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# 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.

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**Volume 10 – Number 2**

**April – June 2005**

### **From the President...**

Greetings Friends!

We have set some goals for 2005 and are eagerly working toward them. Let me go over some of them...

The First Families of Ionia County Society has set a goal of reaching 250 in membership for this year. If you have thought about becoming a member, and just haven't gotten around to it – now is the time! This group of committee members is waiting for YOUR application! If you have an ancestor who resided in Ionia County prior to December 31, 1880, and you can prove that you are related to them, you qualify for membership. Contact Jim Moses for more information!

Another goal of the society is to complete several unfinished projects – namely the cemetery project. We have several cemeteries that are being proof read and will soon be available to you! Many thanks to Janis Kenyon and her group of volunteers who have worked diligently on these!

Many thanks go out to Marion Harris for her work in organizing the volunteers who will help us move into our new building. If you are available to help with packing, inventory, moving, anything related to moving – please contact Marion. She will let you know what our needs are and will contact you when we get the okay to move into our new home. (Which by the way, should be VERY soon!)

Spring is coming soon – get out your genealogy project and start thinking about what you need, develop a plan of action, and then DO IT! Write a query for our next newsletter – maybe you will meet a new cousin!

Word has it that there are plans being made for a PEACOCK reunion – Contact Gary Wickerham for details on that event!

March was Women's History Month – celebrate it by writing the history of any woman in your family. Everyone has a history – it doesn't have to be celebrity status.

**Pam Swiler, President**  
Ionia County Genealogical Society

**IONIA COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY**  
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LAKE ODESSA, MI 48849-0516  
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### Websites of Interest

1. <http://www.rootsweb.com/~miionia/icgshome.htm>  
Ionia County Genealogical Society website
2. [www.michlist.com](http://www.michlist.com)  
Military Biographical Index
3. <http://www.ferris.edu/jimcrow/>  
Story of Frank White  
Icon on the Cream of Wheat cereal box
4. <http://genealogyfix.tripod.com/old-medical-terms.html>  
Old Medical Terms website
5. <http://memory.loc.gov/>  
Library of Congress, American Memory
6. <http://www.familytreedna.com/>  
Genealogy Driven DNA Testing

## WELCOME OUR NEW MEMBERS

Linda Hurlbert White  
701 West Maryland Ave.  
Deer Lodge, Montana  
59722

(406) 846-1565  
Researching: **OLMSTED,  
SETER, BUXTON,  
GIBSON**

Thelma Curtis  
610 First St.  
Lake Odessa, MI  
48849-1013

Norma Chruscielski  
800 Sandlyn Dr.  
Lansing, MI 48910-5660  
(517) 394-4559

Researching:  
**BEARD, PRINCE, REED,  
PEAKE, LAYTON, DICK,  
RICE** (Other counties:  
Rozell, Hammon(d),  
Jones

Margaret Sheffer  
1283 Graf St.  
Muskegon, MI 49442  
(231) 773-9241  
[m-a-sheffer@verizon.net](mailto:m-a-sheffer@verizon.net)

Drs. Stuart & Orriene  
(First) Denslow  
5721 W. Orlando Circle  
Broken Arrow, OK 74011  
[osdenslow@gci.net](mailto:osdenslow@gci.net)  
Researching: **PEACOCK,  
DOWNING, WARNER,  
FIRST, BICE, JOSLIN,  
COLE**

Jerry Boardman  
2822 Wooddale Court  
Jackson, MI 49203  
517.787.9695  
[jboardman000@ameritech.net](mailto:jboardman000@ameritech.net)  
Researching:  
**BOARDMAN, BENTLEY,  
DUFFY**

Elvon C. Lloyd  
4945 26 St. N.  
Arlington, VA 22207  
703.532.7122  
[lloydhouse@verizon.net](mailto:lloydhouse@verizon.net)  
Researching:  
**THOMPSON, FACE,  
LLOYD, KNIGHT**

## NOTE CHANGES

New phone # for Kim  
Pennock 616 794-3035

New email address for  
Pat Currigan:  
[Currigan@aol.com](mailto:Currigan@aol.com)

## IMPORTANT NOTICE

June Gorman has  
volunteered to help  
anyone interested in  
applying to the Daughters  
of the American  
Revolution (DAR). June  
has an interest in starting  
a DAR chapter in Ionia  
County and will help you  
with application papers  
and questions. Please  
contact her at:

June Gorman  
965 Hess Lake Drive  
Grant, MI 231-834-8700  
[Gorman@triton.net](mailto:Gorman@triton.net)

## Saving Graves: Michigan

[www.usgennet.org/usa/mi/state1/](http://www.usgennet.org/usa/mi/state1/)

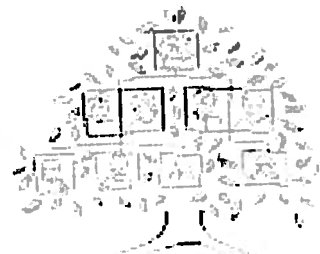
**"Dedicated to providing leadership,  
education and advocacy in preserving  
and restoring endangered and  
forgotten cemeteries worldwide."**

Another great website:  
[www.oldbaileyonline.org/](http://www.oldbaileyonline.org/)

The Proceedings of the Old Bailey  
London 1674 to 1834

## 1600'S ANCESTOR DATABASE

<http://www.firstfamilies.org/db/>



# Ionia County First Families

## Highlight On First Families

Member No. 22

### William VanSlyke Colley

**William "Bill" Van Slyke Colley** was born **Floyd Elton Colley**, son of **Roy and Mary (VanSlyke) Colley**. Bill was born in Muir, Ionia County, Michigan on August 18, 1918. On July 30, 1986 a hearing in Probate County for Ionia County was held with the Honorable Judge of Probate, Gerald J. Supina presiding and Bill officially had his name changed to William VanSlyke Colley. (Liber 481, Page 588).

In the 1920 census for Ionia County, Michigan, Roy Colley is listed as living with his in-laws, wife and son, and his occupation is "wire worker."


Mary VanSlyke is the daughter of **Ami John VanSlyke** and **Edith Angell**. Mary was born April 15, 1895 and died in Ionia County on February 7, 1987 at the Belding Christian Nursing Home, where she was an inpatient. She suffered from Alzheimer's disease, but the actual cause of death is listed as acute respiratory distress syndrome due to pulmonary embolism (pulmonary infarction) due to thrombophlebitis.

Ami John VanSlyke died from Gangrene, left foot arteriosclerosis on January 16, 1950 in Ionia County, Michigan. He was the son of **John VanSlyke** and **Martha Kanier**. He was age 79 when he died and had been a retired farmer.


John VanSlyke had purchased property in Ionia township March 27, 1877 and that property remained in the family for more than 100 years, earning a designation as a centennial farm by Division of Michigan History, which was under the Secretary of State's department in 1977. To qualify for that status the farm must be in the continuous possession of the same family for 100 years or more. John VanSlyke died March 12, 1881 at the age of 47 years. He is buried at Oak Hill cemetery in Ionia, along with many of the early settlers of Ionia county.

**William "Bill" Colley** was well known in the Ionia area. He was a successful realtor with a business on State Road, in Ionia. He also had a passion for antique cars and owned several. He was often seen driving them in local parades and events. Bill died January 15, 2000 leaving his wife Beulah (Steele) and children to mourn his loss.

Bill leaves another rich historical account for generations to come to enjoy learning from. We are grateful for his contribution to our county's history.




**William VanSlyke Colley LL.B.**  
Broker



The  
**REAL ESTATE SPECIALISTS**  
"Service Is Our Specialty"

2406 S. State Rd. (M-66)  
Ionia, MI 48846

hus. (616) 527-0281      res. (616) 527-2792



## The Ionia County News

June 17, 1924

News Gets Splendid Response From Folks in County who are Pioneers. Had to Remove Woman from Death Bed in Order to Get Big Snake!

The response to Ionia County News call for sketches of old folks in Ionia county met with a splendid response. Pioneers are many in this shire and neighbors and friends have been thoughtful in informing this paper.

### Mrs. Sophia Fiebing

Mrs. Sophia Fiebing of Muir will be 82 years old next July. She was born in Yates county, NY, and came to Muir with her parents in 1844 and has resided there ever since, a period of 80 years.

There was only one building in Muir then. The parents lived in North Plains in a log cabin. There were more Indians than white people and they used to come to Muir to trade baskets and fish for anything that they were able to get, such as pork, corn meal, and flour. Many a night they would get drunk and have a real howling time and the Indian women would flee to the neighbors'.

Great black bears would come and feed with the cattle in the barn yards and wolves would peep in at the windows of the cabins. Great snakes would crawl through the knot holes in the floor.

Mrs. Fiebing's grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Moses Rounds, lived in the same neighborhood. They both

died in 1868, just two hours apart. The grandmother had to be taken from bed just before her death in order that a snake might be removed from the bed clothing. The two were buried together in one grave, which can be seen at the west entrance of the North Plains cemetery.

Mrs. Fiebing's father, John Nichols, was a carpenter and many a house still stands in Muir that he constructed. The North Plains home was bought by Arthur Forbes, five years ago and was torn down.

In the early days the folks had to go to Detroit with their beans to get provisions. There were no roads and highways then. All was a wilderness and a thick wood.

### Mrs. James B. Jepson

Mrs. James B. Jepson, daughter of Martin Kimball, at the age of 18 years moved with her parents from Vermont in the year of 1849. The folks located on a farm five miles west of Ionia. She has been a resident of Ionia county since that time. She will be 94 years old on October 22, 1924. N. K. Jepson is the oldest son of Mrs. Jepson.

### Mrs. Rebecca Buchanan

Mrs. Rebecca Buchanan, daughter of Martin Kimball at 11 years moved with her parents from Vermont, in the year 1849 and lived with her parents for a time on the farm, five miles west of Ionia. She has been a resident of Ionia county for 74 years. She is now 86 years old.

### Charles Lovering

Charles Lovering of East

Main street, Ionia, is in his ninetieth year. He and his wife are said to be the oldest living couple in the city of Ionia. Mr. Lovering is still spry and is a practical engineer. He worked in the salt mill at one time, where the Pere Marquette shops are located. That was 60 years ago. He has also worked for the Page & Wilson Elevator company, Bates, Gould, & Gorham shingle mill and Colby's big mill.

## Ionia County News

January 17, 1924

### Arthur Knapp

Arthur Knapp of Cast District had the misfortune to fall on the ice in his yard last Saturday, cutting a gash in the back of his head, so as to necessitate the doctor taking some stitches in order to close the wound. John Case was pleasantly surprised Monday evening when Mr. and Mrs. Mason Brown and family, Mr. and Mrs. Russell Holcomb, Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Elvert and daughters, Mr. and Mrs. Morris Cobb and son, Donald, happened in to help him celebrate his birthday.

William McClow is quite ill with sciatic rheumatism.

Mrs. James Chase received the sad news Sunday of the death of her sister-in-law, Mrs. George Fea, of North Carolina. Mrs. Fea had been ill for some time with heart trouble, and her daughter, of Ionia, was with her about six weeks, but had returned

home about three weeks before the end came.

Mrs. John Chase entertained to dinner Sunday Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Elvert and two daughters, Lilah and Lucille, Mr. and Mrs. Dewey Randall and daughter, Geraldine, in honor of her husband's birthday, which occurred Monday.

Ralph Jinks and Mrs. Maude Thomas were married at the home of her brother in Grand Rapids last Friday evening.

Mrs. Dora Clements and son, Fred, of Lyons, spent Sunday with her sister, Mrs. Lemmie Gladding, and Harold and Freddie Clements were callers at the Gladding home Monday evening.

Glen Nicely superintendent of the Pewamo schools, has been confined to his home for the past few days with the measles. Miss Ruth Swindt has taken much of the responsibility of the school. Commissioner Elwood Brake has been aiding the school in some of the classes.

#### **Ionia Daily Sentinel**

January 26, 1912

#### **ORANGE**

Jan. 23 – Bert McClellan spent a few days of the past week at Grand Rapids visiting his grandmother, who is seriously ill.

Mrs. C. H. Smith returned home Saturday from Houston, TX.

Mrs. Pearl Hazzard has been confined to the house the past week with neuralgia.

Fred Belcher has returned home from Ann Arbor.

Rev. Philo is still holding revivals at the East Berlin church good attendance.

Mrs. John Schlosser is entertaining her sister, Mrs. Antcliff, of Orleans, and cousin, Mr. Haywood, of South Boardman.

Owen Prosser, of Cedar Springs visited his brother, Oliver Prosser, last week.

Earl Holcomb went to Saranac Monday.

Mr. and Mrs. James McCoy visited Mr. Fosberg, in Saranac, Sunday.

Wallace Bliss and wife, of Sheridan visited his mother, Mrs. Joseph Bills, Thursday.

Roy Ralston of Edmore is visiting Fred Courtney.

It is reported that Ed. Harwood has sold his farm to Fred Klotz and Ephraim Darling has sold his farm to Alfred Whitlock.

Mr. Ward, who has been living in Mr. McNeal's house has moved to Portland.

#### **HUBBARDSTON**

Jan. 23 – Misses Maggie and Hattie Bolender left here Monday morning to spend the rest of the winter with relatives and friends in Ohio.

Mrs. John Nevan has been quite sick the past week.

The Farmer's club meeting at Wm. Langdon's Thursday of last week was well attended,

70 being present for the oyster dinner served by the gentlemen.

#### **TRAVIS DISTRICT**

Jan. 23 – Mr. and Mrs. Fred Reed and daughter Lorita visited their daughter Mrs.

Linebaugh and family in Orange Wednesday.

Miss Zella Sexkaton of West Sebewa spent Friday with her aunt, Mrs. Florian Kenyon.

The Benevolent circle will serve its annual dinner at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Wilson Thursday, Feb. 1s Election of officerts.

William Luscher has bought a house of Jacob Evans and is moving it to his farm and fitting it up for the use of his hired man.

Mrs. Dan Samaine is at Collins taking care of their son, Ernest, who is very ill with peritonitis.

Victor Wilson attended Gleaners meeting at Ionia Friday.



# Prisoner of War Camp

**The Lake Odessa Wave**  
July 13, 1944

## P.W.'s FREEDOM SHORT LIVED

The five German prisoners of war who escaped from the stockade here early Sunday morning were captured south of the Pleasant Valley church about eight miles west of Lake Odessa at about dusk Monday evening by Deputy Sheriff George Cowles of Campbell Twp.

Deputy Cowles began the search soon after the escape was reported. Finding tracks on his own farm similar to those where the break occurred, he took up the trail Monday with his 15 year son Paul and a neighbor Clarence Kime.

All heavily armed, the three started out together but later spread out to cover more ground. By dusk the trail had led to the farm of H. J. Burleigh south of the church.

Cowles spotted tracks leading into a dense clump of elderberry bushes, but circling it, found none leading out. He poked his rifle into the bushes, parting them, and spied the Nazis lying in a dugout.

The German speaking deputy fired a shot into the air and ordered the fugitives out in language they could understand. He then marched them to the Burleigh farm house where he telephoned Capt. Garfield Campbell, commander of the

camp here. A group of military police was sent to bring the prisoners back with a truck.

During the morning Cowles and his party found a car belonging to Elmer Scott of Clarksville at the Scott farm which apparently had been pushed out of the farm yard and down the road by the prisoners the night before. Two prisoners' caps were on the fenders indicating the prisoners had been driven away by an approaching automobile during the night, probably a police car. Cowles said the men had spent the first day sleeping on the farm of Austin Livingston, who has three sons in the U.S. military service, four and a half miles west of here and the second night and part of the day in a maple sugar shanty on the Russell Friend farm seven miles west.

Their having taken French leave was first noticed about 2am Sunday when a guard discovered a wire had been cut near the north west corner of the stockade and a roll call of the prisoners revealed that five were missing.

Soldiers, Michigan state police and members of the federal bureau of investigation, which has charge of the hunt for escaped war prisoners, conducted a systematic search for the missing men northwest of Lake Odessa.

Captain Campbell said the missing men were Gunther Krock, 22, Horst Zappe, 21, Alfred Scheireck, 17, Adolf Rieger, 20; and Franz Schaffer, 22. The men wore prisoner of war uniforms with large PW letters painted on the back. Three of them also carried their German uniforms.

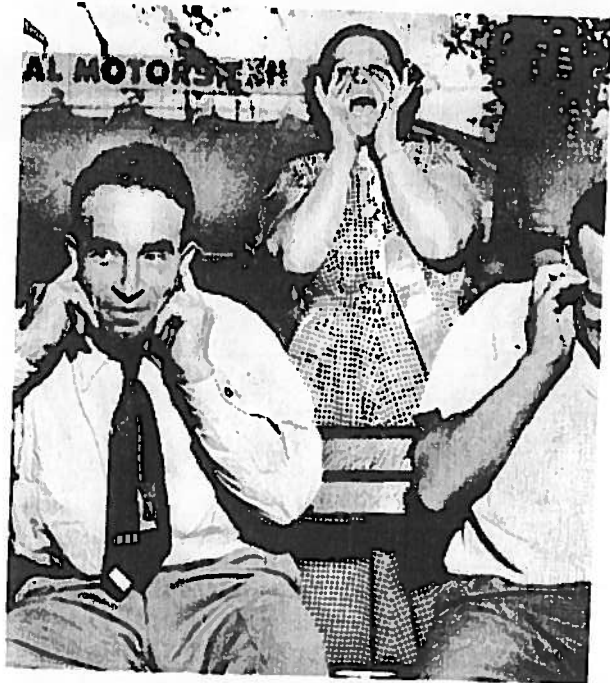
The prisoners were sent here from Fort Custer and are volunteers for work being paid the prevailing wages for farm labor under international law regulating payment of war prisoners. They receive 80 cents a day plus their 10 cents required under prisoner of war regulations and the remainder goes to the federal government for their upkeep. The stockade is located on the property of the Lake Odessa Canning Company and the prisoners have been employed on farm work throughout the county.

The escape of the five of their fellow prisoners was disturbing to a number of the PW's whose ire was reported to have been aroused by the belief that the quintet's escape would result in stricter curtailment of liberties of the more than 200 men confined in the camp.

The men have laid out and built a small athletic field and are now building a swimming pool. They do all the work themselves on their own time and pay for the necessary materials used out of their earnings.

**Portland Observer**  
May 12, 1880

On Monday forenoon of this week Mat. Harris and a young man named Stephen Snyder, who has been working with Harris during the winter, went to the saw mill of Selleck & Derby, and asked the privilege of grinding their axes on the mill grind-stone, which is located under the main floor, Mr. Derby going with them to adjust the belt. They both commenced grinding, Harris standing on the side of the stone used when only one person is grinding, and Snyder getting in on the other side next to the belt, standing near the pulley. They had been grinding ten or fifteen minutes, when, by the combined pressure of both axes on the stone, the belt slipped off. Snyder being nearest the pulley re-adjusted the belt, but in doing so the skirt of his coat, which was rather long, caught around the shaft, which was revolving at the rate of about 100 revolutions per minute, and began to wind him up, and as he turned quickly around and reached with his left hand to get some support to prevent being drawn around the shaft, his coat sleeve seems to have been caught by the set-screw on the shaft, and his arm was wound around it. He was thrown once over, his feet striking the floor above, and was crammed so tightly in between the shaft and the frame work of the mill that the belt slipped off the pulley and the shaft stopped revolving, but not until his arm had been literally torn from the body, taking with it a portion of the skin from his shoulder and side, and pulling out the cords of the arm from above. Mr. Derby who was about 80 feet from the engine when the signal was given, got to it as quick as possible but the shaft had stopped revolving before steam was shut off. The belt was cut, and Mr. Snyder was with some difficulty, extracted from his uncomfortable position, leaving his arm wound tightly around the shaft. He did not lose consciousness, but talked rationally about the accident, and exhibited great coolness and fortitude. Dr.'s Alton and Allen bandaged the wound temporarily, and he was removed to A. M. Sowle's boarding house where he was stopping. Dr.'s Hugg, Alton, and Allen dressed the wound and left the patient as comfortable as could be expected., but at this writing the result can hardly be predicted. It is the opinion of the physicians that he was not seriously injured internally, and with good luck they think he will pull through.



George Seidleman of Ionia, left, and Louie Webb of Calhoun County cover their ears when Mrs. Seidelman shows how she won the husband-calling contest at the State 1954 fair. Photo courtesy of The Detroit Free Press

**Happenings in Lyons**

Ionia County News  
February 4, 1954

Fred Mulnix had been ill at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Horace Clements of Lyons. Prior to coming to the Clement home, he was with his son, LeRoy Mulnix, of Lyons.

The Koerber family had founded the Michigan Brewing Company in 1912 in Ionia, supposedly closing the Ionia brewery during Prohibition and using their trucks to haul what they called "near-beer" from Toledo. When Detroit's notoriously violent Purple Gang saw them as competition, the Koerbers closed up shop in 1923.

After repeal the family opened breweries in Ionia, Port Huron and Toledo which operated until the fifties.

Excerpt from The Detroit News article "Lavish Grayhaven community was crippled by Great Depression" By Vivian Baulch April 13, 2001



# Cobmoosa - Great Walker



Photo of Jacob Walker Cobmoosa  
July 17, 1937 Courtesy of Vicky Rayburn

Excerpts from "Lowell: 100 Years of History, 1831 - 1931" printed in The Lowell Ledger, July 15, 1931. Article written by: Richard E. Southwick, Hart, MI.

In the year 1765 there came from Montreal, to the rapids of Grand River a French voyageur by the name of Antoine Campau. He wooed, won and married Indian style by just living together with the beautiful daughter of the chief. The result of this union was a son born in 1768. .... His name as a boy was not known. But when a man grown he had a dream and saw a ghost or phantom bear, which he followed to the source of Grand River, thence north to the head waters of the Muskegon River down that to its mouth, then followed the lake shore to the mouth of Grand River and back home in one day and night, so that he was given the name of Cub-bah-moo-sa, the great walker. At the first treaty with the United States government in 1855 he signed by his mark Cu-cub-bah-moo-sa, the great chief.

He seems to have lived at different places along the Grand River, The Rapids, Ionia and Lowell. He had four wives, eleven sons and three daughters, also an orphan girl, Negonce, left by his oldest son, Gaw-ge. His first wife, Ah-da-wah-qa had four sons namely, Gaw-ge, Wab-sho-gun, Shaw-bo-e and O-gee-moss. Second wife, Ah-da-go-wem-on, had one son and one daughter. Son, Ah-mah-bes, daughter, Ah-bow-e-na. Third wife, Ma-sena-be-qua, had three sons and one daughter. Sons, Aush-kah-mah-ga, Antoine, Cogz-he-sa; daughters, Was-sayah, mother of Rodney Negake. Fourth wife, Ah-ne-mega had three sons and one daughter. Sons, Mash-she-ba, Cha-way-gosh-gun and Henry Mau-bese, father of Jacob Walker. Daughter, Say-sa-gah, mother of Solomon Bailey.

By the treaty of 1855, the Indians ceded all lands of Grand River Valley and all other valleys north to the Straits for farms in severalty in eight townships in northwestern Michigan. The principal ones were townships 15, 16, 17 and 18 north by range 16 west in Oceana and Mason counties. Each family was given eighty acres and each single person forty acres and many valuable considerations.

On the corner, (northeast corner of Section 27 of Elbridge, Oceana county) by the Cob-moo-sa schoolhouse built in 1860 by the U.S. Government for the Indians, under large maple trees, stands a beautiful monument erected by the D.A.R. of Ionia and the people of this neighborhood. It was unveiled June 26, 1927, by two great-great-granddaughters of Cob-moo-sa, witnessed by an audience of about eight hundred Indians and white people, who enjoyed a picnic dinner and a splendid program. Many of Cob-moo-sa's descendants were there and took part in the program, the last number of which was a song in Indian language, "The End of a Perfect Day," by four of his great-grandchildren.

This article in it's entirety can be found at:  
<http://www.rootsweb.com/~mikent/towns/lowell/1931/cobmoosa.html>

If you are interested in Native American genealogy from this area you may wish to join the Nishnawbe email list. Simply send an email to this address: [NISHNAWBE-L-request@rootsweb.com](mailto:NISHNAWBE-L-request@rootsweb.com) with the word "subscribe" in the subject line. You will receive an email from the list administrator explaining how the list works.

**Otisco Township,  
Ionia county, Michigan  
July 11<sup>th</sup>, 1892**

Unto the Highway Commissioner of said township.

Sir – Your petitioners of said township who are freeholders would most respectfully petition you that the following described highway be laid out for a public highway it being not over forty rods of length nor less then twenty rods.

Commencing at the east end of what is known (and recorded) of Ellis Street on the Howe's addition to the village of Belding, Ionia County, Mich. And continuing east across Flat River to intersect the west end of what is known as the Shiloh Road, all of which is located on the section lines of one (1) and twelve (12) of the township of Otisco, Ionia Co., Mich. Said road is not within the incorporated city or village.

Names	Names
F. B. Millard	J. W. Bennett
Frank C. Antcliff	Simon Spencer
Jerome Savery	Charles H. Jewell
Frank A. Howe	W. H. Shaw
W. J. Wilson	F. E. Howe
W. Zuller	W. K. Campbell
J. P. Austin	M. J. Tanner
S. C. Jepson	A. S. Spencer
Holmes Bros.	A. W. Demorest
E. E. Fales	E. R. Spencer
S. C. Millard	T. F. Ireland
W. S. Tubbs	C. D. Ellis

Excerpt taken from Otisco Twp. "Highway Commissioner" records currently in the process of transcription by Kim Pennock.

**From the Lake Odessa Wave  
1956**

Two hundred and twenty-eight 8<sup>th</sup> graders of the Ionia county rural school districts will be graduated at exercises to be held at the Ionia Theater, Saturday morning, June 6, at 10 O'clock, according to County School Commissioner Elwood Brake. Commr. Brake will present the diplomas and following the taking of a group picture of the graduates at the library, complimentary tickets will be distributed

for the annual field day and track meet at the fairgrounds.

Berlin Township – Bernice Wells, Arlene Sessions, Lena Bartlett, George Emelander, Jane Larson, Ruthella Longfield, Frances Sprague, Ila Dickson, Emery Bowen, Harold Hauter, Jack Pinckney, Keith Haller, Norris Signs, Ellen Young, Lloyd Dausman, Evelyn Edinger, Leo Shepard.

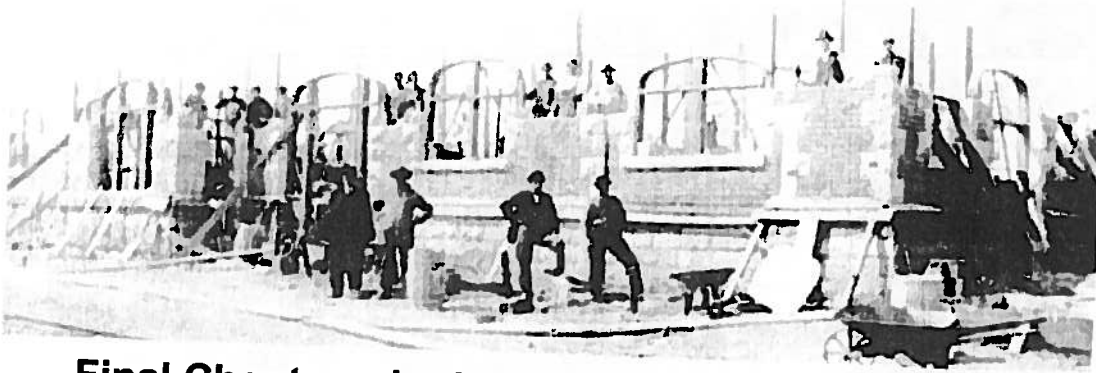
Campbell Township – Arwilda Kauffman, Thelma Kauffman, Donald Roth, Gladys Hamblin, Leona Messecat, Dorothy Miller, Norma Cisler, Irma Heaven, Olive McRoberts, Wilber Livingston, Althea Rosenberger, Samuel Schwab.

Odessa Township – Robert Carter, Lois McCaul, Kenneth Moltmaker, Wanda Barnes, Lawrence Eldridge, Madonna Erdman, Mildred Erdman, Retha Huizenga, Holda Osman, Richard Cook, Robert Cook, Delores Carr, George Carr, Maxine Duffey, Ruth Augst, Marjorie Aves, Margaret Sindlinger, Mildred Sindlinger, Helen Creighton, Kathleen Gibbs, Lena Hissong, Muriel Vandeburg.

**Buggy Rides  
100 Years Ago**

In June 1834, Mrs. Warren Bogue came down the river from Portland to Grand Rapids in a flat boat. The "second city" was small then. There were three log houses where Butterworth's factory now is, and Richard Godfrey, Joel Guild and Louis Campau had frame houses. Noonday, and Indian Chief, had a house and the French, Catholic and Baptist missions were the only buildings on the west side of the river. Mrs. Bogue's daughter was the only white child in the Baptist Mission school. Mrs. Bogue now lives in Chicago and is much surprised at Grand Rapids' growth.

Advertisement: I have a brand new first class sewing machine that I desire to exchange for a good cow. Harness shop, opposite Bailey House. W. W. Williams.  
(Excerpt from the Ionia Sentinel, October 1984)



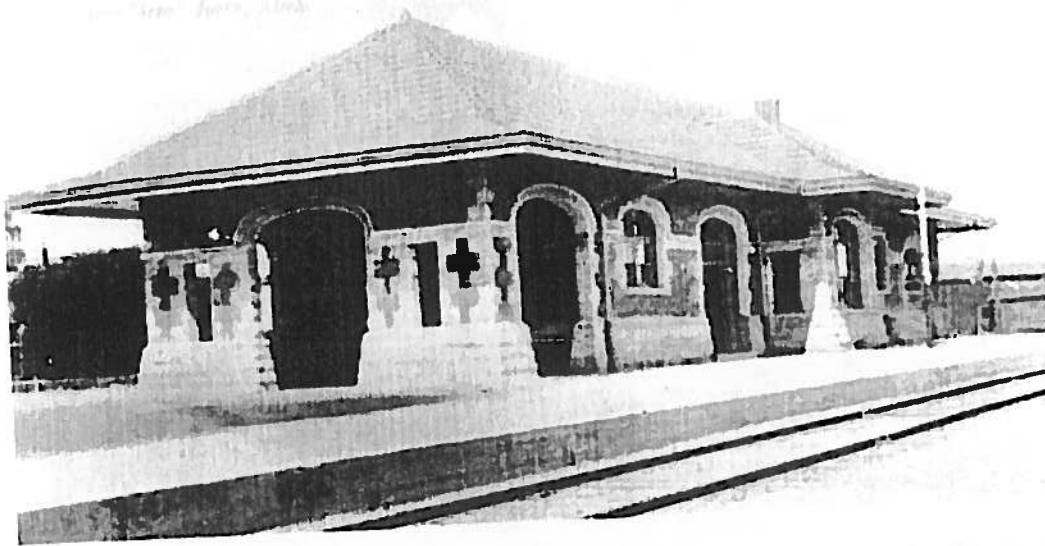
Construction of the Ionia depot. Photograph from the Clarke Library.

Many thanks to Merritt Schamweber for writing this article and allowing us to share it with you.

## Final Chapters: Ionia's Great Depot Fire of 1908

In the afternoon, an alarm was turned in, calling the department to the railroad shop grounds, where a lumber pile was ablaze. The flames were extinguished with a small loss. The third alarm was at 11:45 p.m., when a shed back of Patk. Welch's saloon was discovered on fire. This was somewhat threatening to the block, but was confined to the shed, the loss being small, perhaps \$100. The fourth was caused by the burning of the Pere Marquette coal sheds, at 1 o'clock this morning. The fire was prevented from spreading and the loss was not large. Ticket Agent Rauch of the Grand Trunk, having a cool head and an eye to the essential thing, got out with the cash box contents, \$125, all right and deems himself luck in consequence.

This news article was taken from the Ionia Daily Standard. On this same Sunday, the Grand Trunk depot at South Lyons burns to the ground. The The 1905 map of Ionia in the view above, shows the area of the fire of July, 1908. The Presbyterian church that burned is northeast of the Grand Trunk depot. The Methodist church is located on the southeast corner of Depot and east Main streets. The Grand Trunk depot built in 1868 is on the north side of the GT main line, east of Depot street. Pere Marquette depot, built in 1874, is at Front and Second streets. "Lovell's Place" mentioned in the article is clearly titled at Rich and Lafayette streets. It wasn't until August 6, that a special train bearing E.H. Fitzhugh, third vice president; W.G. Brownlee, general transportation manager; M.S. Blacklock, chief engineer of construction, all of whom were from Montreal, and F.W. Egan, superintendent, Detroit, arrived in Ionia to look over the depot sites. They decided to build the new freight house on the burned depot site and have it completed by that fall. An office 30 by 30 feet with a modern finish would occupy the west end of the structure fronting on Depot street. This is what they had to say about the new depot to be located south of the P.M. depot: "There is no doubt that the present intention is to locate the passenger house at the foot of Second street, which must be opened across the Pere Marquette tracks. The building is to be located close to the main track and it is supposed that the open space to the north will be improved as a park." A year later the Grand Trunk still has not made any effort to build a new depot at Ionia. In June, 1909, The Weekly Standard had this news item which made me think that the new depot that was to be built after the 1908 fire was cancelled or put on hold. This article is dated June 11, 1909. "The victory of the D., G.H.&M. road in the suit brought by the state against its charter, by verdict of State Supreme Court, whereby the road saves \$500,000, may result in giving Ionia a better depot, and possibly sooner, than if the case had gone the other way. The original plans for a depot, it is said, were abandoned as too expensive. It is now hoped they may be restored to favor. Ionia is of enough importance to be given a fine depot building."



New Ionia depot.  
Looks nearly the  
same today.

On Saturday morning, August 4, 1909, the official rail car with General Transportation Manager Brownlee and Supt. Egan, was dropped off by the fast morning passenger train at Ionia. They stayed about an hour looking over the site for the new depot and making arrangements for clearance of the grounds. Work was to begin the following week. It is expected that the new structure will be ready for the public by November 1. The officers gave assurances that it would be a credit to the town and the road. It is to be of paving brick, with a generous platform extending 300 ft. on one side, made of paving brick. By October the Grand trunk is still filling and grading for the new depot. The target date of Nov. 1 is not going to be met. The earth for filling was being brought from the gravel pits east of Muir where a steam shovel was loading the cars. Brick was being delivered from Vander Hayden's yard and the work crew was waiting for the Bedford stone to arrive. In November there are fifty men busy laying the stone and it is hoped the structure will be done before the weather turns too cold, but, the stone quarries where the Bedford stone was being quarried went on strike in December. The work crew was sent to Battle Creek to work there and the Ionia depot was put on hold until next spring.

The Ionia Standard printed this news dated April 15, 1910:

"The Grand Trunk depot walls now begin to take to themselves some resemblance of form, going up at the rate of about a foot per day. The force working there is divided into three sets, bricklayers, those who place the stone trimmings and the rough laborers. All the material is now on the ground. The Bedford stone trimmings come numbered and for each stone there is a corresponding number on the architect's blue prints. The tile for the roofing is a dark red, in color harmony with the rest of the material. New standpipes are also on the ground to be installed later and they will greatly facilitate the quick gathering of water for the engines." On Sunday evening the 19th of August, 1910, the new Grand Trunk depot was opened to the public. Train No. 14 from Grand Rapids was the first to stop and unload and take on passengers. The Weekly Standard made this comment: "The depot is a model of cleanliness and if the employees can cope with the mischievous boys, intend to keep it so --- and they think they can."

For more information regarding Mr. Scharweber's rail research in Michigan, visit his website:  
<http://merrittscharnweber.com/TableContents-2.html>

**Never returned  
cont....**

Harvy Haight

Dan Horton

Ephrim Downing

John Waite

Thos. Dysinger

Jesse Crapo

James Booth

Oscar Hunt

Leonard Brown

Daniel Houseman

Wm. Brokaw

Wm. Kirby

Wm. Haight

Otto Bates

Issac Fickus

**Soldiers that  
went from  
Odessa  
township to the  
Civil war and are  
living yet:**

Emanuel Cramer

Chas. Tupper

Ebert Brokaw

Richard Buxton

Chas. Sickels

Geo. Barton

Robt. Musgrove

Ira Tupper

John E. Patrick

Crys Hiller

Chas. F. Cahoon

James Buston

Leonard Knapp

Thos. Crapo

Syrus Smith

**Cuban soldiers buried  
in Lakeside Cemetery:**

Stephen Otto

John Richards

**Living Cuban soldiers  
in Odessa township:**

Frank Lowrey

Dr. Morse

Mike Guilfoy

**Soldiers wives buried  
in Lakeside cemetery:**

Mrs. Henry Shriner

Mrs. Wallace Lovewell

Mrs. Chris Yager

Mrs. Amanda Kibby

Mrs. Thomas Leak

Mrs. Russell

Mrs. Cyrus Lawrence

Mrs. Wm. Bunker

Mrs. V.O. Bretz

Mrs. E. Bretz

Mrs. S.H. Kart

Mrs. Vandyke

Mrs. W. Fink

Mrs. Martin Cox

Mrs. Frank Shelman

Mrs. Serval Backus

Mrs. Frantz

Mrs. John Green

Mrs. Waterman

Mrs. S.R. Braden

Mrs. Willy Russell

Mrs. Chas. Wright

Mrs. Chas. Sickels

Mrs. Chas. Sickels, 2<sup>nd</sup>  
wife

Mrs. Wm. Hough

Mrs. Seymour Bagley

**Soldiers wives living  
in Odessa township:**

Mrs. Agara Shaffer

Mrs. Wm. Marvin

Mrs. Mary Stine

Mrs. G.W. Archer

Mrs. Thomas Little

Mr.s P.J. Fellows

Mrs. Wesley  
Houghtaling

Mrs. J. W. Demaranville

Mrs. Carrie Mather

Mrs. E.L. Simons

Mrs. Horace Rosell

Mrs. Almeda Shepard

Mrs. Shumway

Mrs. James Kent

Mrs. Alden

Mrs. Sophia Tupper

Mrs. Edwin Gates

Mrs. Rufus Goddard

Mrs. A.C. Vanocker

Mrs. Strickland

Mrs. Susan Hines

Mrs. Sparks

Mrs. Merrills

Mrs. John Lunger

Mrs. Malaca Burns

Mrs. Margaret Haight

**Happenings in Palo**

Ionia County News Feb. 4, 1954

Mrs. Julia Hargrave came last Tuesday to the Millard Stedman home to help out while Mrs. Stedman and the new baby girl are in the hospital.

The P.T.A. which was to be held February 19 at the school gym, will be held March 5, at the same place. They are planning to form handicraft and clothing classes and all parents are urged to be present. After the meeting, cards will be played and refreshments served. Don't forget the change of date.

Mrs. Dora Stedman who has been ill for many weeks in the Carson City hospital, was returned to her home last Thursday, and seems real cheerful and happy to be home again. Everyone is pleased to have her hom ena dhope she will soon be in good health. Mrs. Ruth Wilson is caring for her.

The regular meeting of the W.S.C.S. will be held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Bill Kendall, on Thursday, February 4<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. and Mrs. William Rutherford and Russell and Mr. and Mrs. Jack Bonsall were Wednesday evening guests of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Jewell in honor of Mr. Jewell's birthday anniversary.

Orlo Houghton, who broke his arm sometime ago, has had the cast removed and returned to work last week.

Anna Marie Helms, who has been ill of flu and an ear infection for over three weeks, is better, and expected to return to school, Monday.

Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Nelson, of near Sheridan, spent the week end with Mr. and Mrs. Cliff Gilson.

# The Lake Odessa Wave

## July 12, 1907

### SOLDIERS FROM ODESSA

#### Names of Those Both Living and Dead as Given Us by Messgrs Blair, Musgrove and Cramer.

The following lists of names of soldiers both dead and living who went from Odessa township to the Civil War, together with the names of the wives of the soldiers and the Cuban War veterans, will be of much interest to our readers.

In this connection we wish to call attention to the well organized, well kept and prosperous G.A.R. and W.B.C. posts here. They have a good two-story building of their own; are out of debt and stand both as a credit to our town and as a monument to the blessings secured us as a nation from the outcome of the great Civil War. It is probable that appropriate dedication exercise will be held in connection with the setting of the new soldiers monument in Lakeside cemetery about October first.

#### Soldiers of Civil War now living in Odessa township:

B.C. Blair	Andrew Walters	John Lowrey
S.H. Mallory	Henry Henderleiter	C.S. Lawrence
George Fletcher	V.C. Showerman	J.D. Bishop
Oliver Cheeney	Jacob Hummel	M.V. Carr
S.H. Kart	Rev. H.J. Green	Wm. Priestman
Robt. Musgrove	Wm. Hulliberger	Frank Shellman
Thos. Leak	Chas. Henderleiter	James Ervay
Dr. Martin	Edward Roe	Abel Bywater
Jefferson Justice	James Beard	C.F. Dunham
S.R. Braden	Peter Chapman	John Frantz
Wm. Fink	Rob. Catt	Leonard Knapp
Dr. Crane	Edward Turman	H.E. Earl
George York	V.C. Watkins	John Schneider
Thos. Wadell	Wallace Lovewell	Chris Hiller
Wm. Matthews	Daniel Shellenbarger	Mr. VanBuren
Hiram McCrary	E.E. Cramer	W.F. Baliou
Chris Yager	Henry Hunter	Ira Tupper
Servel Backus	Chas. McCoy	Jacob Beard
Henry Shire	W.H. Howard	Robt. Ritenburg
Geo Bradish	Chancy Fair	
	Martin Cox	

#### Soldiers that went to the Civil War from Odessa township who have died at home and elsewhere:

Edwin Anway  
John Rhim  
Oliver Mourer  
Jacob Gapsey  
V.O. Bretz  
James Sweigert  
Ephraim Downes  
John Shaffer  
Richard Sickels  
Dan Horton  
Francis Haskins  
Leonard Brown  
Delevan Maltby  
Sylvenius Duntly  
Eph Bretz  
Philo White  
John Waite  
Silas Adams  
Nic Shellenberger  
Issac Fickus  
Malacha Burns  
John H. Wood  
Jerome Brokaw  
Nelson Merrills  
Harvey Haight  
Wm. Kirby  
Oscar Hunt  
Erastus Vandyke  
Valmer Haskins  
Sol Lee  
Ashley Russel  
Wm. Haight  
Thos. Dysinger  
James Booth  
Daniel Houseman  
Geo. Houseman

#### Names of soldiers buried in Lakeside cemetery:

Valentine Bretz  
Henry Shriner  
Perry Runyan  
Stephen Haight  
Daniel Filkins  
John Vibber  
James Kent  
Elisha Shellman  
Wm. Marvin  
Wm. Hough  
John Stair  
Malacha Burns  
John Davis  
A.J. Culver  
E.L. Simons  
Sam Moser  
George Bayha  
E.L. Shepard  
A.J. Culver  
J.W. Demarantville  
Merrit Haight  
E.E. Barkdull  
Charles Wright  
J. Green  
Elisha Shellman  
Wm. Chrenister  
J.S. Augst  
Hiram Hyde  
John Dailey  
S.E. Briggs  
John Travis  
T.N. Waterman  
F.J. Fellows  
Thomas Little  
Charles Overly  
Horace Rozell  
Nick Hall  
H.J. Stine  
Fred Miller  
Josiah Perkins  
Augustine Teal

Edwin Gates  
Ezra Stalter  
Daniel Meyers  
Rufus Goddard  
Charles W. Bretz  
Edwin Rush  
Alburtus Mourer  
J. Dorr Shaffer  
George Harinton  
J.A. Russell  
Hames Perry  
John Knapp  
Wm. Clark  
Henry Spoke  
Darwin Spencer  
Neal Alden  
W.S. Beckam  
Henry Brown  
George Postle  
Jacob Gapsis  
John Shaffer  
G. W. Archer

#### Old soldiers buried in Myers cemetery:

H.S. Martin  
H.D. Travers  
Philo White

#### List of names of soldiers in Civil War that went from Odessa township and never returned:

Salvenius Duntley  
James Swigert  
Nelson Merrills  
Erastus Vandyke  
Oscar Postle  
Edward Anway  
Silas Adams  
Oliver Mourer

# Speaker Notes



## JANUARY

Our speaker at the January ICGS meeting was John Waite. He chose the topic "Making Your Mark". John talked about different types of handwriting and gave ideas on how various samples could be interpreted. He showed us how different styles of handwriting could also be misread. Certain letters can easily be mistaken for other letters depending not only on the hand of the person doing the writing and the eye of the one reading, but also depending on the time. For example, back in the 1600s what looks like the letter 'f' was sometimes written meaning 's'. John gave us helpful tips, including the checking of the actual handwriting. The way a person formed certain letters may be unique to that person, so reading a letter can sometimes tell us who probably wrote it. Since we all have distinct differences in the way we write, looking at those differences may help us.

## FEBRUARY

The Registrar of Deeds for Ionia County, Diane Adams, was the guest speaker at our February meeting. Ms. Adams explained many things about her office. She welcomes genealogists and tries to help us with our searches. The office hours in Ionia are 8:30 to 5:00 Monday through Friday, with the office being closed between 12:00 and 1:00 for lunch.

Their records start in 1833 and go to the present. There is a large project to put as many records online as possible. You may check what they already have online by connecting to their website at [www.ioniacounty.org](http://www.ioniacounty.org) and clicking on the appropriate link. The current cost for copies at the office is \$1.00, but soon this will be online, too. Unfortunately, due to a small staff, they are unable to make copies simply because you request them in a letter. Ms. Adams told us about several of the types of records in her office and how they may be helpful to genealogists and she also told us about their preservation projects.

## MARCH

"Researching People of Color" was the topic presented by Jesse Lasorda at the March ICGS meeting. Mr. Lasorda has been researching involvement by Blacks in the Civil War and also researching the Underground Railway system for many years. He gave us details on black soldiers in the 102<sup>nd</sup> U.S. Colored Infantry. These men lived in many small communities throughout our area, as well as in cities. Many men of this unit are buried in Cass County. Mr. Lasorda said that there are very few photos of 'people of color' from that unit, or from the general population at that time, and they are hard to find in most types of records. The main exception to that is in tax records.

He said you can almost guarantee that they are in tax records because the government never lost an opportunity to collect from everyone.

Jesse related a story about a man named Andrew Dungey who was a builder and the wealthiest black person in Lansing. He started out as a janitor and worked until he had several buildings. He helped a lot of people who couldn't get loans through the banks of the time. He also told us about several people connected with the Underground Railway, and asked that anyone with knowledge of the system in our area contact him. The last thing he talked about was a book that was written in 1915, entitled "Michigan Manual of Freedmen's Progress", which detailed the advance of people of color in our state. It has since been revised and reprinted as "Negroes in Michigan History". Originally written by Francis H. Warren, the new edition was edited and published by John M. Green. I have a copy of this book and it is a good source of information if you have any blacks in your family from back in the early 1900s or earlier.



Genealogists never die  
they just haunt cemeteries

## Calendar of Events – Ionia County Genealogical Society

### April 2005

- 5<sup>th</sup> First Families Meeting
- 9<sup>th</sup> Norman C. Caldwell - Surveying in Michigan 1808-1854
- 28<sup>th</sup> ICGS Board Meeting – 7:00pm at Pam's house
- 30<sup>th</sup> FESTIVAL OF TABLES - Lake Odessa Community Library  
Order tickets through Pam Swiler or Bonnie Jackson
- 30<sup>th</sup> Women's Festival in Ionia

### May 2005

- 3<sup>rd</sup> First Families Meeting
- 14<sup>th</sup> Lori Fox – Extra! Extra! Read All About It!
- 26<sup>th</sup> ICGS Board Meeting – 7:00pm at Pam's house

### June 2005

- 7<sup>th</sup> First Families Meeting
- 11<sup>th</sup> Pam Swiler - "Cleaning Up Your Family Tree Maker Database"
- 23<sup>rd</sup> ICGS Board Meeting 7:00 p.m. at Pam's House

\*\* All regular membership meetings are held on the second (2<sup>nd</sup>) 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 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of every month at 7pm. The meeting takes place at the Lake Odessa Area Historical Society Depot Museum, located on Emerson Street in Lake Odessa, MI. For more information, call Jim Moses at (517) 647-7310.