turnpike.

He continued various consulting jobs, and even was requested by Governor Robert Bennett to serve as Temporary Highway Director, until someone could be found who was capable. For some reason, it was hard to fill L.W.’s shoes. All in all, L.W. and Mabel enjoyed their retirement time, and celebrated their Golden Wedding anniversary during the United States centennial year—which seemed appropriate for a Newcomer. (25)

And then, one day on December 21, 1980, while visiting his daughter’s family in Poquoson, Virginia and reaching to put a log on the fire, his heart gave out and he passed on at the age of 79.

The papers nationwide and the many friends he had made in his lifetime overseas as well felt the shock of his death. Charles Heilman, a close friend, gave a memorable speech at his funeral that few will ever forget. He spoke on “A Perspective of ‘Newc’” and described the “Newc” everyone knew: “the one full of rich and inexhaustible yarns and anecdotes...his conversation sparkling with wit, his observations keen...” Two things stood out above all others: , “...his enormous capacity for friendship and, his immense, intense love of, and loyalty to, his family...”

“...”Newc” cast a long shadow over the day-to-day affairs of this community — he leaves a large gap it will take more than one man to fill... For, while we shall no longer see the figure of this lean, lanky, rangy, hawk-nosed friend striding along the streets of this town of ours, while we shall no more hear, in actuality, him roar that warm, that hearty, that heartfelt, greeting, we shall continue to see him still, in our mind’s eye, and to hear him, and to remember him, in our heart of hearts, for he is forever en-

shrined in the amber of our memories. (26)

MY PRAYER

by L.W. Newcomer

Father in Heaven, bless me with a continued zest for life.

Give me the physical and mental stability to properly pursue it fully.

Let me grow older gracefully, dear God, and when my usefulness here is over,

Let me pass on peacefully with the confident awareness

of Thy Divine Providence.

Amen (27)

END NOTES

1. Photo Album, 1956-1975, Turnpike Days.
2. Ibid.
3. Stratford and Klintworth, The Kingdom of Butler, (El Dorado, Kansas: Butler County Historical Society, 1970), 3rd Ed., 1875-1970, p. 219\
4. Earl Williams, Butler County Manuscript on L.W. Newcomer, 1965.
5. Photo Album, Newcomer/Graham –Letters and Photos, 1926-1943.
6. Photo Album, Book II, newcomer/Grahams thru 1942.
7. Ibid.
8. Charles C. Howes, Kansas State University. A Pictorial History, 1863-1963, (KSU, 1962), p. 120-126.
9. KSAC Senior Class, Royal Purple 1923 (Jefferson City, Missouri: Hugh Stephens Press, 1923, p. 228
10. Williams, p. 1
11. Interview with Mabel Graham Newcomer (wife). March 14, 1987.
12. Photo Album, 1956-1975, Turnpike Days.
13. Photo Album, Newcomers—Letters and Photos, 1926-1943.
14. Ibid.
15. Stratford and Klintworth, p. 216-217
16. Photo Album, Newcomers/grahams—Letters and Photos, 1926-1943.
17. Interview with Joan Newcomer Sistrunk McNeil (eldest daughter), April 17, 1987.
18. Photo Album, 1943-1965, Letters and Family.
19. Ibid.
20. Ibid.
21. Ibid.
22. Kansas Construction Magazine, 1954, 1966, 1973.
23. Photo Album, 1943-1965, Letters and Family.
24. Ibid.
25. Photo Album, 1956-1975, Turnpike Days.
26. Photo Album, December 21, 1980, Death and letters of L.W.
27. Ibid.

OTHER SOURCES NOT CITED

1. Kansas Government Journal, February 1938.
2. Klintworth & Borger, The Kingdom of Butler—Her People, (Butler County Historical Society, El Dorado, KS., 1980)
3. Newcomer, L.W. Tales of Three Tours, Volume One, 1966.
4. My own memory.

New Books at the Research Library

By Virginia Beddow and Theresa Wilson

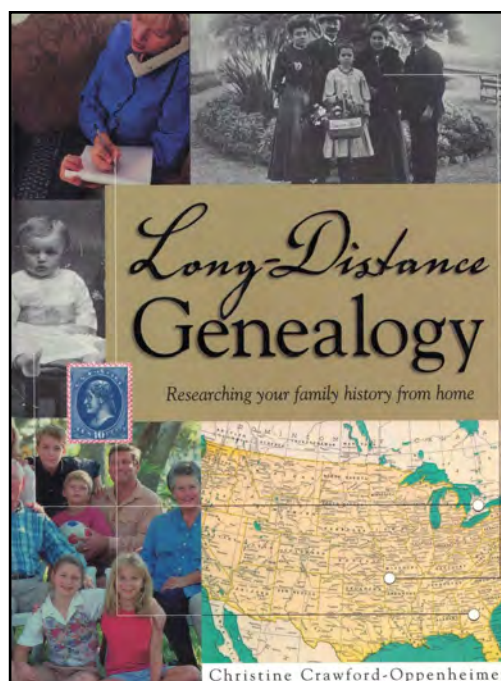
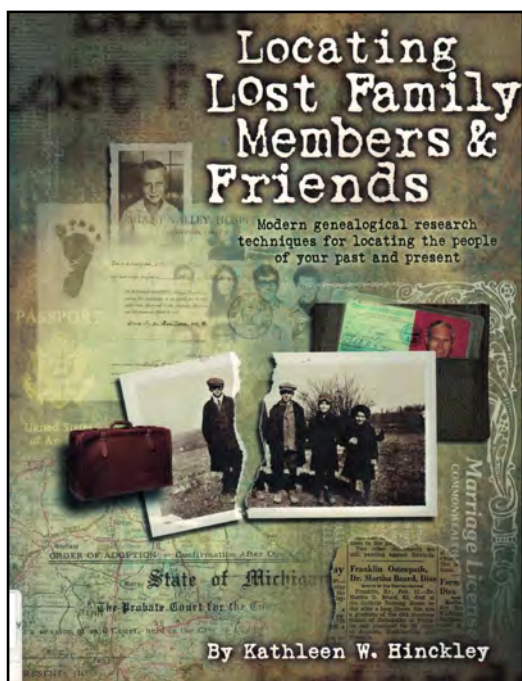


Three Books to Help You With Your Research Strategy

- Are you just beginning your search for your ancestors?
- Did you jump into genealogy with both feet and now want to know more about the subject?
- Are you wondering where to go next in your search?
- Do you want help organizing your discoveries?

We have added three books to the library that can help you. They are part of a series of books for genealogists from Betterway Books in Cincinnati.

The books are laid out in readable style with outside columns for icons to guide your study. The same icons appear in each book. Quick-reference lists, tables, case studies, and charts provide data to help you. All the books are hardback and include an index and illustrations.

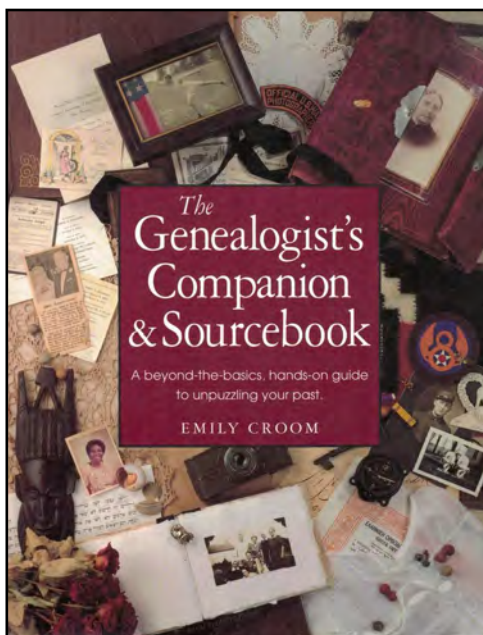


Locating Lost Family Members and Friends: Modern genealogical research techniques for locating the people of your past and present. Kathleen W. Hinckley. Cincinnati: Betterway Books. 1999.

Hinckley is a professional private investigator and Certified Genealogical Record Specialist. Her first chapter will help you get started and organized. The other 16 chapters provide information on the various sources available. 176 pages.

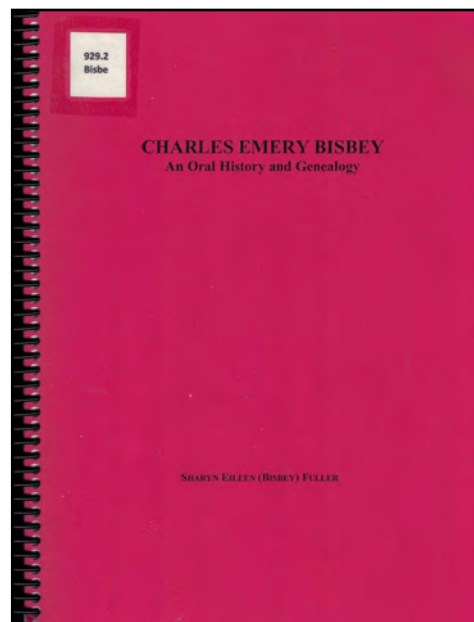
Long-Distance Genealogy: Researching your family history from home. Christine Crawford-Oppeneheimer, MLS. Cincinnati: Betterway Books. 2000.

The author is a librarian, archivist, and professional genealogist. Her book focuses on help for those who cannot travel to sources. Chapter 29 gives help on hiring a genealogist. Appendix C tells where to write for state vital records while Appendix E is a list of state libraries and archives.



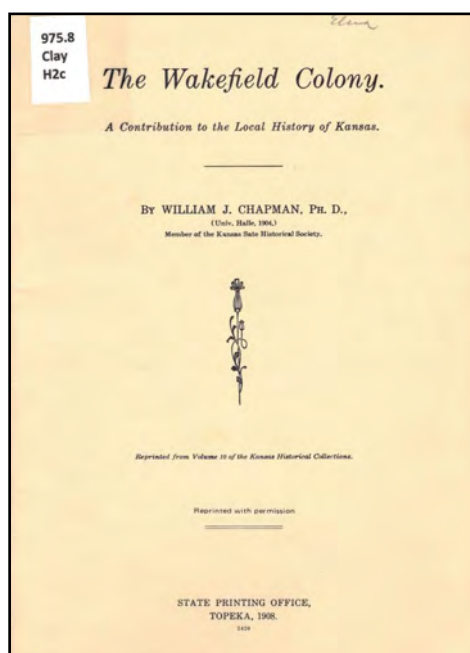
The Genealogist's Companion & Sourcebook: A beyond-the-basics, hands-on guide to unpuzzling your past. Emily Croom. Cincinnati: Betterway Books. 1994.

Have you encountered a brick wall? Croom, an experienced genealogist, suggests new paths to follow. She shows how to get past obstacles and how to use cluster genealogy effectively. Appendix B provides both Dewey Decimal System numbers and Library Congress System numbers that will help you find books in a library. Appendix G lists Roman and Arabic numbers to interpret dates. 229 pages.



Charles Emery Bisbey: An Oral History and Genealogy. Sharyn Eileen (Bisbey) Fuller. Westminster, CA: Sharyn Fuller. 1987.

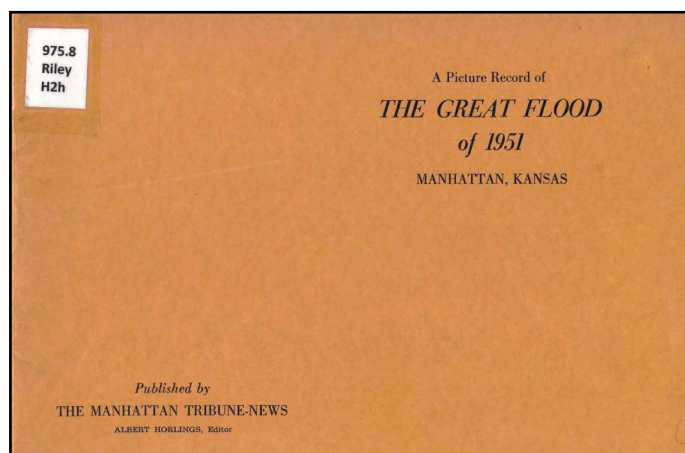
This family history is organized into two parts. Part One is the oral history of Charles Bisbey, 47 pages of text and photographs. Part Two traces his ancestors from John Besbeech, about 1580 to Charles, twelfth generation, with text and photographs. Appendices contain documents that supplement the history. The spiral-bound 237 page book contains end notes and an index.



The Wakefield Colony. A Contribution to the Local History of Kansas. William J. Chapman, Ph.D. Topeka: State Printing Office. 1908. Fifth printing.

The material for this history was collected for the most part in 1905 and first appeared serially in *Clay Center Times*. Chapman discovered more material in 1907 and revised it for this 1908 edition.

Chapman's book begins in 1856 and traces the settling until 1874. Appendix I covers "Rev. Wm. Todd and the Madura Mission," "Pioneers of the Republican Valley," and "The Riches of Over Stowey." Appendix II includes the Marshall Maps. Appendix III is Chapman's chronological table. 53 pages of documented history. No index.



A Picture Record of The Great Flood of 1951, Manhattan, Kansas. Albert Horlings, Editor. Manhattan: The Manhattan Tribune News.

The flood of July 1951 was the greatest in the recorded history of the Kaw-Blue country of Kansas. A record 21.38 inches of rain had fallen in May and June. Five and a half inches fell on Monday night, July 9. By Thursday morning it had exceeded 12 inches in as many days.

The waters covered the entire southern half of Manhattan from First Street to the edge of 14th street and a large part of the north side of town lying east of City Park. About 220 blocks were under water.

The flood crested the Kaw River and surpassed the 1903 flood by more than six feet. An interesting illustration in the book is a map that shows the extent of 1951 flood, the 1903 flood, and the 1844 flood as remembered by Kaw people and early settlers.

This booklet was prepared by the staff of *The Tribune-News*. A one-page history plus excellent captions with the photographs tell the story. Sixty-two photos on 44 pages.

NOTE: You can find out more about the 1951 flood in Kansas in the November, 2021, issue of *Kansas Kin*.

Abstracts of Manhattan Area Newspaper Content

The Births, Marriages, Deaths, and Other Items published in the Manhattan Republic During the Period of 1 January 1941 Thru 25 June 1942 at Manhattan Riley County, Kansas. Sylvester Ekart. Manhattan: Riley County Genealogical Society.

The Births, Marriages, Deaths, and Other Items published in the Manhattan Republic During the Period of 2 July 1942 Thru 24 June 1943 at Manhattan Riley County, Kansas. Sylvester Ekart. Manhattan: Riley County Genealogical Society.

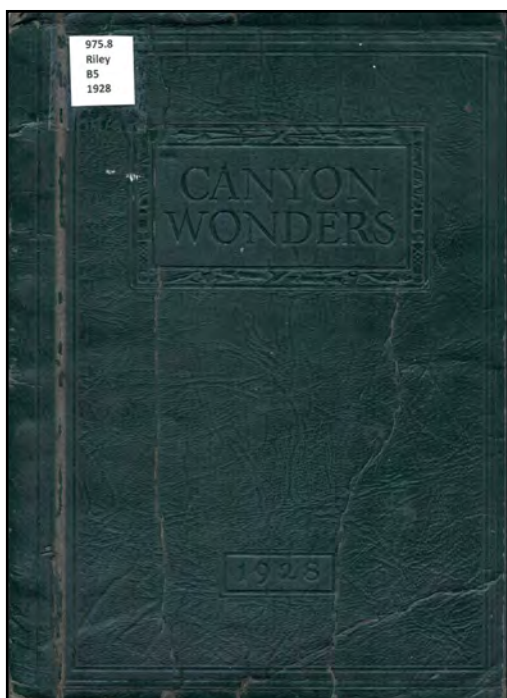
The Births, Marriages, Deaths, and Other Items published in the Manhattan Republic During the Period of 1 July 1943 Thru 27 June 1944 at Manhattan Riley County, Kansas. Sylvester Ekart. Manhattan: Riley County Genealogical Society.

The Births, Marriages, Deaths, and Other Items published in the Manhattan Republic During the Period of 3 August 1944 Thru 28 June 1945 at Manhattan Riley County, Kansas. Sylvester Ekart. Manhattan: Riley County Genealogical Society.

The Births, Marriages, Deaths and Other Items Published in the Manhattan Mercury During the Period of 2 January 1971 thru 29 June 1972 at Manhattan, Riley County, Kansas. Sylvester Ekart. Manhattan: Riley County Genealogical Society.

The Births, Marriages, Deaths and Other Items Published in the Manhattan Mercury During the Period of 1 June 1971 Thru 31 December 1971 at Manhattan, Riley County, Kansas. Sylvester Ekart. Manhattan: Riley County Genealogical Society.

Two Books Relating to Randolph (Kansas) High School



Canyon Wonder. Omo Attwood, Editor. Senior Class of Randolph High School. 1928.

Looking for an ancestor who attended Randolph Rural High School? This 1928 yearbook may help. It includes a brief history of the school and school song before the typical yearbook. Photographs of all faculty members appear for all grades plus a list of board members for the grade school and the high school.

The senior class section includes individual photographs and activities plus the class history and prophecy. The eighth grade class through the junior class are pictured in one photograph with each student individually identified. The single photograph of the grade school includes a list of students by class. Each high school activity includes a description and a photograph with students identified. The ad section shows the year book was well supported by the community. 39 pages.



The Khaki. Randolph: Class of Nineteen Eighteen Randolph High School. 1918.

This is another resource from Randolph High School. It begins with a tribute to graduates and students serving in the war. Typical pages include: individual pictures of faculty; seniors, and juniors. Group pictures show yearbook staff, sophomores, freshmen, and activities. Each class has a history and the seniors offer a prophecy, will, and dictionary.

Did you know?

There is a Kansas Council of Genealogical Societies or KCGS. You can access it here:

<https://www.kcgs.us/index.php>

One useful feature of KCGS is a listing of genealogical societies in Kansas. Some of them have a direct link to their individual websites. KCGS also has a small listing of speakers that are available for local genealogical societies. You can join on their website. They have both online and paper memberships

Visit the RCGS Research Library
2005 Claflin Road, Manhattan, Kansas

Newspaper Clippings about Amanda Arnold, Featured in "The City of Many Names": The Legacy of the Hartford Steamboat Immigrants in Manhattan Kansas"

Clipped by Sherry Butler

At Amanda Arnold's funeral in 1923, they rang the "bell saved from the wreck of the steamboat which brought Miss Arnold to Manhattan more than half a century ago...." (See clipping at bottom of next page.) Note that the Hartford Bell is now located in the lobby of the Riley County Historical Museum, 2309 Claflin, Manhattan, Kansas.

Amanda Arnold Elementary School is located at 1435 Hudson Avenue in Manhattan, Kansas. In 1983, U.S.D. 383 decided to name the school after this pioneer woman (Riley County Historical Society.)

WHY NOT?

Manhattan people have expressed the opinion that the new school building to be erected on the site of Central school should be called Amanda Arnold school in honor of Manhattan's first school teacher.

Why not?

Schools we have named for great men, Roosevelt and Eugene Field. That they well have served their people is true and well they deserve to have their memory thus perpetuated.

But why not honor one of our own? Why not preserve the memory of the pioneer woman who was the teacher of Manhattan's first venture in public schools? She also gave unselfishly of her talents for the sake of her people.

Let Manhattan honor the toiler in the ranks as well as the leader of men. Both laboured honestly and honorably.

PIONEER WOMAN DIES

Miss Arnold Dies Wednesday, Member of Company, Which Settled Manhattan

Miss Amanda Arnold, 86 years old, one of the members of the land settlement company which founded Manhattan, and believed to be the last survivor of the company, died Wednesday in a local hospital.

The story of her life is one of romantic adventure into an almost unsettled land. She came here on the steamboat "Hartford," which burned in the river. She taught the first school here. She was 15 years old when members of the land company arrived here.

She was born in Cincinnati, and has two surviving nieces, it was learned today. She had been in the hospital several years in poor health.

A fitting tribute was paid to the memory of Miss Amanda Arnold, pioneer Manhattan school teacher, when the bell saved from the wreck of the steamboat which brought Miss Arnold to Manhattan more than half a century ago, relates the Manhattan Nationalist, was tolled for a few minutes preceding the funeral services at the Methodist church. Miss Arnold, as a girl of 15, heard the bell ring times innumerable on the steamboat Hartford during that long voyage down the Ohio and Mississippi rivers and up the big Missouri and Kaw. She saw it brought ashore from the wreck of the Hartford a short distance down the river. She saw it turned over to the little Methodist congregation and installed in the little primitive chapel, and later moved to more commodious quarters as the town grew and the congregation prospered.

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In Memoriam: Mary Jane Brown

Mary Jane Brown was born February 2, 1925, in Waubaunsee, Kansas. She died at age 98 on November 15, 2023, at Via Christi Village in Manhattan, Kansas.

Mary Jane was an administrative officer in the Kansas State University Computing Services.

Upon retirement, Mary Jane worked as a volunteer for the Riley County Genealogical Society where she was president from 1997 to 2000. She was President during the building and dedication of the Eyestone Library Annex to the Riley County Genealogical Society Library at 2005 Claflin Road. She was also a member of the Greater Manhattan Community Foundation and Daughters of the American Revolution.

Kansas Kin submission guidelines

We are pleased you are considering submitting an article to the Riley County Genealogical Society for possible publication. *Kansas Kin* focuses on articles ranging from useful genealogical strategies and sources, to interesting accounts of personal research, to family stories, to local histories as they relate to Kansas. We strive to bring your ancestors to life through their stories.

MANUSCRIPTS

500 to 2,000 words, including reference notes, is the suggested length of submissions. Submit your document in Word format via email. Topical headings are preferred for longer pieces. All manuscripts and references should follow the *Chicago Manual of Style*. End notes are recommended, especially for books, articles, and websites.

IMAGES

Whenever possible, please provide images to accompany your submission. The image must be over 1MB in size, with good quality resolution. Please include a caption for each picture which includes a photo credit or source. All images must be sent as separate files. We prefer jpg format.

AUTHOR INFORMATION

Please provide a few sentences about the author(s) to accompany the manuscript.

DEADLINES

Submissions are due the first of the month in April and October. Address submissions to the editor at KansasKin@rileycgs.com

All submissions to *Kansas Kin* are subject to review by the RCGS Editorial Board and revisions may be made, by the editor.

Editor: Judy Regehr

Assistant Editor: Margaret Parker

Editorial Board: Barry Michie, Sherry Butler, Virginia Beddow

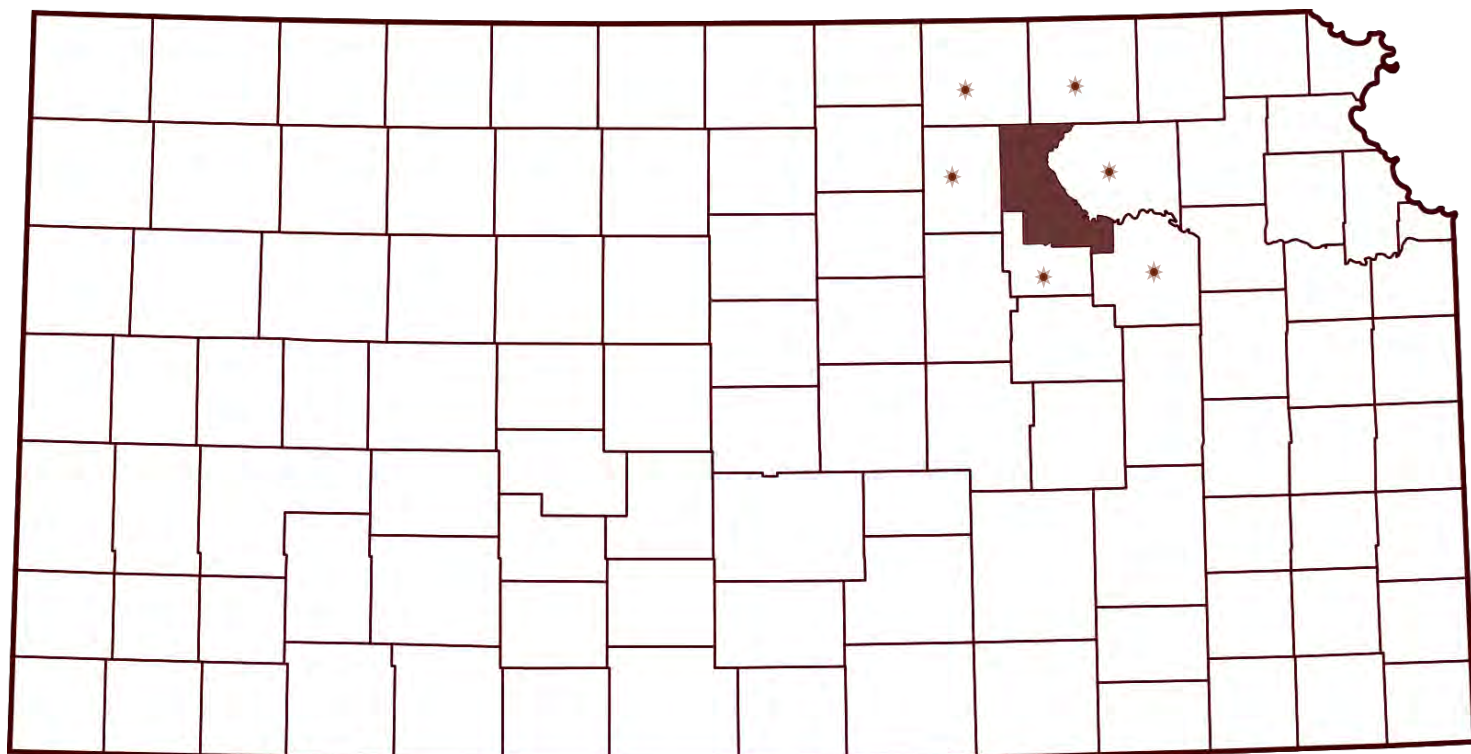




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Kansas Kin

A semi-annual publication of Riley County Genealogical Society
November 2024 Vol. 62, No. 2



Depiction of July 4, 1978, celebration at the Leach House, by artist Mary Moore McCown, commissioned by William and Linda Richter, 1987 (Richter Collection). See article on page 39.



***Kansas Kin* is a semi-annual
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**Membership in Riley County
Genealogical Society**

Dues: \$30 per calendar year. Join here:

<https://rileycgs.com/onlineJoin.php>

Kansas Kin is included with membership.

Kansas Kin Editor: Judy Regehr

Kansas Kin Email: KansasKin@rileycgs.com

RCGS Annual Meeting

2:30 pm, Sunday, November 17, 2024

Manhattan Public Library Auditorium

6 29 Poyntz, Manhattan, Kansas

Agenda:

- Election of officers
- Proposed Bylaws Change
- Program: On Freedom's Trail: The Underground Railroad in Riley County, Kansas

Free and open to the public

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***Kansas Kin* Mission Statement**

Collect, preserve and share information
for researching Kansas family histories.

A Message From the Editor

Dear Readers of *Kansas Kin*:

We welcome you to read the stories and research tips that the Riley County Genealogical Society members have contributed to this edition of *Kansas Kin*!

- William Richter tells the fascinating story of the Leach Mansion in Wamego. Have you heard the rumor that a tunnel connects the house to the opera house?
- Margaret Kline and Virginia Beddow share the value of Military Pension records for information about your ancestors — information that may not be found anywhere else.
- Sy Ekart, longtime member and life member of Riley County Genealogical Society, tells one more family story — this time the Dempsey family. Sy is an expert on the family histories of the Elbow Community east of Manhattan in Blue Township of Pottawatomie County. If you have ancestors who settled in this community, Sy can offer you a wealth of family history information.

We also invite you to contribute your fami-



ly stories, family heirloom stories, research triumphs, or other articles on genealogy and family history.

Judy Regehr, Editor

Slate of Officers for Riley County Genealogical Society 2025

Ginny Petersen -- President

Charlene Brownson -- Vice President

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116-Year-Old Valentine

By Theresa Marsolais Wilson

On Valentine's Day 1908, Frank Gibson Koehler gave a valentine to his sweetheart, Mary Anderson. He was 17 and she was 21. Two years and eight months later on October 26, 1910, they were married in Big Springs, Kansas. By then Frank was 20 years old and Mary was 24. Frank was underage and needed parental permission to marry. His mother, née Katherine Scouten, had died in December 1908 so his father, Frank J. Koehler, gave his permission. Frank and Mary had four children, two girls and two boys. The oldest, Cecilia Esther Koehler, was my mother. Frank and Mary Koehler were my maternal grandparents.

Mary kept the valentine the remainder of her life. I first became aware of the valentine in 2010 when I was doing research on Frank Gibson Koehler's mother, née Katherine Scouten. She had disappeared after an 1894 divorce and I was trying to find clues. My husband and I made a trip to Lyndon, Kansas, where Jan Koehler, my cousin's widow lived. Jan had quite a bit of information on the

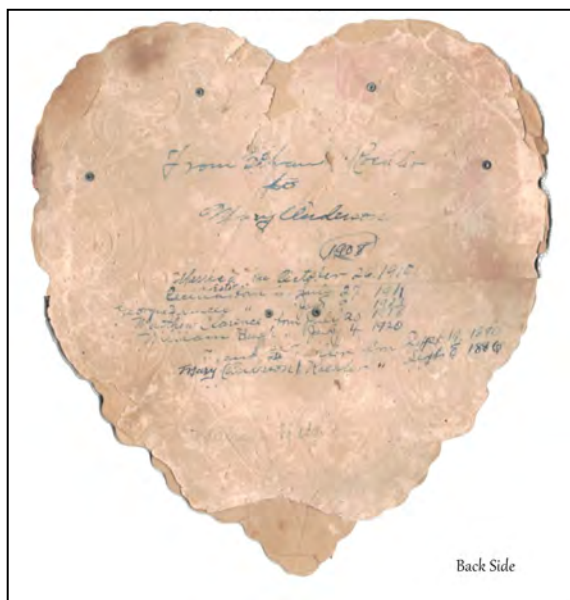


Mary Anderson and Frank Gibson. Photo courtesy of Theresa Wilson.

Koehler family. She was busy with clients the day we arrived, so I set up my copier/scanner and computer and began going through the files she provided.

I was amazed when I came across the valentine. It measured 10" x 10" and was too large to fit on my scanner so I scanned it in sections. Several years later after purchasing a

Continued on next page



The back of the valentine

From Frank Koehler
to
Mary Anderson
1908
Married on October 26, 1910
Cecilia Esther Koehler born July 27, 1911
Georgia Frances born January 9, 1913
Matthew Clarence born July 20, 1918
William Hugh born July 4, 1920
Frank Koehler born September 14, 1890
Mary (Anderson) Koehler born September 8, 1886

The family information on the back side of the valentine

“Valentine” continued from previous page

Flip-Pal mobile scanner, I was able to insert the scans into its software where the sections were “stitched” together. I then had nice photos of both sides of the valentine. On the reverse side my grandmother (I presume) had written “1908” and her husband’s name, their marriage date, and the names of their children with their birth dates.

Last year I was able to obtain the valentine from Jan Koehler. She had done a wonderful job of keeping it safe. Now I needed a way to display it where both sides were visible – I envisioned a frame on a pedestal which rotated. My vision came to fruition through the recommendation of the ladies at Candlewood Frame Shop and the work of a talented carpenter, Lowell Regehr. Lowell, my husband, and I brainstormed until we came up with the final design. Lowell Regehr then constructed the entire project.

The 1908 valentine is now ensconced between UV museum quality glass in a frame that rotates so both sides are visible.

Theresa Marsolais Wilson



The front side of the valentine in a frame on a rotating pedestal by Lowell Regehr, carpenter.

In Memoriam

Barry Michie

Feb. 8, 1944—Aug. 25, 2024

Barry Michie served as the President of Riley County Genealogical Society from 2015 to 2022.

During Barry’s term as President, the RCGS Board accomplished many important things. In 2016, Barry Michie and Judy Regehr and others worked with the Riley County Commissioners to extend the Platt House lease agreement for 40 more years after it expired in 2020. Since then, the Board made sure that the Research Library had new carpeting and new shelving made possible by the Bernie Butler Memorial. Charlene Brownson served as Barry’s Vice President and elevated the quality of the Sunday afternoon programs. During Barry’s tenure as President, the annual Pie Party tradition was started. Each year, it has attracted a lively crowd on a lovely fall day on the lawn of the Platt House. An active Board supported Barry for the seven years that he was President, and Barry was very supportive of the Board.

Barry was an excellent writer and contributed several articles to the *Kansas Kin* newsletter. He also served on the *Kansas Kin* editorial committee.

Barry’s obituary in the *Manhattan Mercury* mentions that he was the son of Scottish American farmers Roy and Lucille Michie. Barry fell in love with and married Aruna Nayyar Michie in India. They were married in New Delhi India in 1968. They had one son, Chetan, who survives.

Barry will be remembered for his work in the Study Abroad Program at K-State, for his love of genealogy, his impact on the community through his many hobbies, and his kind and compassionate personality.

We miss you, Barry!

Three Letters, Wamego's Leach Mansion and Leach Family History

By William L. Richter



The Louis B. Leach House at Fifth and Poplar, in Wamego, Kansas. Vintage photo courtesy of William L. Richter

This article reviews and reflects on three letters, written more than four decades ago, that shed light on a magnificent old home in Wamego, Kansas. The letters also provide history and lore on the family associated with that building.

In the spring of 1978, my wife Linda saw an ad in the *Kansas State Collegian* of a house for sale in Wamego. It was known as the Leach Mansion and had been the home of Louis B. Leach, a legendary resident of Wamego. With a large stone porch, it sat imposingly on the back of three city lots on the northeast corner of Fifth and Poplar, two

blocks west of the center of Wamego. Across the street, on the south side of Fifth, stood the Stewart Funeral Home, formerly an opera house owned by Leach. There was rumored to be a tunnel between the mansion and the opera house.

The following is Leach's description of his house:

We built our home on a central piece of the original township of Wamego, 150 feet square, which slopes gently to the southwest. The house was fashioned and made

Continued on next page

from memory to appear and look like a villa in the suburbs of Messina on the island of Sicily where my wife and I were entertained for a few days by a Sicilian family with the delightful urbanity of the people of that country.²

Some of the peculiarities of the house are: There are 14 gables and 15 outside doors. Porch to the south is 10 feet deep with parapet stone wall, cement floor, and on the north a porch of 6 feet deep. There are 15 practical living rooms above the basement, with nine closets, bathroom and living room....

We bought the house in part because we understood that the next person on the list of potential buyers intended to demolish the house and replace it with apartment buildings.³ We closed on July 3, 1978, then held a

potluck picnic there the next day with approximately 125 attendees. We held similar July 4 events in 1979 and 1981. At some point, we discovered Kansas artist Mary Moore McKown and commissioned her to do a painting depicting one of those holiday parties.⁴

We did not plan to live in the house but instead wanted to create a historic restaurant there. We did extensive refurbishing and upgrading, including installing new heating and air-conditioning systems. When the restaurant project failed to materialize, we contracted to sell the property to the Wamego Historical Society for a museum, but the Society was unable to raise the purchase funds. We finally sold the house to Lauren and Maura Welch in 1982. Subsequent owners have been Bill and Rose Ditto, who extensively remodeled the house in 1988, and Richard and Teresa Weixelman, the current owners.

To learn more about the history of the Leach House, we reached out to numerous people, including L.B. Leach's son-in-law, Floyd E. Fischer, and Floyd's daughter (L.B.'s granddaughter), Anne Fischer Blodgett. Floyd visited Wamego and we talked with him there. Linda corresponded with Anne, who lived in California and took a great interest in our attempts to save the Leach House. She sent us valuable letters and information on the building and her family and enclosed photos, documents and other memorabilia.⁵

Letter 1, from Anne Blodgett to Linda Richter, January 19, 1979

Mrs. Blodgett addressed her first letter to "Mrs. Richter" and began with a detailed description of photos and other enclosed materials. She described some of the features and furnishings she remembered of the house. In this letter and the next, she strongly denied that a tunnel ever existed between the mansion and the opera house:

To our knowledge there never was a tunnel from the house to anywhere. My father says that story started when a newspaper man long ago wanted to write something spectacular and made it up. Heaven knows



Floyd E. Fischer, Roderic Leach Fischer, Eleanor Anne Fischer. Photo courtesy of William L. Richter.

there was enough without that, but the story lingers on – it is just a myth.⁶

Her description of L. B. Leach as “eccentric” and “frugal” is consistent with other accounts we have heard:

As you know, Grandpa Leach was an eccentric although practical too. Because he owned the ironclad hardware store, he was able to update plumbing and other fixtures often, but being of frugal nature he hated to dispose of anything; therefore, at one time he had a discarded toilet placed on a cement base in the front yard close to the sidewalk and planted petunias in it. When he purchased the first auto in Wamego, a Winton, he moved a haymower, which had been in the garage (for buggy) to the front lawn and grew ivy over it. There was a huge old two-seated swing in the front yard which ran on iron tracks.

Most of the letter is devoted to what Anne calls “a bit of family history”:

Grandpa Leach died in 1926 at the age of 83. His father Lucien Leach was from Illinois around the Staunton area, where he had a bank which went bankrupt during the Civil War. As a young man L.B., as he was called, went all over the country selling Catholic church objects – mostly holy pictures. With his own proceeds plus a small loan from his father, who had begun to recoup, L.B. found himself in Colorado (Denver area) and started the first Day and Night bank. This gave him the seed he needed to migrate to Wamego, and get started with the bank there and join with Trout in the hardware business.... In Wamego L.B. met and married a young girl Eleanor Leamon (also from Illinois). She and Anna Gibson – who later married Edward Joseph Fischer – had a modiste shop in town. In 1900 this union produced a child Virginia Eloise Leach – my mother. Eleanor Leamon Leach died when Virginia was about 10 years old. After some time L.B. married Minnie Humphrey from whom he obtained a legal separation in 1922 and his only child Virginia died in

1923. I was not yet two years old at the time of my mother’s death.

L.B. had an abiding interest in religion which he interspersed with metaphysics and spiritualism. Although he was an avid student of the Bible, he also believed in the supernatural and the first Memorial Day after my mother’s death Dad arrived at the cemetery to find L.B. with a tent raised and a canvas on an easel where he said his dead wife’s picture had appeared. It was there, but no one knew how it got there. My father was furious at the proceedings, but they went on anyway. L.B. also became interested in the Unity Church – probably because he was a lifelong vegetarian – and did much to support that institution in Kansas City. He owned extensive property in Kansas City – one building of which housed the Temple of Health, sort of a diet and chiropractic

Continued on next page



Virginia Leach. Photo courtesy of William L. Richter.

center. That building was sold in the late 1930s and became an after-theater restaurant for a while. He also had a great interest in the theater both as a business and from a cultural point of view and owned the Schubert Theater building in Kansas City as well as the opera house in Wamego. I have a letter written to him by Marion Tall[e]y, the opera singer, as a young girl thanking him for some beads that he had given her.⁷

After my father and Virginia were married, Dad worked for and traveled with L.B. extensively. It was worth your life to keep up with the man. He was both admired and feared. Feared mostly because he had a stern manner and talked very little. However, he and dad got along famously and Virginia was the light of his life. When he trav-

eled, even if it was only to Kansas City, the chauffeur drove (B. Bretz) and he took along a 150 lb. letterpress, maps and light bulbs. When he would arrive at the hotel strings went up across the room and maps of all varieties were hung on them. The light bulbs were changed to 150 watt numbers and he proceeded to write letters all night. The maps were to pinpoint his holdings, etc. He usually slept only two or three hours a night. His own statement was that if you put him on a rock in the middle of the Sahara desert he would scratch out a living some way. I'm sure it was true. In Wamego, for instance, he had the first automobile agency – loaned money for the cars from the bank and opened his own insurance agency to insure them. Conflict of interest meant nothing to L.B.

She concludes with an apology for “such a rambling letter,” then adds two more pieces of family history. The house, she notes,

...is truly a historical place in what was the wild West. L.B.'s first customers, and his reason for starting the bank, were Indians. They would come into town and have him keep their money so that when they got drunk they would not have spent everything or had it taken away from them. Incidentally I forgot to tell you his grandfather's name was Julius Caesar Leach so Louis Bonaparte doesn't seem so strange does it?

Letter 2, from Anne Blodgett to Linda Richter, February 1, 1979

Anne's second letter, addressed to “Dear Linda (if I may),” included several more photos and a newspaper containing her mother's obituary notice. Again, she provided detailed descriptions of each of the photos, then returned to stories concerning her grandfather and other family members.

Now for a bit more of the business history of L.B., and how he acquired some of his holdings. He owned 30,000 shares of stock in the Elmhurst Investment Co. which was headquartered in Topeka. The Elmhurst



Virginia Leach as an adult. Photo courtesy of William L. Richter.

owned the Shubert theater building at 10th and Baltimore in Kansas City, Missouri. When the Elmhurst needed cash, L.B. loaned them another \$30,000 and took a lien on the building, and [had] a large box at the theater where we saw many stage plays. At this point he was a [half] owner with John Taylor, of the department store, and Shyler Ashley a Kansas City businessman. He later acquired the sole interest from them. Through the Elmhurst again, he made a 60,000-dollar loan to the Orlando Petroleum Company of Orlando, Florida, and when they started drilling their first well in Peabody Kansas, he acquired [half] of the stock in that company. About 1915 or 16 he bought the Temple of Health at 12th and Washington Streets in Kansas City. This was a pseudo-medical establishment previously owned by Dr. Carson who continued to run it for some time. This establishment was frowned on by the doctors in Kansas City, and became known to them as “the Pimple of Wealth.”⁸ It did have a loyal and wealthy following, however, one of which was an eminent poet from the State of Kansas, Ewing Herbert from Holton who glamorized the place in verse.⁹ Shortly after this purchase, he bought two adjacent homes which he rented. In 1917 my Dad negotiated the purchase of the third home which then gave L.B. the full block adjacent to the Catholic Cathedral. In 1918 L.B.’s patriotic spirit got the best of him and he had the three houses painted red, white, and blue, and they were known as the red, white and blues to everyone on Quality Hill, as the area was known in those days.¹⁰

...

Eleanor Leamon was at least 20 years younger than L.B. She was about Anna Fischer’s age. Dad says that the girls had their shop in the old Opera House, and he believes they shared living quarters there. Obviously, this would be how L.B. and Eleanor met. We do not know where L.B. lived before the house was built, but possibly in the Opera House. Virginia was born in the house, and she was delivered by Dr.

The People in This Article

- ⇒ **L.B. Leach** (also known as L.B. or Louis Bonapart) and **Eleanor “Ella” Leamon Leach** were the owners of the Leach House. The Leaches had one daughter, **Virginia E. Leach**.
- ⇒ L.B. Leach remarried **Minnie Bontz Humphreys**
- ⇒ **Virginia Leach** married **Floyd Edward Fischer**. They had two children, **Roderic** and **Eleanor Anne**. Anne, who went by her middle name, was the **Anne Blodgett** who wrote the letters featured in the article.
- ⇒ Floyd Fischer remarried **Irma May “Jane” Lewis**

Meice, who was supposed to be a “hot-shot” of the time.

Minnie Leach was a widow by the name of Humphrey from Eskridge. She was the aunt of Jim Evans, who worked in the bank. She met L.B. while visiting her nephew in Wamego. That was the start of big trouble. She and my mother never got along, and in fact I don’t think she got along with anyone with the exception of perhaps her housekeeper. After her arrival on the scene, my mother lived with an aunt in Greenup Ill. and boarded at Bethany College in Topeka,¹¹ and then married my dad at 18, and generally spent as little time at home as possible although she was devoted to her father. As I told you, L.B. and Minnie were eventually legally separated and that ended some of the trauma until L.B.’s death, when she returned to battle for his estate. I may give you the details of this at a later date. Suffice it to say that at the end, after some years of fighting, the judge admonished her sternly and said that she had clearly shown a “deliberate attempt to defraud the minor children and rightful heirs to the L.B. Leach estate”

Continued on next page

Letter 3, from Anne Blodgett to Linda Richter, February 20, 1979

The third letter, addressed to “Dear Linda,” included a United States income tax form from 1894 and an 1866 deed to a property in Wamego. Anne indicated that what she had sent us was only a small part of what she had. “I still have a trunk full of L.B.’s papers to go through so no telling what will turn up here. The trunk is at Dad’s house and I will get to it as soon as time permits.”

She also responded to a question from Linda about her father:

You asked if my father was still living.. Very much so. He celebrated his 88th birthday on the 16th of this month. He flew to Phoenix Ariz. to be with some friends from Kansas City for his annual birthday party. He is very active, retiring only last year from the Board of Directors of the Metropolitan Water District of So. Cal. The first week in Feb. he took what he calls his “short jaunt” of 600 miles. He drove it all in two days, stopping in several places and enjoyed the trip as well as his ability to handle it. He is talking about taking his 15th trip to Europe this summer. These Kansans are tough! Dad lives in his own home in Beverly Hills where he is the oldest ex-mayor of the city. He has a housekeeper who has been with the family since 1936.

Floyd lived almost two years after that and died on February 10, 1981. Anne died November 4, 1983, at age 62. We do not know what happened to the trunkful of Leach family items she mentioned in this letter.

Online Genealogical Resources

I created a Leach Family Tree on Ancestry.com and used “hints” to identify five generations, from Eleanor Anne Fischer (Anne Blodgett, 1921-1983) through her great-great-grandparents, including Julius Caesar Leach (1774-1840). Anne Blodgett’s letters and the online resources are largely in agreement, but there are a few discrepancies.

Louis Bonaparte Leach was born January 5,

1842, in Madison, Wisconsin, to Lucien Bonaparte Leach (1819-1873) and Harriet Cornelia Moore (1824-1877). He was a veteran of the Civil War. He and his family moved to Wamego in April 1867. He lived there for almost six decades, until his death on June 5, 1926.

In 1891, L.B. married Eleanor “Ella” Leamon (1862-1906) in Wamego. He was in his late forties and she in her late twenties. On October 5, 1898, they had their one and only child, a daughter, whom they named Virginia Eloise.¹² Ella died August 29, 1906, at age 44, when Virginia was not yet eight years old.

L.B. remarried five years later, to Minnie Bontz Humphreys (1862-1953). Minnie was a widow, having lost her first husband, James Humphreys (1850-1908), three years earlier.

Virginia married Floyd Edward Fischer on July 28, 1917, in Topeka.¹³ She was not quite nineteen and just out of high school. Floyd was twenty-six. They had two children, Roderic Leach Fischer (1919-1993) and Eleanor Anne Fischer (1921-1983). Anne married Julian Robert Blodgett on November 4, 1941, in Westwood Hills, California.

Having lost her mother when she was only seven, Virginia herself died on February 11, 1924, leaving two toddlers. Ann was not quite two and Roderic not quite four at the time of Virginia’s death.

Like L.B., Floyd also remarried after the death of his young wife, on April 14, 1926. The second Mrs. Fischer was Irma May “Jane” Lewis (1891-1972). Several online family trees simply list her as Roderic and Anne’s mother. Anne did not mention her stepmother in her letters to Linda.

Floyd and family moved to southern California, where they lived for the rest of their lives, except for brief visits back to Kansas. Floyd twice served as Mayor of Beverly Hills, California.¹⁴

Reflections

Perceptions and memories — even those of close relatives — can be inaccurate. Anne, for

instance, remembered the last name of Minnie Leach's first husband as Humphrey. Online family trees give it as Humphreys. Other discrepancies have been noted in endnotes.

Online resources can also be erroneous. Several family trees on Ancestry indicated that Virginia Leach and Floyd Fischer were married in New Brunswick, Canada. I finally determined that the source of that error was that their son Roderic was married in Moncton, New Brunswick, February 28, 1942, to Gladys Beryl Gesner.¹⁵ Virginia and Floyd were listed in the marriage certificate as parents of the

groom. Somehow, Ancestry attributed the marriage to them rather than to their son.

Anne Blodgett's letters provide a rich and colorful fleshing out of Leach and Fischer family histories as well as of the Leach House. We probably missed out on many opportunities to gather more information from her and her father, but we were very fortunate to connect with her when we did. We are grateful for her generous sharing of family stories, photos, and other reflections of her family's – and the mansion's – history.

Endnotes

¹The statement appeared on the back of a photo of the house, dated August 10, 1925. *Welcome to Wamego, Kansas, 1866-1976*, p. 83. This book is in the Riley County Genealogical Society Library, along with an index prepared by Katherine "Katie" Towle Glynn, 1993.

²The construction of the house is generally understood to have begun in 1890, but L.B. and Ella were not married until 1891. If they visited Sicily on their honeymoon, that date would probably need to be moved a year or two later.

³About that time, another historic Wamego home, the Rogers House, was torn down to allow expansion of the nearby high school. Linda and I attended the Rogers House Antique Estate Auction in Topeka, April 1, 1979. Among other things, we purchased some ornate molding which we recently donated to the Wamego Historical Society. See "James Clarence Rogers Home, 18761-1966," *Wamego Centennial 1866-1966: Official Souvenir Booklet* (Manhattan, KS: Ag Press, 1966, p. 18.

⁴McKown lived in Wichita and died in 2019. Link downloaded October 22, 2024. [Obituary Mary F. \(Moore\) McKown of Wichita, Kansas, Prairie Rose Funeral Homes.](#)

⁵We have donated some of these materials to the Wamego Historical Society Museum and plan to place the rest of them there eventually.

⁶Anne and her father were adamant that the tunnel between the mansion and the opera house never existed. However, we talked to people who claimed they had been in the tunnel years earlier. Bill and Rose Ditto, during their reconstruction of the house, confirmed the existence of the tunnel.

⁷Anne included the Talley letter in the packet of materials she sent with her next letter. Marion Nevada Talley (December 20, 1906 – January 3, 1983) was an American opera coloratura soprano. Born in Nevada, Missouri, Talley grew up in Kansas City, Missouri. She studied piano, violin, and voice and appeared in a 1922 Kansas City Grand Opera

Company production at age 15. She unsuccessfully auditioned for the Metropolitan Opera in 1923.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marion_Talley

⁸In 1906, *The Journal of the American Medical Association* quoted an article by George Creel, Editor of *The Independent*, a weekly journal published in Kansas City. "In a recent issue," they note, "he devotes some space to one 'Dr.' C. H. Carson, who poses as a 'vital healer' and whose place of residence, where all the 'cures' are effected, is known as the Temple of Health, or, as the *Independent* puts it, the Pimple of Wealth. The treatment employed by 'Dr.' Carson consists of the laying on of hands, blessing tissue paper to place on tumors in women's breasts, placing bits of torn paper in an envelope, with the warning that they must not be exposed to light, etc. It would appear that 'Dr.' Carson and his methods ought to be made the objects of a vigorous investigation by the State Board of Health." *Journal of the American Medical Association*, September 1, 1906, p. 690. <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/article-abstract/459774>

⁹Ewing Herbert (1866-1947) appears to have been primarily a journalist, from Hiawatha rather than Holton. He was born in New Salem, Pennsylvania., and moved to Hiawatha with his parents in 1870. He went to work as a "printer's devil" on the *Brown County World* at age 12. He served as editor of that paper and its successor, *The Hiawatha Daily World*, for many decades. <https://kspress.com/herbert-ewing>

¹⁰Quality Hill is a historic neighborhood near downtown Kansas City, Missouri, USA, situated on a 200-foot-high bluff which overlooks the confluence of the Kansas and Missouri rivers in the West Bottoms below. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quality_Hill,_Kansas_City

¹¹It is not clear whether this refers to Washburn University in Topeka or Bethany College in Lindsborg, Kansas

¹²Some online family trees give Virginia's middle name as Eleanor, perhaps because that was her mother's first name.

¹³They were married in Grace Cathedral in Topeka, according to Virginia's obituary in *Wamego Times*, March 15, 1923,

Continued on page 59

Military Pensions: A Satisfying Meal for Family Historians

By Virginia Beddow and Margaret Kline

Welcome to our dining table. We are serving a simple but satisfying meal. We have provided an appetizer (tantalizing introduction), two main courses (personal experiences), a dessert (delightful conclusion) and a recipe (great references.)

We hope you find the recipe so palatable that you give this meal a try.

Appetizer

Military pension files provide valuable research information regardless of whether your direct ancestor or someone from their immediate family served in the military. There is no guarantee that the file contents will provide an ‘aha’ moment, but we have yet to find anyone who was disappointed after acquiring and reviewing a military pension file.

The value comes both in the standardized content of the file and the cornucopia of supporting correspondence that may illuminate spouses, occupations, siblings, parents, and children. It is common for a pension file to contain one hundred or more pages of documentation and the four files pulled by the authors far exceeded their expectations.

To support their own pension claim, veterans had to provide evidence of their military service and disability. The files grew in size if there were claims for the veteran’s widow or minor children. Those claims provided evidence of the relationship between the widow, children, and the veteran.

Most pension files will include proof of:

Service: Not only the unit(s) the veteran served, but their discharge status and sometimes details of dates and locations.

Disability and death: Proof of disability was documented at application and throughout the life of the veteran if the disability worsened. Documentation took the form of detailed medical affidavits from physicians who treated the veteran either during the war (carded medical records) or afterwards, and by fellow soldiers, commanding officers, neighbors, friends, and relatives (affidavits.)

Marriage: Evidence of a marriage, often including specific date and location, may be documented by a witness’s affidavit, church record, family bible, or an affidavit from the county clerk after his/her review of a marriage register. Of note: if a widow remarried, she

Veteran	Service	Pension(s)	Pension File Size
Hiram McDonald	Drummer, 134 th Regiment New York. Court martialed. Private, 6 th Regiment New York.	Disability Widow Minor Child	199 images
Edward Fry	Private, Co. A, 55 th Regiment Pennsylvania Infantry.	Disability	144 images
John Fry	Private, Co. A, 55 th Regiment Pennsylvania Infantry. Andersonville prisoner.	Disability	130 images
Felix Burgess	Private, Co. K, 85 th Regiment Indiana Infantry.	Disability Widow	179 images

Table: Sizes of various pension files

would lose her pension; however, if her spouse died, she could apply to have the original pension restored. In this situation, the file would also include marriage and death records for the later husband.

Children: If the pension included a claim for a minor child following the death of the veteran, then the application would contain proof of the relationship. Even absent of a minor child pension claim, the pension file may list all children, both adults and minors.

As if this is not enough for any family historian, the real thrill comes when you read some of the affidavits and letters. These are not dry form letters, but handwritten glimpses into the life of the veteran, his family and neighbors, often documenting financial status, location, and occupation.

By now you have consumed the appetizer, and you are ready for the meat and potatoes of our meal. We have provided two hearty courses that detail examples of treasure found in our own research. Please chew well before swallowing and enjoy the repast.

First Course: Case File – Felix Burgess

by Virginia Beddow

Previous research on Felix Burgess revealed that he served in the Civil War, and his widow, Guley, had received a widow's pension when he died. All my research was in public records that traced him from Terre Haute, Indiana, to Illinois, back to Terre Haute, and eventually to California. I had no letters, journals, or stories from family.

Research Objective

Learn more details. When and where had he served? Would any records reveal any information that I did not have?

Findings

I ordered the pension file and received 179 separate images of the contained documents that fit into two categories, either Service or Pension records (there were no carded medical records).

...the real thrill comes when you read some of the affidavits and letters. These are not dry form letters, but handwritten glimpses into the life of the veteran, his family and neighbors....

26 Service Records

These records tracked his service from his enlistment through his muster out roll. They revealed that he was sick or absent from his company from June 1864 through April 1865. Also included were a summary of absences, correspondence with the adjutant general's office, and a Roll of Officers and Enlisted Men in the Veteran Reserve Corps.

153 Pension Records

These images included certificates, official filing forms, letters, adjutant office records, physician examinations, and affidavits to support the claims by Felix for a disability pension and Guley for widow pension.

Most of the documents concerned Felix's claim for a disability pension, also known as an invalid pension, and subsequent increases. Seventeen of these documents concerned Guley's claim for a widow's pension.

A letter in the pension records explained why there were no carded medical records—a fire had destroyed all the records at the Indianapolis hospital where he was treated.

Important Discoveries

Birthplace: I knew Ohio from censuses, but the document revealed that he was born in the town of Massillon.

Divorce decree from Susan E. Burgess: Big discovery. I had not known about a previous marriage.

Death Certificate: Had not yet obtained a copy.

Continued on next page

Stayed At Home At Birth Two years
 I work on the farm When I could
 I went to Terre Haute Ind to learn
 Painter's Trade I work when I could
 My house was on 80th north St
 Ms Thomas Scotts till 69 then
 I went to Kansas City I work at
 my Trade I came back 1870 to Terre
 Haute I stayed on 80th north
 till 1871 then I move on north 80th
 the house was not near as then
 I stay there till spring of 74 my eye
 was so I could not work at my trade
 I move to country 6 miles south of
 Terre Haute I stayed there till last
 of Auger so I move back to Terre Haute
 I went in to my Painter's on Main St
 corner of Main & 3rd I lived on
 Main St I work at my Trade
 Bout 3 years then I had to stop my eyes
 got so I could not get to my shop I
 had a good business I had to give it up

Felix Burgess account. Transcript showing seriousness of his illness

Names and birth dates of his children: This was particularly significant because I had relied on city directories to follow his children. I had turned one daughter into two. Learned of two children who had died.

Seriousness of illnesses he developed during the war: Census records and city directories all provided occupations for Felix, so I did not suspect that he experienced periods in his life when he was unable to work. The affidavits all revealed that he developed eye problems, rheumatism, heart weakness, and stomach problems. For half the war, he served in the Invalid Corps (Veterans Reserve Corps) in Indianapolis, Indiana. Why did his great granddaughter (my mother) not hear stories about his being so ill and nearly blind?

Transcription of Selected Section

June 1865 I went Home I stayed at Home About two years I work on the farm When I could I went to Terre Haute Ind to learn Painter's Trade I worked when I could My house was on 80 north St Ms Thomas Scotts till 69 I went to Kansas City I worked at my trade I came back 1870 to Terre Haute I

stayed on _____ months till 1871, then I moved on North 8th the House was not _____ then I stay there till spring of 74 My eyes was so I could not work At my trade I move to country 6 miles south of terre Haute I stayed there _____ last of August I moved Back to Terre Haute I went in to my Painting on _____ corner of Main and 3rd. I lived on North 9 s I worked at my trade Bout 3 _____ then I had to stop my Eyes got so I could not get to my Shop I had a good Business I had to give it up

Second Course: Case File – Hiram McDonald

by Margaret Kline

Because of the early death of her father, a friend of mine knew little about her paternal grandfather, Hiram McDonald. The only thing she knew was that he perished in the Civil War and was originally from New York.

Research confirmed that Hiram was born in New York. However, he survived the Civil War, settled in Kansas, died in 1903, and left behind his widow Nannie (nee Gleason) and a minor son Hollie, my friend's father.

Unbeknownst to his granddaughter, Hiram had been married prior to marrying Nannie. Hiram wedded Ada sometime before 1870. Then Ada died in Fort Scott in 1880. I could not find their marriage record. Three years later, Hiram married Nannie nee Gleason.

Research Objective

Who was Ada, who married Hiram McDonald before 1870 and died in Fort Scott, Kansas on 28 June 1880?

Findings

The pension file contained an affidavit from Hiram stating that he married Ada V. Bedigrew on 11 June 1867, in Savannah, Buchanan County, Missouri. Further, there were multiple affidavits stating that Ada died on 28 June 1880 in Fort Scott. One of the affiants supporting Ada's death record was James

Bedigrew, presumably a close relative of Ada. He appears on multiple affidavits in Hiram's file.

Bonus Material

There was considerable information in the file that filled voids in the family tree and laid groundwork for further research:

Hiram lived in New York, Ohio, and Missouri in the four years before arriving in Kansas in April 1869.

Hiram had a brother named Anson McDonald.

Residences between the censuses of 1880 and 1900.

Birth date for Nannie (Gleason) McDonald.

Marriage license for Hiram and Nannie, issued on 7 April 1883 in Butler County, Kansas.

Hiram worked as a shoemaker before he became fully disabled.

List of Hiram and Nannie's children and their birthdates, including a son adopted during Hiram's first marriage.

Confirmation of Hiram's death on 1 December 1902 in Wilson County, Kansas.

Death certificate for Nannie's second husband, Alson Lamb.

A list of friends, relatives, and fellow veterans that provided

a base for further research.

Dessert

Having consumed an appetizer and two hearty courses, it is probably best to have a lighter dessert.

This article drew examples from Civil War Union veterans, yet the richness of information found in pension files is not limited to that era and service. Pension records exist for Civil War Confederate widows (issued by the states) as well as other conflicts. Both FamilySearch (search FamilySearch Wiki for United States Military Pension Records) and NA-RA-related websites (historyhub.history.gov, search for military pensions) provide more in-depth information on the history, scope, and process for attaining records.

One word of caution regarding the comprehensive nature

of these files. These are not happy-go-lucky tidbits of information. The nature of these files, i.e. dealing with disabilities, widows and fatherless children, paints a gloomy portrait of their lives.

Recipes

If we have succeeded in whetting your appetite for military pension records, then perhaps you would like to attempt to cook up your own meal. Rather than pro-

Document listing all Hiram's children and their birthdates.

Continued

(8-21-8)

NAME OF SOLDIER:		McDonald, Hiram		
NAME OF DEPENDENT:	Widow.	McDonald, Annie		
	Minor,	Lamb, Annie	Edi	
SERVICE:		A 6 N. Y. Cav. A 2 N. Y. Cav.		
DATE OF FILING.	CLASS.	APPLICATION NO.	CERTIFICATE NO.	STATE FROM WHICH FILED.
1880 July 12	Invalid,	475.411	318.769	Kans.
1913. Feb. 10	Widow,	778.070	565.104	Kans.
1918. Dec. 24	Minor,	796.874	601.715	Kans.
ATTORNEY:		XC. 2817.724		

Pension file index card for Hiram McDonald. Source: Ancestry Collection "[U.S., Civil War Pension Index: General Index to Pension Files, 1861-1934](#)"

vide specific, detailed instructions and costs that become obsolete soon after publication, we are going to provide some basic cooking instructions and send you to the relevant recipe books (reference sites).

Information Needed:

Before you choose a method for your request, you need to be able to point to the specific veteran. This means you have to provide not just his full name, but also the branch and state in which he served, and whether he was regular army or a volunteer. The majority of Civil War combatants were volunteers.

Though it is not required, providing further information increases the chances that you will get the right file: name of regiment, company, ship; if in the Army, whether infantry, cavalry or artillery, rank, birth date/location, death date/location. Some of the military service details may be found on pension file index cards, readily available on genealogy websites like Ancestry, FamilySearch and Fold3. Note that there are two different forms of index cards. One like pictured are specific to a single

veteran. Other index cards may list multiple veterans and were created as applications that came into the Pension Office. (See top of page for a picture of Hiram McDonald's pension file index card.)

The index card for Hiram McDonald provides: the name of his widow and the guardian of his minor child, his service, and dates of applications for multiple pensions associated with his service. The presence of a certificate number indicates that the Pension Office approved the application. Of note, the number at the bottom is not always on the index card. When it is present, it represents the pension file number.

Acquiring the Pension File:

DiETING: NARA offers a 'non-fat' pension record set containing just the genealogical records within the file. This is a cheaper option but may fall short of a satisfying meal.

There are two common methods of attaining images of a pension file's content without a physical trip to the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) in Washington, DC:

1. Send a request to the National Archives and Records Administration by submitting a filled-out form. The response times for NARA requests are variable. You can submit the request form online or download and mail it to NARA. An internet search using the terms "NARA record request pension file" should result in a link to the following government website with the latest form and instructions.

<https://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/pre-ww-1-records>

2. To avoid the uncertainty of response time hire a 'records puller.' There are multiple individuals who regularly travel to Washington DC and provide a record pull service for a fee comparable to or less to that charged by

NARA. NARA provides a list of those independent researchers on their website. An internet search using the terms "NARA Independent Researchers for Hire" should pop up a list searchable by topic and service. Once you have navigated, simply search the page for 'pension' (ctrl F on a Windows keyboard) and you will find a list of record pullers. Here's a link that worked in August 2024:

<https://www.archives.gov/research/hire-help/topics.html?topic=military>

One word of caution. The record puller is providing you with digital images of the file, so ask to get all the images in a single file rather than a file for every image. Virginia and I speak from experience when we say that rifling through 150+ individual files to find the gems is onerous.

Happy researching!

Margaret and Virginia



Third Annual Riley County Genealogical Society Pie Party held on the lawn of the Historic Platt House in Manhattan, Kansas, September 15, 2024. Music by the Grateful Dudes. Photo courtesy of Dave Regehr.

The Family of Charles Dempsey and Nora Mooney Neckelmann Dempsey

By Sylvester C. Ekart

with research by Marcia Schuley and suggestions by Mary McCoy Siegle
of the Riley County Genealogical Society

Introduction

Charles Dempsey was one of the individuals born in the early years following settlement of the Elbow Community east of Manhattan in Blue Township of Pottawatomie County. The earliest settlers came in 1854 and Charles was born in 1857. He had a vivid memory of the days following the Civil War and the local conditions. He was a successful farmer stockman in adult life. He had an interest in politics and served as Chairman of the Pottawatomie County Commissioners. Charles married Nora Mooney, daughter of Michael and Mary Mooney of St. George, Kansas. Nora was adopted at age 5 by Tobias and Elizabeth Neckelmann and grew up in the Elbow community. Charles and Nora had four children, who have no descendants. For a time, Charles and his family lived in St. Marys where his children were educated in the local schools and college, as well as a college at Leavenworth, Kansas. We were unable to locate information about Nora's Mooney parents or information leading to the adoption by the Neckelmans. The story of Charles and Nora's family is told in the following pages.

Editor's NOTE: *This article is compiled from numerous newspaper references, which will be listed at the end of the article.*

Charles Dempsey was born in the month of March 1857, in the Elbow Community of Blue Township in Pottawatomie County, Kansas. He died on 12 March 1927, at Manhattan, Riley County, Kansas. He was buried in St. Patrick's Cemetery, Elbow. He married on 10 November 1881, at St. Patrick's Church, Elbow. Nora A. Mooney, adopted name Neckelmann, was born on 21 May, 1861, at St. George, Pottawatomie County, Kansas. She died on 13 October, 1912, at St. Marys, Pottawatomie County, Kansas. She was buried in St. Patrick's Cemetery, Elbow.

Charles' grandmother was **Margaret Dempsey**, who was born on 2 June 1793 in Ireland. She died on 12 July 1880, in the Elbow Community of Blue Township in Pottawatomie County, Kansas. She was buried in St. Patrick's Cemetery, Elbow. Margaret Dempsey was the oldest born person buried in the cemetery having been born near the end of the 18th century. Margaret had two daughters, the older was Mary Dempsey born in 1823 and died on 9 January 1913. She married John Conroy who was born in 1823. He died 1 November, 1888. Margaret's younger daughter was Ellen Frances Dempsey born in 1835. She died on 13 November 1896. She married James McCarthy on 24 November, 1859 at St. Patrick's Church, Elbow. In 1880, on July 12, she died of old age. Mrs. Dempsey, aged 87 years, was the mother of Mr. Barney Dempsey of Pottawatomie County.^{1 54}

Charles' father was **Bernard Dempsey** born on 25 July 1828, in Kings County, Ireland. He died on 22 July 1904 at Manhattan, Riley County, Kansas. He was married to Charles' mother Mary Moran on 4 April 1853, in New York City. Mary was born on 10 December 1828 in County Cavin, Ireland. She died at Charles' home on Houston Street in Manhattan on 29 November 1916. Bernard and Mary are both buried in St. Patrick's Cemetery in the Elbow Community of Blue Township in Pottawatomie County, Kansas.

During the Great Irish Famine of the 1840s and 1850s, Bernard and Mary left their Irish home and arrived at New York City, Bernard in 1848 and then in 1854 coming to Kansas. He was married to Mary Moran. Mary arrived at New York City a year earlier than her future husband Bernard, in the year 1847. When Bernard left New York and went to Kansas in 1854, Mary remained in New York; she then joined him in Kansas in 1856.^{1 55}

Bernard and Mary Moran Dempsey were the parents of nine children all born in the Elbow Community. The children were Charles, Martin, Ellen (Mrs. Patrick McGuire), John, James, Sarah J., Mary C., Mary A., and Jennie A. (Mrs. Patrick J. Burns).

Three of Bernard and Mary Moran Dempsey children died within a few weeks of one another between 28 December 1870 and 15 January 1871, they were James Dempsey 1863-1871, Mary C. Dempsey 1868-1870, and Sarah J. Dempsey 1865-1871 and a fourth child Ellen (Mrs. Patrick McGuire) died in 1885.^{56 57}

1904, Bernard Dempsey died of asthma at his home on Houston Street at 1:45, aged 76 years. He was born July 25, 1828 in Kings County, Ireland and came to America in 1848, landing at New York. In 1854, he came west and as a stone cutter worked on the first building erected at Ft. Riley. The following year he settled in the Elbow neighborhood. He spent two winters in California for his health. He left a widow and four children — Charles, Martin, John, and Mrs. Jennie Burns. The funeral was held at the home Monday morning at 10 o'clock, Rev. Father P. J. Shields officiated. Interment will took place in the Elbow Cemetery.^{1 55}

In 1904, after a serious illness of several weeks Bernard Dempsey died in the afternoon at 1:45. Funeral services were conducted from the Catholic Church at 10 a.m. Monday and interment took place at the Elbow Cemetery. Mr. Dempsey was a strong, hearty man of a rugged physique until about three years ago when he had an attack of asthma. The past two winters he spent in California with a hope of relief from the disease, but without avail. Mr. Dempsey was born in Kings County, Ireland, July 25, 1828. In 1848 he came to New York and in 1854 to Kansas where he has lived since. In 1851 (1853) he was married to Miss Mary Moran who survives him. To this union were born nine children, of who four were living Charles, Martin, John, and Mrs. P. J. (Jennie A.) Burns. Four (three) children died in infancy and Mrs. Patrick Ellen McGuire died at the age of 24. Mrs. Mary Conroy (wife

of John Conroy 1823-1 November 1888) is a sister of the deceased. Mr. Dempsey was a member of the home guards during the civil war and a member of the Catholic Church. He was a man of strong, sturdy character, a loyal friend, a loving father, and a kind and affectionate husband.⁵⁸

1904, this morning at the Catholic Church (Manhattan) Requiem Mass was celebrated for the repose of the soul of Bernard Dempsey. Father Shields was celebrant and Fathers Hundt of Myers Valley and Lyon of St. Marys Jesuit College were assistants. Father Shield made a short talk concerning the deceased referring to his long residence in this neighborhood and the high esteem in which he was held, also of the fact that the deceased was ready to go as he had complied with all the rites of the Catholic Church of which he had been a constant member. The pall bearers were Constantin Umscheid, Sebastian Umscheid, Pat O'Neil, James Kelly, John Fox, and Mat McKeon. The church was filled to its utmost and many were unable to gain entrance. At the close of the Mass the procession of carriage formed for the trip to the Elbow Cemetery where interment took place. Perhaps no man was better known about Manhattan than the deceased.⁵⁹

1916, Death of Grandma (Mrs. Mary Moran) Dempsey occurred. On Wednesday afternoon, at the hour of 2:15 occurred the death of Mrs. Mary Dempsey at the home of her son Charles Dempsey, 523 Houston Street. She was ailing but a few days when pneumonia set in, after which time she soon passed away. Mrs. Dempsey was 88 years old, but enjoyed good health most of the time, and her sudden illness ending in death came as a shock to her relatives and many friends. The funeral was at the Catholic Church on Friday at 10 a.m. and the burial was in the Elbow Cemetery. Mrs. Dempsey with her husband, Mr. B. (Bernard) Dempsey came to the state in 1856 (Bernard came in 1854) and lived across the Blue River in Blue Township until about 20 years ago when she and her husband moved into their new home on Houston Street, and retired

Continued on next page

from the active duties of farm life. Mr. Dempsey died about twelve years ago, since which time Mrs. Dempsey has made her home most of the time with one of her children.⁵³

1916, the funeral of Mrs. Mary Dempsey who died Wednesday at the home of her son, 523 Houston Street, was held in the Catholic Church at 10:15 o'clock this morning. Burial was made in the Catholic (Elbow) Cemetery.⁵

1916, the death of Mrs. Mary Dempsey occurred Wednesday, November 29, at 2:15 p. m. after a short illness of pneumonia at the home of her son, Charles Dempsey, 523 Houston Street. The funeral services were held Friday morning, at 10 o'clock at the Catholic Church, Father A. J. Luckey officiating. Mrs. Dempsey was nearly 88 years old. Three sons, Martin, Charles, and John Dempsey, all of Manhattan survived her.⁶

1916, quite a number from here attended the funeral of Grandma Dempsey in Manhattan. Interment was made in the Elbow Cemetery.⁷

1916, Mrs. Mary Dempsey was born in County Cavin, Ireland on December 10, 1828, and passed away in Manhattan on November 29, 1916, lacking just 11 days of being 88 years of age. Mary Moran was the oldest member of a family of six, all of whom have preceded her to the grave. In 1847, with her family she immigrated to America, settling at New York City. While there she was variously occupied for several years. On April 4, 1853, she was married to Bernard Dempsey, also of New York City, and to this union nine children were born — four boys and five girls. Her husband and six children preceded her in death. The remaining children are Martin, John, and Charles all of Manhattan. Early in 1856, she came to Kansas to join her husband who had moved here previously and settled on a farm near Manhattan. Except for a short time spent in California, she made Manhattan and vicinity her home until her death. Religiously, she was a Catholic. Funeral services were held in Manhattan Friday and interment in the Elbow Cemetery beside her husband and children.^{1 8}

1865, Nora Mooney was living in St. George Township of Pottawatomie County with her parents Michael and Mary Mooney, her sister Ellen and her brother Michael Mooney, Junior. Nora Mooney's name is listed as "Annie" in this census.⁹

1870, Charles Dempsey, age 13, born about 1857, in Kansas was living in Blue Township, Pottawatomie County, Kansas. His Post Office was Manhattan, his father was Bernard Dempsey who was 39, his mother Mary Dempsey was 35, his brother Martin Dempsey was 11, his sister Margaret E. Dempsey was 10, his brother John Dempsey was 8, his brother James Dempsey was 6, his sister Sarah Dempsey was 4, his sister Mary C. Dempsey was 2, his sister Mary A. Dempsey was 8/12, his grandmother Margaret Dempsey was 69 and Andrew Colston was 27.¹⁰

1880, Charley Dempsey, age 23, born about 1857, in Kansas, was living in Blue Township, Pottawatomie County, Kansas. He is the son of the head of the household. He was in school. His father is Bernard Dempsey age 52, his mother is Mary Dempsey age 52. She was born in Ireland. Charley Dempsey was age 23. His brother Martin Dempsey was age 21. His sister Margaret C. Dempsey was age 20. His brother John Dempsey was age 18 and his sister was Sarah J. Dempsey was age 9.¹¹

In 1881, on November 10 at the bride's parents by Father Ennis, a Nuptial Mass was celebrated for Charles Dempsey and Miss Cora (Nora) Neckelman, both of Pottawatomie County (the marriage was in St. Patrick's Church, Elbow).¹²

1881, November 14, W. S. Shehi and Miss Hugh attended the Dempsey-Neckelman wedding on the Elbow, last Thursday, and report a nice time.¹³

1886, Charles Dempsey was elected Treasurer of Blue Township Pottawatomie County.¹⁴

1895, the date was 1 March, Charles Dempsey age 37 was living in Pottawatomie County, Kansas, Blue Township. His wife Nora Dempsey was 33. His son Bernard J. Dempsey was 12. His daughter Cecelia Dempsey was 8 and his son William Dempsey was 5.¹⁵

1899, the Board of County Commissioners met last Monday and organized for the year by electing Charles Dempsey as Chairman. 10 August. Charley Dempsey, chairman of the Board of County Commissioners, will ask to be nominated on the fusion ticket for county treasurer.¹⁶

1900, Charles Dempsey age 43, born March 1857, in Kansas, was living in Blue Township, Pottawatomie County, Kansas. He was married to Nora A. Dempsey, he was a farmer. His parents were born in Ireland. His home was free of a mortgage. Charles Dempsey was age 43, Nora A. Dempsey was age 39, Bernard J. Dempsey was age 17, Celia (Cecelia) G. Dempsey was age 13, William Dempsey was age 11, Stella Dempsey was age 4, Malachi Glenn was age 46 and Nellie A. Costello was age 30.¹⁷

1910, Charles Dempsey, age 53, born about 1857, in Kansas, was living on Bertrand Street in St. Marys, Pottawatomie County, Kansas, he was married to Nora A., his home free of a mortgage. He has been married 25 years, Charles Dempsey age 53, Nora A. Dempsey age 48, Celia G. Dempsey age 23 and Stella M. Dempsey age 14.¹⁸

1911, Charles Dempsey of Manhattan, Kansas, says he knew something about growing up with the country, as he was born and raised in the Kaw Valley (Blue Valley) right where he lives now. Mr. Dempsey can remember happenings that occurred during the last part of the war (Civil 1861-1865). "Then I recall going with my father about the close of the war, on trips across the country in a wagon to Leavenworth, 100 miles away," he said. "You see we did our trading in those days at that place, as we had no railroad. Then I remember well seeing the long trains of covered wagons going out west in the early days, taking out the poor settlers, who perhaps a year or so later would come back on their way to their former state home in Missouri or Illinois. That section of the state has been settled several times. The last settlers, however, were better off, and had the benefit of experience and remained and made a good country of it." Mr. Dempsey shipped his cattle and hogs to the well known firm of Lampe and son.¹⁹

1912, Mrs. Charles Dempsey died at St.

Marys yesterday morning between 4 and 5 o'clock of diabetes after an illness lasting for some time. She was 51 years old and was survived by one son, William, residing here and two daughters, both residing at St. Marys, besides her husband, who owns a farm northeast of town, where they resided until moving to St. Marys four years ago. The remains will arrive here on the Union Pacific plug tomorrow and interment will take place at Elbow Cemetery north of town.²⁰

1912, a large number of old neighbors of Mrs. Charles Dempsey were at the depot today to meet the train bearing the body and to escort it to the Elbow Cemetery.²¹

1912, *Manhattan Daily Nationalist*, 16 October, the remains of Mrs. Charles Dempsey, who died at St. Marys Sunday, was laid to rest in the Elbow Cemetery yesterday evening. A cortege more than a mile in length, consisting of 250 vehicles followed the corpse from the Union Pacific Station to the resting place.²²

1912, Elbow Community, this community was shocked to hear of the death of Mrs. Charles Dempsey, of St. Marys, who died Sunday morning. The remains will be laid to rest this afternoon in the Elbow Cemetery.²³

1912, Mrs. Charles Dempsey died at her home in this city early Sunday morning after a short illness of a week. Although she had been ill with diabetes for several months, the end was not thought so near until a few days before her death. Mrs. Dempsey was a lady with a high and noble character, a mild, gentle disposition. And to her husband and children was all a mother could be. She was true and faithful friend and when she made friends was always sure to keep them. Nora A. Mooney was born in St. George, Kansas, on 21st of May 1861. At the age of five years, she was adopted by Mr. and Mrs. Tobias Neckelman. On November 10th 1881, at St. Patrick's Church at the Elbow, she was married to Charles Dempsey. There, they lived on a farm until twelve years ago when they moved to this city. To this union, four children were born. They are Bernard, who died six years ago; Cecelia, now Mrs. R. (Remy) Ronsse; William of Manhattan and Stella of this city. Besides her husband and three children the deceased leaves two brothers, Michael Mooney of St. Louis and Wm.

Continued on next page

Ham of St. George and a sister, Mrs. Lawrence (Ellen) Peak of Manhattan. The funeral services were held Tuesday morning at 10 o'clock at the Immaculate Conception Church with a Solemn High Mass, with Rev. Father McNieve, S. J., celebrant, Rev. Father Corbley, S. J. and Rev. Father Coppinger, S. J. as Deacon, and Subdeacon. The remains were taken to Elbow and interment made in the cemetery at that place. Those here from out of town were Mr. and Mrs. Martin Dempsey; Mr. and Mrs. John Dempsey; Mr. and Mrs. Pat Burns, the latter a sister of Mr. Dempsey; Miss Mary McGuire, Mrs. David Irvine, and son; Mr. and Mrs. Will Glenn, all of Manhattan; Mrs. Matt McKeon of Frankfurt, John Conroy of Manhattan; Mr. and Mrs. Will Ham of St. George; John Cockburn⁴ and James Nuss of Manhattan.²⁴

1912, Elbow Community, this community was shocked to learn of the death of Mrs. Charles Dempsey that occurred Sunday at her home in St. Marys. She leaves a husband and three children to mourn her departure besides many relatives and friends. She was raised and grew to womanhood in this neighborhood and therefore has many friends here who are grieved to learn of her untimely death. Interment was made at the Elbow Cemetery on Tuesday October 15. The bereaved family has the sympathy of the entire community in this, their sad hour.²⁵

1915, Charles Dempsey was living in Manhattan, Riley County, Kansas, he was age 57, born about 1858, his mother Mary Dempsey was age 86 and Stella M. Dempsey was 19.²⁶

1920 Charles Dempsey lived on Houston Street, a widower, his father and mother born in Ireland. He owned a mortgaged home,. He was born in Kansas. Charles Dempsey age 62, Stella Dempsey age 24, Marie Brannic (Brannick) age 20.²⁷

1925, Charles Dempsey born about 1858 and his daughter Steller (Stella) Dempsey age 29.²⁸

1927, Charles Dempsey, one of the most widely known farmers of Pottawatomie and Riley Counties, was found dying in his bed at his home 519 Houston Street at 4:30 this morning by his daughter Stella Dempsey. He died within a few minutes after his daughter reached his bedside. Miss Dempsey was awakened by her father's heavy breathing. She ran

to his bedside and found him unconscious and gasping. In a few seconds he had passed away. Mr. Dempsey was born on a farm in the Elbow Community, north of Manhattan, in Pottawatomie County in 1858. His parents, Mr. and Mrs. Barney (Bernard) Dempsey homesteaded the farm on which he was born, when they came to Kansas from Ireland (actually New York). Few farmers were more widely known in the adjoining countries than this son of two Irish pioneers. For many years he took an active interest in Pottawatomie County politics and at one time was a member of the Board of Commissioners. Mr. Dempsey retired from his farm in 1915 and came to Manhattan, where he had lived ever since. Besides his daughter, he was survived by two sons (brothers), John of 520 Osage Street and Martin of 529 Houston Street. Funeral service will be held at Seven Dolors Church Monday. The Rev. A. J. Luckey was the celebrant at the Mass. Burial was in the Elbow Cemetery.^{2 29}

1927, funeral services for Charles Dempsey, who died early the previous day were held at 9:30 a.m. at Seven Dolors Church. Burial was in Elbow Cemetery. The Rev. A. J. Luckey was the celebrant at the services.³⁰

1927, Mr. Charles Dempsey, 71 years of age, a well-known resident of this city for 15 years, died at his home in Manhattan early Friday morning. A stroke of apoplexy caused his death. In 1912, Mr. Dempsey with his family moved to Manhattan where he resided until his death. He was buried Monday morning from the St. Patrick's Church in that city (funeral was at Seven Dolors in Manhattan, burial St. Patrick's Cemetery, Elbow).³¹

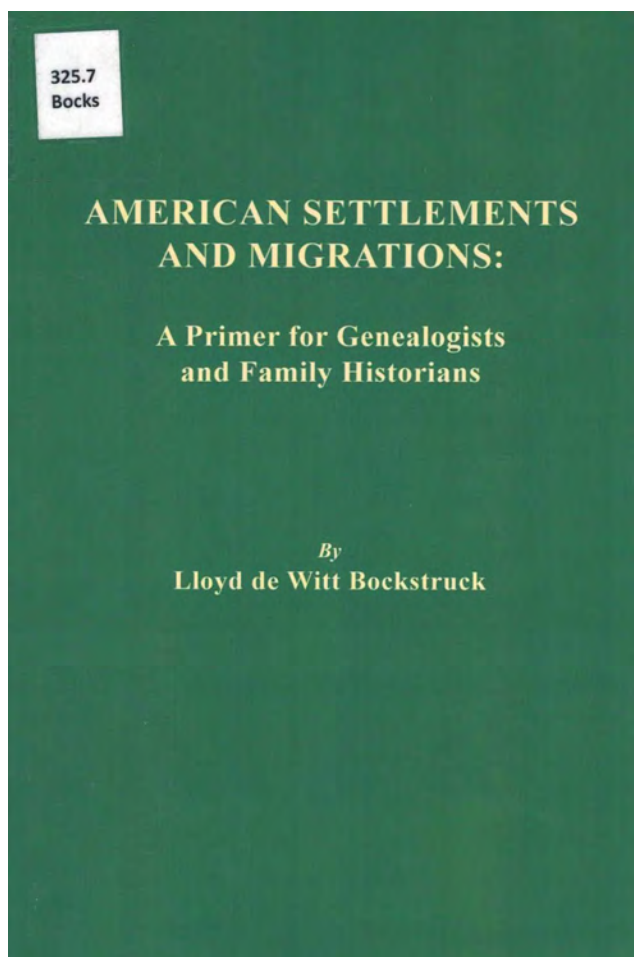
1927, St. George, Route One. Quite a few of the Route people attended the funeral of Charley Dempsey in Manhattan, Monday morning, March 21. Mr. and Mrs. Dud Torrey were in Manhattan Monday to attend the funeral of Charley Dempsey.³²

Charles Dempsey and Nora Mooney Neckelmann had four children, they were in order of birth Bernard, [2] Cecelia (Mrs. Remy Ronsse), [3] William, and [4] Stella (Mrs. Robert E. Glenn). Their story is told in the following pages.

Due to shortage of space, the Dempsey story will be continued in the next issue of Kansas Kin. All references will be included.

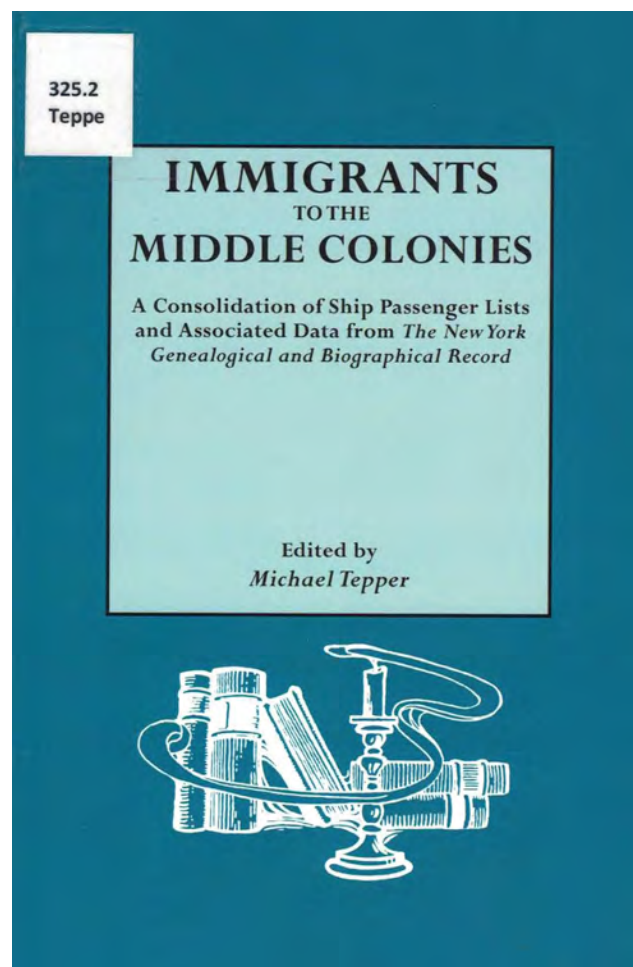
New Books at the Research Library

By Virginia Beddow and Theresa Wilson



American Settlements and Migrations: A Primer for Genealogists and Family Historians. Lloyd de Witt Bockstruck. Baltimore: Clearfield Company, 2017.

This book is truly a primer. The first chapter provides the big picture of migration and explains terms that will be encountered in research. The rest of the book explores the various American geographic areas: New England, West Indies, the Middle Colonies, the Southern Colonies, the Impact of the Revolutionary War, Post Revolutionary Settlements, the Old Northwest, the Old Southwest, the Trans-Mississippi West, the West, the Pacific Coast, and finally Alaska, Hawaii, and Canadian Settlements. 107 pages.

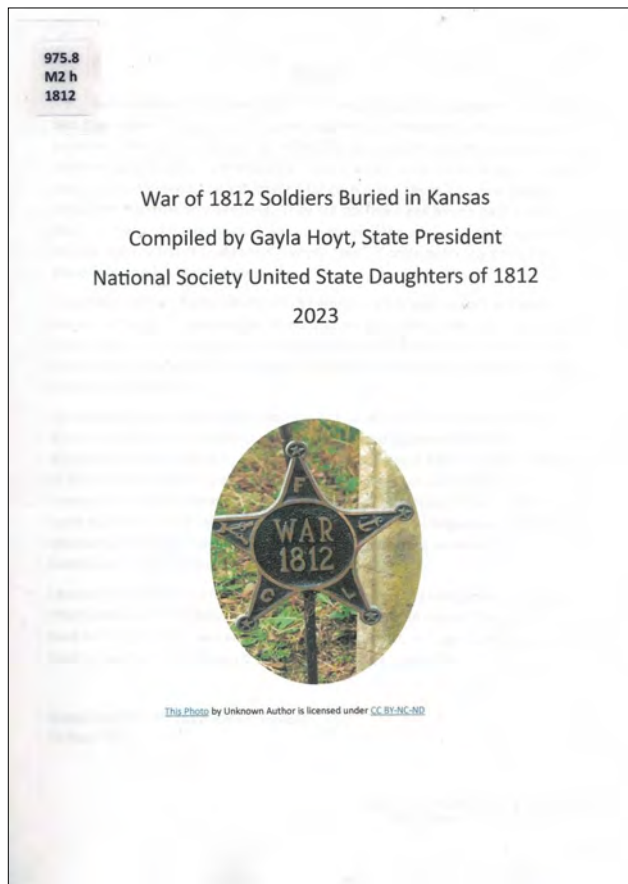


Immigrants to the Middle Colonies: A Consolidation of Ship Passenger Lists and Associated Data from The New York Genealogical and Biographical Record. Edited by Michael Tepper. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc. 1978.

This is a collection of fifteen articles excerpted from The New York Genealogical and Biographical Record. Only half may be considered proper ship passenger lists. The others are mainly inferential passenger lists consisting of lists adapted from records of naturalization, waivers of citizenship, printed sources, and miscellaneous colonial records. There is an index of names. 178 pages.

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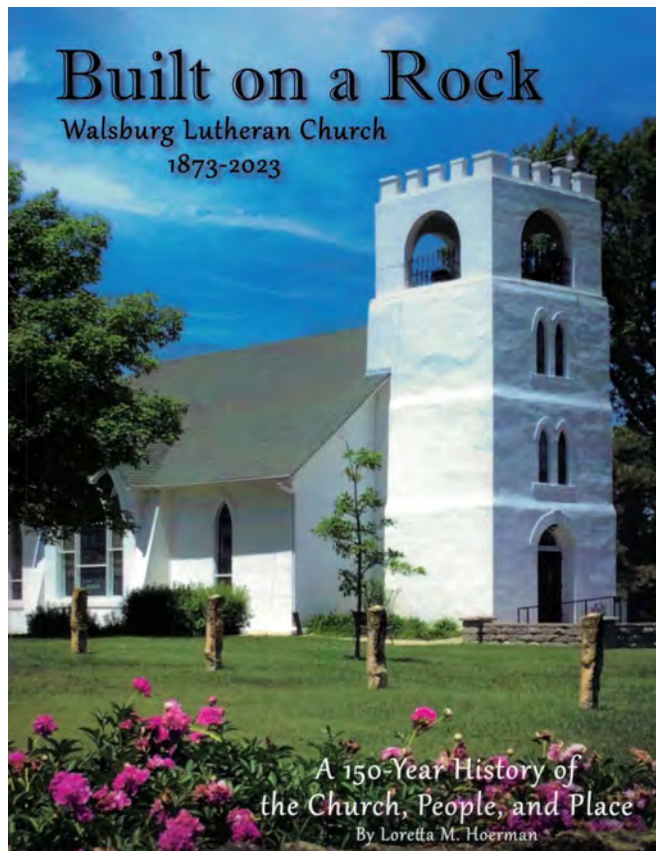
New books, continued



War of 1812 Soldiers Buried in Kansas. Compiler, Gayla Hoyt. National Society United States Daughters of 1812. 2023.

This compilation of soldier sketches was a project of Gayla Hoyt, Kansas State President of the United States Daughters of 1812. She saw the need for a complete list of all the veterans, so she searched many sources to find 72. Each man has a page that can include birth date, death date, service, rank, cemetery, marker, wife, portrait, obituary, and sources.

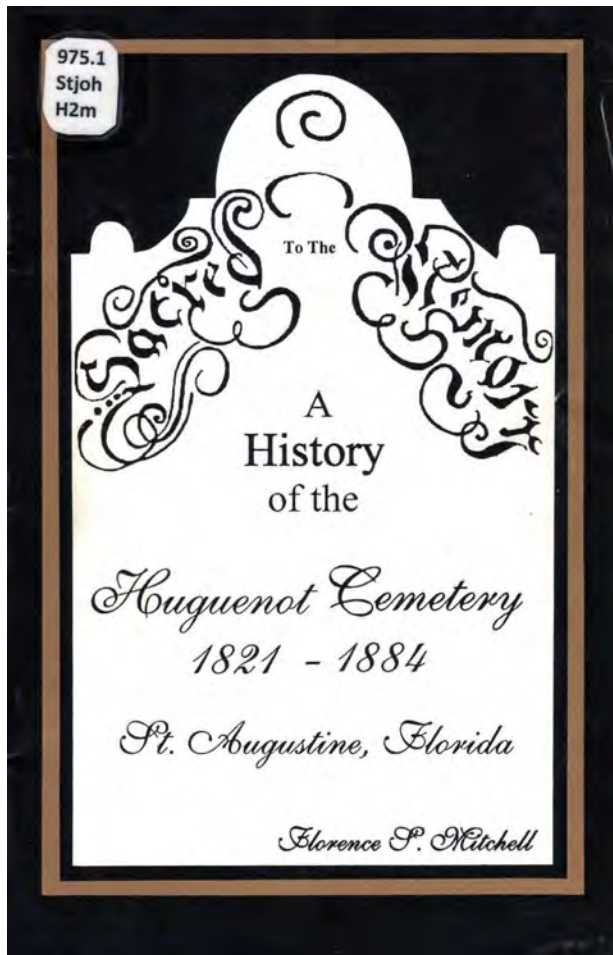
This book of 77 pages provides many photographs of markers and some portraits. There is a preface and a chart of the names of all the soldiers. The soldiers are covered in alphabetical order.



Built on a Rock: Walsburg Lutheran Church, 1873-2023: A 150-year History of the Church, People, and Place. Loretta M. Hoerman. Newton, Kansas. www.MennonitePress.com. 2023.

Built on a Rock tells the story of Walsburg Evangelical Lutheran Church from its beginning in 1873 through part of its 150th year anniversary in 2023. Founded by Swedish immigrants, the language of the church for the first 50 years remained in Swedish. The book explores reasons Walsburg's Swedes immigrated to northeastern Riley County, Kansas. An in-depth review of the joy and tribulations of Walsburg's founders, their descendants, and others who joined the church is provided.

The book is divided into three sections: chronological history of the church, brief biographies of the pastors and pioneer families, and a brief history of Walsburg School and the village.

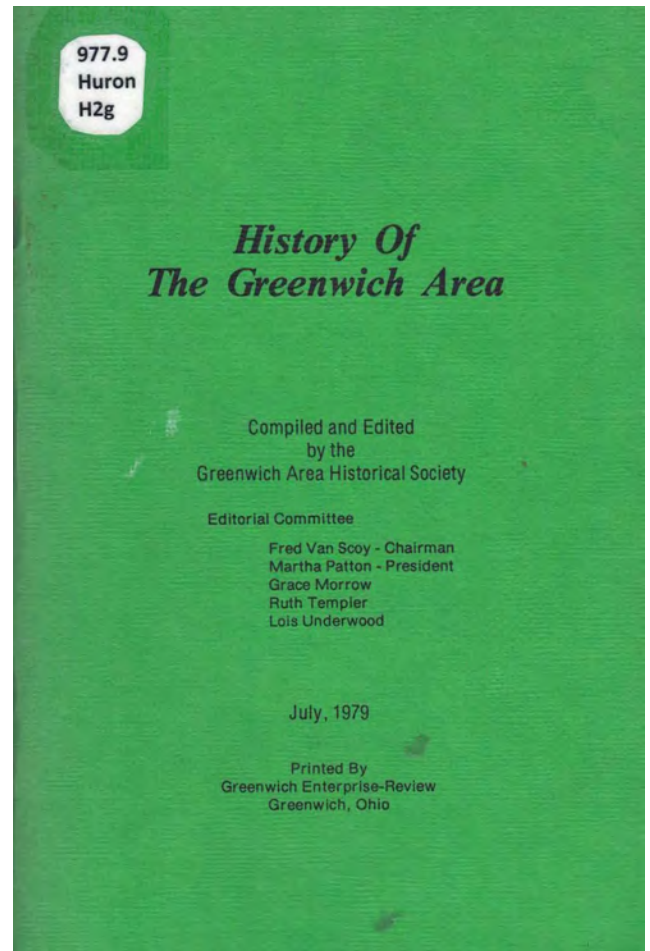


Sacred to the Memory. A History of the Huguenot Cemetery, 1821-1884, Florence S. Mitchell. St. Augustine, Florida: St. Augustine: Friends of the Huguenot Cemetery. 1998.

“Situated between the City Gate, la Puerta de Tierra, and St. Augustine Visitor Information Center on San Marcos Avenue is a shaded, old cemetery. . . . Arching over the entrance is an iron sign. It identifies the graveyard as the Huguenot Cemetery.”

Those words open the first chapter of this booklet that traces the history of this old cemetery in which only one Huguenot grave will be found. When or how the name became associated with the cemetery is not known.

Florence S. Mitchell also explores the diversity in life and death plus the monuments and the grounds. A list of known burials completes her research. Included in the books is a complete list of Works Cited and Notes. Illustrations, photographs, and map of the cemetery are included in the 75 page book.



History of the Greenwich Area. Compiled and edited by the Greenwich Area Historical Society. Greenwich, Ohio: *Greenwich Enterprise-Review*. 1979.

Brief vignettes describe the history of the village, incorporated in 1879, and its many organizations. There is no table of contents or an index. Many historical and present-day photographs are included in the 129 pages.

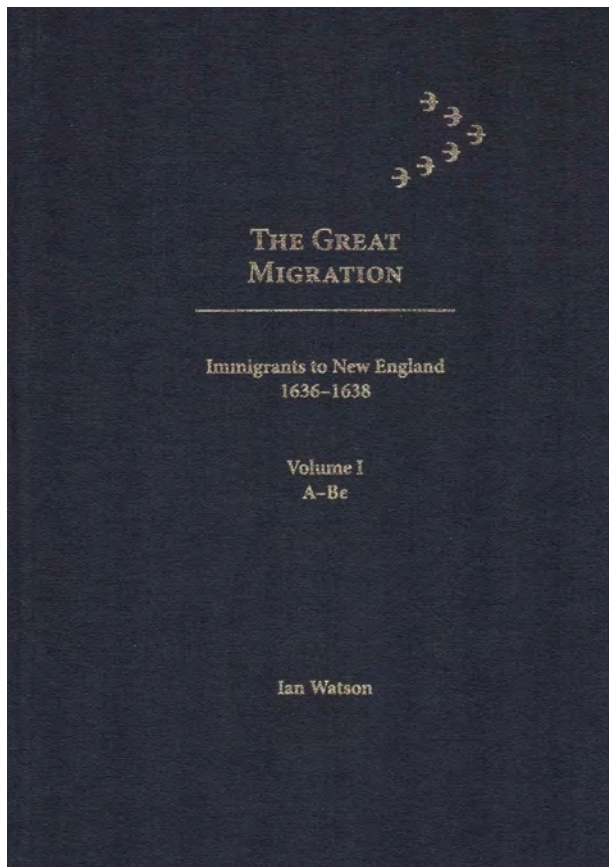
Leach House Endnotes continued

p. 1.

¹⁴Floyd served as mayor in 1953-1954 and 1957 –1958. The mayor was chosen by the city council members, who were directly elected by the people. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_mayors_of_Beverly_Hills,_California, downloaded July 7, 2023

¹⁵Puzzlingly, Roderic is listed on the certificate as “Roderick Lewis Fischer” but signs the document as “Roderic Lewis Fischer.” It is not clear why, when, or how permanently he replaced “Leach” with “Lewis” as his middle name. It may be that he decided to substitute his step-mother’s maiden name for his grandfather’s last name.

New books, continued



The Great Migration: Immigrants to New England, 1636-1638, Volume I, A-Be. Ian Watson. New England Historic Genealogical Society. 2024.

This volume is the first in the third phase of the Great Migration Study Project, treating immigrants in the years 1636, 1637, and 1638.

The first phase of the Great Migration Study Project attempted to identify and describe all Europeans who settled in New England prior to the end of 1633. The date was chosen because of the steep increase in migration beginning in 1634 and continuing for the rest of that decade. As a rough estimate, 15% or more of the immigrants to New England arrived in the 14 years from 1620 to 1633, with the remaining 85% coming over from 1634 to 1640. The second phase carried out the same program for the years 1634 and 1635, covering approximately another 30% of the Great Migration immigrants.

The RCGS library has all the volumes from the first two phases and with this gift volume

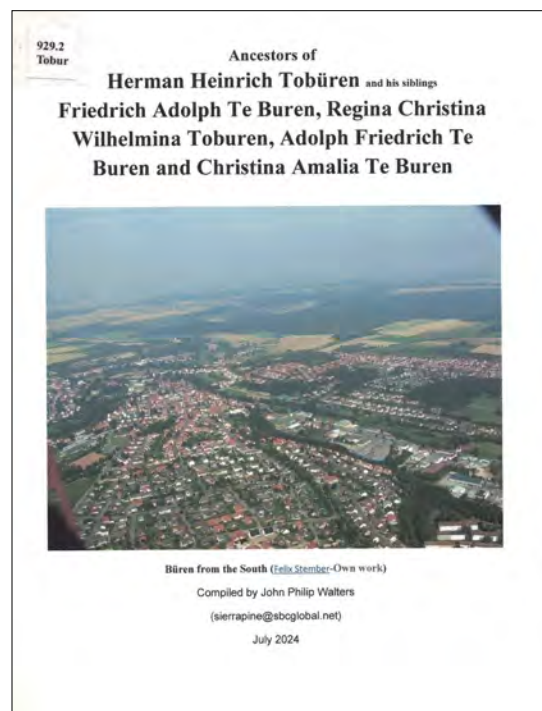
moves into the third phase.

The stated purpose of “this set of books is to summarize and, to a limited extent, evaluate what we know about the immigrants to New England in 1636, 1637, and 1638. . . . provide a solid base which researchers of the future can use as a stepping-off point for doing new research on a given immigrant. “

A standard sketch consists of three formatted sections:; migration, biographical detail, and genealogical detail. This is followed by a section of COMMENTS.

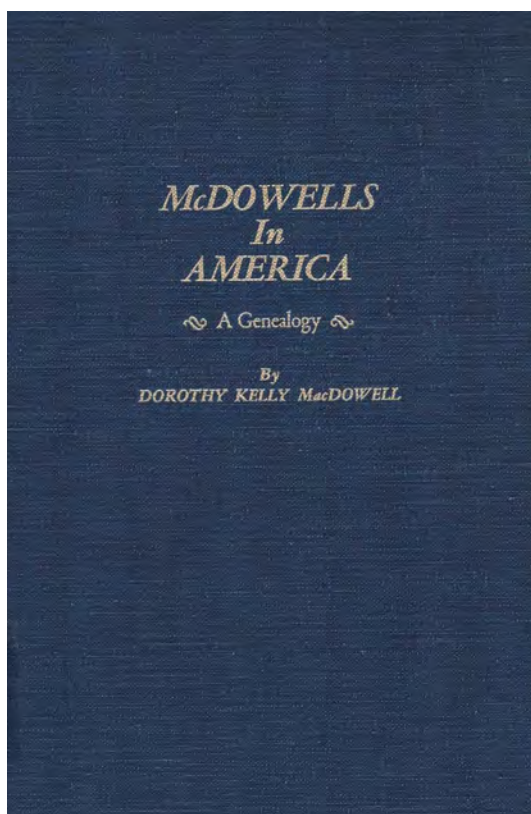
The book contains a large front section of information to help the reader understand the book. The sketches comprise 600 pages. The final pages contain four indexes: Surnames, First Names, Places, and Ships. 721 pages.

New Family Histories



Ancestors of Herman Heinrich Toburen and his siblings Friedrich Adolph Te Buren, Regina Christina Wilhelmina Toburen, Adolph Friedrich Te Buren and Christina Amalia Te Buren. John Philip Walters. 2024.

This record was made possible by obtaining and reading the microfilm recording of the handwritten German Gothic records of the Evangelische Kirche (Lutheran church) of Wersen. The records start in 1655. Photocopies from the original illustrate the first part of the book. The rest of the book is the Pedigree Chart of the family. Two full color maps are included.



McDowells in America: A Genealogy. Dorothy Kelly MacDowell. Baltimore: Gateway Press, Inc. 1981.

MacDowell begins with a list of families by state and a brief study of the surname. The book concludes with an index. 609 pages.

Fullers, Sissons and Scotts: Our Yeoman Ancestors, 46 New England and New York Families. Carol Clark Johnson. Mobile, Alabama: American International.

This work is primarily a family history of John Winfield Scott and his wife, Sarah Fuller. A twenty-one page introduction gives historical background and instruction. Also included are a table of contents, abbreviations

list, preface, list of illustrations, and an index.

Hopkinson and Allied Families: Ancestors and Descendants of Junius Greeley Hopkinson and Perry Hopkinson and their wives Jeanette Eveland and Lois Amanda Moffett. Laura Huffman, Aura M. Hopkinson, and Alsey E. Hopkinson.

The 290 page book contains a Foreword, Explanations, Family Index, and Ancestor Charts. The book concludes with an index. 609 pages.

Repp, Lenherr, Zoeller, Umscheid, Voelker, et al: My Flush Heritage. Mark J. Zoeller. 1990, 2020.

The 30 page book includes historical background and a gallery of ancestor photographs.

The Genealogy of Carl Friedrich Scholz. 1975. *The Genealogy of Carl Friedrich Scholz.* 1983.

Family Group sheets are supplemented by copies of obituaries, photographs, and a complete tree.

Toy: Donegal, Philadelphia, McDowell Creek, and Beyond. Mark Zoeller, Jr. 1889.

This is the story of the Patrick Toy and Margaret Bradley Toy clan. First part: family history; part two is a paper written by Diane Zoeller; part three includes a family tree, copies of family documents, some photographs, and maps.

In Memoriam

Lois Bartley

Millie Combs

Joyce Duer

Barry Michie

Joe Ann Moore

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Kansas Kin submission guidelines

We are pleased you are considering submitting an article to the Riley County Genealogical Society for possible publication. *Kansas Kin* focuses on articles ranging from useful genealogical strategies and sources, to interesting accounts of personal research, to family stories, to local histories as they relate to Kansas. We strive to bring your ancestors to life through their stories.

MANUSCRIPTS

500 to 2,000 words, including reference notes, is the suggested length of submissions. Submit your document in Word format via email. Topical headings are preferred for longer pieces. All manuscripts and references should follow the *Chicago Manual of Style*. End notes are recommended, especially for books, articles, and websites.

IMAGES

Whenever possible, please provide images to accompany your submission. The image must be over 1MB in size, with good quality resolution. Please include a caption for each picture which includes a photo credit or source. All images must be sent as separate files. We prefer jpg format.

AUTHOR INFORMATION

Please provide a few sentences about the author(s) to accompany the manuscript.

DEADLINES

Submissions are due the first of the month in April and October. Address submissions to the editor at KansasKin@rileycgs.com

All submissions to *Kansas Kin* are subject to review by the RCGS Editorial Board and revisions may be made, by the editor.

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