



# KITH AND KIN



MARSHFIELD AREA GENEALOGY GROUP NEWSLETTER

P.O. BOX 337, Marshfield, WI 54449

Vol. 6

Jul-Aug 1989

No. 2

## APOLOGY

We are sorry to have created the confusion and increased expectations by publishing *Kith and Kin* monthly. With this issue we will resume bi-monthly publication. We will try to publish an issue in each odd numbered month. We cannot guarantee that you will receive your copy before the meeting and would suggest strongly that you mark the dates from the CALENDAR OF EVENTS on your calendar.

\* \* \* \* \*

## FUNERAL DIRECTORS' RECORDS

A representative of the Hansen Funeral Home in Marshfield will speak about Funeral Directors' Records at the July 27, 1989 meeting of the group. The records kept by funeral directors are frequently overlooked as a source of genealogical information. It is hoped that everyone present will be able to incorporate this information into their research.

\* \* \* \* \*

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS TO MEET

A meeting of the MAGG Board of Directors will be held immediately following the July meeting. All board members should attend.

## NOTE: AUGUST MEETING CHANGES

Don and Vickie Schnitzler have invited us to their house for an informal get-together. The group library will be there and ready for use.

The hours for the informal get-togethers are 1 to 4 in the afternoon and 7 to 9 in the evening on Thursday August 24th.

Schnitz will be copying photographs. Also, this year Pete Hulke will be present at both sessions to demonstrate the genealogy computer program, Personal Ancestral File (PAF) on the Macintosh computer. PAF is put out by the Latter Day Saints Church. The files are compatible with their files and with a number of genealogy computer bulletin boards. He will demonstrate computer generated: 1. Pedigree Charts, 2. Family Group Sheets and 3. Descendant lists. He will be happy to answer questions about how he happened to choose this particular program.

To get to the Schnitzlers, go one block south of the Marshfield Library. It is exactly one block south of the GT&E building. Their home is on the southeast corner of Cedar and 3rd. The address is 301 S. Cedar Avenue, Marshfield, WI 54449. Their telephone number is 387-4044. PLEASE use the side door on 3rd Street. Thank you!

## President's Message

Dear Friends,

I hope everyone has had the opportunity to stay cool so far this summer by spending alot of time in air conditioned libraries, courthouses and research centers. I know that is how I like to spend those 90 degree days.

I would like to send a special thank you to Don and Vickie Schnitzler for volunteering their home as a place to house our library. They will be designating a room and will organize it so that it is easily accesible. Vickie is almost always home, just call first. Thank you Vickie and Schnitz!

I am also excited about this month's meeting regarding Funeral Directors' Records. I have never had the opportunity to use these records but after the meeting I will probably have to go back and research.

I would like to thank Betty Schuster and Bev Peasley for agreeing to put a membership packet together for members. This should be completed in the next 2 months, then it will be distributed to our members.

I will be looking forward to seeing everyone at the meeting.

Your friend,

Vicki

---

*KITH AND KIN*

The bimonthly newsletter of the Marshfield Area Genealogy Group, a non-profit organization created to collect, preserve and disseminate genealogical data found in the Marshfield Area and to promote genealogical research.

President: Vicki Johnson 683-2861  
Vice-Pres: Sue LaSavage 387-6577  
Sec.-Treas.: Denise Jacobs 384-5591  
Act. Editor: Lou Hacker 387-6979  
Queries Ed.: Barb Mahler 384-4742

**MEETINGS:** Fourth Thursday of each month, 7 p.m. at the Marshfield Clinic Conference, Room 6620,

**SUBSCRIPTIONS:** Free with membership [Business year runs May to May]. Individual \$8; Family \$10. Mid year membership includes all current volume issues.

### QUERIES

The Kith and Kin will publish queries of 50 words or less without charge for members of the Marshfield Area Genealogy Group. Queries for non-members will be published for \$1. Submit your query on a separate sheet of paper with your name and address. The Kith and Kin reserves the right to edit queries and assumes no responsibility for their accuracy.

#### HÖHN- [HOEHN]

Seeking information about the Jacob HÖHN [HOEHN] family which appeared in the 1855 Wisconsin state census as well as the federal 1860 census for Town of New Glarus, Green County, Wisconsin. Am especially interested in information regarding daughter Louiza, born in Switzerland about 1844 or 1846.

Contact: J. L. Hoehn  
1010 W. Fifth Street  
Marshfield, WI 54449  
(715) 387-3526

#### OSBORN- MOORE- WINCHEL- CLOSSER- HIBBARD- POTTER

Need ancestors and siblings of Joseph OSBORN, b. 15 Apr 1784 ?Cape Anne, MA, d. 6 Feb 1859 Porter, Rock Co., WI, m. about 1810 Mary MOORE, b. 12 Dec. 1789 "near Bangor, Maine." After Joseph died, Mary returned to Door Village, LaPorte Co., IN to the home of her daughter and son-in-law Louisa and Harrison WINCHEL, where she died 30 Sep 1869. Children: Almond 1813-1897; Mary Ann 1816-1899 m. David CLOSSER; Louisa 1818-1898; Joseph P. 1819-?; Jane Marie 1821-1907 m. Charles HIBBARD 1843; Caroline 1826-1880 m Porter POTTER.

Contact: Ruth Pors  
706 S. Apple Avenue  
Marshfield, WI 54449  
(715) 384-9953

#### BAST- SALGHERT

Seeking information about and/or descendants of Joseph BAST and his wife Mary (SALGHERT) BAST who lived in Marshfield about 1900.

Contact: Lucile H. McFee  
4136 Hwy 78 N  
Mount Horeb, WI 53572

Please remember to show your appreciation to replies by a "Thank You" note and return postage.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### THANK YOU

A thank you goes out to all who have submitted information for this and recent newsletters. We are now trying to mention the name of the contributor. If we have missed your name we apologize. If your item has not been included within two issues after your submission please let the acting editor know. Thank you.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### CONTRIBUTIONS SOLICITED

Each member of the group is asked to be on the look out for items for the newsletter. You may wish to share with the group how you solved a particular research problem or your experience visiting a particular library or courthouse. On the other hand you may find an article or research tip pertinent to genealogy that would be appropriate for the newsletter. Those individuals whose last name begins with "M" through "O" are asked to submit something for the newsletter by August 31, 1989 if they have not already done so. Those who have submitted their contribution ahead of time are greatly appreciated!

## COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

The organizational committee appointments are as follows:

Program: *Open*  
 Newsletter, Acting Editor:  
 Lou Hacker  
 805 West State Street  
 Marshfield, WI 54449  
 (715) 387-6979  
 Queries Editor:  
 Barb Mahler  
 6817 W. Pleasant Hill  
 Auburndale, WI 54412  
 (715) 384-4742  
 Archives Editor:  
 Don Schnitzler  
 301 S. Cedar Ave.  
 Marshfield, WI 54449  
 (715) 387-4044  
 Librarians: Don & Vickie Schnitzler  
 301 S. Cedar Ave.  
 Marshfield, WI 54449  
 (715) 387-4044  
 Membership: Sue LaSavage  
 Box 455  
 Marshfield, WI 54449  
 (715) 387-6577

The standing committee appointments are as follows:

History: Edna Loiselle  
 (Archivist) 804 S. Palmetto Ave.  
 Marshfield, WI 54449  
 (715) 384-2219  
 Education & Lori Scheller  
 Research: P.O. Box 824  
 Marshfield, WI 54449  
 (715) 387-8217  
 Publicity: Mary Anne Schreiner  
 W793 Huckleberry St.  
 Edgar, WI 54426  
 (715) 352-2523

The ad hoc committee appointments are as follows:

Forms: Betty Schuster  
 6153 Hwy E North  
 Pittsville, WI 54466  
 (715) 387-3718 (work)  
 (715) 884-6821 (home)  
 Necrology: Marlene Cherney  
 Route 1, Box 9  
 Spencer, WI 54479  
 (715) 659-4315  
*continued in next column*

*Appointments continued*

Labels: (Red and White)

Gloria Spindler  
 Route 3, Box 365  
 Stratford, WI 54449  
 (715) 384-4073

Publication: *Open*

In addition, appointed to fill one of the two positions held by the past president and newsletter, acting editor Lou Hacker:

Director: Marlene Cherney  
 1989-1990 Route 1, Box 9  
 Spencer, WI 54479  
 (715) 659-4315

\* \* \* \* \*

## WISCONSIN MAP SERVICE

Wisconsin Map Service offers a variety of maps. They have many old maps of Austria, Federal Republic of Germany, Hungary, Yugoslavia, etc. The collection includes world maps, historical maps, and road maps. They can order any kind of map quickly. They have a copy machine and lamination service. When you are in the area, it might pay you to stop and browse, or write: Wisconsin Map Service, 111 West Second Street, Marshfield, WI 54449.

\* \* \* \* \*

## SECOND EDITION AVAILABLE

*Unpuzzling Your Past* by Emily Anne Croom is out in a second edition published in 1989 by Betterway Publications, Inc. P.O. Box 219, Crozet, VA 22932 for \$9.95. The first edition of this book has been favored by a number of the members of M.A.G.G. The second edition has larger type and has used the same outline. A six page chapter on computer genealogy has been added. Telephone numbers have been included in the appendix for U.S. libraries and archives. The book is excellent for beginner and the intermediate alike.  
 --reviewed by Lou Hacker.

## CHIPPEWA COUNTY (WI) GENE. SOCIETY PIONEER SETTLER CERTIFICATE

The Chippewa County Genealogical Society is issuing Chippewa County Pioneer Settler Certificates to direct descendants of early settlers (1890 or earlier) of Chippewa County. These will be awarded at the time of the 10th Anniversary Celebration Banquet, which will be held in late April 1990. For information send a SASE to: LouAnn Felix, 506 Woodward Ave., Chippewa Falls, WI 54729.--from *Chippewa County Genealogical Society Newsletter, Vol. 9, No. 3, May/June 1989, p. 5.*

\* \* \* \* \*

## ILLINOIS PRAIRIE PIONEER CERTIFICATES

Illinois Prairie Pioneer Certificates are issued in three categories....prior to statehood, 1819 through 1850, and 1851 through 1880. For application form and instructions send a SASE to Ron Nichols, RR1 TR 17, Toledo, Illinois 62468.--*Illinois State Genealogical Society, Vol. 10, No. 2, via The Illuminator, Zion, IL, Vol. 5, No. 1, 1989, p.10.*

\* \* \* \* \*

## SOCIAL SECURITY APPLICATIONS

There have been alarmist notices in some genealogical publications regarding destruction of Social Security applications. The truth is that the Social Security Application form is maintained by the Social Security Administration for five years. After that, the entire document is microfilmed, with no information deleted. Then the paper copy is destroyed due to storage problems. This procedure has been in effect for several years.--from *Okla. Gen Society Quarterly via The Illuminator, Zion, IL, Vol. 5, No. 1, 1989, p.10.*

## FAMILY REUNION CERTIFICATES

Holding to the belief that family unity is the very foundation of the American way of life and that the family reunion is one of the most cherished traditions, The Wisconsin Genealogical Society will present to any family having had five family reunions, a certificate of Commendation. Another certificate will be issued for each additional five reunions.

For those families interested, write to Jean C. Skinner, 7540 Century Place, Middleton, WI 53562. Include the family name, and the date and place of the five reunions for which the certificate is requested.

\* \* \* \* \*

## "GOOD FOR A LIMITED TIME ONLY"

Some "pioneer" certificates are offered in conjunction with an anniversary, a centennial or the publishing of a book. So, get your information in early while the offer is still good!

\* \* \* \* \*

## TIME ZONE CONFUSION

In 1863 more than 50 different time zones existed in the United States, not just four. Noon occurred at whatever time the sun crossed the meridian overhead. When it was noon in Washington, DC it was 12:24 in Boston and 11:43 in Savannah, GA. By the 1860's as the railroads expanded, confusion and missed train connections reached nightmarish proportions. In 1878 Canadian engineer Sanford Fleming proposed a worldwide system of 24 time zones with the same time observer through out the zone, and on November 18, 1883, the railroads adopted this system. Standard Time did not become law until 1918.--from *PA Mennonite Heritage via The Illuminator, Zion, IL, Vol. 5, No. 1, 1989, p.9.*

## GERMAN PLACES - WHERE WERE THEY?

Records for the period of the German Empire (1871-1917) sometimes name a place that is not easily found on a map. Following is a list of some of these areas and the old province in which they were located.

Aachen - Rheinland  
 Altmark - Sachsen Prov.  
 Arnsherg - Westfalen  
 Aschaffenburg - Bayern  
 Barnim - Brandenburg  
 Blankenburg - Sachsen Prov.  
 Breslau - Schlesian  
 Bromberg - Posen  
 Darmstadt - Hessen  
 East Frisia - Sachsen Prov.  
 Fulda - Hessen-Nassau  
 Gumbinnen - Ostpreussen  
 Havelland - Brandenburg  
 Hinterpommern - Pommern  
 Jagst/Jaxt - Wurttemberg  
 Konigsberg - Ostpreussen  
 Koslin - Pommern  
 Kurmark - Brandenburg  
 Lauenburg - Schleswig-Holstein  
 Liegnitz - Schlesian  
 Marienwerder - Westpreussen  
 Mark Brandenburg - Brandenburg  
 Mittelfranken - Bayern  
 Mittelmark - Brandenburg  
 Naussau - Hessen-Nassau  
 Neckar - Wurttemberg  
 Neuberg - Bayern  
 Neumark - Brandenburg  
 Oberbayern - Bayern  
 Oberfranken - Bayern  
 Oberhessen - Hessen  
 Oberlausitz - Sachsen Prov.  
 Oberpfalz - Bayern  
 Oberschwaben - Wurttemberg  
 Oppeln - Schlesian  
 Ostfalz - (East) Hanover  
 Ostfriesland - Hannover  
 Pomerellen - Pommern  
 Priegnitz - Brandenburg  
 Regensburg - Bayern  
 Rheinhessen - Hessen  
 Schwaben - Bayern  
 Schwarzwald - Wurttemberg  
 Starkenburg - Hessen  
 Stralsund - Pommern  
 Swedish Pomerania - Pommern  
 Uckermark - Brandenburg  
 Unterfranken - Bayern  
 Vorpommern - Pommern  
 Waldorf - Hessen-Nassau

--from information submitted by Karen Whitmer for the German Interest Group newsletter of the Minnesota Genealogical Society  
 ---submitted by Lucille Leick.

\* \* \* \* \*

## GREAT MIGRATION STUDY PROJECT

The New England Historic Genealogical Society (NEHGS) is sponsoring what promises to be a notable advance in the study of the Great Migration (1620-1643), during which time about 20,000 English men, women and children crossed the Atlantic to settle New England.

The Great Migration Study Project, directed by Robert C. Anderson of Salt Lake City, will systematically examine everything in print on these settlers and conduct new research on both sides of the Atlantic to bring more English origins to light. The Project's Goal is publication of a uniform set of volumes briefly presenting genealogical and biographical data on Great Migration immigrants. Discoveries will also be presented in the NEHGS Register and other leading journals.

The Great Migration Newsletter, to debut in January 1990, will be a quarterly with detailed information on land distribution, church organization and surviving early records in specific towns settled during this period; bibliographies of recent material relating to the Great Migration; and news of newly discovered sources or new interpretations of known material.

Subscriptions to the newsletter are \$8.00 for one year, \$15.00 for two years. Further information may be obtained by writing to Great Migration Study Project, c/o NEHGS, 101 Newbury Street, Boston, MA 02116.--from NEHGS NEXUS, Boston, MA, Vol. VI, Nos. 3 & 4, June-August 1989, p. 90.  
 ---submitted by Gerald Porter.

## WILLING TO SHARE

Barb Mahler, 6817 W. Pleasant Hill, Auburndale, WI 54412, telephone (715) 384-4742 has several books that she would be happy to lend to other members of the group.

*Directory of New York State County and Municipal Historians, 1988.*

Books relating to the Danube-Swabian Migrations to Southeastern Europe, about 1780.

*Connecticut Nutmeggers, 1987, 1988, and 1989.*

*Wood County Place Names, 1970.*

*Scott's Smaller School History of the U.S., 1884.*

*History of Deerfield, Massachusetts, 2 Vol. Shelton, 1895.*

*History of Fond du Lac County, Wisconsin, 1880.*

*History of Rufus K. Dryer with notes on William Dryer of Rehoboth, Massachusetts and descendants, 1942.*

*The History of the People of Elek in Hungary (in German).*

*Biographical Dictionary.*

*History of the Kimball Family, Morrison and Sharpels, 1897.*

*Challenge - The South Dakota Territory.*

*Town of Emery Centennial Book. [Price County, Wisconsin], 1889-1989.*

*Atlas Fond du Lac County, Wisconsin, 1874.*

*Pictorial Atlas Fond du Lac County, Wisconsin, 1893.*

## Current Maps:

Yugoslavia	1:850,000
Rumania	
Austria	1:550,000
Switzerland	1:300,000
Vienna Area	1:20,000
Eastern Europe	1:2,500,000

She also has issues of the *Kimball Family Association Newsletter* and the *Nims Family Association Newsletter*.

If you are interested in seeing any of these newsletters or books contact Barb at the above address or talk with her at the July meeting.

Also if you have books or newsletters in your personal library that you would be willing to share, let us know, and we will spread the news on. Sharing our personal libraries is just one more benefit of belonging to our Group.

\* \* \* \* \*

JOINT MEETING OF CENTRAL  
WISCONSIN GENEALOGICAL SOCIETIES

The annual meeting of Central Wisconsin Genealogical Societies will be held at 6:30 pm on Friday, August 11, 1989 at the Plover Municipal Building. There will be no admission charge; the meeting is FREE. The evening is being hosted by the Stevens Point Area Genealogical Society.

Ronald Brimer will give a seminar on the World of Genealogy. Subjects will include Introduction and Organization, Speeding up Your Genealogy, Little Known Sources and Rules and Laws of Genealogy. Light refreshments will be served.

We will have membership fliers there, and we will give a five minute presentation about our group. We need to know how many will be going. So let Vicki Johnson know at the July meeting or call her at (715) 683-2861 by July 31, 1989.

## CLASSES IN FAMILY HISTORY

## OHIO RESEARCH

Learn how to trace your family tree and how to organize your research. Classes in family history will be given Thursday evenings beginning September 7, 1989 at the Stratford Chamber of Commerce office. There will be five sessions and homework. The cost is \$16.00. The class is limited to ten students. Contact Susan Weber at (715) 387-8846, (715) 384-2656 or (715) 687-4466.

\* \* \* \* \*

## GENE-A-RAMA '89

The 1989 Gene-A-Rama will be held September 15-16 at The Valley Inn, Neenah, Wisconsin. The cost of the program increases from \$5.75 to \$10.00 after September 1, 1989. Additional information may be found in the previous issue of *Kith and Kin*.

\* \* \* \* \*

## IDENTIFYING OLD PHOTOGRAPHS

---by Genevieve Hantke

Be a Sherlock Holmes when identifying old photographs - use a good magnifying glass and use the *who, what, where, when and how* theory. Make a list of what you discover. Describe what the picture is about:

Farm scene, etc.

People in front of horse drawn vehicle.

Scene in north or south area.

Clothes-Sunday or work-style, of certain era.

Trees and vegetation.

People-family resemblance.

owner and hired help.

Elderly person and grand children.

Look stiff or affectionate.

Check for words, printed or written, as they may tell of time or place. Shadows may tell of time of day. Note the photographer's name and address - then look up in early telephone books to find when he was in business.

If you have Ohio Ancestry, you will be happy to know that House Bill #790-Proposal to close all vital records to the public-has been amended and all vital statistic records will remain open. This success story can be attributed, in part, to the tremendous support given to the Ohio Genealogical Society, by its membership through correspondence to Ohio Senators and Representatives. --from *Decatur Genealogical Society via The Illuminator, Zion, IL, Vol. 5, No. 1, 1989, p.10.*

\* \* \* \* \*

CORNISH-AMERICAN  
HERITAGE SOCIETY

The Cornish-American Heritage Society will meet at Alverno College, Milwaukee, 10-13 Aug. Excellent Speakers and tours are planned. For further information contact: Marvin H. Rusch, 10830 W. Courtland Ave., Wauwatosa, WI 53225. (414) 461-4494--from *Grant Co., WI Newsletter, May 1989 via Chippewa County Genealogical Society Newsletter, Vol. 9, No. 3, May/June 1989, p. 4.*

\* \* \* \* \*

## DOUBLE POSTCARDS

Did you know that you can purchase double postcards from the Post Office for only 28 cents a set? These can be used instead of a S.A.S.E. (Self Addressed Stamped Envelope) for requests requiring a brief answer. Simply self-address the second card and devise a short check-list system on the reverse side. Fasten the cards together and mail them.--from *Bloomington-Normal Genealogical Society, Jan. 1988 via The Illuminator, Zion, IL, Vol. 5, No. 1, 1989, p.10.*



## QUERY - ADOPTION RECORDS

Does anyone in the group have any experience researching adoption records, particularly Wisconsin adoption records? If you do, please contact Vicki Johnson at the July meeting or at (715) 683-2861.

\* \* \* \* \*

## CENSUS RECORDS RELEASED FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Census records for England and Wales for 1841, 1851, 1861 1871, and 1881 have been released to the public and are available in the Census Room, Land Registry Building, Portugal Street, London, England.--from *Nebraska Genealogical Society, 1988 via The Illuminator, Zion, IL, Vol. 5, No. 1, 1989, p.10.*

\* \* \* \* \*

INHERITED DISEASES  
MALIGNANT HYPERTHERMIA

One inherited disease is called "malignant hyperthermia" - MH, which is an inherited muscle abnormality, characterized by reactions to several drugs normally used during anaesthesia. A researcher in Toronto, Canada, (Dr. B. Britt) shows that many MH patients tract their ancestors back to the Acadian line of DUPUIS (George and Flave Bonneville who married 12 nov 1838 in St. Anicet, Quebec). If you know prior to surgery that your family can be traced back to this line, different procedures can be used in the operating room. If you are interested in more information on this subject, write: Malignant Hyperthermia Assn, Room 314, Elizabeth Wing, Toronto General Hospital, 101 College St., Toronto, Ontario M5G1L7 OR Malignant Hyperthermia Assn. of the US, P.O. Box 3231, Darien, CT 06820.--from *Chippewa County Genealogical Society Newsletter, Vol. 9, No. 3, May/June 1989, p. 3.*

## STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY LIBRARY

HOURS: Checkout, use of collections, and reference services are available:

	<u>During University Sessions</u>
Mon. - Thurs.	8:00 am to 9:00 pm
Fri. & Sat.	8:00 am to 5:00 pm
Sunday	CLOSED

	<u>When University Is Not In Session</u>
Mon. - Thurs.	8:00 am to 5:00 pm
Fri. & Sat.	8:00 am to 5:00 pm
Sunday	CLOSED

Holiday hours vary. Call ahead [(608) 262-3421] for details.

\* \* \* \* \*

INDEX OF 1860 U.S. CENSUS  
FOR NEW YORK STATE AVAILABLE

The State Historical Society of Wisconsin Library has three of the four indexes of the 1860 United States Census for New York State. They have western New York, southern New York and New York City. Yet to be obtained is the index for northern New York which includes the Adirondack region and counties north of the Mohawk River.

\* \* \* \* \*

## ADDRESSES

Keeping track of addresses is easier with a metal ring and file cards with a hole punched in the upper left hand corner. The same card can have more than one address such as the addresses for the National Archives in Washington and the branch in Chicago. Including telephone numbers may be helpful. It portable and it stays in the order that you left it.--submitted by Vicki Johnson

## PROBING YOUR ANCESTORS' PROBATE RECORDS

---by Myra Vanderpool Gormley, C.G.

Some of the most useful genealogical resources available today are probate records - the legal documents, such as wills and inventories, pertaining to a person's estate. For the researcher, the greatest value of these records lies in the relationships among the people they mention.

In early America, the number of people who left wills was greater than we might suppose. Land was cheap, and most of the population was rural; so even the poorest of our ancestors usually owned property and had an estate to be administered.

Of course, not everyone left a will. But even if your ancestor died intestate (without a will), records would still have been generated in probate court.

In addition to uncovering family ties through probate records, you can gain insights into what your ancestors owned and valued. For example, on May 12, 1779, my ancestor Rebecah Vanderpool left a will in Washington County, Tennessee. Ordinary in most respects, it gave money, plates, pewter dishes, queen's china, fire tongs, pots and pans, cattle and horses and two sets of plow irons to her children. Extraordinarily, however, it also bequeathed "some small books," thus underscoring the value of books on the Tennessee frontier.

The books may indicate that Rebecah and her family were literate. (Many of our Colonial ancestresses could read and write.) But despite her reverence for words, Rebecah "made her mark" on her will - as did many Early American women - probably at the suggestion of an official.

Some of your ancestors' wills may amuse you. One famous will says "To my son I leave the pleasure of earning a living." Others may perplex you. For example, in a 1682 will a Massachusetts man gave much of his estates to his sons. But he bequeathed "the great chest and the highest chair in the room wherein we live" to his second wife. He stipulated, however, that the pieces be "restored" (returned) to his sons if she remarried or when she died. He also stated that she could "enjoy the parlor wholly for one year."

Finding the probate records of an ancestor is one of the easiest parts of genealogical research - if you know the county in which he died. Discovering the county may be difficult, however. If your ancestor lived to a ripe old age, he probably moved in with one of his children in later years. Thus, you may have to track all of his children to find where he died. (This includes daughters and even granddaughters, whose married names you may not know. To learn these names, you can consult the marriage records of the county in which they lived.)

You need to know the county because most states organize their probate records by county. States have different names for the courts that handle these records: circuit, county, district, orphan's, probate, superior, or surrogate. These courts have county jurisdiction.

Note that in Rhode Island, however, the records are kept by town, and the state is divided into probate districts.

Probate records are often indexed alphabetically by the name of the deceased (or by the name of the ward for guardianships). Many of these indexes are on microfilm, but a few of them have been published. In them you'll find the type of case (a will, for example), the year it occurred, and the probate or docket number. Particularly in New England states, where detailed records have long been kept, you may need the docket number to refer to other indexes that are arranged chronologically by docket number.

If you know the county in which your ancestor died, consult the *Handy Book for Genealogists* (Everton Publishers, Box 368, Logan Utah 84321). The book is in most libraries that have a genealogy section. It is arranged alphabetically by state and then by county, giving the county seat, the years the records cover, and the title of the official who handles them.

For example, if you know your ancestor died in Bowling Green, Ky., first determine what county that town is in. To do this, consult the post office guides that include counties, or use an atlas. Once you know that Bowling Green is in Warren County and, in fact is the county seat, the *Handy Book* will tell you that the county clerk has probate records dating from 1800.

County officials will check the indexes to their probate records for you via the mail. Limit each search request to a ten-year span, and always include a business-size (No. 10), self-addressed stamped envelope with your letter. If your ancestor appears in a particular record, ask for a photocopy of it. Note, however that some probate files are enormous, especially if a will was contested or if a person died intestate and had many heirs from multiple marriages.

You may also find probate materials in various genealogical journals, such as the *New England Historic and Genealogical Register*. In addition, the Family History Library of the Mormon church has microfilmed many probate records and indexes in this country and abroad. You may consult these microfilmed records at the main library, in Salt Lake City, Utah or at its many branches throughout the United States and Canada. (The branch nearest you can obtain the records, and you can use them there.)

Study probate records carefully. An overlooked sentence might contain a valuable clue. And examine the original records rather than abstracts of them because abstracts frequently contain errors.

Keep in mind that the term "infant," often found in probate records, indicates that the person was not of legal age. The term "orphan" usually refers to a person whose father has died.

For a bird's-eye view of your family's social status and wealth, obtain a copy of your ancestor's estate inventory, often found in probate records. It is especially helpful to compare your ancestor's estate with others of his period and locale. A 200-acre estate in Virginia may seem substantial today, but you may discover that 1,000-acre plantations were common in early Virginia.

An estate inventory can also provide a glimpse into the personal life of a decedent - his occupation, his fortune, and the times in which he lived. In the absence of other probate records, the inventory can also give you some indication of his approximate time of death - important when trying to distinguish between individuals with the same name.

If you find a will executed by a woman, it means she was most likely a widow. Until recent times, married women did not own property and, thus, could not legally make a will.

Wills can be a source of great frustration to researchers. You may find for instance, that your ancestor's will simply left land to "all my children" or to "my wife" and does not mention their names.

You may learn through probate records that there were bitter feelings and strained relationships among your ancestors. For example, in a will dated 1763, one man hoped that his "bad" wife would inherit as little as possible.

To understand probate records, you may have to check *Black's Law Dictionary*, foreign-language dictionaries, and other reference works. One researcher found that his ancestor, who died in Louisiana, left such things as a *calaiche* and a *meulle a filee*. Using a French dictionary, he determined that *calaiche* was probably calash, a carriage with a folding top, and *meulle a filee* was either a small mill or a grindstone.--from *Colonial Homes*, early 1989, pp. 56-57. submitted by Shirley Gray.

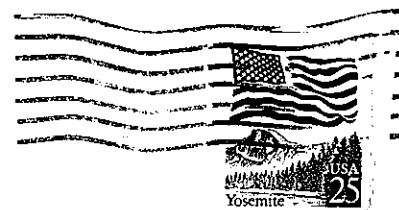
\* \* \* CALENDAR OF EVENTS \* \* \*

- Thurs. July 27.....Funeral Directors' Records. A representative of the  
7 p.m. Hansen Funeral Home in Marshfield will discuss the  
Marshfield Clinic records kept by funeral directors. These records are  
Conf. Rm. G620 frequently overlooked as a source of genealogical  
information.
- Fri. August 11.....Joint Meeting of Central Wisconsin Genealogical  
6:30 p.m. Societies. Ronald Brimer will give a seminar on the  
Plover Municipal World of Genealogy. Subjects will include  
Building Introduction and Organization, Speeding up Your  
Plover, WI Genealogy, Little Known Sources and Rules and Laws of  
Genealogy.
- Thurs. August 24.....No Regular Meeting. Open house to use the library,  
1 to 4 & 7 to 9 pm etc. at Don and Vickie Schnitzler's [use 3rd St.  
301 S. Cedar Ave. entrance]. Pete Hulke will demonstrate the Personal  
Marshfield, WI Ancestral File (PAF) computer genealogy program on  
use 3rd St. entrance the Macintosh at both sessions.
- Fri.&Sat. Sep.15 &16. Gene-A-Rama '89. The main speaker will be  
The Valley Inn Loretto Szucs who will speak on Genealogical  
Wisconsin & Walnut Research in the National Archives Field Branches  
Neenah, WI 54956 and on Irish-American Research. Also there will  
(414) 725-8441 be other presentations, freebies, door prizes,  
vendors, and a computerized surname list.

PLEASE MARK THE ABOVE DATES ON YOUR CALENDAR.

Marshfield Area Genealogy Group  
P.O. Box 337  
Marshfield, Wisconsin 54449

Address Correction Requested



Mr. & Mrs. 002 1990  
Donald Schnitzler  
301 S. Cedar Ave.  
Marshfield, WI 54449