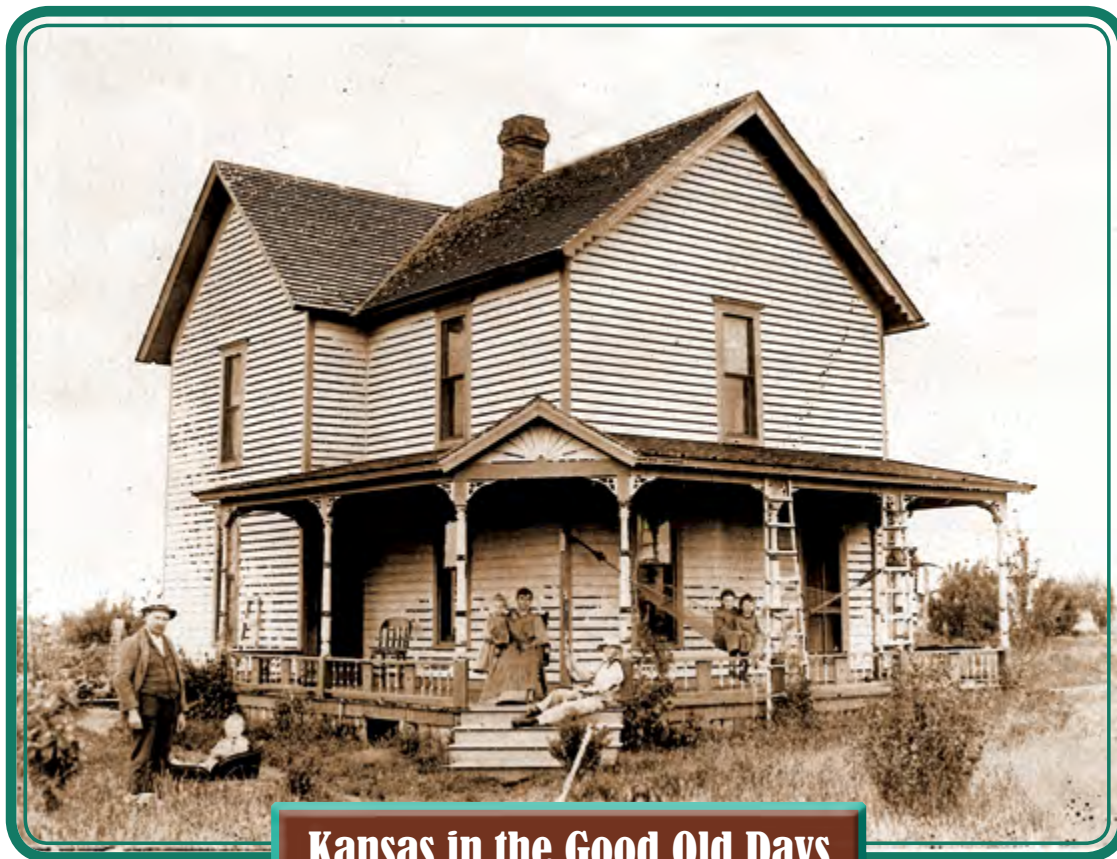




Ancestors West

A quarterly publication for the members of the
SANTA BARBARA COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY
Summer 2018 Vol. 43, No. 2



Kansas in the Good Old Days

Our Ancestral Homes

Walking in My Ancestor's Footsteps

Iconic Ranch House Used by Hollywood

Jacob Newman's Cabin: A Story of the Ohio Frontier

Dutch Treats: Poking in the Records of New Netherland

Yes, Indeed! Deeds Can Help Genealogists



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Hours: Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

10:00 AM – 4:00 PM

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Third Saturday 1:00 – 4:00 PM (Except August)

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Active (individual)-\$40; **Family** (2 same household)-\$60; **Friend**-\$50;
Donor-\$75; **Patron**-\$150; **Life**-\$1000 (one-time donation)

Meetings: Regular monthly meetings are held on the third Saturday of each month except August. Meetings begin at 10:30 a.m. at the First Presbyterian Church, 21 E. Constance Ave. at State Street in Santa Barbara. At 9:30, special interest groups (SIGs) meet that include the following: Writers, JewishGen, DNA, German Ancestry Research, Genealogy and Technology, Italian Roots, French Canadian Genealogy, Civil War, New Member and Beginning Genealogy, and Scandinavian Roots.

Established in 1972, the Santa Barbara County Genealogical Society (SBCGS) incorporated as a nonprofit 501(c) (3) organization in 1986. Its aim is to promote genealogy by providing assistance and educational opportunities for those who are interested in pursuing their family history.

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From the Editor

Housekeepers

THIS ISSUE OF *ANCESTORS WEST* is dedicated to the memories and records of our ancestors' houses. These houses were witnesses to the childhood, adulthood and/or the old age of us, our parents, possibly grandparents or even great-grandparents. The upper limit of those in this issue is the 356-year-old home on Staten Island, New York, of the 9th great-grandparents of Kristin Ingalls. Second oldest is the one-room Newman cabin built in 1807 on the wild frontier known as Ohio! Jacob Newman was the 4th great-grandfather of David Pettitt. Geographically the homes ranged from Germany and Ukraine in the old country and coast to coast in America.

If only these old homes could talk! What amazing stories they could tell. Sue Ramsey's grandmother describes home life on a Kansas farm. What struck me was the sense of joy and wonder she engendered for a way of life that lacked any of the modern conveniences we take for granted. It is worth reading again on a day we begin to grumble because the power is out or the dishwasher is broken.

Not all the stories these houses could tell have happy endings. Some bore the anguish of religious persecution, the financial hardships of the Great Depression and the consequences of urban sprawl. It all boils down to location, location, location. John Shute's ancestral farmhouse still stands in Illinois farm country as does the Anderson Farm in DeForest, Wisconsin, while the thousand acre Goodall Ranch west of Hollywood, California, has been completely subdivided into suburban tracts.

Several city homes have remained comfortably in their old neighborhoods for over 100 years—a purple house in Elgin, Illinois, the Herman home on Garden Street in Santa Barbara, the Brant-Rackowski home in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and the little brick house Henry Penry built (originally on a 10-acre parcel!) at the corner of De la Vina and Pedregosa.

Some homes, such as Millie Brombal's in Corvallis, Oregon, and the Billiou home on Staten Island acquired the prestige of a listing in the National Register of Historic Homes. However, many homes of our ancestors exist only in our memories: Cathy Jordan's Gramps'

House in Los Angeles, California, Aunt Vesta's home in Benzonia, Michigan and the Big House in West Allis, Wisconsin.

While homes bring back a flood of memories to those who lived or visited there, house records also are of considerable value to genealogists. Betsy Green, our resident authority on how to discover the history of our homes, explains the reasons the deed to an ancestor's home is worth finding, and how to find it. Sharon Summer provides an example of all the names, relationships and dates she uncovered while investigating the Knickrehm house in Elgin, Illinois. That was before it turned purple.

Connie Burns invites us inside the Voegeli mansion in Minneapolis, Minnesota, to see the treasures there that she has inherited. If you have any colonial Dutch in your family history or even if you don't, Kristin Ingalls amusing foray into New Netherland is not to be missed. Also in this issue, Margery Baragona shares her memories of homes here in Santa Barbara as well as the interesting history of our Santa Barbara municipal golf course.

A seminar to remember

Our Society's seminar April 14, 2018, was a resounding success. The Keynote address by Bob Bason, "Fifteen Fun Facts For Finding Family," set the tone with humor, personal stories and sound advice from many SBCGS members. Those who were not able to come to the seminar and attendees who want to enjoy again Bob's enthusiastic approach to genealogy will find a copy of his Keynote in this issue of *Ancestors West*.

The Next Issue—Ancestors' Schools

The theme for the next issue of *Ancestors West* is our Ancestor's Schools. Fall is the season when youngsters say goodbye to the summer sun and carefree days to return to the classroom. What do you know about your ancestors' education? Was it in a one-room schoolhouse on the prairie? Did they finish grade school, or high school or even complete a classical course of study at Harvard? Did you hear stories of the games they played on the schoolyard or at school picnics. Did they really walk five miles to school—uphill both ways? Do you have class photos, yearbooks or report cards? You are invited to share what you have found and family stories in the next issue of *Ancestors West*. As always, themes are only suggestions. All articles of genealogical interest are welcome!

**The submission deadline for the next issue is
August 1, 2018.**

Debbie Kaska, Editor

Fifteen Fun Facts For Finding Family

By Bob Bason

(Keynote Speech, Santa Barbara County Genealogical Society Seminar, April 14, 2018)

WHEN I WAS A YOUNG MAN going to theological seminary to become a Methodist minister, our professor of preaching said one of the tricks of a good preacher was to use alliteration. So, how do you think I did on the title of this sermon?

If you really stop to think about it, we genealogists are a strange lot. We start out in genealogy knowing almost nothing about a whole lot. Then, after a few years, we know a whole lot about almost nothing.

But, as they say, it's not the destination that counts, it's the journey. Come to think of it, whoever said that has not driven across country to Vermont six times in the past two years with a whacko dog in the back of the car, chewing on your seatbelt, trying to escape. If I never see Nebraska again, it will be too soon – although visiting my great uncle's 160-acre homestead in Adams County, Nebraska, was a treat!

We don't go to school to learn about genealogy. We learn from doing it. We also learn from others who have done it before us.

So, I decided for this "keynote" address today I would ask some of my friends in our genealogical society what helpful ideas or tricks they have learned while doing their genealogy that might help others. Thirty-two of them responded and here are their ideas, in no particular order, but in their own words. This way, if you don't like what I say, I can always claim that it came from Karen Ramsdell.

1. KEEP GOOD NOTES AND GOOD FILES

Speaking of Karen Ramsdell, our intrepid president gave this hint: "Keep your research organized. Use genealogy software, binders or files."

Jim Wilson, the guardian of our Society's growing endowment fund, reminds us to "organize and label all family pictures and treasures."

Personally, I keep my entire genealogy directly on *Ancestry.com*, including my pictures, which I also back up in the cloud. But, I also keep hard files on all my original documentation and original pictures. I'm now up to five bankers' boxes of files and worried about what will happen to them when I check out.

2. CHECK AND RECHECK YOUR DATA

Betsy Green, our resident local historian, gave us this one: "I've encountered numerous mistakes in 'official records.' I have learned to check and recheck. As they say in journalism, 'If your mother says she loves you – check it out.'"

Berri Bottomley gave me this hilarious story: "A certified death certificate listed my great-grandfather's



Bob Bason and his devoted dog visiting graves of the Benshoffs (Benshoofs) in Johnstown, Pennsylvania.

mother as 'Dora Know.' I spent months looking for her." When she finally got the image of the actual death certificate, it revealed that it wasn't "Dora Know" at all, but "don't know."

Mel Sahyun agrees: "...one of the best things I have learned (and had to re-learn more than once) is to be skeptical...there are a lot of people out there in the great galaxy of ancestors with very similar names, even similar dates and places of birth."

Our member Marjorie Wilser, who says she is now living 300 miles north of us, adds a practical comment: "Keep checking. New stuff is available every day, both online and in physical libraries."

Marj Friestad reminded us about a problem we all have faced: "Look at name patterns. Family histories are hints, but in sources you may find your uncle is your grandfather."

Jim Friestad, who with his wife, Marj, has led so many of our trips to Salt Lake City, had this to say: "Don't totally depend upon the internet. When we did the 1940 census record indexing, we found at least a 20% error in the ancestry data. Make sure there is some kind of documentation behind the data you are using."

Dorothy Oksner, our Society's wizard of digitization and preservation of local records, says: "Once you have a document in hand, read it over three times. In a few months or even years, reread it. There may be some issues that can be answered or questioned by looking over this document again."

Marie Sue Parsons, one of our past presidents, had this personal experience with this idea: "I recall when I found a new name in my later searches and then returned to an old census and checked a page or two on either side of the original ancestor. Lo and behold, the others were there – just at the time those names meant nothing to me – and then the new discovery sent me off in search of some other new people."

My own story on this brought about some traumatic changes for my own genealogy. I have exhaustively researched my Bason family back to the progenitor of our family, Griffith Bason, a "miner," who arrived in the United States from England in 1831, at age 26, on the good ship *Ajax*, with his wife, Sarah, 24, and their little two-year-old daughter, Mary. I have his naturalization papers. I had traced all five of his children to either the end or the continuation of their lines. I have tromped over the 80 acres he owned in Peoria, Illinois, looking for his gravestone and finding the historic remains of his coal mines. I even know that he had a second wife because I have the wonderful 33 pages of his probate records, because his son-in-law was hauled into court by the sheriff after Griffith's death, by this second wife, to explain what had happened to Griffith's property after his death. In short, I was certain that I had everything done – and done correctly. I wrote up his story and felt the accomplishment.

However, I still had a couple of niggling details that didn't quite mesh. In the 1840 census record the children's ages didn't quite work out, but that often happens. However, a bigger problem arose in the 1850 census, where he is listed (in Peoria), with his wife, Sarah, and four of his children (the fifth one was married, and living next door). The problem was that his wife, Sarah, was listed as being born in England, which was correct, but she was clearly listed as being 15 years old, which was a problem. After much hemming and hawing and extended research, I finally wrote it off as another clear example of a mistake by the silly census taker. There was no other explanation that made any sense.

But, as I was writing up his story, I decided to look through my hard copy, paper file on Griffith Bason one more time. In there was a copy of an article that I had found in a county history on one of my early trips to Illinois to trace the family. It was about the marriage of a Sarah Basson to someone named Orrien McColrey. After researching it, I had dismissed it as interesting but of no help to me. There were no McColreys in my family tree and the dates didn't work either.

But, as I read through the paper file one last time – to make sure that I had everything in the story and that it was correct – I was suddenly startled to read in those terrific probate papers that the lawsuit brought by his second wife was joined by another person, Orrien McColrey. Oh, no! With that, the scales fell from my eyes and I realized that the 15-year-old "Sarah" in the 1850 census was not his wife at all but a daughter, "Sarah," who shows up in no other records – and that she had married Orrien McColrey, and, as Griffith's son-in-law,

he had brought suit to get part of the property that Griffith left behind.

Needless to say, it was "rewrite" time for my family history – and all because I had saved my records and had rechecked them ONE MORE TIME.

3. USE EVERY AVAILABLE ON-LINE SITE

Bob Goeller, our immigrant from Connecticut, has three information sites that he recommends. The first is the World War I draft registration records on *Ancestry.com*. He finds them "to be very accurate" as they give "addresses, date of birth and next of kin in 1917 or 1918." It also has original signatures. He also checks the state and municipality online records, which are often free and, finally, he checks the on-line city directories, which can also locate adult children and their spouses living in the same city.

Bob also gave us this helpful hint: "I am fond of looking in *FindaGrave.com* for additional family members once one member is found, either by looking for other members with the same last name in the same cemetery or if available in the same plot. I also look for in-laws by the wife's maiden name."

I too love *FindaGrave.com* and use it constantly. Recently, my second cousin in Minnesota, who maintains the definitive list of Benshoofs in America, sent me the names of over 100 Benshoofs whose graves he had found on *FindaGrave.com*, but didn't have in his tree. We spent the better part of a month making sure that all those departed Benshoofs got put back into the family tree and are not forgotten.

I also happen to love *Whitepages.com*, which lists living people in the US. I will never forget hearing about a Benshoof baby who had been adopted in the early 1900s. That always makes a genealogist's ears perk up. Another Benshoof? The relative who told me the story said that she had received a telephone call from that baby's supposed grandson about 20 years earlier and gave me the grandson's name and the town where he lived. Even though it was 20-year-old information, I found a person in *Whitepages.com* by the same name living in the same town in Oregon, with a phone number. I picked up the phone and made a cold call. It was a slightly awkward beginning ("You've never heard of me..."), but I told him that I could give him nine generations of his birth family going back to the 1700s. He said he had been searching for his birth family for 20 years. By the end of the conversation, he was crying, and I was too.

Patsy Brock added another suggestion: "Use maps. It is often very clear that a family can't be yours when it is three counties away in the 1800s.

Marjorie Wilser suggests: "Check odd corners like *eBay.com* for physical artifacts and photos."

My own experience in this produced remarkable results. After hearing this *eBay.com* suggestion at one of our monthly meetings about three or four years ago, I immediately went home and listed my keywords of "Bason," "Benshoof," "Blue Grass, Iowa," and "Johnstown, Pennsylvania" on eBay. For about two years I mostly got "hits" advertising bathroom and kitchen

sinks from people who misspelled my last name as “b a s i n.” But, then one day, up popped a picture of someone identified on the back as “G. W. Benshoof,” whom I immediately recognized as my grandfather as a young man. Of course, I immediately bought it, and another one that the seller also had. Into my hands, from the unlikelyst of sources, fell two pictures of my grandfather as a teenager that no one in the family had ever seen.

4. IMPROVE YOUR SKILLS

A lot of members had a lot to say about this. Karen Ramsdell unexpectedly said: “Join the Santa Barbara County Genealogical Society and take classes there.”

Chris Klukkert said: “Attend seminars and classes – LOTS of them. Learn the basic and correct techniques EARLY and stick with them.”

Merna McClenathen advised joining a local genealogy group “as soon as possible and take every class, course and trip they offer if you possibly can.” She added: “You can’t do genealogy in a vacuum, so network with as many people as possible – and ask questions if you don’t understand something.”

5. GET OUT OF YOUR HOUSE – GO VISIT FAMILY SITES

This theme recurred often. Karen Ramsdell said: “Augment your research by visiting ancestral towns.” Kathie Morgan added: “Eventually you have to get out of the house and away from the computer and go to a library, cemetery, courthouse, archive, etc. to find your family.” Jean Pettitt has this exciting story: “Visiting a small town in Ohio I learned that a professor from Ohio State University was conducting an archeological dig at the site of our ancestor’s cabin (a stop on the Underground Railroad) to collect artifacts left by runaway slaves. At the local library in the same town I found a copy of a speech written for a family reunion in 1880 describing the family’s life in England, their journey to America in 1814 and happenings for each family member and descendant since their arrival.”

One of our members, probably Jim Friestad, said, “Go to Salt Lake City at least once before you die.”

6. CITE THE SOURCES FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Cheryl Jensen reminds us all of the importance of this: “When you find some information or a document, note the source. This way you can always find it again, and you’ll have the proof you need to ensure your research is based on facts.”

Bob Rothenberg said: “Use historical, ancestral research and supporting documentation to validate your process.”

Chris Klukkert added this practical suggestion: “If you Xerox a record from a book, copy the cover and title page too.”

Debbie Kaska, the indomitable editor of our wonderful periodical *Ancestors West*, suggests: “Work slowly. Start from what you know and ask one question at a time. Keep track of where you got your information.”

Judy Sahn said: “ALWAYS record your sources and focus on what you are looking to find.”

Cari Thomas, perhaps our Society’s most eminent genealogist, thinks citing your sources is one of the

most important things she has learned. She says it is “my way to help others be able to find the same records and stories I’ve found.” She thinks it is a way “to pay back – AND pay forward, for one’s own genealogical discoveries.”

One of my favorite citations is this one: “This information is from the family Bible in the possession of Aunt Merle until the tornado hit Topeka, Kansas. Now only the Good Lord knows where it is.”

7. ASK FAMILY TO TELL STORIES, IDENTIFY PICTURES

Art Sylvester was a former president of our society and now looks out for our property. This is his best hint: “I had a trove of unidentified family pictures and fortunately my aunt, the last of my paternal family, was able to identify everyone in all of them.” He added: “Do it NOW, not tomorrow.”

Sue Ramsey agrees with this one and expands it a little: “Network!” she says. “Talk to your known relatives, but also reach out via the internet, snail mail, or even cold calls to people who may be relatives. No fact or detail is insignificant. One little piece of information can be the key to unlocking those brick walls.”

Alex Grzywacki, our Society’s best helper on all things about the Civil War, says: “Call your oldest family members and record their life stories. But he also suggests three practical ways to get the younger generation involved: (1) find a descendant, 8 to 12-years-old, to be your research partner, (2) pay your grandchildren to scan the family photos, and (3) take a road trip with your grandchildren to take photos of them at the graves of their ancestors.”

I have already shared my own story on this one. In 1985, when I began my genealogical search, I called a much-older cousin in Iowa, who, my mother told me, had done some family research. In our conversation he mentioned that 40 years earlier he had seen a “trunkful” of family letters at a relative’s in Davenport, Iowa. In 1991, I convinced my long-suffering wife that we should take a wonderful vacation in Davenport, Iowa. The result of that trip is that I finally located these letters, nearly 300 of them, not in Davenport, but far, far away, clear out in San Diego, California. I now have them and am preparing them for publication. They are from 1850 to 1910, all written to my great-uncle, who lived his entire life in Blue Grass, Iowa. They cover the founding of Johnstown, Pennsylvania, the conditions on Civil War battlefields (from his brothers), the death of Abraham Lincoln, the great Johnstown Flood of 1889, homesteading in Nebraska, and lots of family gossip. Those old genealogical bones of birth, marriage and death, suddenly got up and fairly danced around when I read their thoughts and actions in their own words. Transcribing them and figuring out “who is who” in them has not only astoundingly filled out the picture of my family for five generations, but it has also kept me mostly out of trouble for the last 27 years.

8. EVERYTHING IS NOT ON-LINE – USE YOUR LIBRARY

It surprised me that this recommendation came from Kathie Morgan, our library director. She said: “Librar-

ies contain much information that was collected and published way before the internet appeared and this information has not yet been added to the internet."

Jane Honikman said: "Join the Society and sign up for a class. After trying to research on my own for decades I hit homeruns with support from true experts."

Don Gill, one of our honest-to-god retired librarians in the Society, says: "'Ask A Librarian' is a great free service available via the internet. Just type in your question and whoever is online (it's manned 24/7) will search for you. That person will email you, probably the next day, with information." He also suggested "Call local libraries in the area you are researching. Reference librarians will do some research for you at no charge."

Let me break in here to give you some of the better requests that have been received by genealogical libraries. One letter said: "We recently lost our Grandmother. Please send us a copy." Another had a simple request: "I would like to find out if I have any living relatives or dead relatives or ancestors in my family." Another letter showed some understandable frustration: "Enclosed please find my Grandmother. I have worked on her for 30 years without success. Now see what you can do!" And, since we here are all mostly "of an age," you can empathize with this older man who wrote: "Please send me information about my first wife. I have forgotten her name." This one may have come from a genealogy widow when she requests: "Please send me any relative that you can find residing in your library."

9. USE DNA

Paul Cochet, one of our leading DNA gurus in the Society, says: "For better or worse DNA has changed the way genealogical data is utilized.

And the full story on this hint is yet to be written.

10. SHARE WHAT YOU FIND – AND REAP THE REWARDS

Kristin Ingalls, our resident genealogical poet, says: "Volunteer to help others. You will learn more than you ever counted on and better yet, you will meet the coolest people who share your passion and they will be friends for life." She added that she was too lazy to make that rhyme.

Alex Grzywacki puts it simply: "Pay your genealogy forward!"

I was an early convert to this way of thinking. I remember meeting with a cousin in Minnesota at a family reunion many years ago and his telling me that he kept his information private and that I should too. It was his, he had done the research, and why should he give it to someone else.

I remember thinking that this didn't make sense to me. It wasn't "his" information, it was the family's information. I immediately went home and made all my on-line data public. My Bason-Benshoof tree of almost 19,000 people now gets nearly 100 "hits" every month from close and distant relatives. I must admit that I was slightly irritated last month when a shirt-tail cousin sent me three pictures of relatives with a note saying, "I thought that you would like to see these." I wrote back,

thanking her, and kindly pointing out that I was the one who originally put those pictures up online. But, even with that, I couldn't begin to count the number of times I have received information I needed from "relatives" that found me online – hundreds of pictures and even huge packets of private material that I would never have found on my own.

11. WRITE YOUR STORIES

Several people had ideas to help on this. I will always remember the speaker at one of our monthly meetings who said that the secret to writing your genealogical stories is simply two words, "butt glue." I hope I don't need to explain what that means.

Marianne Corradi, who dazzled us all with her published genealogy, says she had lots of help with hers. A graphic artist combined three separate pieces she had written and her daughter found the printer on the internet.

My own experience is still in flux on this one. When I found out that five of my great-uncles, all brothers, had served in the Civil War, I began to write the definitive article: "The Benshoof Boys in the Civil War," but almost immediately got bogged down. So, I decided to follow Annie Lamott's writing recommendation and do it "Bird by Bird," or, in my case, write each of the brother's stories separately. I have found that I can more easily get my hands around a smaller project. I've finished two of them now and am hard at work on the third. In the end, I'll probably put them all together and have the book that I wanted to do in the first place.

12. KEEP WORKING – AND NEVER GIVE UP

Patsy Brock, who helped me find my deadbeat relative (he was homesteading in Nebraska), put it this way: Get busy. Keep busy. Stay busy.

Judy Sahn added: "Surround yourself with other genealogists – especially at the Sahyun and SBCGS events – and ALWAYS think outside the box."

Cathy Jordan, who has diligently kept our membership up-to-date, said: "Do not accept defeat when you cannot find a record; there is usually another way to attack the problem and you just have to find it."

Alex Grzywacki was even more urgent when he said "We are all running out of time. So, if you don't do it, who will? Tick. Tick. Tick."

13. WRITE LETTERS TO YOUR DEAD RELATIVES

Okay, I'll confess that this is one of my OWN ideas. But, I have used it a lot and have the letters in my ancestor's online files to back up this claim. Sometimes I do it when I hit a brick wall, sitting in my own house, trying to make some sense out of something. I just start writing a letter to my relative, telling them what I know about them and asking them a question, like "what were you doing in the 1870 census and where were you and why can't I find you?"

But, I ALWAYS do it when I am sitting in a graveyard, next to a gravestone. Here's one of those early letters, written over 27 years ago back in 1990, when I was sitting next to my great-grandfather George William Benshoof's gravestone in Greene County, Iowa:

"Sunday, July 15, 1990. Angus, Iowa.

Hello, Great Grandpa. I've finally found your grave here in Angus, Iowa. It wasn't easy. It has been over 107 years since your death and I couldn't even find Angus, Iowa, on any present-day Iowa maps. When I finally arrived at the spot on the map where Angus was supposed to be, there were only four houses left - and NO cemetery. In desperation, I went to one of the houses and knocked on the door. The farmer's wife informed me that, "Yes, this is Angus - what's left of it." And to think, Grandpa, that there were 7,000 people living here when you were here, working in the coal mines.

She gave me the instructions to the cemetery and I drove a few miles on the gravel road and up into some low hills. There it was. I was surprised, because it was meticulously maintained. The grass was carefully mown, the bushes and trees trimmed, the gravestones all upright.

I have spent some time wandering the graveyard now and have finally located your marker. It's a nice one, much like all the others for a veteran of the Civil War, except taller. It tells that you were in "CO. E, 20th IOWA INF. Died April 14 1883, Aged 52 yrs 2 mo. 24 ds." but fails to mention that you were at the Battle of Vicksburg, dug in with your brother, Peter, and the rest of the Iowa boys. I hope you saw General U. S. Grant and cheered for him as he rode by on his horse.

I see that your second wife, Emma Conklin, is here beside you. I guess I expected that. But I am surprised to see that Ora Captolia, your granddaughter, is here as well, dead before her first birthday. It must have been a sad day. Were her parents visiting you, to show off their new baby?

I have been sitting here in the shade writing to you and have just been interrupted. A farmer arrived in his truck and unloaded a ride-on mower and began his work. When he got close to me, he stopped his mower and I went over to say hello. I introduced myself and shook hands and he said "I'm pleased to meet you, Mr. Bason, my name is Jim Benshoof." Here I was face-to-face with a first cousin I'd never seen, never even heard of. He is the son of your boy, LeRoy, and Nellie Freestone Benshoof, the ones who homesteaded in South Dakota and lived in the sod house.

We talked about your gravestone and he said that he had been taking care of the cemetery since 1961 when it was overgrown and dilapidated. I asked him about a Benshoof grave marker that was almost new in the cemetery, one for "James David Benshoof, 1946-1965." He began to cry. It was for his 19-year-old son, killed in an auto accident. He told me that he and his son had cared for the cemetery together when the boy was a teenager. One day, young Jim had told him that he wanted to be buried here. "And so, here he is," said my cousin, "and that's why I'm here too, doing this, trying to keep it neat. It's for him."

And, so, Grandpa, life is going on. Your children and grandchildren are all dead now too. Even your great grandchildren are nearly all gone as well. I'm one of the last. But, I thought you would just want to know that your grave is still well-tended, and you are not forgotten.

Love,

Your great-grandson,

Well, that is just too sad a note on which to end a keynote address. Besides, I have a couple more quick things to add.

First, I know that someone is going to complain that I only have 13 suggestions listed here. So, I hope you will add two more of your own and let me know what they are. But, that's all there were from you - and "Thirteen" just didn't go with "Fun Facts For Finding Family." So, sue me!

Finally, as some of you know, I still have one thing left to find out about Griffith Bason, the progenitor of our family in America: I don't know where he is buried. I've searched all online and library sources for burials in Peoria County, Illinois. I've wandered through nearly all 43 of Peoria County's cemeteries. I've tromped over his 80-acre piece of land with the hope of finding a grave stone - all to no avail. But recently I was informed that, just this last April, a local Peoria genealogist had "discovered" a lost cemetery only a quarter-mile north of Griffith's property, which had been abandoned in 1906 and sold off and paved over in the early 1950s. With stars in my eyes and hope in my heart, I wrote to this genealogist to ask if a Griffith Bason was buried there. He said "no," but that they had recently found out that the gravestones, when they were bulldozed off the site, had all been dumped in a ravine and they were now going to excavate the ravine to recover them.

So, the good news is that - in genealogy - there is always another day - and there is ALWAYS HOPE.

So, I hope you have a great day of discovery today in this seminar with a truly great genealogist, Joshua Taylor.



Keynote speaker, Bob Bason. Photo by Charmien Carrier

A TOUCH OF OLD SANTA BARBARA

Our Beautiful "Muni"

By Margery Baragona



IN THOSE DISTANT DIM DAYS of World War II, I recall how scary were the shrill sounds of air raid sirens awakening us. The sirens were located at the Hoff Army Hospital, a major medical facility west of State Street and on both sides of Las Positas. I am not sure why Santa Barbara was chosen but it was a

large part of our city in wartime. As the war ended in 1945 the facility gradually closed. It was a huge undertaking to demolish buildings and move others. Some were transferred to the low cost housing development, Pilgrim Terrace, and a few to near Turnpike. The Oaks Nursery School started on the hospital grounds. Several buildings remain today. However, what I am interested in is how our majestic and beautifully maintained public golf course came to be on much of the land Hoff Army Hospital once occupied.

Early in 1948 farsighted people (including my mother, an energetic athletic woman) thought that our paradise should have, as many cities did, a public golf course. Committees were formed, the idea was debated, problems were solved, and other problems became evident. The Army donated 26.02 acres and for \$100,000, the city purchased land from the Nineteenth Agricultural District. A petition requiring 2,300 signatures was put on the ballot; it passed. Delays mounted and problems persisted. An additional hundred thousand dollars was raised by public subscription. There were 61 people on the committee, which worked on these troublesome



Margery Baragona's parents, Louis and Lillian Marcus, totaling up their golf scores.

issues. Can you imagine 61 people agreeing on anything? Funds in the amount of \$160,000 were finally allotted for construction, but the Korean War started and the National Security Board halted work as some of the materials were needed elsewhere. As completion was nearing in 1957 the fees were set, \$5.00 for membership and "working people" would pay 50 cents per round! The newspaper articles are fascinating, showing the conflict in a city trying to succeed with something new. Finally, late in 1958 the course opened, although the configuration of the holes differed from the course today. My mother, although a country club member herself, had always felt that there should be a course for everyone. For her hard work and dedication she was afforded the honor of being the first woman to tee off.



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We wish to thank the following members of the Santa Barbara County Genealogy Society for their contributions, which greatly help to defray the publication costs of **Ancestors West!**

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Knick-Knacks and Drainage Pipes: The Fun of Growing Up in Santa Barbara

By Margery Baragona

ANCESTRAL HOMES bring to mind stately manors, vast plantations, or remote country houses. My grandparents' ancestral home in the Soho district of London is lost in time. After my father brought them to Santa Barbara they rented a small craftsman house on De La Vina Street near Micheltorena, where they lived in the '30s and early '40s. When I visited with my mother I was asked to dust her whatnots. I don't know if this was for housekeeping training or so my grandmother and mother could talk privately. Some of Grandma Annie's knick-knacks are now my treasures.

My "ancestral home" was at 1801 Olive Street at the corner of Islay where my parents rented from 1932 to 1937 for \$35.00 per month. It was a fun



My grandparents' home on De La Vina Street in Santa Barbara, California as it looks today.



Margery Baragona in front of the home on Olive Street where she grew up.

place to grow up. I had wonderful friends: Katharine Yarwood, Peggy Locke, and Shirley Broad. A favorite pastime was to cross under the street in a drainage pipe. We also had plays in the Yarwood garage. Although it was 81 years ago I still remember the scent of the Camay soap as we washed our hands in their tiled bath. When one has grown up in Santa Barbara the homes of childhood friends seem ancestral. Even if landscapes have changed and residents are different, they seem forever the same.

"The Natoma" (Model No. C2034)
Sears Catalog Home appearing in the
1916 Sears Roebuck Catalog.
Wikimedia Commons

\$191⁰⁰

20' 0"

18' 0"

LIVING ROOM 10' 0" x 10' 0"

KITCHEN 8' 0" x 7' 0"

BEDROOM 6' 0" x 7' 0"

PORCH 9' 0" x 5' 0"

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Walking in My Ancestor's Footsteps and Sitting in His House in Ukraine

By Dorothy Jones Oksner

LOOKING AROUND IN the dark interior with the filtered sunlight shining through a small window in the living room, I pondered how I had connected with this crazy Ukrainian tour group. My cousin Thelma, who wanted to be related through a hoped-to-be sister of my great-grandfather, Cyril Genik (aka Kyrylo), had told me of an upcoming tour to Western Ukraine that was leaving from Toronto, Canada, in September 2004. We decided to go together and be roommates. We had first met online in a Ukrainian research list-serve on *Yahoo.com*.

So there we were, sitting in this house that had belonged to my 2nd great-grandfather, Ivan Genyk-Berezowsky, and where his sons, Stefan, Anton and Cyril (Kyrylo) had been born and raised in the mid-1850s and 1860s. Before the trip I had met my other 2nd cousins in Toronto, Stefan and Andrey, descendants of Kyrylo's brother, Stefan; they connected me with Mykhailo, a cousin of theirs, whom we met in Kolomyia, Ukraine, the home of the giant Pysanka (Ukrainian Easter egg) in the Hutsul artisan region in western Ukraine (also considered as eastern Galicia that was once a part of Austria).

Mykhailo generously took time off work to drive a Ukrainian-speaking woman (who was also on the tour with us) as well as Thelma and me in the pouring rain to Bereziw Nyzhni, a very small village about 20 miles to the west. The Ukrainian interpreter-lady and Mykhailo entertained each other in the front seat telling Ukrainian jokes for the whole 20-mile trip. They must have been pretty funny as there was a lot of laughter, but since Thelma and I lacked a knowledge of Ukrainian, we could not share in the humor.

On the way, we stopped at the home of Mykhailo's mother, Cristina, and delivered money to her from Andrey, her nephew. She served us lunch consisting of soup and bread on short notice or that's all she had. She explained through the interpreter about her family, which, of course, I copied down as best I could. Later back in Toronto, Cousin Andrey straightened it out somewhat, and he enjoyed watching the videos I had taken with my camcorder.

We stopped at the cemetery in Lucza (Lucha), the village where my grandmother, Eugenie Genik, was born. Still in the rain, we looked for headstones with the name Genyk or Genik on them and found sev-



The house in where my 2nd great-grandfather, Ivan Genyk-Berezowsky, lived in Bereziw Nyzhni, Ukraine. Note the unique design in the roof shingles.

eral with the name "Hanec" in Cyrillic lettering that Mykhailo said was Genik. That wasn't too helpful, as Mykhailo did not know who was buried there and the first names did not mean anything to him. A lot got lost in the translation.

When we arrived outside the house where we were now visiting, we saw a large monument-like tablet in the pathway to the house. The writing was Cyrillic but our interpreter read it for us. It said something to the effect that "Ivano Franko had stayed there for six weeks in the summer of 1880 recuperating from his imprisonment," which, by the way, had severely deteriorated his health. He was considered a radical by the government and was imprisoned due to his activism. He was later considered a hero and an important and famous historical figure and writer with a region and city named after him, Ivano-Frankivsk. The village residents were proud of Franko and had paid for and erected this monument to him. My great-grandfather, Cyril, was Franko's contemporary and friend, and was greatly influenced by Franko and his radical ideals. I have a very old photo of Franko dancing with Cyril and Paulina, Cyril's wife. It would have been taken in the 1880s when Franko was staying there.

The rain had stopped, and a woman with a kerchief on her head soon appeared on the pathway carrying a cloth bag; she introduced herself as the tenant of the house and said her surname was Genyk. The woman couldn't tell us anything about the history of the house or its ownership. Like I said before, a lot got lost in translation.

I took a lot of photos, one of which confirmed the house was the right one I had seen in a Ukrainian history book about the Genyk-Berezowsky family. The roof had the same colored shingle design.

Later in Lviv before our flight home, I visited with another cousin, Vasył Lazarowych, and his wife, Ira, and their two beautiful daughters. The daughters were a little conversant in English and we had a nice but short visit.

There is more about my great-grandfather, Cyril Wasylovich Genik (Kyrylo), who was born in 1857 in Bereziw Nyzhni, the second or last son of Ivan Genyk-Berezowsky, the village mayor, and Anna Pertsovytch. Cyril was educated at the gymnasium (university) in Lviv where he obtained his baccalaureate before his teaching appointment in 1879. In 1882, he returned home and established a school there. Throughout the 1880s he established a milling business as well as a producers' cooperative that he named the Carpathian Store. In 1890 he had been elected to the town council in Kolomyia.

At some point, he met and was recruited by Josef Oleskiw, a man who had been encouraging immigration by Ukrainians to Canada, to accompany and lead his second contingent of Ukrainians to Canada and help them get settled. Genik and his family joined a group of 64 Ukrainians in landing at Quebec City on June 22, 1896.

That same month, Oleskiw recommended Genik be hired as an immigration agent by the Canadian Department of the Interior. In September, Genik became an as-needed Department worker for the government's interpreting and translation needs. In his job as an immigration agent, Genik met new Ukrainian Canadian immigrants at Quebec City, encouraged the use of English and the abandonment of traditional customs and served as a counselor wherever necessary.

By 1898 Genik had become a full-time salaried employee of the Canadian government. In doing so, he had become the first Ukrainian full-time Canadian government public servant.

In 1899, Genik established the Taras Shevchenko Reading Hall in his house in Winnipeg, and the first Ukrainian language newspaper in Canada, *Kanadyiskyi farmer* (Canadian farmer) in 1903. Despite not



1880s photo of Ukrainian activist Ivano Franko, second from left, with Cyril Genik (far right) and Pauline, his soon-to-be-wife, in traditional festive attire.



Cyril Genik (1857-1925), and Pauline Tsurkowsky, my great-grandparents. He was known as the "Czar of Canada" for his service to the Ukrainian Community.

being religious himself, Genik believed that a Christian denomination should exist independent of Greek Orthodox and Russian Orthodox norms, and founded the Independent Greek Church in cooperation with Winnipeg Presbyterian Church ministers in 1903-1904. In 1911, following the general election of that year in which Genik's favored Liberal Party had lost office, Genik lost his job, and he finished his life in the public sphere. He lived for a while in the United States but returned to Winnipeg in his later life, where he passed away on February 12, 1925. By the time of his death, Genik had become so well known in the Ukrainian Canadian community that he had come to be known as the "Czar of Canada."

I had followed Cyril's travels from Ukraine to Winnipeg. He had crossed the border into California, purchased land in Goleta, California and deeded it to my grandparents, Charles Arthur Jones and his wife, Eugenie Genik in 1916. He was reported as an "enemy alien," in a letter found on *Ancestry.com*. He may have been seeking a "Utopia" in California as he had filed a Declaration of Intention to become a United States citizen in Los Angeles, California where he also did not claim his mail being held at the post office. He traveled from Florida to Havana, Cuba and back as well. He died in 1925 in Winnipeg, Canada and is buried with Paulina Tsurkowsky, his wife, in the Elmwood Cemetery in Winnipeg.

In February 1999, the Canadian Government honored Cyril Genik on Canada's Heritage Day in Winnipeg with a plaque inscription, "For 18 years he provided practical advice and assistance to Ukrainian immigrants as they tried to adapt to life in their new country. Genik's leadership in cultural matters also helped strengthen Canada's Ukrainian community."

I have not yet found a sister to Cyril, Stefan and Anton. I hope Thelma has taken a DNA test that will indicate her cousin relationship to me at some degree.

Dorothy Oskner a SBCGS Board Member, has been researching her family history since 1986.

A Little Brick House

By Melville R. V. Sahyun and Geraldine V. Sahyun(dec.)
sahyun@infionline.net

WHEN YOU DRIVE DOWN De la Vina Street, across Pedregosa Street, you can look to the southeast and see a small gray stucco house perched atop the hill. Next to our famous adobes, this may be one of the most historic houses in Santa Barbara.

Built in 1868, it was one of the first (if not the first) houses in Santa Barbara built of fired brick. According to the Santa Barbara Historical Society, recent research and restoration work on the Fernald house, located across Castillo Street from the Sahyun Library, revealed that the oldest portion of that structure, completed in 1861, was also fired brick, a building material not manufactured in Santa Barbara at that time.



The Little Brick House as it appears today.

A history of the brick house located at De la Vina and Pedregosa Streets was written some years back by my mother, Geraldine Sahyun, in the context of a biographical essay about her great-grandfather, Henry Penry (1817 - 1895), who built the house. Her account follows (with some editorial modification). It is based on her grandparents' (Richard and Sarah Dowell) recounting of these family stories.

Henry Penry was born in Longtown, Wales, the son of an innkeeper. His was an adventurous spirit, and he had a fondness for travel. In his youth he and a cousin, Thomas Penry, came to the United States, and eventually purchased a farm in Pleasant Valley, Ohio. In 1839 he returned home planning to marry, but the conservative parents of his sweetheart, sixteen-year-old Ann Hoddell (1823 - 1898), took a dim view of entrusting their only daughter to a footloose young man whom they considered irresponsible, regardless of how charming he was. Consequently the young lovers devised a plan. There

was to be a fox hunt in the neighborhood, so on that day Henry, in full hunting attire, followed the hounds as usual, then turned off and rode to join Ann. With Henry still in his red coat, they were married by an obliging vicar.

Though Ann's parents disapproved of both the marriage and the subsequent departure for Ohio, they outfitted their daughter with a trousseau, which included some clothing which her mother considered suitable for "the wilderness," but which Ann did not like. Later, as they traveled by canal boat on the Erie Canal, the youthful bride threw one particularly disliked brown dress overboard!

Life in Ohio was very different from England, but they found the people kind and friendly. They spent several years there during which their older children were born. Henry found opportunity for more travel—leaving Ann and the children in the care of his cousin, he went by

boat down the Mississippi River to New Orleans and back, which must have been an even more interesting trip in the 1840s than it is now.

The death of Henry's father and the illness of Ann's mother called the family back to England in 1856. It was a long and stormy voyage. The ship was disabled, so the passengers had to help man the pumps, and supplies ran so low that fish had to be caught to supplement the food. They were so much delayed that Ann's mother died before they reached port. (By this time a new survey of the border between England and Wales meant that Longtown was now no longer in Monmouthshire, Wales, but in Herefordshire, England!) After the settlement of the estates they expect-



Henry Penry (ca. 1895)

ed to remain in England, but Henry was not a good businessman, and his inheritance (and Ann's) diminished so much that he finally decided that his best course was to salvage what he could and return to Ohio, the Civil War having ended. The oldest daughter, Margaret (1842-1873), married and remained in England for the remainder of her short life; their elder son, James Hoddell Penry (1844-1923), also elected to stay. Sarah Ann (1847-1917), the second daughter, could not bear to be parted from her sweetheart, young Richard Dowell (1844-1920), whose parents were both dead, but neither could she part from her parents, so history repeated itself; they slipped away and were married. The youthful pair then sailed for America in 1867 together with Henry and Ann, the Penrys' younger son, Harry (1852 - ?), and two little girls, Mary Jane "Pollie" (1851-1909) and Carrie (1856-1938).

On the ship they met a man who was returning to California, and who told such glowing tales of the Golden West and of its beauties and opportunities that Henry was immediately filled with the desire to see it for himself. Consequently when they reached New York, instead of proceeding to Ohio as planned, they embarked for Panama. There they crossed the isthmus on the primitive little railway that existed there at the time, and again took ship for San Francisco.

Life, however, in that lusty, turbulent city did not appeal to Ann for herself or her children. Then from various sources they began to hear reports of a lovely little town to the south, Santa Barbara. It sounded promising; a recent, severe drought had bankrupted many of the ranchos on which the economy of Santa Barbara depended and dramatically depressed land prices, music to Henry's ears. So once again the family moved on in search of a dream. This time they found it, and the wanderer put down his roots at last.

They booked passage from San Francisco on the side-wheeler "Orizaba." In Santa Barbara passengers were landed in small boats, the sailors carrying the women and children through the surf; the first wharf wasn't built until 1872. Once ashore, there were no carriages for hire, but they found a man with a wagon for hire and rode up Calle Estado seated on their trunks, to the adobe St. Charles Hotel, which sheltered so many Santa Barbara pioneers.

The family wished to move into a house as soon as possible, and succeeded in finding a newly cleaned and painted one for rent. It was the Caneda adobe on East Canon Perdido Street, now part of the Presidio State Historic Park, for incorporated in it is one of the two surviving (original) buildings of the Royal Presidio of



The oldest extant photograph of the little brick house, as it originally appeared.

Santa Barbara. The other, El Cuartel, across the street, was occupied by the Valenzuela family, from whose well the Penrys drew their water.

They lived in this historic house while they looked about for property on which to build their own home. They finally decided upon a ten-acre plot bounded by De la Vina (the stage road), Chapala, Mission, and Islay Streets. The house was built on the highest part of the property, which is now the southeast corner of De la Vina and Pedregosa; this latter street did not exist then, and that section was used as a corral for the Penrys' horses. The house faced De la Vina Street, nearly on a level with it, for the gently rolling road had not yet been graded down. The address has since been changed to 131 W. Pedregosa Street.

In its position on the stage road, the Penry house was a favored stopping place for friends driving in from Goleta and the outlying ranchos. The Indians from Cieneguitas used to stop at the well, too, when they came that way; they also used to pull up and eat the young corn sprouts from the field where Henry grew feed for his stock. The ten acres provided room for this, as well as an orchard, a garden and pasture. The passing of the stage was a great event for the children and later grandchildren, as the driver whipped up his horses to get up the steep hill and make a flourishing entrance into town.

The Penrys did not choose to build with adobe; frame houses were few, and, besides, they had always lived in houses of brick or stone. It was then 1868, and Santa Barbara's brick supply came as ballast in ships. The house was started and reached the height of the tops of the windows before the bricks gave out; it was then necessary to wait for the arrival of another ship. According to family tradition, when the house was finally finished, Ann wept and declared despairingly that she could never live in such a small place. To which Hen-



The Penrys' second home at 1830 De la Vina Street

ry replied, "Name of God, Ann, that's all the bricks in town!" They moved in; it rained and the not-quite-finished roof leaked. They piled their possessions on the beds, covered them with tarpaulins, and the children sat on top with umbrellas, an experience they all remembered gleefully even in their old age.

Some years later the Penrys built a two-story frame house immediately adjacent, now 1830 De la Vina Street; it too is still standing as a stuccoed-over apartment house. They lived there the rest of their lives, but it never held as warm a place in the family's hearts as did "the little brick house," as they always called it—a place of many happy memories.

Melville R.V. (Mel) Sahyun is the son of the library donor Geraldine Valde Sahyun. He and his wife Irene are Life Members of the Society.

Iconic Ranch House Used by Hollywood

By George Goodall

MY GRANDPARENTS' RANCH HOUSE was often used in the 1920s and early 1930s as the "on location" site for filming "Western" movies. I can't remember the names of all of the famous actors involved, except Tom Mix and Luli Deste. I didn't watch much of the filming because I was in school most of the time.

One time when I was watching the filming, the script called for the actress to crawl under the house to retrieve a kitten. She had only the high-heeled shoes she had worn to the shooting, but they would never do for a Western. The Director turned to me and said, "Hey kid, can we rent your shoes for 50 cents?" That's the only time any of me was ever in a movie.

In addition to those showing the ranch house some of the scenes were of a fight that developed among the cowboys in the bunk house. Other scenes were when the cowboys came riding out of the yard at a very fast gallop and they had meetings at the hitching post in front of the house.

This ranch was developed by my grandparents, Frank and Sue Goodall, in the 1890s as an isolated, self-sustaining farmstead. Nearly everything that was needed was produced on the ranch except cloth, clothing, flour (they grew wheat but didn't grind it), canned foodstuffs, and personal needs. The primary ranch income came from about 1,000 acres of dry-farmed wheat or barley. My grandfather threshed his grain with a harvester pulled by 26 horses. Most of the horses could



Tom Mix (1880-1940) was one of the Hollywood Cowboys in films shot at the Goodall Ranch.



Frank and Sue Goodall on the porch of their iconic ranch house in 1925.

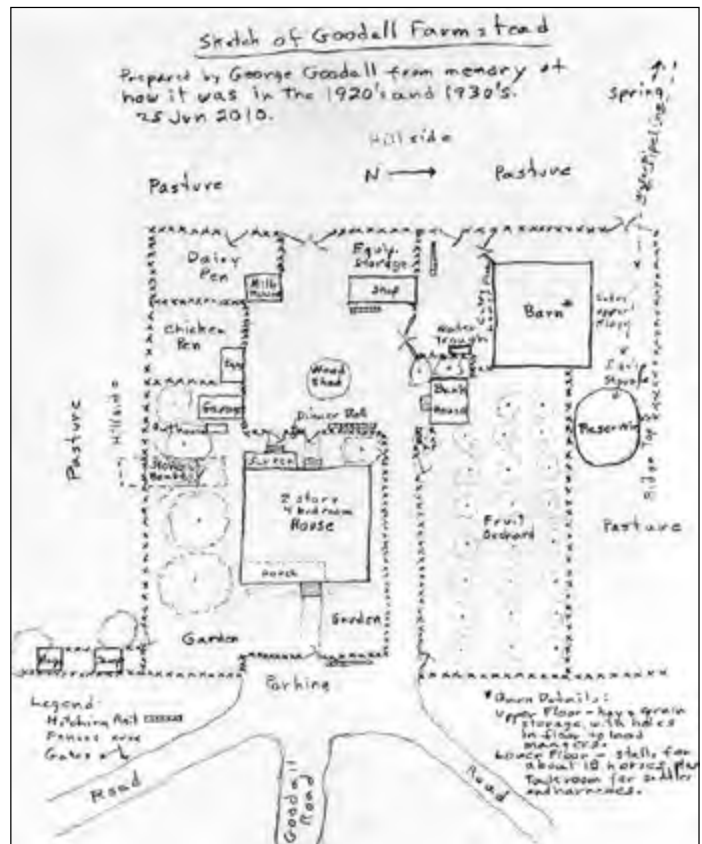
be housed in the 18 stalls on the lower floor of his very large barn. The upper floor was for hay storage.

The rolling hills behind the house were pasture land for the horses and cattle. The water supply was from an improved spring in the canyon and there was a reservoir on the ridge to the north for running cold water in the buildings.

The ranch was located at the very west end of the San Fernando Valley in Los Angeles County about 25 miles west of Hollywood. On a clear day one could see across the valley from the front porch to the San Fernando Mission, about 20 miles to the east. The farmstead was mostly in a small, nearly flat valley, facing to the east. Utilities were not available. It was oil lamp lighting, chopped wood for heating and cooking, and outhouses behind. The ranch was accessible by a dirt road (Goodall Road) coming from the east.

As farm lands in the San Fernando Valley became attractive as home sites for Hollywood personalities in the late 1930s, my grandmother sold the ranch to Luli Deste, an Austrian actress, who had fallen in love with the place when she had been there on location. In the 1950s the ranch was completely subdivided for residential housing that extended on building pads to the tops of the hills. Sadly this iconic ranch house was lost to the subdivision boom in Southern California.

George Goodall has been a member of the Santa Barbara County Genealogical Society for 30 years. He is retired as the UC Farm Advisor in Santa Barbara specializing in citrus and avocados.



Sketch of the Goodall Farmstead in the 1920s and 30s prepared by George Goodall from memory.

The House of Many Memories By Helen Latham Cornell

I'M PROUD TO INTRODUCE you to the house at 926 Garden Street in Santa Barbara, California, that my grandparents Clorinda and Ernesto Herman purchased around 1905. My mother, Matilda Herman Latham, just missed being born there. She and her three sisters and three brothers lived in the somewhat small house for many years.

Various relatives lived nearby in the 300 blocks of East Carrillo and Canon Perdido streets. Our maternal great-grandmother, Inocencio Cordero, subsequently married Ernesto's brother, Fred Herman. So mother and daughter were sisters-in-law, and brothers were stepfather and stepson. This location is near the Presidio, which is appropriate since my grandfather was a Descendiente (descendant) of one of the soldiers who was part of the founding of Santa Barbara in 1782.



The house at 926 Garden Street. Santa Barbara, California, as it looks today.

One of my grandfather's occupations for several years was driving the stagecoach from Los Olivos, leaving around 10 a.m. and arriving in Santa Barbara Park at 4 p.m. He also worked building the railroad tracks, and was later a gardener of various estates. His father, Cayetano Herman, was the head vaquero at the Hollister Ranch for many years.

Eventually, after there had been two deaths in the family and none of the family had the money to buy out the other family members, the house was sold in the 1960s. It has had various owners since then and is now an attorney's office. The remainder of this block is all new and tall buildings.



A family gathering including Maria Inocencio (center), and Clorinda Herman (far right) on the front porch in the early days at 926 Garden Street. Note how high the porch stood from the ground at that time!



The author's father, Emile Latham, with son Richard, kneeling in front of the bay window ca. 1928.



Uncle Ernest Herman in his baseball uniform beside a Model T Ford convertible parked in front of the house.

I'm so glad to have photos showing various activities that had taken place in the family home on Garden Street: the children growing up, weddings, my grandparents' 50th wedding anniversary, my uncles and other athletes, a car on what would later be the front lawn, family and friends reunions and especially welcoming home the World War II veterans. I'm so happy to have these great memories and wish we had taken more photos.

SBCGS member Helen Latham Cornell is a proud 6th generation Santa Barbaran. She attended La Cumbre Jr. High and graduated from Santa Barbara High School, class of 1952. Her first employer was Harold Chase (brother of Pearl Chase) followed by Jim Halliburton, Real Estate Appraiser. She also worked for Santa Barbara Savings and for neurosurgeon Richard Brown, M.D. She now has the "perfect" job at Jordano's working for her old SBHS classmate Peter Jordano. Her daughter Kim is an attorney in North Carolina.

Back Home in Milwaukee

By Mary Ann Kaestner

MY GRANDMOTHER Josephine Brandt bought this home at 2945 N. 36th Street in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, sometime between 1920 and 1927. When her daughter Stephanie married in 1927, Stephanie and her new husband continued to live in the house. Soon the house was home to three generations. In 1929, I was born there to Stephanie and Stanley Rackowski.

My memories of growing up in Milwaukee include the interesting fragrances of the city. I remember the scent of Ambrosia Chocolate and on other days, the hops from the Pabst or Schlitz breweries.

Financial circumstance forced grandma, my parents and me to live elsewhere and rent the home. I don't know the exact date this happened, but the mortgage was retired in 1934. By 1939, my grandmother as well as my mother and I moved back to 2945 N. 36th Street, but in the meantime



my father Stanley had passed away. I married and moved away in 1951 but my grandmother Josephine continued to live in the home until she died in 1979. My mother remained in the home seven more years, until 1986. Then the house was sold and mother moved to Oregon to join me and my family.

Built in 1918, our former home at 2945 N. 36th street is 100 years old this year!

Jacob Newman's Cabin: A Story of the Ohio Frontier

By Jean Pettitt

ON AN EARLY SPRING DAY in the year 1807 Jacob Newman set out from the small settlement of Canton, Ohio, on a 65 mile trek west along an Indian trail into the wilderness to meet up with his cousin, James Hedges. Hedges had been hired the previous year by the new American Government to survey land so it could be divided into property lines and sold to incoming settlers. The task was daunting as surveyor's chains had to be stretched out through the dense forest with corresponding lines entered into a plat book. To assist with this task Hedges asked Jacob to join him.

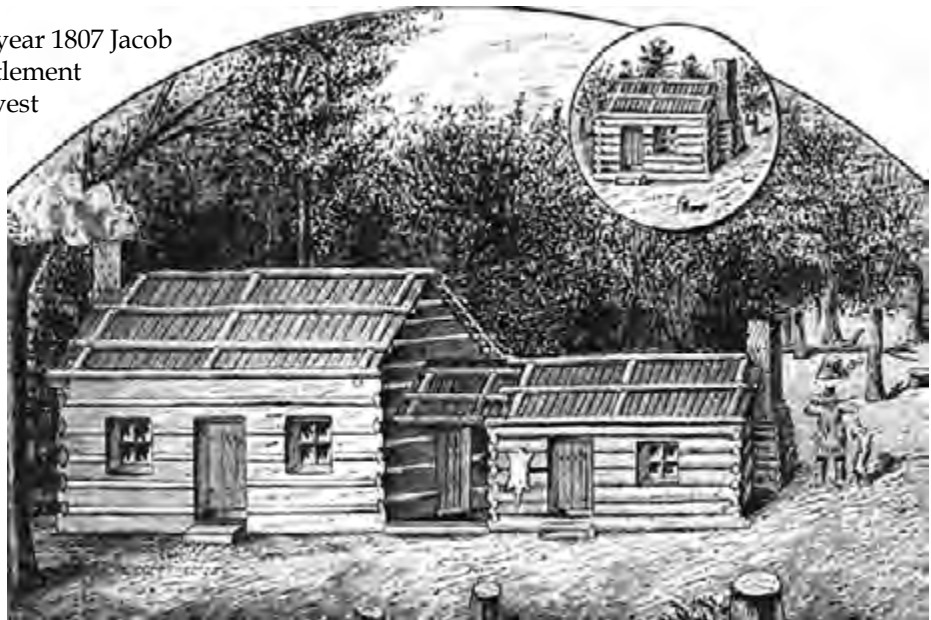
As Jacob set out on that spring day he was filled with excitement and hope for a better future for himself and his family. He knew that the area would soon fill up with farmers who would need to build houses, erect barns and establish towns where they could take their produce to be sold. His plan was to select the best land for himself and build an adjacent town where profits could be made and legacies forged.

Life had not been easy for Jacob. For the past five years he had moved several times in search of a place to put down roots and start a new life. It had not always been that way. Shortly after serving in John Snyder's Northumberland County Militia during the War of Independence Jacob settled down in Hamilton, Pennsylvania, just south of Chambersburg, married, purchased land near his in-laws, and started a family. But all that changed in the fall of 1802 when his wife Catherine (Frey Meyer) died three weeks after giving birth to their fourth child, Henry. Her death would lead to the split up of his family.

Shortly after Catherine's death, Jacob left his three older children with Catherine's parents and took Henry to western Pennsylvania near Greensburg to be close to his brother Michael. When the brothers heard about cheap land in the newly formed state of Ohio, they left Pennsylvania and moved to the frontier settlement of Canton where they were living when James Hedges approached Jacob and told him about the rich land he was surveying that would soon be available for purchase.

Jacob's Cabin

Jacob left Henry with his brother Michael and headed west that spring day with his niece and two nephews, the Brubaker siblings. When they met up with Hedges near the banks of the Rocky Fork River they set out to find the perfect spot to settle. It needed springs for drinking water, river-ways to transport settlers and



Jacob Newman's cabin, the first cabin built in Richland County, Ohio. The smaller cabin was built in 1807 and the later one in 1809. Drawing by Jacob's son Henry Newman, 3rd great-grandfather of David Pettitt.

produce, rapids to power mills and a site nearby to build a town. Jacob chose a beautiful spot on a small hill overlooking the rapids of the Rocky Fork River and soon began the arduous work of building what would become the first settler's cabin in Richland County, Ohio.

For the next several months these four pioneers worked nonstop to finish the cabin before winter set in. It wasn't much but it was a beginning, a place to provide shelter and the headquarters for Hedges and Jacob as they finished surveying the land. The small cabin (only 9 by 12 feet) was made of rounded bark covered beech logs chinked and daubed with sticks and mud to keep out the winter cold. There was no floor, only pounded earth. A wide fireplace occupied one end of the cabin with a stick and mud chimney running up the outside and a small loft above for sleeping. Windows were covered with 12 by 12 inch pieces of oilpaper. The door was so low that any man of ordinary height had to stoop when entering. It had a latchstring but it was hung on the outside to welcome all who passed by, whether they be friend or stranger.

By late summer the cabin was ready for occupation. The men then turned their efforts towards building the sawmill so they would be ready to provide lumber when the new pioneers arrived. Young Catherine Brubaker spent her days taking care of the men, preparing meals and tending to everyone's needs. With no time to plant crops Jacob returned several times to Canton to bring back supplies. This gave him time to spend with his five-year-old son Henry whom he hoped to bring to the settlement as soon as possible.

Even as the days shortened and winter approached preparations never slowed. During the winter of 1808

land was cleared for spring planting, construction continued on the sawmill and surveyors measured the remaining land and prepared the plat books in anticipation of settlers arriving in the spring. At night the little cabin was bursting at the seams since it accommodated not only the family but also at times Hedges and his employees as well as an occasional pioneer or Indian passing through the area.

By spring Jacob was anxious to have his family join him. Knowing that the little cabin was too small, he set to work building a larger more livable cabin. The second cabin was erected adjacent to the old one with a covered porch connecting the two. With the saw mill in partial operation Jacob was able to build a roomier cabin that was a half-story higher than the original. It had a board loft to be used as a sleeping room, wooden plank floors, and doors and windows made with the sawed lumber. The logs were nicely hewed and fitted and real glass was placed in the windows. A large fireplace took up one wall and was fitted with an iron crane with numerous hooks to hang the cooking kettles. Jacob's brother Michael and his wife arrived that spring to work on the mill and plant corn and wheat in the newly cleared land.

With the cabin built, fields planted and the mill operational Jacob was ready to bring his family to their new home. That fall he brought six-year-old Henry to live in the cabin and then returned to Pennsylvania to visit his three older children and marry his previous neighbor, Susan Snively, who lived near Jacob's old farm. The newlyweds spent the winter in Pennsylvania waiting until spring before embarking on the trek west to the little cabin in the Ohio wilderness. Susan had a daughter, Harriet Newman, born three months after Henry who would join them several years later. (The mystery as to who Harriet's father was has never been solved although Harriet was always referred to as Harriet Newman with no other father mentioned either in local records or family documents.)

As anticipated, settlers began to arrive, purchase land and set down roots. All was going as planned except for one minor irritant – mosquitos. After spending several summers at the cabin it became apparent that the site was a breeding ground for mosquitos. The town would have to be located elsewhere. So the surveyors moved two and a half miles north and plotted out the lots that would eventually make up the town of Mansfield. In 1811 Jacob sold his cabin and purchased land in the new town where he built a third cabin for his growing family. Andrew was born in 1811 and Joseph in 1812.

The War of 1812

All was turning out as Jacob had envisioned during his trek on the old Indian trail five years earlier. He owned the best land in the area, had become prosperous selling produce from his farm and lumber from his mill, was a highly respected leader of the community, and had a new wife and four beautiful young children. The future seemed promising and probably would have been if it weren't for events occurring thousands of miles away that would soon have an impact on his little community in the wilderness.

War between England and Napoleon's France was drawing America into the conflict. Britain had enforced a naval blockade choking off American trade with France; American merchant sailors were being impressed into the Royal Navy; and closer to home, British Canada was joining forces with Northwest Territory Indian tribes to conduct raids on American settlers in the hopes of scaring the settlers away and creating an Indian state that would serve as a buffer zone to American expansion. The United States would declare war on June 18, 1812.

Indian raids became a constant threat for the settlers of Mansfield. When one of their townsmen was found scalped in the nearby forest, Jacob's neighbor Johnny Chapman ran 26 miles to the nearest army post to bring soldiers for protection. Chapman would go down in history and American folklore, not for saving the town, but as Johnny Appleseed, who distributed apple tree seedlings from his nursery in Mansfield to settlers throughout the country.

By the winter of 1812-1813, eastern Militias came west to fight the British and their Indian allies. The First Regiment, Second Detachment of Pennsylvania Militia commanded by Brigadier General Richard Crooks arrived in Mansfield in mid-December. Being unfamiliar with the territory they engaged Jacob to be their guide. Jacob guided the Regiment to Upper Sandusky where they met up with General William Henry Harrison and then to the rapids of the Miami River. Along the way forts were erected and skirmishes fought. It was brutally cold with days spent marching through icy waters and over frozen rivers, dragging artillery and stores along the way. By the time the Regiment disbanded in mid-April over 30% had died, most from illness due to exposure. Jacob returned home in early June, suffering from pulmonary disease. His condition grew worse and on June 20, 1813 he passed away.

While Jacob did not live to see his dream fully recognized he did leave behind a legacy that would have made him proud. His children prospered and he would become known for many firsts – first settler in the county, one of the founders of the town of Mansfield, first will recorded in the probate book, and of course the builder of the first cabin in Richland County.

Information for this article was provided by Jacob's son Henry and daughter Harriet through personal documents and papers and from interviews compiled by A.A. Graham for his book, "History of Richland County Ohio" published in 1880.

Jacob Newman (1762-1813) is the 4th great-grandfather of Jean's husband, David Pettitt.

Jean Pettitt first became interested in genealogy after she rescued from the trash (not her mother's interest) the family history files that were compiled by her grandmother. She joined the SBCGS when she moved to Santa Barbara in the late 90s. Her primary interest is in the historical context of the times and places in which her people lived. Those places include the British Isles, New England, the Mid-Atlantic States and the Mid-West.

Gramps' House By Cathy Jordan

WHEN I WAS GROWING up, Gramps' house was my second home. He was my mother's father, Martin Gideon Feely, and he lived in Los Angeles with his widowed sister, Maude Feely Allen. All his grandchildren called him Gramps. He had moved his family of three children to Los Angeles from the tiny town of Jennings, Kansas, because his dying wife asked him to do that. Her family lived in Riverside, California, at that time (1923) and Gramps' family had made several trips to the west coast to visit them. Jennings was so small that my mother had to live in another town to attend high school. So he honored his wife's wishes, sold his mercantile store to his brother, and bravely moved to Los Angeles in 1923 with my mother Lola (age 17), her brother Gerald (age 14), and her sister Eleanore (age 12).

Gramps supported his family through the real estate financing business. He bought two lots on West 51st Street, one for his family and one next door for his sister Grace and her family. All three of Gramp's children attended and graduated from Manual Arts High School, not far from the home. From home my mother took the streetcar to UCLA where she was the first in the family to earn a college degree. Her brother went to USC, which was closer, and her sister followed in her footsteps at UCLA (thereby initiating the beginnings of our USC-UCLA family rivalry). Located about a mile down Vermont Avenue from the LA Memorial Coliseum, it is the family home at 1039 West 51st Street that is vividly planted in my memory as a place of love, joy, and family. My parents and I visited several times each month from Santa Barbara throughout my childhood until my great-aunt Maude passed away in 1963. Gramps had died in 1954.

Built in 1909, the house was in the style now called California bungalow. It had a covered porch across the entire front. At one point the porch to the left of the front door was glassed in on two sides, the side and the front, but remained open to the rest of the porch. This provided some protection from wind and rain but still allowed one fresh air while sitting there enjoying the neighborhood. The porch was also used as a smoking area; Gramps was a cigar smoker and his sister preferred he smoke outside. I do remember, however, a huge ashtray on a stand that sat beside his comfortable chair in the living room so I assume he smoked



Gramp's California bungalow in Los Angeles, California was like a member of the family.

indoors sometimes.

Inside, the house had dark (probably dark stained pine) wood trim and a plethora of built-in cabinets. There were cabinets that separated the living room from dining room and there were built-in china cabinets in the dining room and breakfast nook. Some of these cabinets had leaded glass doors. Most favorite of mine were the window seats in the dining room. If you lifted the tops of the window seats, there were several wonderful board games and children's toys as well as many 78-rpm records. I remember that the wind up Victrola to play those records sat in the dining room; one of my cousins has that Victrola and it still works.

Off the living room and separated by heavy, beautifully detailed pocket doors was a bedroom. I suppose this was my grandfather's room. But whenever I visited, it was my room. The bed was huge to me (probably a double bed but bigger than I was used to) and there was a high long window along the side of the house as well as large windows out onto the front porch.

This bedroom was connected to the other bedroom used by my great-aunt Maude by what we nowadays call a "Jack and Jill" bathroom. Each bedroom had an access door. This bathroom had a traditional black and white tile floor with a pedestal sink, toilet with a wooden seat, and a claw foot tub with a shower above.

The door between the dining room and kitchen swung both ways and was fun for me. The breakfast nook was where we usually ate when we visited even though there was a beautiful dining room. The furniture in there was white, there were a lot of windows, and I remember it being very cheerful, cozy, and bright.

The back end of the house was probably added on at

some point. I don't know if Gramps did it or if it was already done when he bought it. There were several twin beds in it (three at least I think), and one wall was all cabinets. There was a lot of storage.

We spent so many hours in this house. I remember Christmases lying in the big bed and hearing sleigh bells (Gramps shook them but I didn't know that at the time). I remember Thanksgiving dinners in the dining room. I remember playing with my cousins (five boys) all over the house. We always lined up outside for family photos. There are dozens of photos taken with 1039 as the backdrop; it was like a member of the family. Most major events were celebrated with a photo in front of 1039. It was just down the street from a Van De Kamp's bakery for a while, and I remember walking



My mother in front of Gramps' house wearing her cap and gown after graduating from UCLA in 1928.

hand-in-hand to that with Gramps to buy fresh doughnuts for breakfast. I was the only granddaughter so he probably spoiled me and I ate it up!

After my grandfather and great-aunt died, my mother's brother inherited the house. I remember my mother, her brother and sister going through the family pieces and splitting them up. I didn't realize at the time that it was their intention to sell the treasured house. But of course, that was what happened.

And now? Sadly, the land is part of the grounds of a charter school. The house I remember so vividly is



Gramp's and his siblings in front of his house. Left to right: Martin Gideon Feely (Gramps), Grace, Neta, Clarence and Maude.

gone forever. The stones, and wood, and glass no longer exist. But in my mind they are as fresh and vibrant and real as they were in my childhood, when laughter and stories and music filled all the nooks and crannies of this house on West 51st Street in Los Angeles, Gramps' house.

Cathy Jordan has been a society member for seven years and is researching the family names of Feely, Walsh, Mallery, Pratt, Bayha, Eckhardt, Mitchell, Lemmon, Matthews, McDuffie, Bayne, Willhite, Farmer, Wood, Shelton, Allen, Griffin, and others. Born and raised in Santa Barbara, she returned in 1981 to raise two sons and care for her parents. Cathy retired from the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department in 2008 from a career in computer programming and support to plunge headlong into genealogy after a visit to the 2009 Open House during Family History Month. She currently serves as 2nd Vice President for Membership on the SBCGS Board of Directors.



The farmhouse in Colwich, Sedgwick County, Kansas where Gertrude Elliott nee McDowell grew up. Left to right Gertrude's father Walter Leslie McDowell (1859-1931), her brother Oscar Shaw McDowell (1898-1977), Gertrude Maria McDowell (1894-1974), her mother Fannie Myra Shaw McDowell (1864-1950), her brother James Lee McDowell (1887-1972), and two sisters, Isabell M. McDowell (1888-1981) and Elsie Margaret McDowell (1892-1978). Photo taken ca. 1899.

Kansas in the Good Old Days

By Gertrude McDowell Elliott, contributed by her granddaughter, SBCGS member Sue Ramsey

EXCERPT OF A LETTER written by Gertrude McDowell Elliott (1894-1974), to her grandson January 9, 1973, describing life in Kansas in the "good old days," about the turn of the 19th to the 20th century. A few words and grammar were changed for easier reading.

"When I lived in Kansas, we lived in a big two-story house. There was a great big kitchen, which we ate in as well as cook. Then off the kitchen was a big pantry and I can remember on the wall was a coffee grinder and we always ground our coffee. I imagine we couldn't get it ground like we do now. Then when we popped corn we would put the old maids (these were the kernels that didn't pop) through the coffee mill and eat them in milk and they were sure good.

Off the kitchen in back a big porch, which was screened in, was such an interesting place. Mother made our own hominy, sauerkraut and soap and in the winter the hominy and kraut would freeze and we had quite a time getting it out. Then Father and some more men would go hunting out in the "Indian Territory." They would kill deer and rabbits and

wild turkeys and we would hang them up on that porch and they would freeze and we had fresh meat all winter beside all the lovely cured meat we had in our cellar. We raised our own pigs and Father¹ would have them butchered and we would make all kinds of things out of them. We had a smoke house and we made our own hams and bacon. We would kill a beef and would have a barrel of corned beef and one of the legs they fixed so we had chipped beef whenever we wanted it. In the fall Mother would make crocks of jams and jellies and pickles and would can lots of fruit-- several hundred quarts of it. We had barrels of apples and apple butter and cider. We really lived like kings and didn't realize it. We had our own cows and chickens and eggs. Sometimes at night in the wintertime Mother would heat a big milk pan of milk, she would toast lovely homemade bread and put it in the milk and put little dots of jelly around on the toast and we would eat it out of the soup dishes. Another thing Mother made was her own mincemeat – gallons of it.

Then we had two more rooms downstairs – big ones. They were the living room and the parlor. In the living room was

a big potbelly heater and over it in the ceiling was a grill so the heat could go up into the bedrooms. Of course we lived in that room. There were double doors going into the parlor and we never went in there unless we had special company or Christmas.

Christmas was a wonderful time and how we loved it. We would have a tree that went clear to the ceiling. We smaller ones never got to help decorate it. We would spend our evenings for a week stringing popcorn and cranberries. We didn't have tinsel then so that took the place of it. We had lots of other tree decorations and I wish we had saved some of them but I guess they got pretty well worn out. We didn't have electricity but had candles set in little candleholders that pinched on the tree. After we went to bed Christmas Eve, Mother and Father would decorate the tree. Of course we always hung up our stockings and was hard to sleep. We couldn't get up the next morning till the house was warm, then we would go downstairs and the candles were lit and they opened the doors and what a sight it was. We had to watch all of the candles all of the time so they wouldn't set anything on fire. We always had turkey for Thanksgiving and goose for Christmas."

1 Grandma's father, Walter Leslie McDowell, owned a mercantile store in Colwich, Sedgwick County, Kansas. In 1903, he sold the store and moved the family to California—first to Orange County, then later to Tulare County.



Gertrude McDowell, ca. 1900, before they left Kansas.

Sue Ramsey has been an SBCGS member since 1993. She is a past board member and long-time volunteer librarian.

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Great-Grandmother Mary Fyfe's Square Grand Piano and Other Treasures

By Connie Burns

ONE OF THE TREASURES in our living room is the Schomacker square grand piano that my great grandmother, Mary Fyfe, purchased in 1877, before her marriage to Thomas Voegeli.

Even more interesting are the original statement and the bill of sale for the piano, which I also have. The piano cost \$325.00 at the time, including the cover and stool, plus interest in the amount of \$4.55. Grandmother



Schomacker square grand Piano owned by Mary Fyfe, later Mary Voegeli.

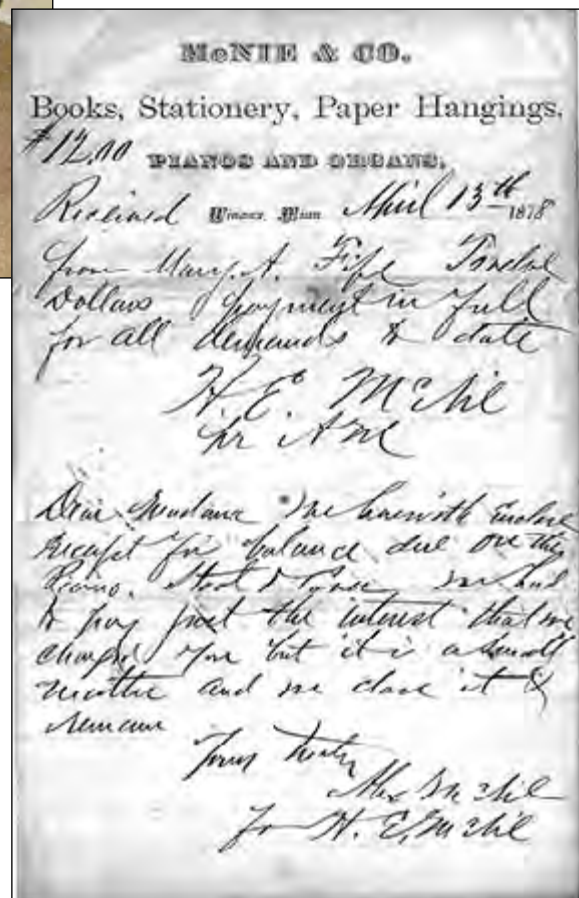
diligently paid off the debt in monthly increments, and finally received a notice that her purchase had been paid in full.

When I was young, I took piano lessons, but rarely practiced, so I was not very good. I remember that when I visited my grandparents in Minneapolis my cousins and I threw blankets over the piano and made it into a "fort." We had a great time under it. Grandma Ethel tolerated this and brought us cookies or little green apples from her tree.

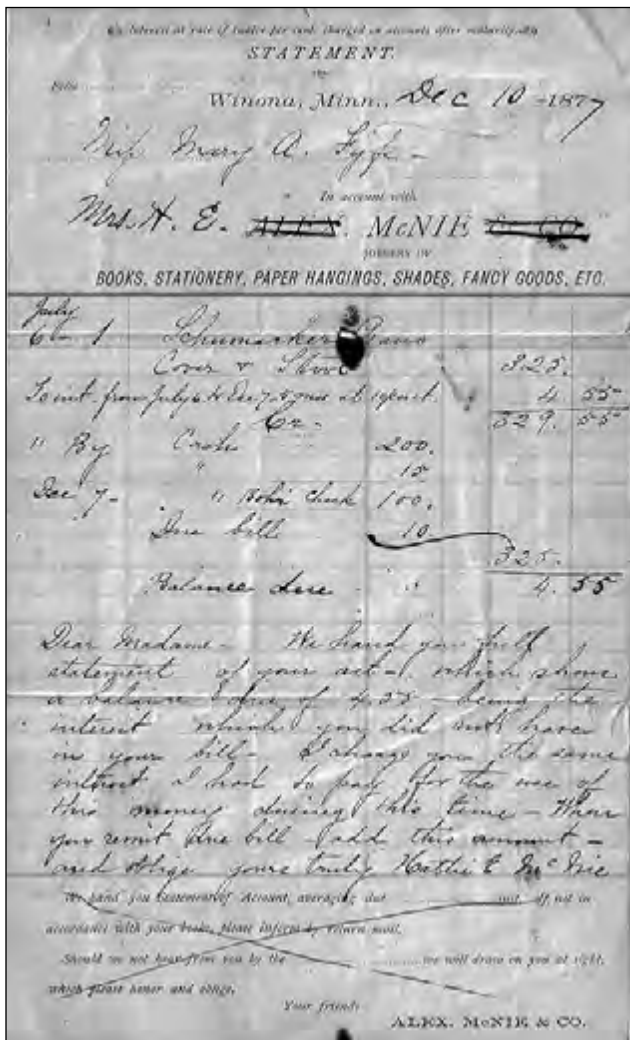
When my grandparents, Ethel and George, died in 1968, my Mom went to Minneapolis to help her brother settle their estate. Mom asked me what I would like to have of my grandparents' to remember them by. I'm sure she wanted me to answer that I wanted a vase or a dresser scarf or a brooch, or some other small thing that was easily sent here to California. But no, I wanted the piano, so Mom had it shipped out to me, and it weighs

about a ton! It does not play much at all, the wood is in less than perfect condition, the ivory keys are broken, but it is charming, and I love it!

I found on *Google* that "the square grand," or "box grand," is a grand piano that is built in the form of a rectangle-shaped cabinet, sitting on four legs, with its strings, running left to right. During the 18th and 19th centuries, more square grand pianos were built and sold in America and Europe than any other type of pianos combined. Today they are all but extinct. Their heyday was in the 1850s - 1870s. They are larger and heavier, and "more mechanically refined." They were popular as good parlor instruments that fit nicely against a wall or in a corner, not taking up as much room as a grand. Someone would sit on the stool and "tickle the ivories" and others would roll up the rug and dance on the hardwood floor. There is a piano like mine at Stow House.



Bills of sale for Schomacker Piano in Winona, Minnesota, dated 1887 and 1888.



150 year old glider rocking chair.

About 25 years ago, I found that it would cost about \$15,000 to rebuild, repair, refinish, and replace the ivory keys on my piano, so it just hasn't been done. It would cost a lot more now, IF a repair person could be found who could work on this outdated old treasure.

GLIDER ROCKER

Sitting in front of the piano is a rocking chair that was in the old Voegeli living room, circa 1855, that great-grandfather Voegeli bought. I believe it still has the original fabric covering, but I can't tell from the picture. The picture is of my grandmother Ethel sitting in it, with her stepmom Charlotte in a nearby chair, in about 1896 or so. A lot of babies have been held in that rocker!

VOEGELI FAMILY BED

Another treasure from my Voegeli great-grandparents is the baby bed. This beautiful rosewood "youth bed" was made for my great-grandmother Mary Fyfe to sleep in, about 1860. EVERY child of every generation of children since 1860 slept in this bed (including me, my children, and my grandchildren). Slats are added so that toddlers can't get out, and most of us slept in it, without the slats of course, until we were about nine years old, or until the next child in the family came along.



Rosewood youth bed where six generations have been tucked in. The sixth generation is still using it!



Great-grandmother's hair keeper, a reminder of Victorian times when it was customary to collect hair for use in decorative art and jewelry.



Grandmother Ethel seated in the rocking chair (right) in the living room of the Voegeli house in Minneapolis, Minnesota, about 1896.

HAIRKEEPER

I have had this piece for a long time, and finally learned what it was for when I trained to be a docent at Stow House because they have one like it there too. This was my great-grandmother's also, and is called a hairkeeper. When a person retires at night he/she brushes his/her hair, then removes the loose hair from the brush with a comb. The hair is put into the "hairkeeper" that always sits on one's dressing table. Then, the mom comes around occasionally to all the dressing tables and she collects all the hair in the keepers. She waxes the hair, wraps it around thin wires, and bends it into the shape of pretty flowers, to be made into a bracelet, or brooch, or hair decoration!

This art form, called "hair art" was very popular in England and the US in Victorian times. Queen Victoria made it so. She had tresses from her beloved Albert's head made into a brooch which she wore every day, from the time of Albert's death until her own death 30 years later.

It's lovely and creepy all at the same time! Examples of hair art and more hairkeepers may be seen at Stow House in Goleta. An appraiser told me that the base of this porcelain piece would have been sent to the US from France, for the pretty pink flowers to be painted on it here.

Connie Burns serves on Society's Board of Directors, and schedules all the Library volunteers, plus other society "housekeeping" type chores. She is a former middle school Spanish teacher, and more recently retired from managing



Grandmother Ethel in front of the elegant Voegeli home in Minneapolis about 1900.

homeowners associations in Santa Barbara county. She adds, "I'm an avid history reader, but not such a good researcher... I get lost in the side stories!"

The Thomas Pettitt House (AKA Aunt Vesta's House)

By David J. Pettitt

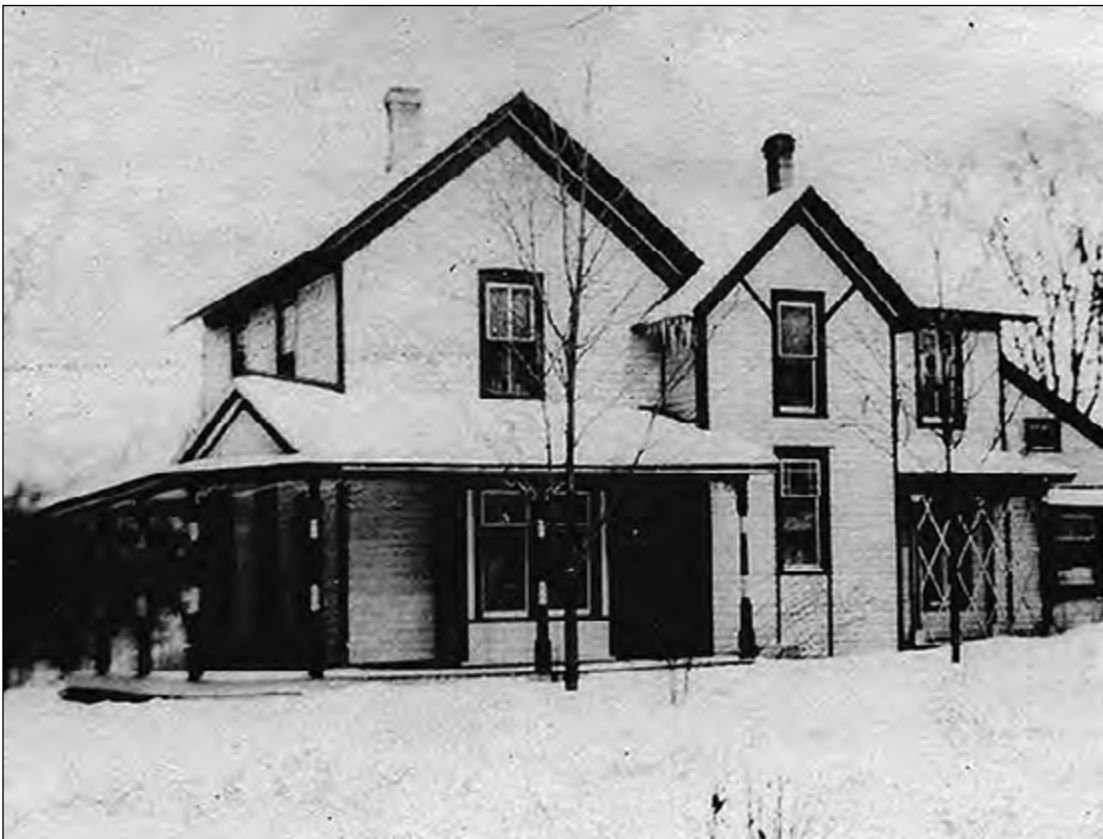
SPENT MANY A SUMMER as I was growing up in Benzonia, Benzie County, Michigan, a town that my 2nd great-grandfather, John Pettitt, helped settle shortly after the Civil War. Benzonia, which was a small community when I was young with a permanent population of around 300, was home to numerous Pettitt descendants with many fine old houses and is the one place in the world that many of us have always considered home. Although Pettitt relatives are now scattered throughout the US and other countries, we all gravitate back to Benzonia from time to time, and this is where all Pettitt family reunions are held. My grandfather's house was on Lake Street where we would stay, often with several cousins, aunts and uncles. Lake Street was so named not because it was on a lake but because if you followed it down a steep hill and across the tracks you came to Crystal Lake—a real thrill on the ancient bike with its very unreliable brakes that we discovered in the basement of Grandpa's house. One of my fondest memories was when my cousins and I would head up Lake Street to visit our great Aunt Vesta, who lived in the old family home that her father had built in the 1870s. Aunt Vesta was sharp as a tack even into her

later years and was always full of family stories that she relished relating. Although her house had been built by her father, Thomas Pettitt, my cousins and I knew it only as Aunt Vesta's house.

Vesta's father, Thomas Boyd Pettitt, was born in Crawford County, Ohio, in 1849 and was the oldest child born of Reverend John Pettitt by his third wife, Ann Boyd. In 1867 when Thomas was 18 the family moved to Benzonia, where John homesteaded and farmed and helped establish a Christian College. Thomas married Ella Sours in 1876 and at some point built the house I remember as Aunt Vesta's. Thomas' three full siblings all had houses nearby and in future years more Pettitt houses were built on nearby lots. Thomas had four children. The oldest was Vesta and the youngest was Jay Sours Pettitt, my grandfather. Grandpa's house was only 1/2 mile down the lane from the Thomas house so when we visited it was an easy run up and down the hill between the two. Vesta was married to Herman Ehman who died in 1922 leaving her with four young children. That's when she moved in with Thomas and Ella, raised her children there, stayed on to care for her parents in their old age and ended up living out

her life in the Thomas Pettitt House.

The house had originally been a single story with a large central kitchen that also served as a sitting and dining room. There were four bedrooms off to the sides and a woodshed in back. When Thomas decided to expand, he had the house jacked up ten feet off the ground and built a new first story underneath. This addition also had a large square kitchen, where we would always find Aunt Vesta when we visited. This was the real heart of the house. The room



Thomas Pettitt House on the corner of Lake and Walker streets Benzonia, Michigan, circa 1920. The pop-out to the right of the main porch enclosed the stairway to the upstairs, which was the original ground floor house.

was dominated by a large round pedestal table in the center and a huge cast iron wood-burning cook stove against one wall. The main room wrapped most of the way around two sides of the kitchen with one side serving as a dining room and the other as the parlor. Fascinatingly, the kitchen and dining room area were separated by a four-foot-wide closet that ran the full length of the wall between them with a door at one opening into the kitchen and at the other end into the dining room. To us kids this was "the secret passage." There was also a large bedroom off of the kitchen and a woodshed off the back. As was so often the case in those days, every room on the ground floor had at least one door to the outside in case of fire. The upstairs was where my cousins and I always headed after paying our respects to Aunt Vesta. The large central room was intact with an ancient linoleum floor that bore the marks of where the table and the wood stove had once stood. The upstairs could be heated by a pot-belly stove near one wall of this central room but since my cousins and I were only there during the summers and Aunt Vesta could no longer navigate the stairs, I never knew it to be used. Leading up to what had been the original main entrance when it had been a one-story house was a wide staircase that made two turns on the way up and ended on a landing that contained a large overburdened bookcase. As we got older we found this bookcase to be a real treasure trove. I was told that the space in the middle of the stairwell was designed to be big enough so that a double bed could be hoisted up to the second story and indeed there was a large wooden pulley centered over the opening. I never heard how they could get a rope up through that pulley. Since this staircase was essentially outside the main living areas, it was enclosed by a two-story pop-out that was a prominent feature of the house with the new entryway at its base. The old rear exit into the woodshed now had a set of stairs that descended into the new woodshed. The stairs came directly off the corner of the old kitchen with no door and the woodshed was not insulated so it must have been drafty and cold in the winter. Two of the original bedrooms still contained the beds but the other two had been used as store rooms and dumping grounds for decades and held trunks and chests filled with the most delightful treasures.

The excitement of visiting was not limited to the inside. There were two small root cellars that could only be entered from outside that were also filled with goodies, and a large barn with a loft above and a small room below that we were told was where they kept the bull. We were warned not to go up into the loft because the floorboards were so old we would fall through but since it was so full of interesting old farming equipment, a cream separator and a wooden hand crank threshing machine we went anyway. The old ceramic silo was clearly falling in upon itself so we did stay out of there – mostly, I think, because it held nothing of real

interest. Likewise two old cisterns were very intriguing but not something any of us dared to try to get ourselves into and out of.

The other intrigue was a several acre wood lot across the lane from the house. No one had taken any wood out of there for 50 years or so and it had become very overgrown. It had been kept as a wood lot because it was cut through by a deep ravine that made it unsuitable for farming. It was more than suitable, however, for youngsters to scamper through, fight off imaginary invaders and re-enact the Civil War, which was a popular game in those days.

Aunt Vesta never locked her doors, which was not uncommon in that small town. In her later years, she went to Florida for a couple of winters and one of my uncles mentioned that he assumed she locked the house when she was gone for that long a time. Aunt Vesta assured him that she always left it unlocked because "Someone might want to get in while I'm away!" By "someone" she obviously meant a relative or close friend.

Although as a youngster I didn't notice, the house was in very poor repair when I first began to visit it and it only got worse over the years. There was no trace of paint on the wooden siding but I guess I assumed that that's just the way it had been built. It never bothered me that the floors were uneven or that the porch roof sagged in the center. I know from pictures that the house appeared well built, tidy and neatly painted while my grandpa and his three sisters were growing up and while Aunt Vesta raised her family there. I can remember having pangs of disappointment one summer when I arrived after a couple of years away to find that the wrap-around porch had been removed. After Aunt Vesta died the house was sold and was subsequently razed. Two manufactured homes now sit on the lot. The barn was sold for salvage – old barn timbers being quite valuable at the time. Vesta's youngest son cleared a portion of the woodlot and built a beautiful home there overlooking the ravine. He and his wife retired there. That house too has now been sold. Although five or six of the old Pettitt houses still remain, only one is still in the family, being occupied by the daughter or one of my grandfather's cousins.

I still vacation in Benzonia on occasion and have always meant to get back into the woods where I know the old barn and silo once stood. Nothing has been built on that part of the old homestead and it is very overgrown. I often wonder if there might still be some sort of rubble or other treasure hidden under that overgrowth just waiting to be discovered. Someday I'll find out.

David Pettitt is a Life Member of the Santa Barbara Genealogical Society.

Musikantenweg (Musicians' Way) 39 Frankfurt am Main, Germany: The History of a House and a Family

By Milt Hess

MY FATHER, FRIEDRICH HESS, was born in Frankfurt am Main, Hesse, Germany in 1902. His family lived at Musikantenweg 39 in Frankfurt, and I first saw the house on a 1991 business trip. Musikantenweg is a short two-block street located about a mile northeast of der Römer, the central plaza of the city. Number 39, at the corner of Kantstrasse, is a six-storey structure (five numbered floors plus the ground floor (Parterre)).

Unlike most other houses on the street, it survived World War II intact. When my wife, Cecia, and I visited Frankfurt in 2012 as part of an ancestry trip, we were able to go inside. Now a rehab facility, the interior is totally new. Nevertheless, this was the house where my father and his siblings were born and raised.

Until recently, that's all I knew about the house. Thanks to a tip in *Nu, What's New*, the weekly newsletter about Jewish genealogy, I discovered that the city directories for Frankfurt are available online. Each year's directory is organized into three sections - by name, by street and by trade.

Tracing my father's family in the directories through the years they lived in Frankfurt has provided a history of both the family and the house. It has been fascinating to see how the two were intertwined, from the construction of the house in about 1889, to the family's departure due to death and emigration, and finally to the Holocaust and the extermination of the family members who stayed in Frankfurt.

1886-1923

My grandparents were Markus and Bertha Adler Hess. Bertha was born and raised in NiederFlorstadt, a small town about 20 miles northeast of Frankfurt. Markus was born and raised in a nearby town, NiederMockstadt. They were married in NiederFlorstadt in November 1886, and the 1886 city directory already records them living in Frankfurt. Markus was a Metzgermeister, a master butcher. Musikantenweg 39 had not yet been built.

During the next two years Markus and Bertha lived at several different addresses. Their first child, Ida, was born in December 1887. The 1889 city directory is the first record of the existence of Musikantenweg 39, with Markus as the owner. Apparently his Metzgerei (butcher shop) was in the building along with the family's living quarters; no other site for his business is listed in this or any of the other directories.

Bertha gave birth to a total of 13 children, from Ida in 1887 to Rina in 1907. Rina and a sister Melitta died in infancy, but the other 11 children all reached adulthood. It must have been a very busy house! I had always assumed that the family occupied the entire building,



The six storey building at Musikantenweg 39 as it looks today.

but the city directories show that I was wrong. Tenants occupied the top three or four floors, depending on whether the family was using the second floor.

I made a surprising discovery in the 1902 directory. Bertha's father, Michael Adler, had moved from NiederFlorstadt to the second floor of the house. He continued to live with the family until his death in 1904. The 1904 directory for Musikantenweg 39 shows Markus as the Eigentümer (owner/proprietor) occupying three floors, with Michael Adler occupying the second floor.

39 E. Sp. N. Metzgermeister (E)	1-3
Michael Adler, Einzelw.	2
Tenants	

1904 City Directory of Frankfurt, Germany

In 1909 the eldest daughter Ida traveled to the United States to visit her uncle in Philadelphia. There she soon met her future husband and stayed in America.

From 1912 to 1914 the family is listed as living at AllerheiligenStrasse 57, although Markus's Metzgerei continues to be listed at Musikantenweg 39. Could they have been doing a remodel of the living quarters?

In the 1913 directory Markus is listed for the first time as an Innungsmitglied, a guild member. Guilds were a big deal in Germany, so he must have been honored in some sort of initiation ceremony.

Three of my grandparents' sons fought and died in World War I - Ludwig, Siegfried and Siegmund. When

I was born in 1941 I was given the middle name Siegmund after one of these uncles. My parents had wanted to give me the name Siegfried, but with war going on in Europe they were concerned it sounded 'too German' ... as if Siegmund doesn't?

In September 1921 Markus died of cancer. Ida came back to Musikantenweg 39 to be with her family during this time. In 1923 Bertha decided that she didn't want to give any more sons to the Kaiser (according to family lore) and emigrated to the United States with three of her sons - including my father. Ida was living in Baltimore at the time, so that's where Bertha and her sons settled...and where I was born 18 years later.

As expected, the city directory for 1922 shows Bertha as the resident of Musikantenweg 39 in place of Markus. She's also listed in 1923 before disappearing from the directories. In subsequent directories the ownership of the house is either B. Hess Ww (Amerika) or simply Hess (Amerika). Ww is the abbreviation of widow in German (Witwe).

1923-1941

There were four other children of Markus and Bertha - Hilde, Alexander, Edward and Wilhelm. Hilde and Alexander both married and stayed in Frankfurt. Edward and Wilhelm came to America on their own. Edward made a life here, but Wilhelm wanted to return to Germany.

When Bertha traveled to Frankfurt in 1933 to visit her married children, she heard Hitler's rants and urged Hilde and Alexander and their spouses to come to America. As my mother told the story to me, they said, "this will blow over; we're good Germans; it'll be okay." Tragically, they chose to stay.

While in America, Wilhelm was working and sending money back to his future wife in Germany. When he finally decided to return he had no money for fare,

and his family wouldn't give it to him because of their mother's report on conditions there. He wound up being deported anyway and got married. He appears as a resident of Musikantenweg 39 in the 1934-1941 directories. He lived on the fifth floor and, like his father, was a Metzger, a butcher.

As of January 1939, male Jews with given names that didn't sound Jewish were required to add the name "Israel." Similarly, women were required to add the name

"Sara." Sure enough, the 1941 directory lists him as Wilhelm Israel Hess. He never appears again. He was killed at Buchenwald in 1945.

Musikantenweg 39 also was home of Alexander and his wife and daughter starting in 1934. I can

only conjecture why they moved there at the same time that Wilhelm moved back. Alex and his wife sent their daughter to America in 1938, but they stayed in Frankfurt. Alex makes his final appearance in the city directory for 1939. Alex and Hilde and their spouses were killed at Auschwitz.

Musikantenweg 39 observed the formation and dissolution of my father's family in the midst of the geopolitical turmoil of the first half of the 20th century. The Frankfurt city directories have given me a deep insight into my family's history and have made the big house on the corner an intimate part of that history for me.

Milt Hess started trying to discover his family almost 20 years ago. Piece by piece he has found his extended family and learned about his roots in Germany, Latvia and Lithuania. Before retiring to Santa Barbara with his wife, Cecia, he enjoyed a career in IT as a consultant and program manager. He has been a volunteer computer coach at the Jewish Federation and Public Library for a number of years, and he currently is a member of SBCGS, the City's Library Board and the County's Library Advisory Committee.

"The Frankfurt city directories have given me a deep insight into my family's history and have made the big house on the corner an intimate part of that history for me."

A Nostalgic Visit to the Shute Family Farm

By John C. Shute

WE TRAVELED TO Connecticut to help our family prepare to move back to California. We had agreed to drive their car back while they flew, and I thought it was an opportunity to stop by the family farm in Illinois as I had never seen it. I wrote to a cousin of mine whom I had never met to ask if that could be arranged. He contacted another distant cousin, Tom Pearse, from the Watts side of my grandma's family and the son of the man who took over my grandfather George F. Shute's farm during the Depression in 1933.

The farm is located near Ottawa, Illinois, in Ottawa Township as it is out of town in the heart of farm country. We arrived around 10 in the morning and met Tom and his wife and daughter for the first time. Tom was a very pleasant man. We later found out he was recently discharged from the hospital. Tom was 90 years old.

Tom graciously showed us through their home and we talked with them for a while before taking a tour of the farms and the nearby cemetery. Tom was eager and excited to show us around and insisted on driving his car to the consternation of his daughter. The tour began with a short drive to the Deer Park cemetery where many Shutes are buried. As we walked through the very quiet and peaceful place, Tom explained what he could about the many Shutes buried there. I saw my grandpa George F. Shute's and grandma Clarabel's gravesite for the first time as my dad had arranged to have them buried there. We also saw that many others Shutes we're buried there.



Headstones of Grandma Clarabel J. Shute and Grandpa George F. Shute in the Deer Park Cemetery, Ottawa, LaSalle County, Illinois.



The farmhouse built by George Shute in 1908.

After viewing the gravesites and photographing them we began our farm tour. Tom explained the various farms as there are three with family ties. We finally arrived at my grandparents' farm house, which my grandpa Shute had built in 1908. Across the road and down the lane was the "hired man's" house, as my dad called it, that grandpa built and lived in while they were building the main farmhouse. My grandpa was innovative as he had built an acetylene-powered gas system for lighting in the house long before electricity came to the area in the 1950s. There was a small block house in the rear where the acetylene was produced and piped to the house and lamps. In looking through the home we were very impressed with the beautiful woodwork that had been done inside. Tom said it was cherry wood and it was still beautiful and in excellent condition after all these years. Tom said that the original heating system was still in working condition too.

Grandpa's farm was held in high regard by other farmers in the area according to Tom because of some of the innovations he had done there. He had originally purchased it from two Dutchmen who tried to develop new ways of feeding and propagating cattle. The barn was built by them for that purpose. Tom took us through the barn and we noticed that many names have been carved into the wood siding inside. There was one that stood out to me as I recognize the distinctive way my dad had engraved the name Shute as I had seen the same on some of his tools and on a 22 rifle he had brought to California. Also we could see my grandpa's name painted on the wall—faded but clearly recognizable. That was a very nostalgic moment for me to see all of that.

Since our visit I have wondered why they had to build a new house. There must have been one on the property along with the original barn. I'm not sure about this, but I remember my dad saying that at one time grandma's and grandpa's house had burned down and now I think that was the original house and that was why they had to build the new house. I didn't



The farm buildings, including the original barn where my father and grandfather had left their names on the walls.

think about it at the time of our visit and Tom didn't mention it as it was before he was born.

The farm today is about 500 acres. When my grandparents owned it, it was 228 acres according to my dad. My dad was a young farm boy and there was much to do on the farm. He had to get up early to feed the cattle and hogs and do the usual farm chores before school in the mornings and in the evenings. When he was on the farm they raised corn, soybeans, cattle and hogs. They used horses to do the field work and I'm not sure when they became mechanized. Today they raise the same crops. After the Pearses obtained ownership they were able to acquire additional acreage over the years

to get the farm to its present size. Cousin Tom and his wife live on an 80 acre parcel that was acquired that way and is immediately adjacent to the original farm.

I'm sure it was a devastating loss for my grandparents and my dad to have to give up the farm and move to California. Apparently my grandpa speculated in the cattle and a hog futures markets and was positioned the wrong way and lost. Unfortunately he "bet the farm," which was very sad indeed! My dad always felt that they had left in disgrace and none of them ever wanted to go back. After my grandparents

died I ask my dad if we could travel back there so he could show me the farm and tell me about it but he was never interested in going back.

After seeing the farm and the farmhouse and the beautiful farmland and countryside, I can feel some of the pain of the tragic loss they experienced. We took several photographs of the house and buildings before we left and said farewell to Tom and his family. I'll always be grateful to Tom for his kindness and patience and showing us the old family farm. Sadly Tom and his wife passed away two years later.

John C. Shute, a former member of the board of directors and garden volunteer, has been a member of SBCGS since 2001.

Chain of Title of a Little Purple House

By Sharon Knickrehm Summer

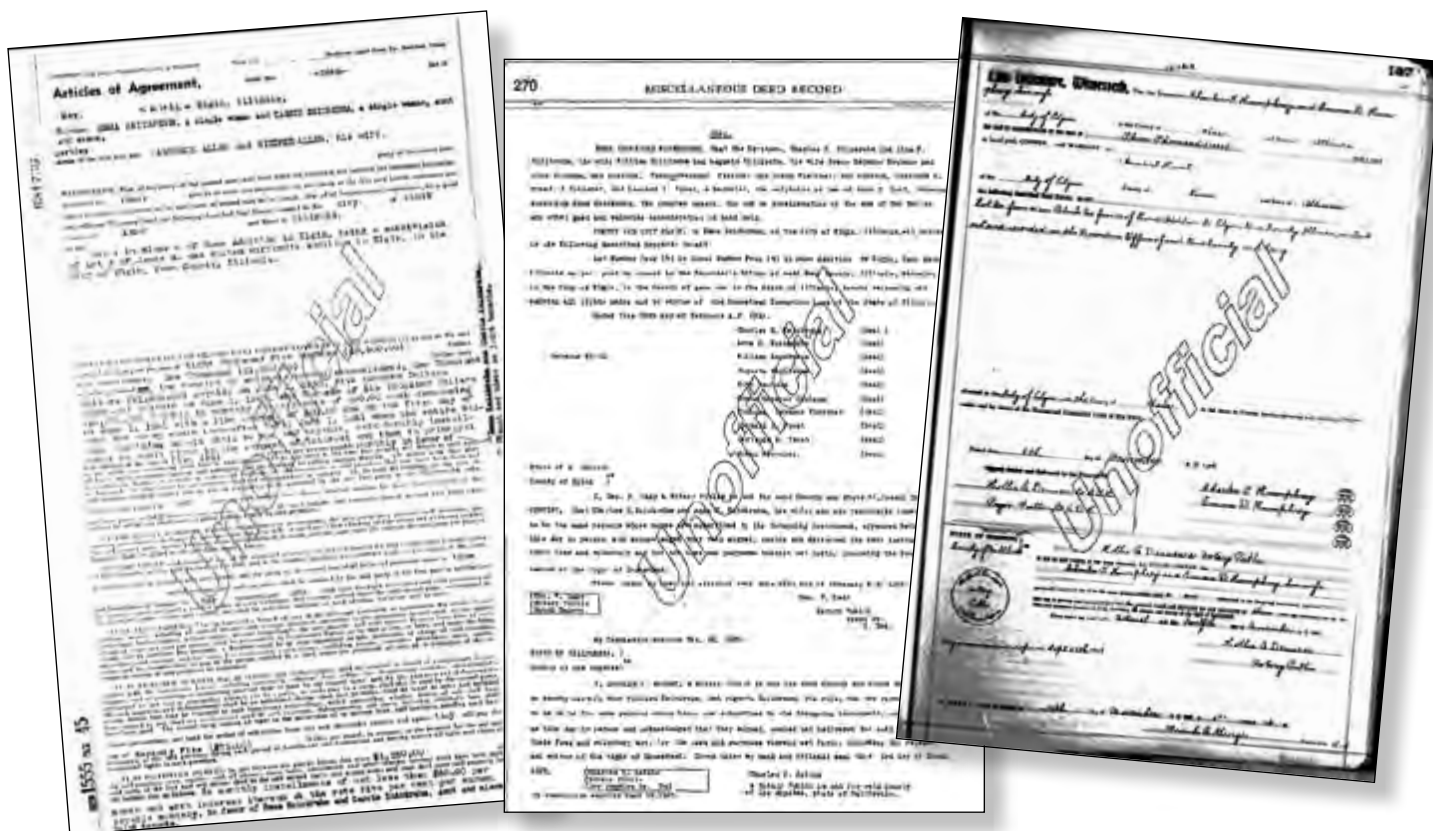
FOR SEVERAL YEARS I have known about a house in Elgin, Kane County, Illinois, once owned by Anna Knickrehm Hunt that recently turned purple! Surely her parents, my German immigrants Carl and Caroline Knickrehm, would not have favored that flashy color. But the house still stands proud today. Even its detached garage is purple, the only house on the street with such a lively look.

Anna purchased the home upon her husband's death in 1902. It remains a small but charming little house on a leafy residential street near downtown Elgin. No one knows how it came to be that purple color but what we can trace is the chain of ownership, which must contain the name of the person with the paint can. However, the part of chain of title I acquired includes only the years that members of my Knickrehm family owned it.

My quest started one day in 2017 standing in a parking lot with a fellow genealogist in the Santa Barbara County



The little purple house in Elgin, Kane County, Illinois, that was owned by the Knickrehm family for 50 years between 1902 and 1952.



Articles of Agreement, Miscellaneous Deed Record and Indenture that are part of the Chain of Title for the house obtained from the County Recorder. They list names, relationships and dates that are genealogical treasures.

Genealogy Society who animatedly told me about how she obtained the deed for her ancestor's home. She said she got it by looking up the County Recorder's Office for the county in which the house was located. Next she called the recorder's office, since she said she gets best results from speaking on the phone with a real person. She gave the family name and the address of the house, and maybe a date of ownership, in an effort to find a deed. The friendly county worker subsequently mailed my friend a copy of the deed to the house. My friend was thrilled and urged me to do the same thing, so I did.

Online I found the site for the County Recorder's Office for the city of Elgin, Kane County, Illinois, where Anna Knickrehm Hunt lived. I've forgotten how I came to know the address, 217 Henry Street. It may have been from a census schedule, a city directory or even a death certificate—all possible places to find a person's address. I saw on the website the name of the County Recorder with her email address, so I emailed the Recorder with my inquiry.

Five days later I received a very helpful response from the Recorder's Research Manager. In his email he commented that their county records are available online and for free. But he had looked through their records for me and found the documents I was interested in. His email gave me a list of six land record books with the page numbers that contained my Knickrehms and Anna Hunt. He then detailed clear instructions on how I could access these particular pages. I am grateful for those instructions since before contacting the office I could not find my ancestor's house on their website. It was not obvious where I should look, since I did not know the lot or block number or any other information except the address.

Just as my genealogist friend prefers her telephone conversations, I prefer my email correspondence. It means I now had a written record of instructions about how to locate my documents on the website and a written list of the books and pages I needed to find. Following the Research Manager's instructions I easily found the six documents showing my Knickrehm portion of Chain of Title for the house. In my return email I thanked him profusely.

Those pages yielded a Deed, Articles of Agreement, a Joint Tenancy Grant Deed, a Warranty Deed, a Quit Claim, and something called an Indenture. Seeing my family names on those documents was quite exciting and gave me a look into their lives.

One of those now-downloaded pages was called "Miscellaneous Deed Record." It listed ten witnesses. All ten were my family members, including my great-grandparents, William and Augusta Knickrehm of Los Angeles, California. Other names listed were noted to be "husband" and "his wife," along with a "bachelor," and a "spinster, having never married." The spinster was my Aunt Carrie of Los Angeles. I found out that the house was first purchased by Anna Hunt in 1902. Then in 1919 Anna's niece bought the house for a dollar. Two other family members appeared to have added on to the house, maybe to make room for them to live. It seems this little now-purple house had been owned for 50 years by two generations Knickrehms, and lived in by cousins, before being sold on the "20th day of November, 1952."

Six documents! Fourteen names of known family members and dates! What a genealogical find!

SBCGS member Sharon Knickrehm Summer remains fascinated by what can be learned through genealogy.

This Ole House

844 S. W. 5th Street, Corvallis, Oregon

By Millie Brombal

ALTHOUGH IT WAS an old house even in 1936 when we moved to 844 S. W. 5th Street in Corvallis, Oregon, we thought it would be nice to be living in a house, as up to that time, we had mostly lived in back of Dad's radio repair shops or behind or above various restaurants or cafés my folks owned and operated in both Salem and Corvallis. In fact, we moved to the house after my parents sold their restaurant at 122 S. 2nd Street in Corvallis.

A definite plus for this 5th Street house was the steep staircase leading up to the bedrooms on the second floor. My sisters and I had the weekend chore of changing the sheets on the beds. We would make a pile of the sheets at the top of the stairs and then slide down. What fun!

Another plus was the railroad yard nearby. My younger sister and I would jump on the flatbed cars lined up on the sidings and then squeal with delight as we jumped off when we heard the clank and felt the jerk as the cars started to move. Very dangerous, and I'm sure my mother was not aware of our activities. Being so close to the railroad yard, there were always hobos, as the homeless men who rode the boxcars were called, walking in front of our house. I'm not sure if they rang the doorbell asking for food but I recall my mother frequently bringing out a plate of food or sandwiches for them.



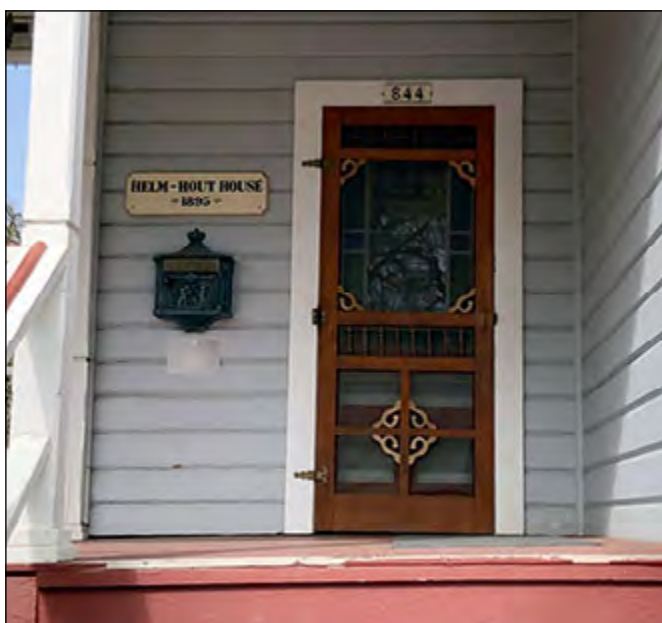
The house at 844 W. 5th Street in Corvallis, Benton County, Oregon, as it looks today. Photo by Lois Courtney, Benton County Genealogical Society.

Some fifty years later, when my daughter and I visited Corvallis, we were standing in front of the house as I pointed out the various rooms. A young lady came out on the porch and asked if she could help us. When I told her that I had lived in the house many years ago, she graciously showed us inside. She told us that the house had been named a historic house and a drawing of the house would soon be on a calendar!

Recently, I was curious to know if the house was still there and would look the same. I found a photo from 2011 on the internet but the house seemed to be set much farther back on the lot than I remembered. I wrote to the Benton County Historical Society to see if I could find out more about this house. My inquiry was forwarded to Lois Courtney of the Benton County Genealogical Society. Ms. Courtney sent me the following information and photos.

In 1985 the house was named the Helm-Hout House and it was placed on the National Register of Historic Places by the United States Department of the Interior. The house is named for the original builder, Frances Avery Helm, born in 1849, the daughter of Joseph C. Avery, who was responsible for laying out the town site of Corvallis (originally named Marysville). In 1868 Frances married F. A. Helm. Frances was the founder of the St. Mary's Chapter of Eastern Star and later became Grand Worthy Matron to the State Chapter. In 1888 she was appointed Post Mistress, following in her father's footsteps.

After Frances' mother died, she inherited the land where she had the house built in 1895. The house is located on Lot 1 and a fraction of Lot 2, Block 3 of the E. A. Helm addition to the city of Marysville, now Corvallis, Benton County, Oregon. Neither the builder nor the contractor is known, but it is speculated that the plans might have been mail ordered.



The house is now listed on the Register of Historic Places as the Helm-Hout House. Photo by Lois Courtney, Benton County Genealogical Society.

The two and a half story house is of the Queen Anne style.

After living in the home for only four years, Frances sold it to Charles Hout who had had a meat market and was associated with the Whiteside Hardware. The Charles Hout family lived in the Helm-House for about 12 years. Since then, there have been numerous owners but it was always used as a private residence, often as a rental.

In 1981 the house was purchased by a contractor who did extensive renovation both inside and out, keeping the original style intact. The wood-shake roof was covered with composition shingles and although the porches were redone, they were left with the turned columns, spools and spindles of the original. The outside was repainted and the garage was moved and rebuilt in harmony with the Victorian style of the house. Later 5th Street was turned into a dead end street creating a quiet neighborhood without much traffic, which accounted for the change in the street view that I saw on the internet.

Although the inside of the house was completely refurbished, the floor plan is the same. The front entry with oak flooring opens into a hallway containing access to the stairway, dining room and living room.

The steep stairs leading to the 2nd story bedrooms have winders at the turns instead of platforms. The handrails and balusters are all of oak. The original lath and plaster has been removed and all rooms re-plastered. Some rooms are wallpapered with period style paper. The kitchen and bathroom were entirely renovated, leaving only the claw foot tub in the bathroom. The electrical wiring and plumbing were updated; insulation and a gas furnace were installed. A parlor stove in the living room may be original and much of the baseboard molding is intact.

While writing this article, I was reminded of the ballad *This Ole House*, written by Stuart Hamblen in 1954. It was a song about an old house that had seen laughter and given comfort but is now in a state of disrepair, is "no longer needed" and is "a-gettin' ready to meet the saints."

As the current photo shows, the 844 S. W. 5th Street house, now 123 years old, is a-lookin' great and not yet ready to meet the saints.

Millie Brombal is a long time genealogist, editor of five family genealogical histories, and is currently working on an interactive workbook combining timeline history and ancestors. She was encouraged to write at Allison Grosfield's class.

The Anderson Family Farm

Gloria Chaney Clements along with brother Ted Chaney and cousin Dan Anderson verifying, correcting and adding details

THE ANDERSON FARM on Kroncke Road in DeForest, Wisconsin, has been owned to this day by four generations of Anderson men. The original house still stands but the big red barn was demolished in 2017 after well over 100 years of use. The barn, silo and milk house were replaced by a steel machinery storage shed built by the local Amish. The farmhouse has housed three Anderson families with a total of 24 Anderson children that were raised under its roof.

Ole Anderson (born Ola Anderson Hagen, April 17, 1846) sailed to the United States from Hagan, Raundalen, Voss, Norway, in 1868 with his brother Peter Hagen. Ole came to Morrisonville, Wisconsin and met Engeborg Amundsdotter Quammen (1855-1940), also spelled Ingeborg. They married in 1874. Engeborg's parents, Kari Johannesdatter Kvammen (1822-1884) and Amund Kvammen (1804-1894) arrived in the United States in 1847. The surname was Americanized to Quammen from Kvammen.

Ole built a house for his bride on his 140-acre farm in Leeds township, Wisconsin, and began his farming career. He planted several different crops on his acre-



The Anderson Farm in Leeds Township, Wisconsin in 1962.

age and raised dairy cattle along with an assortment of horses, chickens, and other farm animals. This area had been covered by a glacier during the Ice Age, and therefore, had an abundance of rocks and stones that needed to be cleared in order to plant his crops.

Near the house, a thick limestone rock building was erected as a milk house. A windmill close by pumped a slow trickle of water, which kept the milk icy cold even



The Anderson Farm House in 1943

in the hot, muggy summer months. After milking, the milk cans were carted up to the 14' x 14' milk-house building with a concrete walled recessed basin enclosed within filled with cold water. In addition to the windmill providing a constant flow of water for the milk cans, there was a pipe that provided drinking water for the family and livestock. It was a marvel how the early pioneer farmer solved problems.

A large red barn was built to house the horses and milking cattle during the cold, bitter winter months and for hayloft storage. In those early days, neighbor helping neighbor was the norm for barn building and crop harvesting. From early morning to late into twilight the men would labor at the assigned task for the day. The women folk, too, would

labor from early morning, cooking on the wood-fired kitchen stove and oven baking and preparing freshly cooked ingredients for the main noon dinner and for supper later in the day. It was a way of life that helped each struggling family, knowing their neighbors were close at hand to help meet whatever chores or challenges came their way.

The house was two stories and was comprised of a kitchen, dining room, living room and a bedroom on the first floor. The upstairs had three large bedrooms. There was also a shallow dirt walled basement/root cellar with shelving for an assortment of canned jars from the year's harvest. A large coal furnace in the basement was the source of heat for the house. The kitchen had a cast iron wood burning cook stove. There was no fireplace. Indoor plumbing was added much later.

Engeborg and Ole had 12 children; six boys and six girls were born in this house. The oldest boy, Anders, died in infancy in 1875. Born next was Albert (1877-1949), Martin (1879-1964), Lew-

is (1881-1950), Caroline (1883-1963), Mary (1885-1946), Sophie (1887-1954), Thomas (1888-1943), Lena (1891-1971), Arthur (1893-1928), Gertrude (1895-1970) and the youngest, Emma (1897-1970). In 1912, Ole became ill and passed away.

One of the older boys, my grandfather Martin Anderson, had already moved to Eveleth, Minnesota, where he met Alice Marie Ferne-lius (1893-1979), a Swedish girl, and married her in 1909. Martin, along with the help of a cousin, Olavis Vick, built a cabin there in Minnesota for his new bride. They had two children born in the cabin, Irvin Oliver (1910-1988) and my mother, Fern Amelia (1912-1985). Upon hearing of his father Ole's illness in 1912, Martin and Alice pulled up stakes in Minnesota and returned to the Ole Anderson farm in Leeds (now DeForest). Martin borrowed \$20,000 from a private party and bought the farm.

Five more children were born to Alice and Martin: Delbert (1914-2010), Leona (1916-1993), William (1920-1986), Elinor (1923-1990) and Chester (1919-1920) who died from pneumonia at age 1. Delbert and Leona were born in the farmhouse. Martin added indoor plumbing and additional outbuildings for machinery and feed-corn storage.

Still clearing rocks in the 1940s, my older brothers, Wayne and Ted Chaney (sons of Fern), tell of being allowed to go along for a ride on the "stone boat" that was used to transport the troublesome stones, from gravel size to two feet across, which would turn



Ole and Engeborg Anderson with their 11 surviving children about 1905.



The second generation: Martin Anderson's family: Bill, Irvin, Leona, Delbert, Elinor, Alice, Martin and Fern about 1940.

up during the annual plowing of the fields. This was a family and neighbor affair and was back-breaking work. Using the horse team was the most challenging and dangerous task until the purchase of their first John Deere tractor. The "stone boat" had a multitude of farm uses for hauling other things as well.

At times, Martin would comically announce after a spring thaw that a new crop of rocks has once again sprouted, putting the stone boat and crews back in service to deposit the

rocks again on the old border fence lines.

Martin tried tobacco farming for about 10 years along with his other main crops of corn, peas and hay for the cattle. During World War II, Martin contributed to the war effort by growing about 10 acres of hemp. Fourteen Anderson cousins, Ole's grandchildren, served during this war and, gratefully, all returned home. Martin also did some pig farming where a few sows would produce a multitude of offspring. Along with running the farm, Martin picked up side jobs like selling corn, selling Farmers Insurance and tax collecting.

My brother Ted recalls as youths, he and our brother Wayne spending two weeks each summer in the 1940s and 1950s being a part of the farm activities where there would be six to eight neighbors along with any other able-bodied relatives. Each neighbor would bring in their tractor and farm equipment as needed for the task of the day. While the men did their farming chores harvesting peas corn, hay and other crops, the women would prepare meals indoors or bring food contributions from their homes, set up two to three large tables on the lawns to feed 20-30 people at every new meal until the harvest season was done. This method would pass from neighbor to neighbor as the needs arose.

Around 1948 Martin fell off a moving hay wagon and broke his shoulder, which prevented him from continuing his farming. As he continued to regain mobility, he set up shop and began grinding and selling feed grain. This developed into Martin becoming a very successful Pioneer feed and sweet corn salesman across Wisconsin.

Martin's youngest son, William (Bill) took over the farm while in his 20s after Martin's accident. Martin and Alice moved a couple miles away to a nice two-story home in Leeds, Wisconsin. Bill (1920-1990) married Helen Zenger (1922-1986) in 1944. Bill and Helen had five children, four boys, William (Bill Jr.) (1945), Daniel (1951), Kevin (1953) and Brian (1958) and one daughter, Susan (1947).



The third generation: William and Helen Anderson and their children. William Jr., Daniel, Kevin, Brian and Susan about 1966.

Carrying on the dairy farm and the Pioneer corn sales, Bill also started driving a school bus. The house sat on the top of a hill so when the snows came, driving was a somewhat precarious and dangerous occupation as country roads were not the first to be plowed. He also served on the Board of Directors for a farm lending institution. Bill milked cows until his youngest son, Brian, graduated from high school and then he began raising beef instead.

Helen worked various jobs off the farm to help support the family, including rural mail delivery, selling eggs, waitressing, office work, driving a school bus like Bill did, and also served on the DeForest School Board for many years.

A room off the kitchen was added for Bill's mom, Alice (my Swedish grandmother), early in the 1970s. After Alice passed away, this room was used as an office for the Pioneer corn business.

Bill and Helen's son Dan built a house on the farm in 1977 just south of the farm house on the other side of Kroncke Road with his wife and two sons, Jared and Jamie. Dan helped his father Bill on the farm when needed. Dan took over operation of the farm after Bill's death. Dan purchased an additional 31 acres and raises grain corn and soybeans and occasionally canning factory sweet corn and peas. Dan's help on the farm now is his son Jared and grandson Dylan, so the farm has a great chance of continued Anderson ownership and operation.

In 1938, some of the Anderson cousins organized a family reunion. There were 67 in attendance. It was voted to make this an annual event and now this year, 2018, we will be celebrating our 80th annual. Over the years, the reunion was held at a park or a relative's residence. My favorite was when we had the reunion at the farm. The last reunion we had near the farm was in 2006 (thanks to cousin Dan who lives across the street from the farmhouse and owns the property). There were over 100 relatives attending from all corners of the USA. If you count the living of the six generations of descendants of Ole and Engeborg, we could have had many hundreds attending. The farm has continued to remain in the "Anderson" hands of Ole and Engeborg and their descendants for over 140 years.

The "Big House" (1884-1963)

By Gloria Chaney Clements

IN 1884, A GENTLEMAN from Germany, Henry Schultz, built a stately five-story mansion on his 400-acre property on a hill in Greenfield, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin. He also erected an enormous barn that was two stories and measured 145 x 48 feet with 12 x 12 inch beams. The house and the barn were meant to last and "outdo every house in the neighborhood." Along with the large barn, there was a gatekeeper's house, a carriage house and some chicken and machinery sheds. He was ready to go with his gentleman farming where he raised and bred cattle among other types of livestock on a lot of acreage.

The sixteen-room five-story house had six upstairs bedrooms with the master bedroom on the east side having a generous view sitting atop the hill overlooking the Root River and had a large windowed walk in closet/dressing room. The high-ceiling main floor was built in a circular arrangement where you could walk through all the rooms and end up where you started. These rooms could each individually be closed off with large beautiful butternut wood pocket doors. From the front entry you would walk into the front hall and espy the sturdy grand oak staircase leading upstairs. To the left was the spacious living room, where you could walk into the den/office (or bedroom) and continue on to the water closet that led into the serving kitchen, which led to the formal dining room. Step to the right and you are back in the front hall.

On the west side of the house was the servant and delivery entrance. There was a staircase leading from a hallway that led from the bottom floor up to the fourth level, which was the attic. The fifth floor was a tower with windows on all sides and you could see forever. The lowest floor that originally housed the kitchen and washing chores, along with servant's rooms, opened on the north side of the house to a terrace outside.

In 1902, Henry sold 174 acres and the buildings to Frank and Harriet Seymour for \$200 an acre. This was the same year that the North Greenfield residents voted to organize their village and called it West Allis. The address became 12220 West Cleveland Avenue, West Allis, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin.

Here, the Seymour family continued with farming and raised a family. Their children, Albert and wife Edna, with Sydney and wife Myrtle, continued to live at the house and helped run the farm. Over the years, the house was modernized and the kitchen moved upstairs to the main level. Included was lead pipe, which was plumbed to the sink in the kitchen and bathroom. As the grandchildren were growing and the young families left, the farm was slowly sold, acre-by-acre, and



The Big House in West Allis, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin, about 1959. Built in 1884, the five story hilltop mansion commanded a spectacular view of the 400 acre farm and the Root River.

40 acres were donated to the county for a park, which I believe is Greenfield Park.

The Seymours were proud of their heritage as their great-grandfather, Asa Seymour, fought in the Revolutionary War at age 17 and the sword he used is still in the family's possession. The family also had a cane made from the Connecticut Charter Oak Tree given to some Seymour relation after the 1,000-year old tree fell in 1856. The tree had the 1687 Connecticut colony Charter hidden inside.

In late 40s and early 50s, a contractor purchased some of their acreage and began building houses nearby. In 1952, the Seymour's sold off their 65 purebred cattle and six Suffolk horses and most of the farming machinery. The house and other buildings along with the last of the acreage was sold around 1954 to the contractor who was going to build more houses on the land where the grand home and outbuildings stood. The contractor decided to rent out the big house and the gatekeeper house until he was ready to move on that piece of property.

From 1949 to 1954, my parents (Fern Anderson Chaney and Jerome "Jerry" Chaney) were running a small Mom and Pop grocery store on 68th street in West Allis. Throughout this period Fern actually did most of the store operation with the help of her older two teenage boys, Wayne and Ted. Jerome meanwhile was co-owning and running a furnace and air conditioning business. Outside help was needed when baby brother John was born and added to the bedlam in 1952. With

running the store, raising five children, and keeping the home fires burning, Mom was overwhelmed at times. Eventually it was decided to quit the store and move on.

Through Jerry's grapevine he caught wind of an answer to this family dilemma. He was able to rent this large Seymour mansion for \$85 a month in West Allis, Wisconsin. The "Big House" as we affectionately referred to it stood toward the top of a hill where you could see for miles it seemed. We were a family of seven, Mom, Dad, four boys (Wayne, Ted, Gary and John) and a darling little girl aged seven (me). Our family at the move-in also consisted of my paternal grandfather, John Chaney. We added Uncle Leon (Chaney), Jerome's brother, a couple years later as another permanent resident.

My brother Gary (two years older) and I were delighted. The house stood on a 13-acre parcel on a triangular piece of land and there were just four new homes on it, the mansion, the carriage house, the gatekeeper house and big barn. My father decided to raise different animals during the next several summers—a couple times it was chickens, one summer was ducks, and one year a sow with eight piglets. My father had grandiose ideas, but somehow Mom and we kids ended up with the maintenance chores. One summer we had a retired circus



The carriage house once housed carriages and later automobiles. It burned down about 1958.

pony that knew great tricks, like biting the rider, or rolling on its side to get rid of the clown on his back. There was enough property so my mother planted two very large gardens for our use and for canning. But for my brother Gary and me, this house and grounds around were a playground. In the gatekeeper's house, there was a family with nine children, several around our age.

The large kitchen was our homing place. In the corner of the kitchen was a dumbwaiter that Gary liked to get in and go up and down from the 1st to the 3rd floors. Also adjoining were two large pantries. In the one with windows we kept our dishes, glassware, pots, pans, and the other was used for food storage where it was cool and dark.

In the winter when we could afford it, we would crank up the enormous oil furnace and heat the house. It cost about \$400 every time we would refill the oil,

which would last about two months if we kept it at a nice warm 70ish. It was efficient but not very cost effective.

Somehow my Dad having lived through the rough times of Depression in the 1930s must have had an insight on a how to solve a dire problem of providing heat to at least some of the living quarters in the mansion. Within a week's time he brought in and set up a potbelly stove in a corner of the kitchen. This became not only our heat source for the two rooms but the magnet of our good times, family gatherings and conversation. Grandpa John, sitting a few feet away from the stove in his rocking chair, became the proprietor of keeping the stove stoked with coal and fired up as needed. Even though he had limited sight of only one eye having lost his other in a mining accident in his younger years, he was keen on watching and gruffly chiming in with comments on comings and goings that brought laughter and charm to the family setting.

We resorted to heating the house with the oil furnace at a minimum temperature to keep pipes from freezing and then shut off the rest of the house with the large butternut pocket doors down to just two rooms, the kitchen and formal dining room being amply heated by the potbelly stove. Before bedtime, we opened the pocket doors to let some of that heat upstairs. Even then, it certainly got cold in our rooms at night.

The attic was a treasure with boxes left behind. A couple boxes had *National Geographic* magazines from the 1910 and 1920s era. There was a four-fold silk embroidered screen from Japan dating back to 1900. There were boxes of books in the attic and a large bookcase in the servant's hallway full of old books. About three of the boxes were full of copper and glass photo plates of some of the past cattle and horses that seem to reveal the effort and joy that the Seymour family had while raising prized livestock. From the attic, you accessed the fifth-floor tower with windows on all four

sides. What a view!

The Seymours left behind a thick family Bible and a cane from the "Charter Oak Tree." We contacted some of the Seymour family and no one seemed to want any of it. My mother treasured them and we took them with us when the house was to be demolished. The Seymours did take the Revolutionary War sword with them though. The Seymour family left a lot of furniture behind, like a long dining room table with a set of 12 chairs made by Hitchcock in 1835. The dining room also had a large black walnut sideboard buffet cabinet. The dining room alcove housed an impressive desk. The living room had a long curved sectional sofa. The floors were covered with dense, plush gray wool carpeting. An upright piano graced the front hall. They left the large heavy poster bed in the master bedroom, a settee and mirrored vanity dresser in my bedroom. I guess

if you are downsizing, you can't take it all. Sydney Seymour had passed away, and so had Edna. Albert was about 82 and his sister-in-law Myrtle was pushing 75 or so.

As time went on, my father "generously" added family and friends here and there as temporary residents, one time as many as 12 or 13 living in the "Big House" with only one very large bathroom housing a clawfoot tub, commode and sink. We did enjoy the roominess of the house and always could find room for a visiting relative or to host some type of celebration, holiday or family reunion. Guitar and banjo playing and sing-a-longs were always a part of the festivities.

I did learn how to pluck and clean chickens, scale and clean fish, how to harvest and can vegetables along with baking bread, cakes and making cookies at our makeshift farm during these years.

The contractor was going to begin demolishing the buildings and start the grading process on the 13-acre parcel, so we had to depart from the "Big House" in August of 1960. It appears that it took him a while to get the sturdy barn and other small buildings down

along with all the trees on the property as he did not start demolition on the main house until closer to 1963.

By the late 1950s urban expansion in the outskirts of Milwaukee was in full swing with the encroachment of new home developments nearby. The days were numbered for this grand old, majestic mansion and remaining acreage. By the early 1960s, the mammoth barn, the house, the gatehouse, and many towering elms and surrounding shrubbery were all gone, leaving only bare ground. Even though its demise was inevitable, I was very saddened when I heard the "Big House" no longer existed. Only the memories of the good times are all that is left of this grand home we lived in and what we experienced, but what a great gift to have.

1) Some historical data and quotes obtained from photocopy of *The West Allis Star* circa 1953-54

Gloria Chaney Clements, member, library volunteer and indexer for the Santa Barbara County records project with the SBCGS records preservation committee. She is also currently working on slowly organizing data and old photos along with helping friends putting their trees together.



A family gathering around the large antique table in the formal dining room of the Big House. Sing-a-longs were part of the fun.

Dutch Treats: Poking in the Records of New Netherland

By Kristin Ingalls

MY FIRST INTRODUCTION to genealogy came when my sister, Lynne, sent a 15-generation pedigree chart to her daughter Beth. Beth was living with me and had far more fun and important things to do than muse over dead people. I, however, was fascinated—which may say something about my social life. I became intrigued by names of ancestors who lived in pre-colonial New York in the early 1600s.

I did exactly what I tell new genealogists NOT to do. I started with the oldest, most-distant ancestors to research. I was working at UCSB and took the chart to the third floor of the library and started poking around. How could I not want to find out about Wolfert Gerretse Van Kouwenhoven? What a name! I opened a book of early New York records, and found out all about him. I have not stopped poking since.

New Netherland history is vastly different from the history of the rest of colonial America. A couple of years after the “Pilgrims” landed in Plymouth, the Dutch East India Company sent over some settlers too. The Dutch had several forts or stockaded trading posts along the Hudson River and saw the wisdom in settling the area permanently.

The 17th century was the Golden Age in the Netherlands. Dutch trade, science, military, and art were among the most acclaimed in the world. Status was not determined by wealth, the clergy had little power, women had more freedom, and all children shared inheritance. The Dutch living standard was higher than anywhere else. It is hardly surprising then that few Dutch wanted to leave the civilized comforts of home, risk a treacherous voyage across a raging ocean to venture into a wilderness of savage beasts and wild men and other unknown perils.

And so, the first colonists the Dutch could find to go were the Protestant refugees who had fled from France and Belgium and settled in the Netherlands to escape those rather bloodthirsty Catholics. The Dutch stayed home, planted tulips and kept their finger in the dykes.

Before getting on the boat, the new settlers swore allegiance to the Company, found someone to marry, jumped aboard and arrived in the New World in 1623 (some say 1624). My ancestors Joris Jansen Rapalje and his bride Catalyntje Tricault were among these first couples. They have nothing to do with the family home I will eventually get to, but it is nice to have ancestors



NEW AMSTERDAM, ABOUT 1630.
Reversed and enlarged from the view in Hartgers' "Beschrijvingh van Virginia," Lenox Library, New York City. Originally published in "New Amsterdam and its people; studies, social and topographical, of the town under Dutch and early English" rule by John H. Innes 1902.

who were the first in something. Because the Dutch kept such meticulous records, and because these settlers liked nothing more than suing each other in court, they are quite a fun bunch to research.

What treasures I found in "Pre-Revolutionary Houses and Families in Northern New Jersey and Southern New York," by Rosalie Fellows Bailey! About 25 of the houses and farms in the book are part of my family history. Ms. Bailey also gives sketches of the lives of these early inhabitants, so I really struck gold with this book.

And this is how I found my Billiou house, home of my 9th great-grandparents.

Pierre Billiou was born in Lille, France about 1625. His wife, Francoise Du Bois, was born about 1622 in Reims, France. They were Huguenots who fled France, taking refuge in the Netherlands. They married in the Walloon Church in Leyden, Netherlands in 1649. (Note: the French Protestants were known as Huguenots, the Belgian Protestants were called Walloons.) In 1661, now parents of four daughters, they left for New Netherland, landing three months later with four daughters and one son, Isaac, who was born at sea.

Francoise's brother, Louis Du Bois, his wife, Catharine Blanchan, their children, her parents, and her sister and brother-in-law, the Crispels, all emigrated about the same time as the Billious, some say on the same ship. That family settled in New Paltz in what is now Albany County, New York. Many of the Huguenots and



The cobblestone house originally built on Staten Island by Pierre Billiou in 1662.

Walloons (many of whom spoke French) chose to settle away from the larger Dutch settlements, thus creating their own little French towns. For generations their church services were in French. There are still buildings in New Paltz from this early settlement and I must plan a trip there too.

For some reason, Pierre and Françoise settled on Staten Island instead of going north with the rest of their family. Because of ongoing hostilities with the native peoples, efforts to settle Staten Island had been abandoned. Three attempts had been made between 1639 and 1655 all of which ended disastrously with much bloodshed. Nineteen settlers, Dutch and French, asked for and received permission from Director Stuyvesant to settle the island. Among them was Pierre Billiou, who became their leader and was active in the civil life of the settlement. Still worried about Indian attacks, a garrison was erected, and records show the stockpiling of ammunition and gunpowder. Well, imagine that! Poor Françoise not only has to make an ocean voyage heavy with child, she delivers the child, then goes with her five children into the wilderness which is full of hostile natives. What were these people thinking?

Billiou family stories, both in print and on websites, lay the credit of the success of the settlement directly at Peter's feet, claiming that he "tamed the Indians and made friends with them." More likely is that by that time the native population was diminishing due to disease carried by the new settlers.

Like all Dutch settlements, Staten Island did not grow quickly. While gazillions of English were jumping aboard any ship to

the New World, the Dutch were still having a great life at home, waving goodbye to those few who did leave. As a result, the English population by 1660 was over 75,000, New Netherland had about 9,000. Hopelessly outnumbered, the Dutch quietly surrendered to the land-greedy English in 1664, many of whom were also my ancestors.

In June 1673 the Dutch took back their colony, only to lose it again and finally to the English a year and a half later. Now those eighteen months were a curious time called "in the Dutch time" afterward. In May 1673 you lived under English law; then in June the Dutch reimposed their way of life, and then again, it was English. In the Dutch time, Pierre once again held powerful positions as Schout and Scheppen (Sheriff and Magistrate) imposing his will on people who had ruled him. When the English again regained control, Pierre was punished for his actions against the English. In order to maintain their property, the Dutch had to swear an Oath of Allegiance to the British. And they had to find a last name. Because of the patronymic naming tradition, most did not have a surname, and they became quite creative in finding one. But many chafed under British rule, and left New York. New Jersey is where the Billiou family resettled.

Before I was finished with this research, I found 34 families who had settled in New Netherland between 1623 and 1662. One was actually from Scandinavia. One was Van der Bilt, and yes, it was those Vanderbilts. Alas, my Van der bilt ancestor left Staten Island early, unlike the ancestors of Cornelius Vanderbilt who stayed and became fabulously wealthy. Who wants to be a rich heiress anyway — just think of dealing with all the paparazzi!



The Billiou house as it exists today. The cobblestone house is the central part of the structure with additions on both sides. Photo by Dmadeo, [Wikimedia Commons](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Billiou_house.jpg).

There were a couple of stinkers too. The worst was actually an Englishman, John Sales, who was booted out of Massachusetts for stealing food from the townspeople during a famine. He and his daughter headed to New Netherland, a much more liberal community. He continued to get into trouble there, but his daughter did live long enough to become my 9th great-grandmother and have children. The Van Meteren family is one I share with another of our Society members, Diane Long. We both descend from the immigrant Jan Joosten Van Meteren. Several generations forward our trees split off and Diane's direct ancestor, Abraham Van Meter, actually owned as slaves the ancestors of Dr. Henry Louis Gates. This was mentioned on one of the TV programs Dr. Gates hosted. Thankfully Abe freed his slaves when he died.

Another ancestor, The Reverend or Domine Johannes Theodorus Polhemus (another name you can't help but love) seems to have been a brilliant but dull minister who was taken prisoner at sea by Spanish pirates! You think the Deity would look after his faithful a little better than this. Several of my family were taken captive by the native people and later released. Some killed Indians, some were killed by them. There are a couple of sets of people marrying their step-siblings. Several of my Dutch ancestors owned slaves. Yes, they had slaves way back then! And many more stories...but I had better get to the point of this one.

I was able visit the Billiou home in early October 2001. Because of the tragic events of the month before, I had to drive down the New Jersey turnpike to get to Staten Island. Even in the drizzle it was a lovely drive through lush vegetation and under charming stone arched overpasses - until I got to the Newark Airport exit. A large jet was just leaving the airport, low in the sky, flying east, then banking and heading slowly west. Following it my eyes took in the scene just across the water - the still-smoldering twin towers. It had been weeks, and the smoke was still rising. A sight I will never forget.

Arriving on the Island, I visited Historic Richmond Town and then on to Richmond Road where stood the home Pierre and Francoise built 356 years before. It is the oldest standing building on Staten Island and is a New York City Landmark and on the US National Register of Historic Landmarks.

The caretakers, Matthew and Paula, graciously took me on a tour - it was a short one, because the original part of the house was basically one big room. The cobblestone structure is the original house with additions on both sides.

Along one entire wall was the great fireplace that reached almost to the ceiling. There were stairs that led up to a half attic that was open to the downstairs on one side.

When Pierre moved to New Jersey, the house was given to daughter Martha and her husband, Captain Thomas Stillwell. They enlarged the house about 1680. Their descendants lived in the house until 1758 when it

was acquired by the Perine family. It is now owned by the Historic Richmond Town where it will be preserved for many generations to come.

One question that remains in my mind - why didn't the "Pilgrims" communicate and interact with the Dutch when they were in the New World? There were no "Welcome to your New Home" parties thrown. The Dutch had given the "Pilgrims" sanctuary in Leyden for a dozen years. My *Mayflower* passenger William Brewster may have personally known some of my Dutch relatives. Wouldn't you think to welcome your protectors, maybe invite them to one of your Thanksgiving Feasts? Bad manners.

Other homes of my early Dutch I have yet to visit are the Pieter Claesen Wyckoff House, 5816 Clarendon Road, built in 1638, now a National Landmark and museum. There is also the Schenck-Crooke homestead built in 1655. All these in New Paltz! And I think there might be some in New Jersey.

The most fabulous thing I discovered in this many-year research project is that of those 34 families who settled New Netherland, my mother and father share eight in common, making mom and dad cousins many times over! I found the same thing when I researched the rest of New England.

If you ever find yourself with a few years of idle time, read about the Dutch and their lives and the settlement of New Netherland. The more I read, the more I loved these people. Or, come on over and I will pour you a cuppa and tell you all about what I found out. If nothing else, it will keep us both busy until we die!



The great fireplace in the Billiou house.

Kristin Ingalls has been a member of the Society since she retired from the UCSB Bookstore in 2000. She happily volunteers as a librarian and delights in helping new researchers. She currently is the BookNook lady purchasing and selling books at the library and at our monthly meetings. She lives with her cat Buddy and writes bad poetry.

Yes, Indeed! Deeds Can Help Genealogists

By Betsy J. Green

DEEDS ARE GENERALLY FOUND in county offices, not city or town offices. Try to find the deed when your ancestors bought the house, and also the deed when they sold the house. Deeds can contain useful information. In addition, the information contained in deeds can help you locate information in other sources as well. And you might find something totally unexpected. (More about that at the end of this article.) Here are some examples of things to look for when you find a deed.

Your ancestors' full legal names. A deed is a legal document and generally your ancestors' names are spelled out in full. For example, if you are always seeing "Jonathan D. Smith," the deed might be the first place where you learn that your ancestor's full name was "Jonathan Daniel Smith." A deed is sometimes the only time that you see the wife's name spelled out in full, and not Mrs. Jonathan D. Smith.

Your ancestors' legal relationship. If a married couple is buying or selling the property, the deed will state that they are legally husband and wife.

Your ancestors' place of residence when buying and selling property. Did your ancestors live in another community before buying the house, or after selling the house? Look near the top of the deed for a phrase such as, "Jonathan Daniel Smith and his wife Patricia, of the town of _____." This indicates where your ancestors lived when they signed the deed. On the deed that was created when your ancestors sold the house, their place of residence will be listed. Perhaps they sold the house because they had already moved to another town.

A notice in the local paper about your ancestors. Just as a death date can help you find an obituary, the date that a deed was signed can provide a timeframe to look in the local papers for a news item about

your ancestors moving into the community. Or you might find mention of where they moved when they sold the home.

I recommend looking at the local papers a month or two before and after the signing date. You might find a small article in the local news column, saying "Mr. & Mrs. Smith from Savannah are moving into the old Johnson house with their children, Sally and Fred. Mr. Smith is a retired farmer." Or some other useful tidbits.

More information about relationships. The deed usually mentions the amount of money changing hands when the property is sold. Sometimes you can see the actual sales price. Sometimes only a modest amount is listed — such as \$10. This is done to keep the actual price confidential. But sometimes you may see a phrase such as, "For \$1 and the love of a father for his son." This will give you an idea that the two had a good relationship.

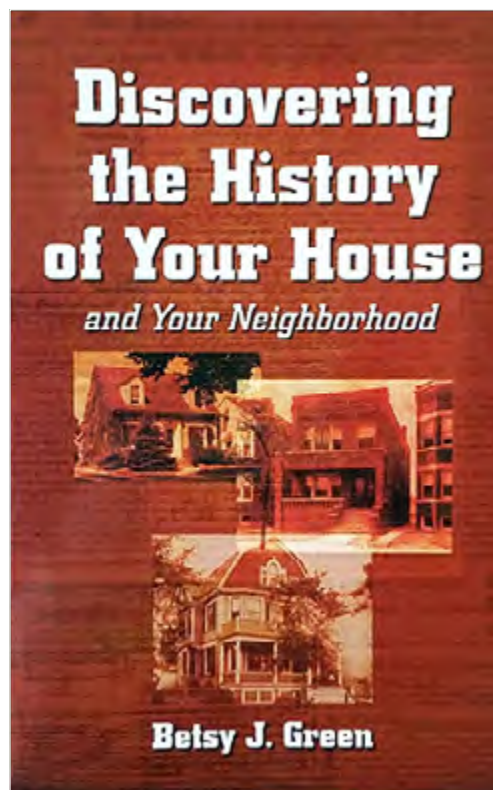
Your ancestors' signatures. Despite what I just wrote about the full legal names of people in a deed, mistakes and typos do happen. When in doubt, I figure that people signing their own names are using the correct spelling.

Don't assume that because your ancestors signed with an X, that they were illiterate. In the 1800s, schools taught reading before they taught writing. So, if people only had one or two years of schooling, they might be able to read, but might not know how to sign their names.

You might find something totally surprising. Years ago, I was researching the history of an 1890s home and found that the home was auctioned off in the late 1800s because the owners had not paid their home loan on schedule. In going through the legal documents for the auction, I found a document saying that the sheriff had tried to deliver the notice of the auction to the property owner. But it was noted that the sheriff was unable to find the owner because "he is believed to be in the Klondike area of Alaska."

This was the 1890s — the time of the Klondike Gold Rush. So that helped me fill in where the homeowner went and what he was doing. Without that document, I would not have known what happened to this man, or why his occupation on the 1900 census was miner, whereas before that, he had worked for the railroad.

Betsy J. Green is the author of Discovering the History of Your House and Your Neighborhood (2002). This book is sold in the bookshop at the Sahyun Library.



Author Guidelines - *Ancestors West*

Updated May 2018

ARTICLES FOR *ANCESTORS WEST* focus on useful genealogy or research sources, helpful research strategies, compelling historical accounts, and interesting case studies. The items represent the mutual interests of the Santa Barbara County Genealogical Society membership. Each issue follows one or more themes that are meant to draw together a selection of content within the journal; submissions are not limited to the themes, however.

Manuscripts

Suggested length is from 250 to 2500 words. Longer pieces or serial pieces are also published. Submit your document in Word format if possible. If not, please submit in text format. Endnotes are recommended, especially for books, articles and websites. Please follow the *Chicago Manual of Style* and the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* for usage.

Ancestors West reserves the right to edit and revise submissions as necessary for clarity, substance, conciseness, style, and length prior to publication.

Images

Any piece is enhanced by images. Please provide images if you can to support your piece. The images in general must be over 1 MB, and preferably over 2 MB, with good quality resolution (300 dpi) – clear and sharp to the naked eye when printed at a reasonable size (e.g., 3" x 4" - plus). Please include a caption for each picture, a photo credit or source, and insert the caption in the location in the document where it should appear. The images must be sent as separate files.

Author information

Provide one or two sentences about the author(s).

Deadlines

Submissions with images are due the 1st of the month in February, May, and August, and October 15 for the November Issue. Address submissions to the editor, Deborah Kaska, at kaska@lifesci.ucsb.edu

Contributor copies

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Seminar Volunteers



SANTA BARBARA COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY volunteers welcome seminar speaker D. Joshua Taylor, nationally known genealogical author, lecturer and researcher, to the Sahyun Library April 13, 2018. The following day, Keynote Speaker SBCGS member Bob Bason set the stage followed by Josh Taylor's presentation of four excellent lectures entitled "*Bridging the Gap: Finding Ancestors between 1780-1830; Successful Searching Online; New Tools and Ideas in Research; and Putting it Together: A Case Study.*" The efforts of many generous volunteers contributed to this very successful seminar. Photo by Barbara Hodgdon