
IONIA COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

MISSION STATEMENT

The Ionia County Genealogical Society is a non-profit volunteer group whose mission is to create awareness and preserve family histories within the Ionia County area. The focus of this group will be to develop genealogical resources and to assist all those seeking local history.

Volume 10 – Number 1

January – March 2005

From the President... Happy New Year!

I trust that you had a wonderful holiday and that you are now ready to jump back into your genes and dig up your roots!

We have so much news! First of all, the Ionia County Genealogical Society has a new mailing address:

**IONIA COUNTY
GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY
P.O. BOX 516
LAKE ODESSA, MI 48849-0516**

This address is effective immediately, so please send your membership dues and any correspondence to this address. Thank you!

Our building is nearing completion and we are so excited about this! As some of you know, we have been packed into a space, which has been busting at the seams. We are thrilled that the Lake Odessa Area Historical Society Freight House building is underway and we are looking forward to moving in sometime in the spring. We will be sending you more information in a future mailing.

Due to space constraints, the library will be closed in February until further notice. We apologize for the inconvenience this may cause. If there is something you need from us, send a request and we will do our best to look it up for you, but we do not have enough room right now to have people doing research at the depot. As soon as we get moved, we will be setting up regular hours of operation and welcome you to come and see our new "digs." ☺

We have a new slate of nominees for the new year. If you are interested in running against any of these folks, please notify me ASAP. An election will be held in January at our first meeting.

Continued.....

The nominees are:

- Pamela K. Swiler, President (incumbent)
- Bernadine Carr, Trustee (incumbent)
- Charles Scofield, Recording Secretary

We thank Elaine Garlock for her commitment to ICGS and for her service as our recording secretary.

We also welcome Jackie Gilliland back as Vice-President, filling the position vacated by Lori Fox who is now our treasurer. Jackie's term will end January 1, 2006. We appreciate her stepping up to fill this vacancy.

The budget for 2005 was set in place by your board of directors on December 16th. We have made allowances for the purchasing of some furniture for the new library space, but we will be happy to receive any donations you would like to make to help with this project. Remember, we are a 501 3c tax status now, so any donations made to our society are tax deductible. The board recently agreed to purchase a new computer, overhead projector and sound system for the society, using the designated funds and memorial monies along with matching funds from our general fund. These items will be available to use at our future home.

Please review your Annual Report, which is enclosed to see what other things your society has been doing. Thank you for your continued support and we look forward to serving you in the year to come.

-Pamela K. Swiler, President

BOUND AND GAGGED.....

About 12 o'clock Wednesday night three masked men entered the house of James Graham, two miles east of this city, and commenced to make things interesting for the inmates. They first bound and gagged Mr. Graham and then meted out similar treatment to Mr. Graham's aged mother. Both were tied to the beds. When the burglars had their victims securely fastened they proceeded to prepare themselves a midnight supper and then sat down and ate it as unconcernedly as though it was an every day occurrence. When the supper was completed they proceeded to ransack the house for valuables and when they had completed their work the interior of the house looked as though it had been struck by a small sized cyclone. Bureau drawers were emptied of their contents and scattered about the floor and everything turned upside down in their search. During the proceedings Mr. Graham had managed to get loose but the bold business end of a revolver was placed against his head and he decided it was the best plan to remain quiet and submit to being rebound. After the burglars had completed their work they went to the barn and hitched up one of Mr. Graham's horses and drove away. Some time after they had gone Mr. Graham managed to get loose and the condition of his wrists show that it was no easy job. The fellows secured about \$27 in cash and Mrs. Graham's gold watch. Mr. Graham has no idea who the parties were but the officers are endeavoring to find the villains. Sheriff Train received information Thursday morning that the horse and buggy was at Wood's Corners and that the sheriff at Ionia had three men locked up on suspicion.
(Source: unknown newspaper clipping)

**WELCOME
NEW MEMBER**

Carol Anne TONKIN
280 Crescent Drive
Portland, MI 48875
517 647-7385

pctonkin@power-net.net
Researching: **BLACKMAN,**
SHATTUCK, **HAZEL,**
RENWICK, **POGUE,**
BULALRD, **TONKIN,**
MCGREGOR, EMERY, LA
FOUNTAIN

**TAKE
NOTE!**

New email address for
Sharon **KISELAS**
kiselas@tm.net

New email address for Leora
STUTES
leorastut@comcast.net

~Interesting Tidbit~

"Wallace Eddy was found guilty of stealing a watch, in circuit, and was yesterday sentenced to a fine of \$60 or 80-days in jail. He paid the fine."

Source: Ionia Daily Standard,
February 13, 1894, Page 4

**OUR
SYMPATHY**

To Laurel Manning and her mother, Joyce Luscher in the loss of Joyce's sister Rose Ainsworth.

To Merrilee Morrison-Cotter and Polly McKendry in the loss of their father.

To family and friends of our First Family Member, Merrilee "Shellie" Jackson who passed November 5th.

To John Waite who lost his cousin, Amy Cruz to cancer.

To Jerry & Carol Engle who lost their father Earl Engle.

**EVENT
NOTE**

The Ionia High School Alumni Association Committee is hosting the **1924-2004 All-School Reunion** on Saturday, June 25, 2005. If you attended Ionia High School at anytime, and have moved recently, please contact Joan and Joe McCord with your current address by faxing it to (616) 527-4252 or sending it to them at 3960 Potters Road, Ionia, MI 48846.

**New Ionia County
Plat Maps 2005**

Published by the MSU Extension office in Ionia, these new maps cost \$25. They are available at the following locations:

Register of Deeds: Ionia Courthouse 616 527-5380

MSU Extension Office: Ionia 616 527-5357

Ionia County Farm Bureau Ins: Ionia 616 527-3960

Greenstone Farm Credit Svcs: Ionia 616 527-1930

Belding Covered Village Mall: Belding 616 794-2210

Westphalia Milling Co:
Westphalia 517 587-4531

WANTED!

The ICGS is collecting yearbooks from any and all Ionia County high schools. We have a nice start on this project already. If you would like to donate a yearbook from your alma mater, please contact Pam Swiler at (616) 374-3141 or bring it to an upcoming meeting.



Ionia County First Families



Highlights on the First Families of
Ionia County Society Member No. 21

Russell Bernard Miller, Jr.

Russell became a member of the First Families of Ionia County Society in 1998. He was born in Lansing, Ingham Co., Michigan the son of **Russell Bernard Miller, Sr. and Hulda Eugenia Kalb.**

Hulda was born June 8, 1913 in Ionia County, Michigan. She died of renal failure on May 6, 1987 in Jefferson Memorial Hospital, Alexandria, Virginia. Her husband died of pneumonia

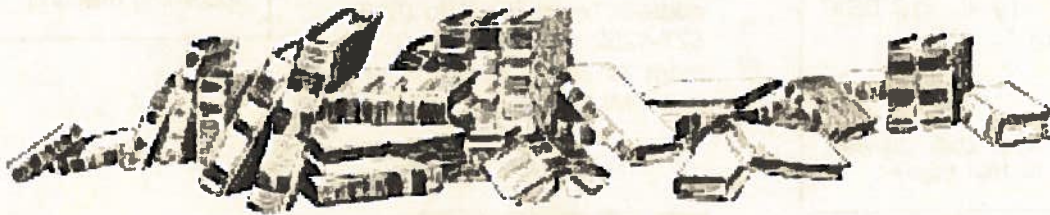
on January 5, 1998 in Falls Church, Virginia. He was born April 14, 1912 in Woodland, Barry Co., Michigan.

Hulda is the daughter of John Kalb and Fannie Schultes, both born in Germany.

Russell Sr. is the son of Jesse George Miller and Mary C.V. Beardsley. Hulda and Russell were married in Lyons, Ionia County, Michigan on April 23, 1938.

Jesse is listed as a "buttermaker" at the time of his son's birth. Mary was listed as born in "Berlin Twp., Michigan." They were married in Woodland, Barry County, Michigan on July 24, 1900.

Mary was born September 26, 1879 in Berlin Twp., Ionia County, Michigan. She is the daughter of James Crosson Beardsley and Hannah Morrison Ward. Her parents were both born in New York. Mary and her parents were in Ionia County prior to December 31, 1880, making them eligible for the guidelines laid out to become a member of the First Families of Ionia County. We thank Russell B. Miller, Jr. for his work in providing this valuable information, which helps our society meet its number one goal of preserving family histories in Ionia County.



TAKE ACTION

The Record Preservation and Access Committee (RPAC) needs your help on House Bill 10. As you may know, HB10 seeks to limit access to vital records in order to protect each of us from identity theft. The way the bill is worded, it could also limit however, our access to this information for genealogical purposes. The RPAC is recommending that the wording in the bill be adjusted to:

Insert the following language as a new subsection 890A(b)(2)(E) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (see Title 6, Section 606(a) of S.2774):

"...shall not require a State to change its law or practice with respect to public access to (i) non-certified copies of birth certificates or to (ii) birth certificates or birth records once a period of 100 years has elapsed from the date of creation of the certificate or record."

The combined Senate and House committee is meeting to adjust the language of the bill and the committee members need to hear from the genealogical community. It is particularly helpful if you live in one of the states represented by the committee members. If not, contacting someone you know in that state to make their opinion known would be the next most helpful thing you could do. If you do not live in any of these states and do not know anyone whom you could contact, then you should probably not take an action at this time other than to write to your representatives.

You can get the address of the various representatives at:

<http://www.house.gov/> and the senators at <http://www.senate.gov/>

These are the members of the Conference Committee:

Senate:

Collins (ME)
Lieberman (CT)
Lautenberg (NJ)
Levin (MI)
Lott (MS)
DeWine (OH)
Roberts (KS)
Rockefeller (WVA)
Durbin (IL)
Graham (FL)
Sununu (NH)
Voinovich (OH)
Coleman (MN)

House:

Hoekstra (MI)
Dreier (CA)
Hyde (IL)
Hunter (CA)
Sensenbrenner (WI)
Harmon (CA)
Skelton (MO)
Menendez (NJ)



Thank you for your support and interest.

Respectfully,

David E. Rencher

Chair, Record Preservation and Access Committee

The Federation of Genealogical Societies

Township Spelling Contest Schedule for 1932

January 26 - 10:10 a.m. Danby township at Section school; Leona Mull, teacher.

January 28 - 10:30 a.m. Sebewa township at Travis school; Ruby Adams, teacher; 2:30 p.m., Orange township at Steele school; Helen Rowley, teacher.

February 2 - 10:30 a.m., Campbell township at Clarksville; D. B. Gillette, superintendent; 2:30 p.m., Boston township at North Bell school; Rosalyn Schueller, teacher.

February 4 - 10:30 a.m. Odessa township at Odessa Center school; Grace Grimes, teacher, 2:30 p.m. Berlin township at Berlin Center school; Ariel Denton teacher.

(Source: Ionia Sentinel 1932)

Local Laconics....

Married Wednesday afternoon Jan. 18, by Justice Curry, C. B. McCormick, of Tidiout, Pa, and Miss Jennie Waqters, of Ionia.

"Kit", one of the old horses owned by J. M. Kidd and which has been used in a team he has had on his farm at Kiddville for the past twenty years died a few days ago. - Belding Banner.

Rev. W. L. Munger, pastor of the Baptist church at Belding, resigned his pastorate there. Mr. Munger has been the officiating clergyman of that denomination for the past five years. He has received a call to a church in Jackson to which place he will remove soon.

Sheriff Moon is out again, and went to Otisco Monday.

Emmons Smith, who has been ill for some time, was down town Monday.

C. A. Preston returned home Friday from Washington, New York, and Cleveland.

Mrs. Ira Mann and son, Willie, who have been visiting here have returned home to Chicago.

Mr. and Mrs. George Chase left Thursday for Hillsdale for a visit with friends and relatives.

William Burgess, of Duluth, was called here by the death of his mother, Mrs. George Burgess, of Palo.

Mr. and Mrs. H. R. Wagar, and Miss Portia Wagar, left at 6 o'clock Thursday afternoon for Wagar, Alabama.

Mrs. G. D. Johnson and daughter Ruth, accompanied as far as Grand Rapids by Miss Kate Mills, left for Chicago Thursday.

Chas. N. Higgins, of Keene, was in the city and renewed his subscription to the Sentinel for another year. Mr. Higgins is one of our old time subscribers, having taken the paper ever since it was known as the Ionia Gazette in the sixties.

Mr. and Mrs. L. D. Robinson have returned from their visit at Greenville, and will now complete their visit with their parents, Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Robinson, of East Lafayette street, before returning to their home at Des Moines, Iowa.

Mrs. Nelson Hinds, who has been a resident of Ionia since six years of age died at 12:35 o'clock Thursday morning at the family residence corner of Summit and Pleasant streets. She had been ill about three weeks, suffering from a severe attack of the grip. The funeral held Sunday afternoon at 2:30 p.m. from the First Baptist church. Prayer services at the house for relatives only at 1:30 p.m.

The maiden name of the deceased was Emma Lockman, her father being one of the pioneer settlers of the county. She was born Aug. 27, 1848, at Branford, Canada, and came with her parents to Ionia six years later. She was married to Nelson Hinds at Lyons, June 30, 1865, and of the union five children were born, four of whom, Nellie, Theodore, Mary, and John B. L. with the father, survive her.

Miss Allie J. Willett and Frank J. Young United in Marriage.

At the home of Mr. And Mrs. Milan A. Willett, Thursday forenoon at 11 o'clock, was celebrated the wedding of Allie J. Williett, daughter of Mr. Willett, and Frank J. Young. The ceremony was performed by Rev. G. K. Berry, in the presence of about 30 invited guests; congratulations and a wedding dinner followed. (Source: Ionia Sentinel, Jan. 26, 1899.)

Eagle News.....

George W. McCrumb has sold his forty acres to Mr. Leeper of Ohio for \$1,500.

The village school commences today with Miss Danie Pennington teacher.

Last Saturday night 17 candidates took the first degree and became members of Eagle Grange.

Levi Wilkinson is progressing finely with his new house on the forty he recently bought of Ira Niles.

Last Thursday, while a little boy of Wm. Stickland's and Eddie McCrumb, both about six years of age, were in one of the boarder's room at the hotel, they found a revolver lying on the table, and prompted by that curiosity prevalent among boys of that age, began to examine the revolver, when it discharged, the ball taking effect in the palm of the Strickland boy's hand, making a bad flesh wound but breaking no bones, while Eddie got one ear badly scorched, and one side of his face completely peppered with powder.

Last Friday morning Ephriam Russell and wife, in company with Delos Tinney and wife, went on a little fishing excursion to some of those little lakes near the village of Bath, and returned yesterday, finding the barn, house, and granary completely cremated. It is doubtless the work of an incendiary, as the house and barn must have been set. Mr. Horace Munroe and wife were about the first ones to discover the fire while on their way home from Eagle Grange, and the first one on the spot. When they got there the barn was nearly consumed while

the house, which stood some fifteen or twenty rods to the south-west, had only commenced to burn, the fire being entirely within the building, but had got under such headway that nothing could be saved. The wind blew strong from the south, and together with the distance from the barn to the house would make it seem impossible for the house to have taken fire from the barn. It is said that the house has been broken into and ransacked at other times before while the family was absent. It leaves Mr. Russell and family destitute of everything in the provision and furniture line. Insured in the Clinton County mutual for \$1,275.
(Source: The Portland Observer May 5, 1880)

Danby News....

Enoch Rozell has rented his farm to Mr. Rudd, who took possession a few days since. Geo. B. York has moved back on his farm and has commenced spring work in good earnest. The summer term of school commenced in district No. 2 on Monday the 4th with Miss Agnes Aurman, of St. Johns, as teacher. The clearing of our farms from stumps is receiving considerable attention this spring, and much valuable improvement has been done in this way. (Source: The Portland Observer May 26, 1880)

Second Six Weeks Period

Kindergarten - Jerene Collier, Eleanora Day, Yvonne Haney, Evelyn Morrow, May McCartney, Martha Jane Nye, Paul Reed, Jackie Snyder, Joyce Tingley, Billy Tischer, Wayne Wortley.

First Grade - Eldiene Neeb, Joan Klahn.

Second Grade - Lyle Conrad, Marguerite Green, Margaret Valentine, Frankie Jane Redstrom, Alona Desgranges, Robert McCartney, Margaret Seog.

Third Grade - Mary Lou Dunham, Robert Hazel, Jack Lambert, Jean Lambert.

Fourth Grade - Betty Carpenter, Marv Stevens.

Fifth Grade - Norma Fender, Mary Jane Klahn, Mary Louise Reed, Jean Sullivan, Kathryn Tew, Robert Tingley.

Sixth Grade - Margaret Myers.

Seventh Grade - Gertrude Tew, Evelyn Veitch.

Eighth Grade - Keith Bishop, Marian Curtis, Thelma Everest.

Ninth Grade - Wanda Barker, Walter Brown, Jennie Decker, Ruth Goodemoot, Betty Johnson, Lorraine Leak, Charles McNeil.

Tenth Grade - Richard Nazel, Lawrence Smith, Hal Wade.

Eleventh Grade - Ford Goodemoot, John McDowell.

Twelfth Grade - Lorraine Curtis, Charles Hoffman, Ruth Klintworth, Mary Majinska, George Smith, Chalmer Torrey.
(Source: Lake Odessa Wave December 17, 1931)

Brief Mention....

There is to be an ice cream social at Mr. Joel Stewart's, Easton, across from Welch school house, on Wednesday, Aug. 29th, for the benefit of Welch Sunday School. Everyone invited.

C. H. Taggart of Easton has purchased the neat little cottage in second ward so familiarly known as the By Miller home. The land included in the purchase will cut into several nice building lots if desired.

The young men of the north side of Main Street have a fast baseball team and think they can defeat a nine from the south side if they could get a game. They will play for money, marbles, or chalk, and say they are sure of winning such a game.

The Democrats of Orange on Wednesday elected delegates to the county nominating convention, and voted to get in the fight early, and on the evening of Saturday, Sept. 1st, at the Town Hall, will organize a club. Messrs. Ellis, Hawley, Scully, and possibly others will speak.

A. P. Sweet arrived in the city this afternoon.

W. H. Allured of Easton has a number of old papers, perhaps the oldest in the county. One is the New England Chronicle or Essex Gazette, published by Samuel and Ebenezer Hall, in Harvard College, of date Aug. 3, 1775, beginning No. 366 of the issue. He also has a copy of the Ulster County Gazette, of Jan 4, 1800: and No. 1 Vol. 1 of the Rochester Daily Advertiser, dated Oct. 25, 1826.
(Source Ionia Daily Sentinel Aug. 23, 1900)

Berlin Township....

Mr. & Mrs. Wm. Bennett & family and Mr. & Mrs. George Bennett spent Saturday at Grand Rapids. Mrs. Norman Galloway and Mrs. Combs visited Tuesday at Mrs. Frank Galloway's. (Source: Ionia Daily Sentinel April 23, 1919)

Mr. & Mrs. Charley Lowrey and baby spent Sunday at Bert Kimball's. Mr. & Mrs. Wesley Hile and children spent Sunday at Jame's Fishers at Ionia. Mr. & Mrs. Bruce Lowrey and Alice, Freida Scheurer, and Josephine Aldrich were in Grand Rapids Saturday. Bertha Lake started in school Friday. Norrine Adgate has been having measles. Mrs. Clara Winslow is recovering from the ??? she had at Grand Rapids. Norton Lowery returned to Ann Arbor Monday. Warren Carman and family spent Sunday at Frank Sherwood's. (Source: Ionia Daily Sentinel April 24, 1919)

Two Hurt in Crash....

One man is in serious condition at Community hospital and another was missing last evening following the tipping over an automobile at the intersection of Washington and Jefferson streets early Sunday evening. William Henlic, 25, a driver for the Ionia Dry Cleaners, is suffering from a fractured skull, but regained consciousness Monday morning and is said to have a good chance for recovery. He also sustained a severe gash just above the left eye and lacerations about the face.

Henlic was said to have been riding in a light roadster driven by Eddie Waters, of this city. Who was reported to have been injured, but could not be located following the accident. It was reported Monday that Waters had been taken to a Lansing hospital during the morning, suffering a broken collarbone.

The car rolled over and came to a stop on the northwest berm as it attempted to make a left-hand turn into Washington street in coming from the south on Jefferson. One report reaching the sheriff's department was that it had been struck by a machine driven by Maurice Pierce, of Lansing, which was following Waters' car and which was said to have struck the rear end of it just as it started to turn.

Passerby picked up the unconscious pair, placing Henlic in the car of Dan W. Lind and Waters in Pierce's machine, and both started for the hospital. While Henlic was being carried into the operating room, Peirce is said to have suddenly started his machine and swung around the south side of the hospital, where there is no driveway, and disappeared, with Waters in the rear seat.

The death of Clara, beloved wife of Alderman George Dodson, occurred at hospital in Ann Arbor, on Tuesday evening. Mrs. Dodson had been at the institution some six weeks, during which time she underwent three surgical operations, the last one on Tuesday, which proved fatal. The remains will be brought home this evening by husband, who left for Ann Arbor on Tuesday evening about fifteen minutes before notice was received here of her death. Beside the husband, deceased is survived by her widowed mother, who made her home with her daughter. Mrs. Dodson was a lifetime resident of the county, many years with her husband on the farm in Ronald, but the recent years a resident of Ionia, where she was greatly beloved for her many womanly qualities and real moral worth.

(Source: unknown newspaper clipping)

Miss Josephine Burnette is celebrating her birthday, jointly with St. Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland today, at the kindergarten. This is only Miss Josephine's fifth anniversary, while historically the Saint has a few more to his credit. We are not discussing the ages, but rather that party, which will long be remembered by the kindergarten pupils. Refreshments of crackerjack wrapped in Shamrock napkins, and Domino crackers were served. Those present in addition to the pupils were: Mr. & Mrs. A. M. Burnette, Mrs. R. L. Page, and son Rufus, Mrs. O. W. Slocum and daughter Alice, Mrs. S. B. Hosmer and Catherine, and Mrs. Fred Lauster and Grace. Misses High and Cutler had charge of the festivities.

(Source: unknown newspaper clipping)



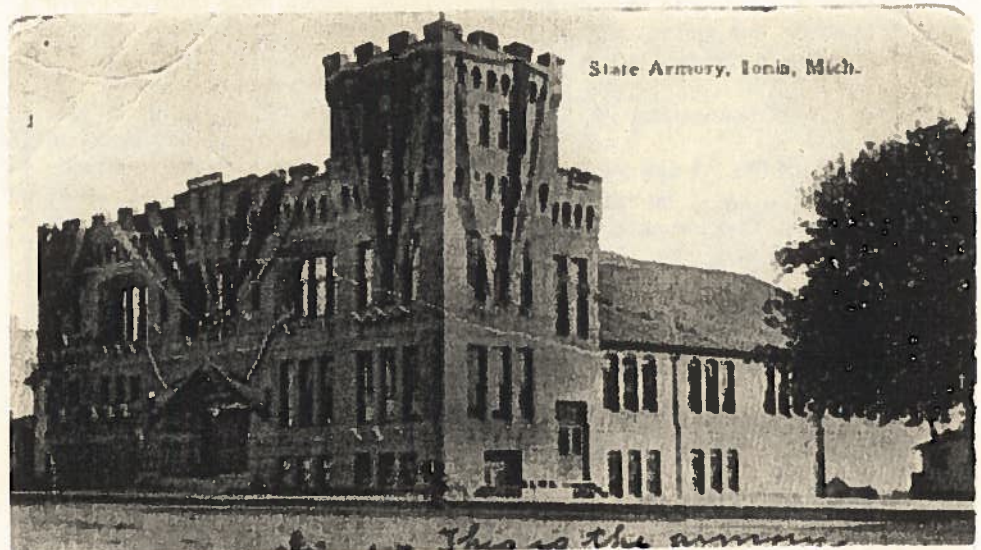
FOUND:

I found this photo album in an antique shop in Los Angeles many years ago. It tells the story of the families of Charles D. Bennett, Claud Hugo Corrigan and Claude M. Hurd of Grand Rapids Michigan from 1902 to 1919.

It is difficult to tell exactly who so lovingly put this book together; great attention seems to be giving to all three families. There are mentions of children Clark Bennett and Helen Bennett and also birth notices of Robert Gilchrist Hurd (Jan. 30, 1914) and Elizabeth Jane (Betty-Jane) Corrigan (June 3, 1914). Also mentions of Julia Mary Corrigan and Ora Edith Hurd.

I would love to find the proper heirs to this treasure. If you have any information please email me at Craftworks@aol.com

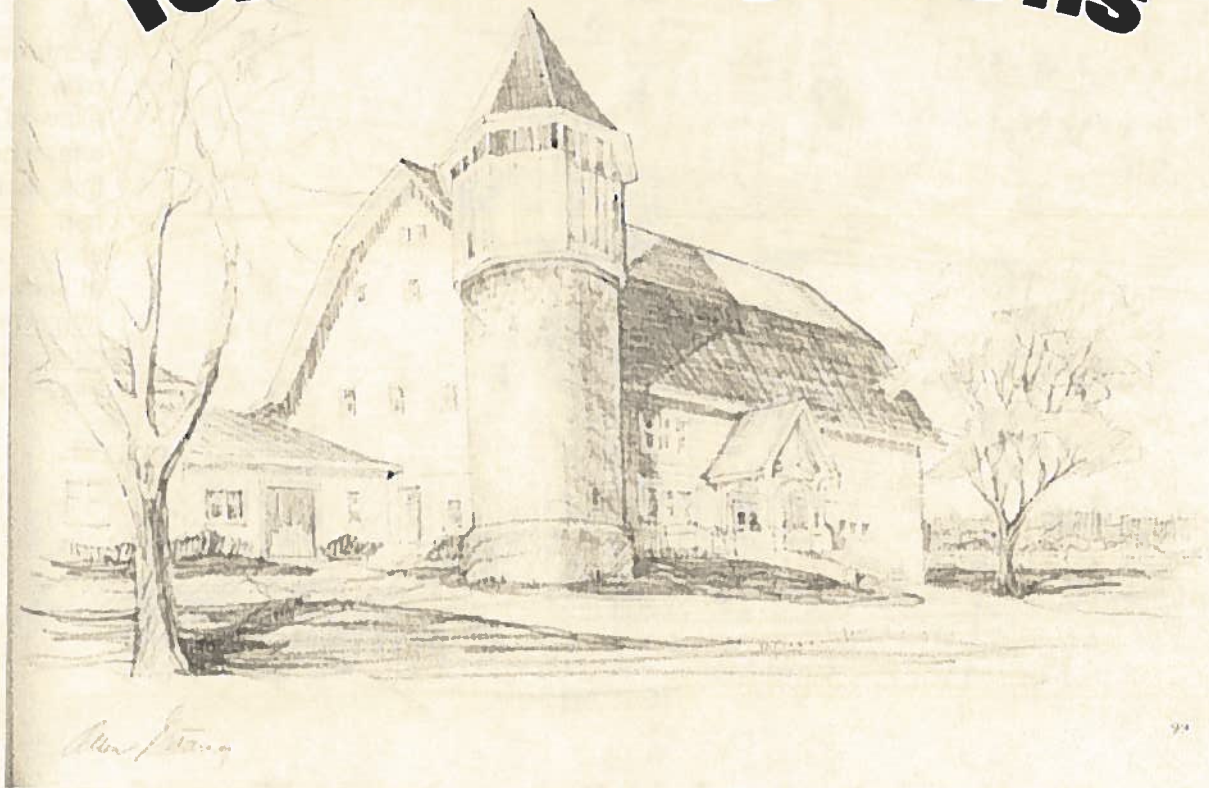
(Ionia County has many families with these three surnames, hopefully we can help find a home for this lost treasure.)



State Armory, Ionia, Mich.
Postcard mailed August, 1911

Note the amazing decorations

Ionia County Barns



The Ionia County Free Fair Association is looking for your 100+ year old barn!

Do you or someone you know have a barn in Ionia County that is at least 100 years old?

When our ancestors settled Ionia County the first priority was the barn. Many families lived in their barns until they could spare the time and/or money to build a house. The Free Fair Association is planning a unique exhibit to showcase our county's barn heritage.

Information requested: Call (616) 527-1310 for more information and applications.

What year was the structure built? Remolded? Additions?

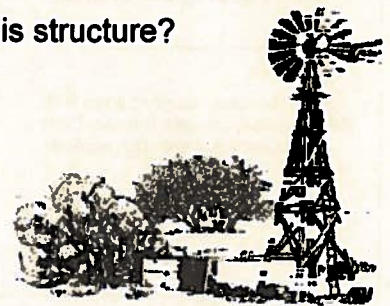
Who originally built it? Anything particularly unique about this structure?

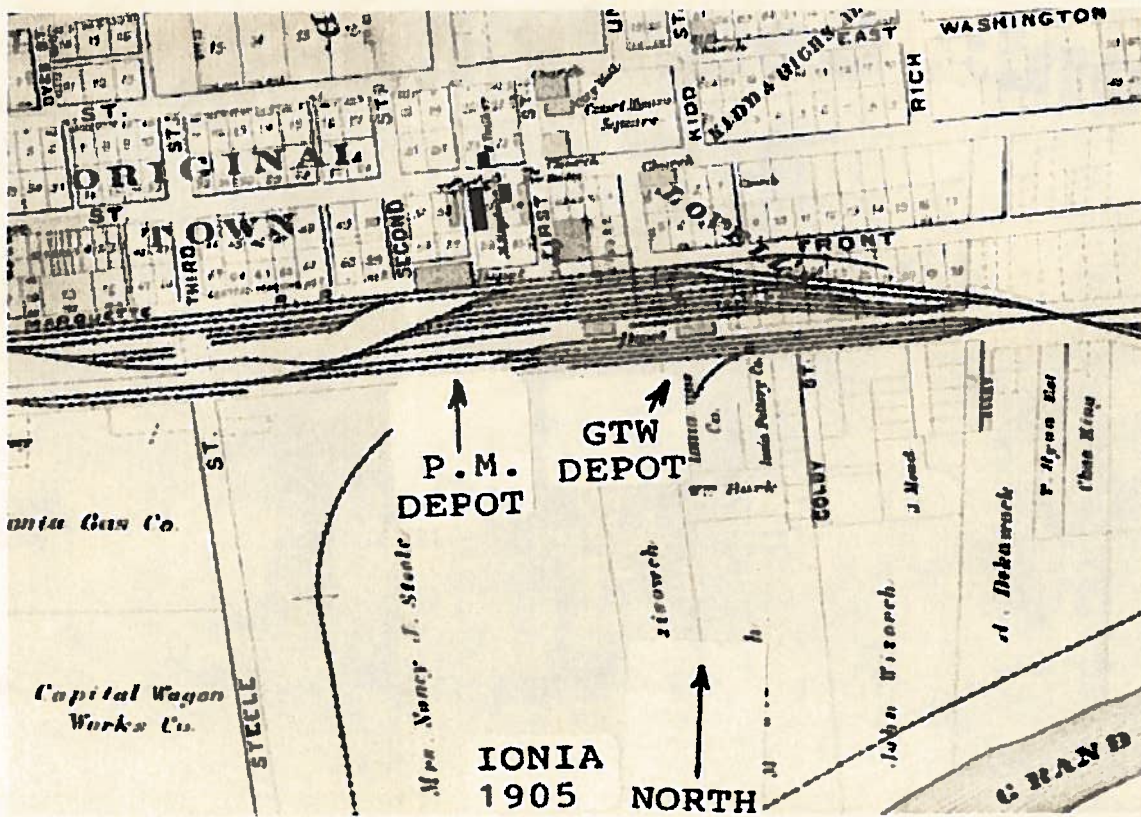
Is it made of stone, wood, underground, etc?



What are the dimensions?

Of course Pictures!!!





The following article was written by Merritt Scharnweber who graciously allowed us to share his work in this issue. You can find more about rail history at his website: <http://merrittscharnweber.com/IoniaFirePage1.html>

Continued : Ionia's Great Depot Fire of 1908

Grand Trunk wanted to build a new depot at Ionia. It was to be at a new location approximately one block west of the old depot. This would put the new depot straight south of the Pere Marquette depot located at Front and Second streets. The problem with this was, the Grand Trunk had to acquire land from the Pere Marquette Railroad to gain access to the new proposed depot from the north. October, 1907, The Ionia Daily Standard had this to say on the matter:

"The best information obtainable is to the effect that the new depot for Grand Trunk is assured, that the contract has been let, according to plans adopted and that the work will probably be commenced not later than next spring. The cause of the delay at this time has been the P.M. Company being in the hands of a receiver; it could not give permanent title to a strip of land needed for depot approach. The restoring of road to stock holders the last of this month will open the way to close the deal for this land and remove what seems to be the only obstacle to commencement of this much needed improvement. An interview between Mayor Bible and a prominent Grand Trunk officer confirms this view of the situation."

By June, 1908, the Grand Trunk had not yet started construction on the new depot for Ionia. Then July 3, 1908 disaster struck the Grand Trunk depot which quickly turned into a more serious problem.

FURIOUSLY FANNED FIRE

DESTROYS GRAND TRUNK STATION
AND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Eighteen cars, Mostly Laden with
Merchandise, are also burned. Central
Residence Section Threatened

Sunday was a busy and most exciting day in Ionia. The fire started in the platform of the Grand Trunk station. It was noticed just before the regular passenger west left at 9:28 a.m. Water was poured down the hole from which smoke was seen to issue and it was supposed to be extinguished. But twenty minutes later, soon after the excursion train pulled out, the entire space beneath the platform was discovered to be a roaring furnace. So rapid was the progress of the flames that not a single book or paper could be saved from the freight office, nor a single article of freight from the freight house. Everything was also lost in the ticket office—not the slightest scrap left in the way of supplies or records. The baggage, however, was all safely removed from baggage room—and this was all that was saved out of the entire building—combined passenger and freight house.

Had the fire stopped here, the people would not have been inconsolable; but the four tracks in Pere Marquette yard were filled with freight cars and the G.T. depot was lined with cars. The P.M. switching crew does not work Sunday and it was sometime before an engine could be fired to run out the cars. Eighteen cars, mostly loaded, were burned before the engine could be brought into use, but a large number were finally placed out of line of danger.

But this was not the worst. The brisk breeze was carrying fire embers to the northeast, endangering the most thickly settled and valuable residential district. The P.M. freight house was in the direct line of danger and was only saved by the most strenuous effort, men on the roof keeping it well soaked and closely watching every point. Houses half a mile away were in great danger and scores of citizens were compelled to use their utmost endeavor to save their own homes, along Main, Washington and Lafayette streets, reaching to Lovell Place and beyond. Several houses were on fire, but the flames were put out before gaining headway.

The fire started as people were on their way to church, but the dimensions and danger were not realized until after the services had commenced. Rev. Dr. Spencer, pastor of Presbyterian church, suffered from some uneasiness of mind and while the choir was singing, he slipped out doors and found that the blaze had started in the roof of the church. He quietly returned and saying that as the homes of some of the congregation were threatened, it would perhaps be best to close the service. About this time a lady rushed into the church and exclaimed excitedly that the building was on fire. The congregation was quieted by the pastor, however, who directed that the collection be taken and then calmly pronounced the benediction, the congregation passing out in good order, while Miss Francis Gillbert played a selection on the organ, without a hurried note. So it was all done, decently and quietly, as become good Presbyterians. The only things saved in the church were part of the hymn books, a few cushions and other small articles, which people carried with them as they passed, except the silver service in the basement, which some of the ladies were thoughtful enough to take out. The fire being on Sunday was unfortunate in some respect, but it was lucky that it was a day-light fire and that the wind was from a westerly direction rather than from the east in which case, the flames most certainly would have lapped up the warehouse of the Ionia Produce Company and then reached over and took possession of the Standard Oil Company's plant. Once lodge here, it would hardly have been possible to have kept the flames from running riot in the business district. As it was the Produce Company building was on fire several times, but was saved by careful watch and quick work and by moving some freight cars by hand, which might have otherwise formed a fire line connecting with Standard Co's yard.

The house of F.O. Sibley, the tenant house on Front street belonging to Mrs. G.W. Webber and several others were on fire at times. The tenants in the Webber house moved out their goods.

All the books and records in the Pere Marquette freight office were removed and were being put back this morning. The Koppitz-Melcher's warehouse at the east end of the Grand Trunk station, went up in smoke and flame with its stock. The loss here is estimated at \$4,000, insured for \$3,000.

The services at the Methodist church and Church of Christ were cut short by the fire, but were conducted in full at the Baptist and Episcopal churches, which were a little more out of line of flying embers.

It is impossible to give a close estimate of the loses, especially on freight. The railroad officials will not give figures and declared that they could not even make approximate estimates in case of freight until later. The losses will aggregate probably somewhere between \$50,000 and \$75,000, being estimated in round numbers, as follows:

Grand Trunk, \$15,000; Pere Marquette, \$18,000; Presbyterian church, \$14,000; Koppitz-Melcher Co., \$4,000; J.C.Preston, Detroit, cold storage building, \$4,000; telephone and telegraph companies, \$500; Ypsilanti Reed Furniture Company, \$5,000. The losses by railroad companies are covered by blanket insurance. The Grand Trunk lost only four cars — 3 box and one refrigerator. The Pere Marquette lost 14 cars — 9 box, 1 furniture, 1 gondola, and 3 flat. This company also had one passenger coach burned above the sills and two coaches quite badly damaged.

General officers were much in evidence this morning. Representing Grand Trunk were: W.G. Dohed, of Battle Creek, lost freight agent; F.W. Egan, Detroit, supt.; J. Ehrke, Durand, train master; J. Sheedy, Durand, master of bridges and buildings; Mr. Hamilton, Grand Rapids, road master. Officers of Pere Marquette: Supt. Pycatt, Detroit; Mr. Cain, train master, and Mr. Enos, traveling engineer.

Two passenger coaches, now standing on the track east of Depot street, but to be moved to site of burned depot as soon as the debris is cleared, are being used for passenger station. The east end compartment is freight office; the west end, ticket office. The passenger compartments between are, the one for ladies' waiting-room, the other for gentlemen. They are really more luxurious than the depot rooms. Three freight cars on the track are to be utilized for freight storage. Supplies for the freight office were received Sunday afternoon and for the ticket office today. Passengers going out on this morning's trains could not be supplied with tickets or checks for baggage.

The new Grand Trunk depot, which was already tolerably well assured, may now be considered absolutely sure. All day yesterday, until late in the evening, large crowds thronged the scene, many coming in from the surrounding country. This morning the grounds were a busy place, a large number of workmen being engaged in removing the debris, gangs setting poles for wires, officials giving directions and taking note, a few curious spectators and gamins scattered over the ruins poking in the ashes in hopes of valuable finds. Grand Rapids was telegraphed for help, at the time the danger seemed imminent that the fire might sweep through the entire central part of town and a special train was made up there, leaving at 11:05, with a fire company and engine, accompanied by Mayor Ellis. The special was made up of two passenger coaches and three flat cars, on which were loaded two hose wagons with 2,700 ft. of hose. The run was made in less than an hour but the fire was under control when the train reached here and the fire apparatus was not unloaded.

There was great danger from the electric wires. Several were burned off or torn from their position as burning poles fell, but the electric company employees were on hand and cut them.

More to come in April.....

Civilian Conservation Corps

Men from Ionia County who enlisted in the CCC

Legend:

- 1 - Sent May 17, 1933
- 2 - Sent May 26, 1933
- 3 - Sent Oct. 9, 1933
- 4 - Sent Nov. 3, 1933

NORTH PLAINS TWP

Henry Bennett 1
Sterling Martin 2
Foster E. Fenn 4
Clyde R. Silvermail 4

RONDALD TWP

Gordon Higbee 1
Chas. H. Seleck 2

ORLEANS TWP

Raymond J. Roberts 1
Clois Blumberg 1
Ovett Harrington 1
Merideth C. Sweet 3

KEENE TWP

Latham E. Snell 3
Keith R. Fashbaugh 3
Edwin B. Potter 4

EASTON TWP

H. Rowley 1
Glenn Miller 1
Gerald Comer 1
Elton Braman 1
Lesley Morgan 1
John R. Vincent 1
Lyle Simmons 1

IONIA TWP

Lody Nequette 1
Frank Smejkal 1
Andrew French 1
Harold Reglin 1
Paul Supp Jr. 1
Leo Blow 1
Wm. Hoople 2
Geo. Chase 2
Wm. A. Moorehead 3

LYONS TWP

Elmer White 1
Wm. Whittaker 1
Claude Swainston 1
Robt. E. Melvin 1
Olin D. Smith 3

PORTLAND TWP

Richard Miller 1
Harold Holford 1
Carl Hallwachs 1
Allen Shay 1
Wm. Lalone 1

ORANGE TWP

Dale J. Mirer 3
James S. Summers 3
Lionel R. Normington 3
Floyd E. Friedly 4

BERLIN TWP

Harl Adams 1
Clif. G. Day 3
Ernest Cobb 2
Chas. W. Topp 4

BOSTON TWP

Robt. Trumball 1
Rob. E. Lee 1
Rex Lowrey 1
Leon James Need 1
Robt. B. Gibbs 3
Harold W. Childs 3
Woodrow R. Brooks 4

CAMPBELL TWP

Forest Slater 1
Versil Witbeck 1
Horace G. Meyers 2
Carl. E. Fauley 3

ODESSA TWP

Gerald White 1
J. B. Valentine 1
Gerald Brown 1
W. Jess Fellows 1
Maxwell D. Ritter 3

SEBEWA TWP

Robt. Peacock 1
Warren W. Davis 1
Wm. T. Haskins 4

DANBY TWP

Clare Allen Graft 1
Herbert Stemler 1
Stanley O. Scott 4

BELDING CITY

Johns Evans 1
Harold E. Luce 1
Emery Hoffmaster 1
Herbert King 1
Wm. Martin 1
H. D. Caverly 1
John Fischler 2
Vincent L. Hanson 1
John Allen Hazel 1

IONIA CITY 1st Ward

Mike Vargo 1
Bert Anderson 1
Lawrence Marion 2
Chas. Henry Allen 3
Orie A. Heilman 4

IONIA CITY 2nd Ward

Alf. Hamblin 1
Geo. Mann 1
Wm. Astle 1
Cecil Harder 2
Howard Lange 3

IONIA CITY 3rd Ward

Jack Veazy 1
Elton Peabody 1
Francis Zander 1

IONIA CITY 4th Ward

Arthur Hass 1
Alb. Dean 1
Dale Loucks 2
Walt Robinson 1
Raymond Hill 1
Elb. E. Heth 3

Commonly referred to as

“Teddy Roosevelt’s Tree Army”

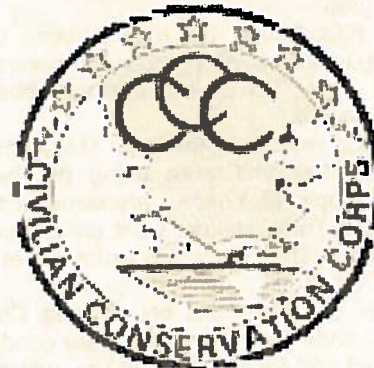
This information was gathered at the State Archives in Lansing. Please note this list contains only a portion of the men who joined CCC camps from Ionia County.

More information for each name listed can be found in the State Archives filed under “Ionia County” records donated by local government.

The Ionia County Genealogical Society would like to add your ancestor to this list. If you are aware of a CCC camp attendee who is not on this list we would like to hear from you.

If possible please include:

- Full Name
- Residence at time of enrollment
- Age at time of enrollment
- The camp did he attended
- How long was he there
- What tasks were performed while in camp





Old School mates listed on back of photo are:

Nettie Carrol
 Matie Ward
 Satie Reed
 Nora Lunn
 Mary Murtha
 Pearl Reed
 Verna Swiler

(Note: unknown little girl)

Can anyone tell me what school these ladies attended? I know that Verna Saxton Swiler was born in Danby Twp., Portland, MI.

What would you like to see in your
Ionia County Genealogical Society Newsletter?

We need to hear from our readers....

Do you have information to submit?
 Is there an interest you would like to see featured?
 Aware of a great resource not mentioned?

Share with us!
 ICGS
 PO Box 516
 Lake Odess, MI 48849-0516



"Silk Mill Girls"

Photo taken in Belding

Freda Walker
 Jessie Eddy

*Annual
 Membership
 Dues*

Are Due!!

Speaker Notes

OCTOBER

Our regular scheduled speaker was unable to attend, however, Merrie DeVoe eagerly stepped up to the base and did a home run program on beginning genealogy. She presented items that both new and seasoned genealogists were able to learn from. Some of us just needed a refresher course and Merrie was able to share her many years of experience with us. The unique thing about Merrie DeVoe is that she does her genealogy from a motor home. After her husband retired from public schools, they jumped into their motor home and have not stopped yet. They travel all over the United States and they have learned how to do genealogy in limited spaces. We were honored to have her "jump off the bus" to join us! Thanks Merrie - stop in again when you are in the area!

Take Part

The Ionia County Genealogical Society hosts an interesting speaker each month of the year and you are welcome to join us! Meetings are always the 2nd Saturday of the month at the Lake Odessa Manor at 1:00pm. Come Learn with Us!

NOVEMBER

Our own Suzanne Carpenter shared her knowledge on the Michigan Oral History Association. Suzanne stressed that the oral historian is not a journalist, but only a reporter. Our job while doing oral history is to record what others know. Oral history is the oldest form of historical inquiry, and there are cultures today that still pass on their most important information orally.

As historians we can collect this information and preserve it for generations. Modern oral history started in the 1940s with recordings on reel to reel tape recorders. Today there are many ways to gather the stories of the past; from the various tape recorders we now have to camcorders. Of course, when the recordings are done, transcriptions should be made for easier reference, as well as for being permanent records of what was taped.

Suzanne gave us a good handout about oral history and went through the steps required to create and complete a project. Her tips will make it almost easy to learn about the past from those who lived it.



FIRST FAMILIES BANQUET

Pam Swiler was the guest speaker at the annual First Families Banquet this year. Her topic was the barns of Ionia County. Pam had a lot of interesting information in her talk, as well as a lot of photos of barns in our county. The barn of yesterday is a rapidly disappearing feature of our landscape, and we need to study them before they are gone. Pam organized her talk around a slide show that gave us an idea about what barns are still here in the county, and she showed us some of the interesting things associated with barns (such as paintings on the sides of the barns or on the silos, and oddly-shaped barns in the area).

In addition to the slide show there was a nice display of tools associated with barns. It was apparent from some of the tools that we are losing our knowledge of the older practices of farming, as there were some tools that nobody could identify. There was also a piece of an actual barn on display. It was a star that was found on a barn, and removed before the barn was destroyed. There was a lot of discussion afterwards about preservation and making a record of what barns are still existing in Ionia County.

Calendar of Events – Ionia County Genealogical Society

January 2005

- 4th First Families Meeting
- 8th ICGS - John Waite – “Making Your Mark”
- 24th ICGS Board of Director’s meeting 7 p.m.

February 2005

- 1st First Families Meeting
- 11th ICGS - Diane Adams – Registrar of Deeds
- 19th Genealogy Class: Federal & State Census
(Yankee Clipper Library, 2025 Leonard St. NE, Grand Rapids Time: 1:15pm – 2:45pm)
- 24th ICGS Board of Director’s meeting 7 p.m.
- 26th Movers & Seekers: Michigan Historical Museum, Lansing
(Exhibit about Michigan immigrants and migrants)

March 2005

- 1st First Families Meeting
- 12th ICGS - Jesse Lasorda – Researching People of Color
- 19th – 20th The 30th Annual Kalamazoo Living History Show – Awesome!
- 24th ICGS Board of Director’s meeting 7 p.m.
(check it out at: <http://www.kalamazooshow.com>)
- 19th Genealogy Class: Federal & State Census
(Yankee Clipper Library, 2025 Leonard St. NE, Grand Rapids Time: 1:15pm – 2:45pm)

** All regular membership meetings are held on the second (2nd) Saturday of each month, except December, at 1:00pm, in the Community Room of Lake Manor on Emerson Street, Lake Odessa, just west of the Depot Museum. The public is welcome and refreshments will be served. In addition, the Depot library will also be open following each monthly meeting until 5:00pm.

** First Families Committee meets the 1st Tuesday of every month at 7pm. The meeting takes place at Jim Moses’ house, north of Portland.

IONIA COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY
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Websites of Interest

1. <http://www.rootsweb.com/~miionia/icgshome.htm>
Ionia County Genealogical Society website

2. <http://www.cyndislist.com>
Tons of genealogy information and links

3. <http://genealogy.about.com/library/blsubmitquestion.htm>
About.com's "Ask a Genealogist"

4. <http://habitant.org/houghton/fcgenealogy.htm>
French-Canadian research in Michigan

5. <http://members.aol.com/roundsky/introduction.html>
Native American research in Michigan

6. <http://www.ioniahistory.org>
Ionia County Histocial Society's official website

New sites