

McHenry County Illinois Genealogical Society

Connections Newsletter

mcigs@mcigs.org

PO Box 184, Crystal Lake, IL 60039



Volume 43, Issue 10

McHenry County Illinois Genealogical Society

October 2024



October Meeting
Thursday, 10 October 2024
7:00 PM
Doors open 6:30 PM

In Person
McHenry County College
8900 Route 14, Crystal Lake, IL
Room C104

***“Tracing Your Civil War Era
Ancestors”***

A recently retired professor of history at South Suburban College, Bruce S. Allardice is past president of the Northern Illinois Civil War Round Table, and past president of the Civil War Round Table of Chicago. Prof. Allardice has authored or coauthored six books, and numerous articles, on the Civil War. A former Board Member of the Illinois State Historical Society, Prof. Allardice has presented numerous lectures and presentations on the Civil War and genealogy for Civil War Round Tables, museums, and civic organizations. He is the recipient of the CWRT of Chicago's prestigious Nevins-Freeman Award for distinguished service in Civil War Scholarship and the CWRT movement.

To track your Civil War-era ancestors, a basic knowledge of the era and of the war is necessary. Using various resources, both in print and online, will be discussed along with suggestions on the best ways to extract from these resources and use them in genealogical research.

From the President...

Salutations! Wow, it just seems to me that this year is flying by! The season of the Pumpkin is upon us with options for coffee, doughnuts, cereal, yogurts, and cookies – just to name a few. Fall can be a fun time to grab your favorite coffee and hit the road to research your family history.

It is elections season at MCIGS. Did you know that you can still be on the board even if you live far away from McHenry County? Zoom allows us to meet with people who can't make it in person to a meeting. We will be presenting our slate of officers for the board at our October general meeting.

We are planning to “Spot Light” our members in each newsletter starting in January 2025. Look for an email from me with a questionnaire for you to complete and we'll include the results in the newsletter. I'll remind all of you again but be on the watch for an email as we get nearer to the end of 2024.

A couple of reminders about our meetings as we close out 2024:

Our last in-person meeting this year is in October until April next year. Join us on Zoom for November-March. We do not have a general meeting in December

Our annual election will occur at our November general meeting

*Laurie Stage
President*



Upcoming Events

All events are CDT. P-in person; H-hybrid and Z-Zoom presentation only.

5 October, Saturday 1:30 PM (H) Winnebago Boone Genealogical Society, "Italian-American Immigrants and Chicago Mafia Connections in Northern Illinois and Southern Wisconsin" Speaker: Vicki Hahn Meeting Location: (in person speaker) Rockford Public Library - East Branch 6685 East State St, Rockford IL. To register for Zoom – [HERE](#).

7 October, Monday, 7:00 PM(Z), Chicago Genealogical Society “Researching Your Ancestor’s Occupation, speaker Rhonda McClure. Register [HERE](#).

9 October, Wednesday, 7:00 PM (H), Fountaindale Public Library District, 300 W. Briarcliff, Bolingbrook, Meeting Room A. Tina Beard will present “Gathering and Preserving Family Stories.” Drop in or online. Register [HERE](#) .

15 October , Tuesday, 7:00 PM (P), Lake County Illinois Genealogical Society, Vernon Hills Village Hall, Room 2, 290 Evergreen Drive, Vernon Hills, Illinois. “Railroad Records for Genealogists” presented by Craig Pfannkuche. LCIGS1170@gmail.com

19 October, Saturday, 10:30 AM (H), CAGGNI, Maureen Brady will present “The Jones Family: A Chicago Irish Story.” Register [HERE](#).

21 October, Monday, 7:00 PM (Z). Zion Genealogical Society, “Using Probate Records for Genealogical Research” presented by Michael j Neill. To register for Zoom: ziongenealogy@gmail.com

September 2024 Meeting's Recap

Speaker Laura Chaplin; Presentation:

“Coming To America: The Immigrant Experience.”

Submitted by Sandra Braid

Laura began her presentation by checking each Federal Census record and checking out was unique to each. . Some of those “unique questions” for each census included for the 1820 & 1830 census which asks for the number of persons foreign born; for the 1850 & 1860 census the birthplace; for the 1870 census birthplace, eligibility to vote and whether parents were foreign born; for the 1900 census immigration year, number of years in US and whether naturalized; for the 1910 census language spoken; for the 1930 census “home language;” and for the 1940 census citizenship was added. Some questions overlapped censuses.

There were “legal requirements” most countries required before a citizen could leave. Complying with the laws included paying all debts, serving military duty, and possibly registering to leave. Laura mentioned that being convicted of a crime often meant deportation because the jails and prisons of Europe were full. She also mentioned that not everyone (especially young men who didn't want to serve in the military) followed those rules.

The next important item to consider was what mode of transportation was available to your ancestor. Most came by ship. Laura said that during the 1700's-1800's ships were wood sailing ships that carried at most 100 people and could take as long as 12 weeks to arrive. Also, departures depended on several details that could delay a trip by several weeks, including the weather. Later centuries saw changes in the type of ships used – 1800's-1850's were Clipper ships; and 1860's were Clipper ships (2/3) or steamer ships (1/3). By

the 1870s iron hull steamships were used and could carry 1500 people and arrive in about 12 days. Laura mentioned that during the US Civil War immigration dropped but picked up by the

1890's when steamships were used that could carry over 1,000 people and arrive in about 10 days.

Laura then covered the ports of departure and times each port was used. Ports included Antwerp and Rotterdam – used during the early years, Le Havre in France –from the mid 1800's and travelers had to train from Strasbourg to Le Havre, and the German ports of Bremen and Hamburg – from 1850 and later. She told us that Bremen was used mainly by people from southern and southwestern Germany as well as the Swiss and that Hamburg was used by people from northern and northeastern Germany as well as Russia.

Getting to those ports of departure was an exercise in itself. In the early years, our ancestors traveled to the ports using the Rhine River and often built their own rafts. By the mid-1800's many took a fast train from Strasbourg to Le Havre. By 1850 and after there were more train routes available.

Laura told us the most common European ports and the percentage of emigration coming through each of those ports. The major US entry ports numbered over 100. Laura listed five ports of entry as the major Eastern ports. Those included New York (there were at least three ports mentioned); Boston, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New Orleans. Ports were used based on our ancestors' final destination.

Laura told us that many German ancestors came through Baltimore because there was a Germanic community located near there that was willing to help new immigrants get acclimated and settled. She also said that many immigrants from Ireland during the Potato Famine years went to Boston. Laura explained the New York immigration locations as well as when each was used. She stated the Castle Garden, in use from 1855 to

Continued on page 66

Continued from page 65

1890, was a state processing center as the federal government did not begin managing the immigration responsibility until 1890. When the federal government took over immigration, the “Old Barge Office” was used on a temporary basis while the permanent building on Ellis Island

was built. The original Ellis Island building was in existence between 1892 and 1897 when the wooden structure burned. The Old Barge Office was used again for three years while a replacement Ellis Island structure was built.



Ellis Island

Laura addressed citizenship and naturalization, providing information on dates the immigration laws changed and what changed with each new law. She stated that before 1906 naturalization paperwork is at the state, county, or town level. A woman’s citizenship followed her husband, therefore if a US-born woman married an unnaturalized immigrant man, she lost her citizenship.

After 1906 the records were kept by the Federal government. A person could change their name during the naturalization process. A person must enter legally and for those who didn’t, many simply went to Canada and then returned.

Prior to 1922 children and wives were automatically naturalized when the husband was so records for them individually won’t be found.

After 1922 citizenship of spouses were kept separate but was not backdated to women who lost their citizenship through marriage earlier. In 1936 if a woman were widowed or divorced, she could file for citizenship via a quick process, but married women still needed to use the longer process.

By 1940 and after, women had access to the quick process. There were times in our history that military service with an honorable discharge gave the service member citizenship at the discharge point. The records for citizenship and naturalization are now under the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).

Memoriam

Long time member and past board secretary and Quarterly Magazine editor, Jan Knight, died in Madison, Wisconsin on Sunday, 8 September 2024. A Celebration of Life will be held on Saturday, 5 October 2024 at the VFW in McHenry from 4:30 – 8:30 PM.

We extend our condolences to Jan’s family and friends.

A McHenry County Related Photograph:

Elizabeth Bansa Mansfield

By

Craig L. Pfannkuche

On a trip East, my wife and I stopped in at a small antique shop in Ridgeway, Pennsylvania. Rummaging through a drawer of 19th century cabinet card photographs, my wife found one taken in Chicago about 1892 with the names “Elizabeth Mansfield/Mrs. L. Mansfield” written on the back of the photo. Who was this woman whose photo was found so far from Chicago?

A search of the “Index to Illinois Marriages to 1900” on line came up with the fact that a Lyman N. Mansfield had married an Elizabeth Bansa, born in Chicago in 1861, in Chicago on 23 August 1882.

Lyman Mansfield, a son of Frederick and Miranda Mansfield, was born in Warsaw, New York on 9 July 1839. This author was surprised to find that, before Lyman was in Chicago and married Elizabeth, he lived with his parents in Woodstock, Illinois as early as 1840 (obituary WOODSTOCK SENTINEL 11/24/1887). He married Miranda Noble in New York state about 1833. During his time in Woodstock, Frederick was well known as the McHenry County treasurer. Sometime shortly after 1870, Frederick and his family moved to Chicago. He died in Chicago on 19 November 1887. His body was brought back to Woodstock by train, and he was buried in Woodstock’s Oakland Cemetery.

Following her husband’s death, Miranda Mansfield went to Elgin to live with one of her daughters. She died in Elgin on 26 November 1899. Her body was brought to Woodstock to be buried next to that of her husband.

Following residence in Chicago and Wheaton, Illinois where their only child, Myrte, was born (1888), Lyman and Elizabeth with Myrtle moved to Ripley, Payne County, Oklahoma where Lyman’s brothers, Henry, and Milo, were living. The brothers had gone to Payne County to be part of the 1889 land rush there and afterward stayed in Ripley which was established in 1890 by the Santa Fe railroad.



Elizabeth Banas Mansfield

It was in Ripley that Elizabeth Bansa Mansfield, the woman in the photo, died on 17 August 1894. Her burial site is unknown to this writer.

Continued on page 68

Continued from page 67

Lyman N. Mansfield died In Jasper County, Illinois on 19 July 1921. He is buried alone in the cemetery at Wheeler, Jasper County, Illinois.

Concerning 19th century photographs, the photo of Elizabeth Mansfield was taken by the Worden photographer who was in business in Chicago between 1891 and 1896. The Chicago Genealogical Society maintains a listing of over 1,200 such photos of Chicagoans who lived in the city at times between 1860 and 1910, some of which are related to McHenry County residents. A list of those photos can be accessed through the web site of CGS

<http://www.chicagogenealogy.com>

Using Tax Records In Genealogical Research

By Ann Wells

Types of taxes:

Poll taxes – usually a fixed sum not based on income or wealth. Very often associated with Confederate states but found in other places. Early on poll taxes were a major income track for the early colonies. Poll tax payment was required to vote in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia

(1877), Louisiana, Mississippi, North and South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia. The poll taxes were abolished at the federal level by 1965, but not necessarily abolished at state level until later.

Personal Property Tax -may be known as Chattel, movable property, or personalty. This property tax included slaves as property along with cattle, household furnishings, farm equipment and tools; basically, anything that could be moved. Personal property tax in Illinois was collected even on how many dogs were

owned! Also, taxes on farm crops were implemented in places.

Real Property Tax – often called real estate taxes or realty taxes. This is based on real estate (property/land) and improvements (house, barns, other buildings, decks, pools, etc.). Taxes are based on market value and assessment. Usually a real property tax bill/or payment will show a legal description of the property. This is useful to follow the ownership of property and to see if size changes over the years.

Tithe – a 10% payment/donation/offering that was usually paid to a church. However, the French instituted a tithing tax in the North Central and Mississippi Valley. It was abolished when the U. S. obtained these lands.

Every civil or federal authority entered into acquiring taxes from its residents, regardless of what they were called. As time went on, taxes were applied and collected on any number of things. Employment taxes, professional taxes, slaves, business related taxes, sales taxes, entertainment taxes, city, and county taxes. There are hundreds of taxing bodies, and everyone will be different from the next.

Besides showing a person paid taxes at a particular level, the tax payment rolls can be used as a substitute census, especially important between federal and state census returns, or when a census was lost or destroyed. The owner **or** the person who paid taxes will be listed. It's important to use tax returns and census returns around those dates to determine if person paying was land owner or not; if they died and an adult child was paying or perhaps the lawyer or even someone unrelated who for some reason was paying the taxes. In looking for property taxes a search for grantor/grantee records would be good supporting information. In McHenry County you can follow land transfers online from first purchase to current which should give you an

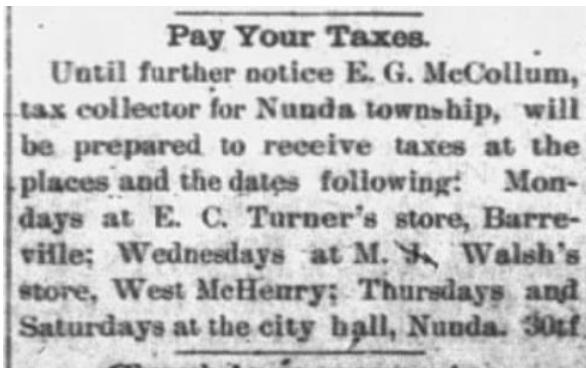
Continued on page 69

Continued from page 68

dea of who owned the property. Doing a bit of research on each owner will help determine if they were family or not.

Other taxes may be recorded in any number of ways and knowing the history of the particular tax will help to sort out what was going on, how often tax was paid, how much and why that amount was paid. Every tax type has a history and as part of your research you should find out the who, what and why of the tax.

As noted above, finding your ancestor on a tax payment form can be a substitute for a census and if nothing else, puts the person in a place at a specified time. Of course, the family won't be



Nunda (Illinois) Herald, Thursday, 23 February 1899, page 1, col. 5 (newspapers.com)

listed, but as you follow that property over the years, others who paid the tax may very well be family and further research on them will help determine that.

When property assessments were made, that information was very often listed in the local newspapers showing the property owner, the assessed value, and the amount due. If the owner didn't pay up on time, then there may have been an additional newspaper article showing that they hadn't paid and how much was due at that point.

If a more local tax was collected, under various names, those might also be in the newspapers, or in a local depository. In Illinois, those records might have been in city or county archives or IRAD (Illinois Regional Archives Depository). If you can't find the records, try calling the depositories or the collector of those taxes.

	Nunda Twp.	Algon'n Twp.
State	\$278,132	\$311,164
County	2,000	2,250
Town	1,333	813
Road and Bridge...	5,330	3,765
Corporation	2,588	3,339
School	9,402	11,443
Dog	191	292
Total	23,628	25,005

Nunda (Illinois) Herald, Thursday, 14 February 1907, page 8 (newspapers.com)

Church records may be available showing that tithing amounts were paid. While these records are probably the most likely not to be available, you may find that your church/denomination has the information. Some places churches had pew rents and those may be available for research. Pew rent records may have had all family members noted. Check your local parish church or the depository for that faith to see if there are any tithing or pew rents. Pew rents were common before the 20th century as they were a way to collect funds to exist. Dropping the odd coin in the collection plate wasn't going to keep the church and clergy functioning for long, so pew rents were initiated as a way to fund the church.

While property taxes are relatively easy to find, you'll have to dig deep for some of these other taxes. Looking for articles in local papers about various taxes may be a way to determine what taxes were collected and how.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

October is the beginning of our membership drive and we invite you to join or renew, online or by check. Our membership information can be found at <https://www.mcigs.org/become-a-member.html>.

Our members receive the monthly newsletter via email and discounts on conference registration.

Your dues help us pay for the monthly speakers, the venue (MCC) and for our Zoom format when we don't meet in person. We realize you have a choice about which societies you join and we try to keep that in mind when we organize meetings and other activities. We hope our efforts are beneficial to you.

<https://www.mcigs.org/become-a-member.html>.

We offer a scholarship each year and are so thankful to those who have donated and made each award possible. You can donate when you pay your dues.

***Meeting Information:***

Please check FB page or our website for any cancellations. If weather related, also check the college. <https://www.mchenry.edu/>. If the college is closed, we have no access.