



Connections

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McHenry County Illinois Genealogical Society Newsletter



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mcigs@mcigs.org

June 2021

Virtual Meeting

10 June, 7 PM

Jan Polep, 1st V. P. Programs

40+ Sources for Finding Maiden Names



Kathrine Willson

Finding maiden names can be a hair-pulling activity. This presentation offers 40+ possible sources to consult when searching for a female ancestor's maiden name. The discussion will include search tips for a variety of online databases.

Brief Biography: Katherine R. Willson of Dexter, Michigan is an engaging & dynamic genealogy lecturer at local, regional, and national conferences; an educator teaching beginning, intermediate, and advanced genealogy classes in Michigan since 2001; the author of *The Genealogist's Guide to Grand Rapids, Michigan* (published in 2018 by *The In-Depth Genealogist*), and a professional researcher for private clients. Her genealogy interests began as an 8-year-old Junior Girl Scout working towards the now-retired "My Heritage" badge, and her passion was fueled when, after college, both her mother's and father's relatives gave her binders containing generations' worth of family information.

You can register for this meeting at mcigs.org or [here](#).

Our condolences to Tami Allred, MCIGS' treasurer on the death of her mother. Our sympathies are extended to Tami and her family.

MCIGS 2021 Annual Summer Genealogy Conference

Registration is now open for our annual **Summer Genealogy Conference**, which is now just weeks away, on Saturday, July 10, 2021. This year we will be hosting a live conference virtually on Zoom. The featured speakers will include George G. Morgan, Drew Smith, Cyndi Ingle and Cari Taplin - "The Genealogy Squad" as they are known on Facebook.

Beginning at 9:00 am, each speaker will present 3 one-hour presentations, with a panel to answer questions in hour four. This year the conference is FREE for all MCIGS members, and only \$25.00 for nonmembers.

Not an MCIGS member? Then, this is a perfect opportunity to purchase an Individual membership for \$20.00 which will allow you to attend for free.

You may also win one of our many DOOR PRIZES! The members of the conference committee have worked many hours to make sure this event is a success. We hope you will join us on July 10, 2021. Please visit www.mcigs.org/conference for more information on the conference or to register.

Last Meeting Recap

Submitted by Nancy Gaynor

Voting Records: Genealogy's Best Kept Secrets

Presented by Pam Vestal
13 May 2021

According to Pam Vestal, voting is about identification and citizenship. More often than the decennial census and a great replacement for the missing 1890 census, voting lists can help pin an ancestor to a time and place. An example is the [Chicago Voter Registration of 1892](#) found on Ancestry. Once thought missing, ledgers for 1888 and 1892 are also available.

Voting records can carry an impressive amount of detail. Physical descriptions, making one person unique from another, are not uncommon. Comments like "Married American" and physical description can be found in these records. Name changes may also be indicated in the records. Persons of color MAY be in totally separate books or, listed in the back of ledgers.

There's great variety to these records. California created the "Great Registers" in the mid 1860's to try to stem the great amount of voter fraud they were experiencing. The 1898 Great Registers contained a physical description, occupation/business of the voter, age, any disability, nativity and naturalization status of each voter. Ancestry has the Registers of 1866-1898 which include over 3.5 million voters.

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Voting in this country was originally limited to land owning white males over the age of 21. While not common, you CAN find females listed in early voting records. The right to vote as it became open to more people was VERY important and meant a lot of immigrants. Eligibility to vote has varied through time. A religion test was required during Colonial times and abolished by 1810. As early as 1776 in New Jersey women can be found on the voting logs. Women were regularly voting in California in 1911, Oregon in 1912, Chicago in 1892 as well as other locales. In 1920 20% of women voted for the first time.

Through time different ethnic groups also were banned from having the right to vote. In 1867 the 15th Amendment sought to protect the rights of black men after the Civil War. Passed by Nevada in 1869, it wasn't until 1997 that Tennessee became the last state to ratify the amendment. Laws supporting these rights were necessary, culminating in the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

The end of the Civil War created an increased number of potential voters in the former slaves, and an interesting array of laws and records. Former slaves could now vote. As time went on Jim Crow laws placed literacy requirements on blacks and poor whites. Former voters who had sided with the Confederacy had to file an Oath of Allegiance to the United States before they could vote. Those worth over \$20,000, or those who held office in the Confederacy had to apply for reinstatement by the President.

There are many governmental offices that may maintain voting records. Within the state look at the Secretary of State's Office,

at the county level records could be in the County Clerk's Office or Board of Elections. State archives may maintain the back files which COULD be helpfully labeled as "Miscellaneous records" or even "public records".

Ms. Vestal said she has found voting records for other countries as well including Bavaria, Czechoslovakia, Paris, New Zealand and the Dominican Republic to name a few.

Upcoming Events

All of these meetings are being offered via Zoom. Check society's website for registration information.

June 1, 2021, 9:30 am, Elgin Genealogical Society, "Scottish Emigration to North America: Before, During and After the Rebellions" Paul Milner, Zoom presentation, <https://www.elginroots.com/>

June 8, 2021 – 7:00 pm – Lake County IL Genealogical Society: "Adoption Searches – Past and Present", Matt Rutherford, Zoom presentation, <https://lakecountyilgenealogy.org/>

June 13, 2021 – 2 pm – Cary Area Library, "Unlocking the Treasures Within Midwest Archives and Depositories," Tina Baird, Cary Library. Zoom registration required: caryarealibrary.org

July 10, 2021- 9:00 AM -MCIGS Annual Summer Conference- All day Conference. Zoom presentation, mcigs.org. See other information in this newsletter.

McHenry County Illinois Genealogical Society
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SNIPPETS OF INTEREST

Submitted by Claudia Conroy

From MCIGS Quarterly 2009, Vol. XXVII, April-June, No. 2 edition and originally published in the *Woodstock Sentinel on noted dates*.

April 14, 1870 Hop House

A large hop house, the property of Se. P Q MURPHY, was burned to the ground about 7 o'clock Wednesday evening. The building was in a lot just south of the corporation limits, and as there has been no fire there about the premises for some time, the destruction must have been caused by some vagabond incendiary.

April 21, 1870 Hebron's here

Hebron – Hebron still stands where it did last year. One mile and a half from the state line. But who knows that the time may come when Chicago will have to be moved to give Hebron a chance? There is some building going on here this season.

May 5, 1870 Religious Billiards

“Croquet” or, as the boys term it, “religious billiards,” seems to be gaining in popularity.

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May 19, 1870 Short Ride

A drunken man, on Sunday afternoon, undertook to cross Crystal Lake with a twohorse wagon. His companion, a boy, jumped out before getting into deep water, but the

driver held on till everything was swimming and the box tipped over. The horses found their way to shore, and by "fools luck" the man also.

A Hero Dies

We are pained to learn of a distressing accident which took place in McHenry, in the county, on Monday morning last about half past eight o'clock, which resulted in the death by drowning, of Rev. W S MARSH, pastor of the Christian church of that place, and a little son, some 13 years of age. It seems the two sons of Mr. MARSH'S were fishing from a boat while the father was spearing fish from the bridge. By some means the boat was overturned, and the boys thrown into the water. The father immediately ran to the end of the bridge and sprung into their assistance. Either he was

taken with cramps, or the struggles of the older son, whom he reached, were such as to prevent the use of his arms, for they speedily sank beneath the surface and were drowned. The younger son was rescued.

May 26, 1870 Coach Accident

On Thursday of last week John CALLAHAN was run over by a runaway

paralysis of the body. It is thought that his chances to recover are a little doubtful.

Fracas occurs

A fracas occurred at McHenry on Saturday last between a man named Stephen SMITH and two men named WIRTZ, which resulted in severe injury to Theodore WIRTZ. It seems that both parties wanted to wash sheep in the same place and that the dispute rose as to which had the better right. Clubs were freely used, with the result so stated – WIRTZ being severely injured in the head. SMITH was arrested and held to bail in the sum of \$1500.

Smart minister

Richmond – Some people think the hardest part of letter writing is to get started, others think the hardest part is stopping at the right time, and what is true of letter writing is also true of speech-making and sermons, and there are many of our best ministers who fail because they do not stop at the right time.

We are very glad to have clergy here who have learned this and think it only right when we get such a man in the pulpit to let

him know he is appreciated. We notice that as the warm weather comes on, Bro. TRIGGS is shortening his sermons proportionately and when services close we feel that it will be a pleasure and not a drudge to go next Sunday and hear a short, pointed, practical sermon from him.

Train Wreck

The freight train from Chicago came into town Wednesday morning at a speed of some eight miles an hour, and attempting a flying switch, some ten cars heavily loaded with lumber, ran with tremendous force into some empty cars, resulting in smashing the end of one car, and the “bumpers” of several others.

June 2, 1870 Erratic Square

The gentlemen who, quite a number of years ago, came to this place from Woodstock, Vermont, and gave our young city, the name it owns, had queer notions in regard to laying out a public square. Their erratic ideas in leaving no loopholes at the corners has since proved a matter of no trifling expense to our citizens in righting. Two years since a street was opened at the northeast corner, and at the last meeting of the Board of Trustees, funds were voted, for improvement, and well worth the money it cost.

Business Dull

Union- Business generally in this place is dull. The same cry that heard in other places is heard here. “Times are hard, and we can’t get any money,” in consequences of which all branches of trade suffer.

Union – there is being built a very good school building – it is of stone, two stories height, 32 x 64 feet on the ground and containing four rooms, two large rooms 28 x 29 feet, inside the walls for general school purposes, and two smaller rooms for recitation rooms. The entire cost of the building is estimated at \$8000. It is not being pushed forward very fast, but, when

completed it will be an ornament to the town.

June 9, 1870 Wooden Over-Coat

If the parents of some dozen or more boys who make a practice of jumping on and off the cars as they rush in and out of this city don’t take steps to stop this dangerous practice, some one of these parents will be at the expense of a wooden over-coat. Last week, two boys were killed, and another lost a leg indulging in this foolhardy pastime, as we learn by our exchanges.

Locust

Policemen are not, as a general thing, softhearted, or inclined to allow the majesty of the law to be insulted through them, without duly incarcerating the offending person in the lock-up, generally making effectual use of the ‘locust,’ which is a terribly hard stick of wood.

Here in Woodstock, however, our policemen are too -well, we will call it humane. A rowdy may shake his fist under their nose, dare them to arrest him, call them all the choice names in the vocabulary of the Billingsgate, and go off and pick a fight with the first man he meets, but our policemen will good naturedly take it all. Some people say they show a feather on such occasion, in color surprisingly like that used as a flag of truce, but we lay their forbearance to their natural good-heartedness, at the same time respectively but firmly expressing our belief that such men have mistaken their forte in contracting to do their duties of a policeman: We are led

to these remarks by a disturbance which kept the whole town in an uproar on Tuesday afternoon. Sheriff BADGER was not aware of the row, or he would have had an addition to his boarders at his hotel on the hill.

DID YOU KNOW?

Ancestry library edition will continue to be available from home (if your library participates) until the end of 2021!