

MUSKEGON COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

Founded 1972

Vol. 22 No. 6

June 2022

T W I G T A L K

Newsletter



[Find and Like Us On](#)

facebook

[Celebrating 50 years in 2022](#)



President's Message

By Dawn Westcomb Kelley -



I continue to look for locations where we can have meetings. I have found that all evenings are taken at the VFW. If we still want to stay at the VFW, the only day available is Saturday where they open at 1:00pm. The cost is \$60. Therefore, do we look for a new place or stay? Do we do Zoom or Google Meet?

I talked to Kim from Hackley Public Library about meeting space and time and it's FREE. We cannot meet weeknights at HPL. It would be Saturday mornings, starting at 10:30am until 12:30pm. We do not meet in July or December. Any suggestions where our society can have meetings are welcome. Contact us at 1972mcgs@gmail.com

Tidbits and Trivia

Did you know that on September 27, 1887 Muskegon County became the very first to allow marriage of a minor without the parents' consent.

Good news from the Local History & Genealogy Department. The public computers now have Microsoft - Word, Excel, Power Point and Publisher. You **cannot save** your information to the computer, but you can save it to a Flash Drive. If you forget to bring a Flash Drive, you can buy one from the library for \$5.00.

HPL-Torrent House Our Local History & Genealogy Department.

We are excited to help you get started on your one-on-one research. Contact the society at 1972mcgs@gmail.com or call the Local History & Genealogy Department. at 231-722-8016. Tuesday through Saturday 10:00a.m. - 12:00 and 1:00p.m – 4:00p.m. **BY APPOINTMENT ONLY!**

This past month I met with Tara & Blane Scott who flew in from Utah this past week for 2 days. They were successful finding information on her family surnames: Wing, Dean and Deane.

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

Postage - a 1st class US postage stamp will be going up at the beginning of July from 58 cents to 60 cents.

Books - Local History & Genealogy Department located in the Torrent House. Muskegon Chronicle Vital Statics 1940 through 1944 by Matt Burns have been completed.

Welcome our new member – Sara J. Rose from Muskegon. She will be helping on some projects for the society.

We hope to see you soon in person or virtual. Stay safe and healthy!

TIP - From Ancestry

Watch for data errors and impossibilities.

We have already mentioned index mistakes, but other, less obvious errors can damage your family tree. As you work, make sure the data you find makes sense. Were parents born *before* their children? (Conversely, were mothers alive when their children were born?) Flag any data that does not line up. In addition, using your social history knowledge, determine if your ancestor's actions make sense given his age and the time and place he lived in.

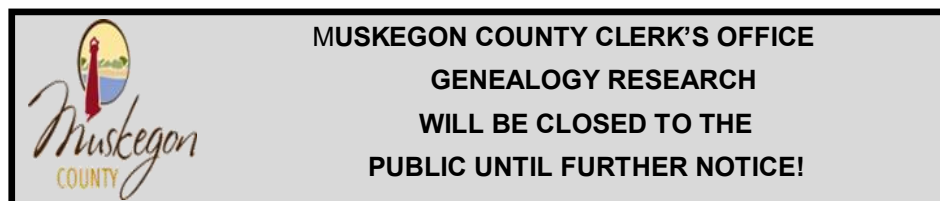
Cite everything.

Though time-consuming, source citations lend more credibility to your research. They do not have to be overly complicated, but they should contain enough information about a source that you or another researcher can easily trace the data back to its source. *Evidence Explained: Citing History Sources from Artifacts to Cyberspace* by Elizabeth Shown Mills (Genealogical Publishing Co.) will get you started.

Back it up.

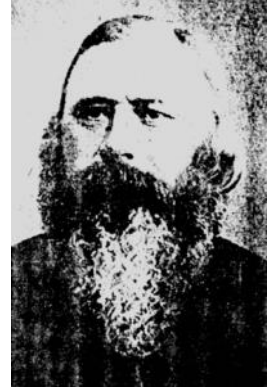
The evolution of digital tech does not mean your documents are safer than they used to be. If anything, your hard-earned research is even more at risk now from file formats becoming outdated and hard drives crashing—in addition to the fires, floods and other natural disasters that also threaten your physical papers.

Set aside some time to regularly back up your genealogy data, and make sure you have backed it up in multiple places. For example, in addition to having your files on your desktop, also back them up on an external hard drive, in paper format and in a cloud storage service such as Dropbox.



Hubert Stein
By Frances Harrington

Hubert was born in 1831, in Luxembourg, Belgium. At the age of 21, he was drafted into the army. He said he wanted no part of what he thought was an unfair draft, and had “no desire to serve the king as a target for his enemies”. His parents secured the necessary papers and sent him to another country (the name of that country was never mentioned). He waited there until his parents and his sister joined him, and they all headed for a better life in America. His parents were Nichols (1808-1855) and Catherine (Shultz or Sholters) Stein (1808-1874). His sister’s name was Susanna (Stein) Young.



They lived in Wisconsin for a few months, before coming to Muskegon. The year was 1852, and Hubert and his family were some of Muskegon’s early settlers. He married Elizabeth Symet (or Zimet) also of Luxembourg, in 1856 at St. Mary’s Church. He claims to have been the first man married in that church, which he helped to build. The couple ended up having 4 children who lived past infancy. His father died in Muskegon in 1855 and his mother in 1874.

Hubert was employed in Muskegon by the Trowbridge, Wing & Swan saw mill, working there for 15 years. He also worked at rafting on the sawmill booms, and teaming from Grand Rapids to Muskegon before the railroad came in. With his earnings, he purchased land for farming. At one time, he owned 2,900 acres of land that would eventually become Muskegon Heights. He purchased the land for \$1 an acre. When he sold the land years later, he sold it for \$10 an acre.

His personal farm was 115 acres of what had been described as the most picturesque and naturally beautiful farm in the county. By all accounts, he was a very good farmer. His crops were known to yield more than those of his neighbors. He was once given 3 walnuts by a man named A. A. Bull-ock. He planted all 3 nuts. One of the trees died but the other two developed into fine adult trees. One year, from just one of the trees, he got 22 bushels of walnuts! He also grew other fruits, wheat, and vegetables and raised some cattle. When he first started out growing potatoes, he had so many that he couldn’t sell all of them so he offered people a deal – you buy one bushel of apples and he’d throw in 1 bushel of potatoes.

Mr. Stein was quite well known throughout Muskegon. He served as Township Treasurer, was on the Highway Commission, and for many years was the Township Supervisor. He was also one of the directors and President of the Muskegon County Agricultural and Driving Park Association. He was known to be a kind and considerate man.

In 1903, Hubert (age 72) had quite the altercation with an old friend, John Williams (age 54), who was a wholesale and retail liquor dealer. Some months earlier, Hubert had signed 3 or 4 bank notes for Williams totaling about \$2,425. Mr. Williams had given Hubert the mortgage on some property he owned as security. The mortgage was found to be faulty. Meanwhile, the notes became due and the bank was looking for Hubert to pay off the debt. He was quite upset with the whole situation and wanted something done! There was a meeting with their lawyers where Mr. Williams then tried to give Hubert a different mortgage, which his lawyer thought did not hold enough value, so Hubert refused it. The meeting didn’t resolve anything. Hubert was angry and went to the bank and took up the notes and paid the interest. That night he barely slept. The next day, he didn’t eat breakfast and

he visited several saloons. By the afternoon, while quite intoxicated, Hubert went and got his old rusty revolver, and when he saw Mr. Williams in town, he called him a robber. Mr. Williams made a face at him and pushed him aside. That's when Hubert pulled the revolver. Hubert later said he didn't think the revolver was loaded, nor was it cocked. Mr. Williams then tried to take the revolver from Hubert. There was a struggle and Mr. Williams yelled for help. A bystander stepped in and took the gun. Hubert then went voluntarily to the police station, and told his account of the events including the fact that he didn't really try to stop anyone from taking the gun from him. Then he told the Chief he could lock him up, if he wanted. The chief told him he could do one of two things, be locked up, or go home. He chose to go home. He was persuaded to go home with his neighbor, Charles Whitney, who was also intoxicated.

After Hubert got home, while having dinner with his family, and Mr. Whitney as their guest, he got his double-barreled shot gun and headed in the direction of Mr. William's place. He said he had taken the shot gun to use as a club against some dogs that were bothering his cattle, but Mr. Whitney thought he was going after Mr. Williams again. Remember, both men had been drinking all day and were still intoxicated. When Whitney got near, Hubert told him to mind his own business, but Mr. Whitney kept coming closer, arguing with him. When he was about 12 feet away, Hubert leveled the shot gun, and pulled both barrels, but the gun was not loaded. Mr. Whitney then came at Hubert and Hubert hit him in the head with the gun. Hubert dropped the gun and accidentally stepped on it and broke off the stock. Mr. Whitney claims that Hubert then pulled a knife on him. Mr. Whitney said he grabbed the broken stock and hit Hubert with it to make him drop the knife. He said he then gave Hubert a beating with his fists. When Hubert finally agreed to go home, Whitney accompanied him and left him in the care of his family. Mind you, Hubert was 72 years old at this time and Charles Whitney was about 30 years younger.

Meanwhile, Williams went to the police and swore out a warrant for Hubert's arrest for "assault with the intent to commit murder". Early in the morning, Sheriff Payne drove out to Hubert's farm to serve the warrant. He found Hubert confined to his bed because of the beating, with both eyes completely swollen shut. Hubert told Sheriff Payne, "Whitney said he did this for my own good," pointing to his bruised face and arm, "but was this for my good?" Sheriff Payne thought he was in no condition to be arraigned, so he didn't bring him in at that time, but would do so when he recovered.

Later, he was arraigned, pleaded not guilty, and held over for trial. During the trial, Hubert maintained that he thought the gun was not loaded and was only carrying it to protect himself from Mr. Williams. A bail of \$4,000 was required and was immediately furnished. The bond was signed by Patrick Dowd and John S. Anderson.

At the trial, attorney W. J. Turner, in his opening statement, said, "the defense would show that Mr. Stein had no intention of killing John Williams; that he supposed the gun he had was not loaded; and that he covered the barrel with his other hand so that Williams would not see that the gun was not loaded". The trial lasted four days. Judge Russell, in his charge to the jury, asked, "What was Stein's intent?" "Did he intend to kill Williams?" Hubert's attorney must have made their case because the jury deliberated only three hours and returned a verdict of "Not Guilty".

As for Mr. Whitney, he was later found guilty of assaulting Hubert with the intent to do great bodily harm. He was ordered to pay \$75 or be confined in the Detroit House of Correction, not to exceed 6 months. He paid the fine. In Circuit Court, a jury awarded Hubert a judgement of \$2,669.44 against John Williams. John Williams, in turn, filed a suit against Hubert for \$3,500, which he claims was for an open account for horses, liquor, etc., over a period of 10 years. The Circuit Court jury returned a verdict of "no cause of action". (According to <https://thelawdictionary.org> it is a verdict that is in the defendant's favor on grounds that the plaintiff does not have a right to bring a charge against him.)

(Continued on page 5)

In 1908, Hubert Stein put his 115 acres farm up for sale. He was 77 and decided it was time to retire. His wife, Elizabeth, died in May of 1910. Hubert died 5 months later. They are buried in St. Mary's Cemetery along with Hubert's parents Nichols and Catherine, and his sister Susanna.

Sources: Ancestry.com, Genealogybank.com (Muskegon Chronicle), Romance of Muskegon (Alice Prescott Keyes), Portraits and Biographical Record of Muskegon and Ottawa Counties (Biographical Publishing Co.), Findagrave.com, Lakeshore Museum Center, Hackley Public Library (Local History & Genealogy Department).

Cemetery Etiquette

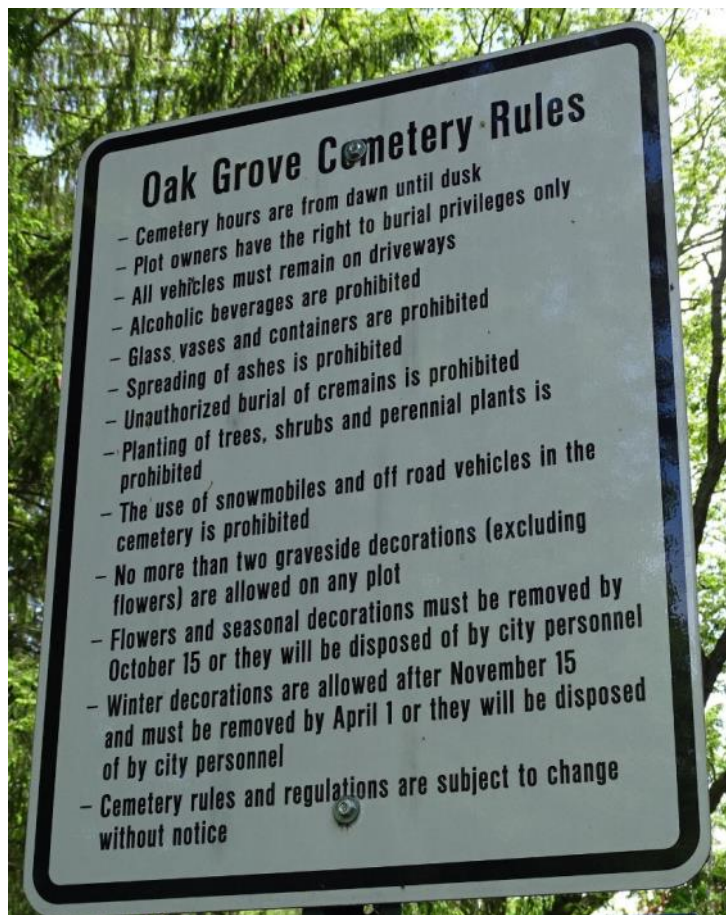
By Ingrid Porritt

As you venture into your families' cemeteries, this summer please be sure to look for update signs regarding cemetery guidelines. The sign from Oak Grove cemetery addresses specific situations that have created problems for sextons or staff members. Scattering of ashes is prohibited, glass vases and limited adornments are also addressed. Even though these rules may seem constricting, they are for the safety and consideration of everyone. This new sign refreshed memories of finding an unopened, full, glass beer bottle on a marker for someone's grandfather. Please look for the rules in your family's cemeteries and respect the quiet and peace found there.

Montague, MI Oak Grove Cemetery Rules Transcribed

Oak Grove Cemetery Rules

- * Cemetery hours are from dawn to dusk
- * Plot owners have the right to burial privileges only
- * All vehicles must remain on driveways
- * Alcoholic beverages are prohibited
- * Glass vases and containers are prohibited
- * Spreading of ashes is prohibited
- * Unauthorized burial of cremains is prohibited
- * Planting of tree, shrubs, and perennial plants is prohibited
- * The use of snowmobiles and all off road vehicles in the cemetery is prohibited
- * No more than two graveside decorations (excluding flowers) are allowed on any plot
- * Flowers and seasonal decorations must be removed by October 15 or they will be disposed of by city personnel
- * Winter decorations are allowed after November 15 and must be removed by April 1 or they may be disposed of by city personnel
- * Cemetery rules and regulations are subject to change without notice



10 Tips & Tricks for Military Records and Genealogy

GENEALOGY BARGAINS

[HTTPS://GENEALOGYBARGAINS.COM](https://genealogybargains.com)

Throughout your ancestors' lives it is likely that they or a family member served in the military. Military records can provide valuable insights into the lives of your ancestors. Many records can also provide vital record information and even data on those who didn't serve but were related to the ancestor.



- Are They the Right Age to Serve?** Often genealogists think an ancestor served in a specific military conflict, when actually, they were too young or too old to have served. Use the *Ages of Servicemen in Wars* chart via FamilySearch Wiki.
- Determine Military Service, Rank, and Division:** This is probably the most important search data needed to get started with military records. You may need to get creative ... interview relatives, search for newspaper articles, etc.
- Interview Relatives:** You may gain information as to your military ancestors' service by interviewing relatives. Use email, Zoom calls, or the telephone and try to extract as much information as you can.
- Check Newspaper Articles:** Find various details as to military service using historical newspapers. Look for draft notices, enlistment lists, roll of honor listings as well as articles about your ancestor and military service.
- Request Military Records:** for US records, file a Request Pertaining to Military Records with the National Archives. NARA will only send selected pages they believe are pertinent to the military service. You may need to file a further request for the ENTIRE FILE which is rich in documents.
- Check Yearbooks for Military Service Enlistments:** During World War I and World War II, if high school students were serving in the military, very often there might be a special section listing their names, military branch, and area of service.
- Volunteer Military Service:** Did your ancestor sign up for a state militia or volunteer with the National Guard? Peacetime service also produced many military records. Remember to also check on the state level for these records.
- Research Military Reunions:** Starting with the US Civil War, groups of veterans would meet on regular basis. Groups like the Grand Army of the Republic would publish meeting records including yearbooks.
- Check Family Photos:** Are you sitting on old family photos depicting servicemen and servicewomen? Scan the images and examine the uniform worn, any service medals and ribbons, etc.
- Understand Available Resources:** Use the FamilySearch Wiki to determine what military records exist and how they can be accessed. Understand the formation of branches of service, i.e. the US Air Force was part of the US Army prior to 1947.

Check out the **Military Records Genealogy Resource List** on the back page!

10 Tips & Tricks for Military Records and Genealogy

© 2020, copyright Thomas MacEntee. All rights reserved.

Used with permission

Southern California Genealogical Society Webinar Series is there for you no matter where you live. Join our twice-monthly webcasts with knowledgeable genealogists to help grow what you know. We offer a low-cost broadcast that is open to the public Price: \$5.50. Register at www.scgsgenealogy.com

- **You MUST Register to participate.**
- Click on the Webinar Title you want to attend.
- Register with our partner website, GoToWebinar.com.
- Enter your name and email address and answer a few questions. You will receive confirmation of your registration by email.
- You will also receive reminders before the webinar. The reminder email will have information on accessing the handout material.
- On the day of the session, click the link that you received in your invitation to GoToWebinar.com to join the online session.

Saturday, June 4 *1:00 PM – Eastern*
On and Off the Train: Pullman Porters and Maids
by Janice Lovelace, PhD



The Pullman company was one of the leading employers of African Americans who worked on the railroad. The prime routes ran cross country ending in Los Angeles or San Francisco. How do we find records of our ancestors who were Pullman Porters or Maids?

Janice Lovelace, PhD (psychology), has 30+ years of experience in genealogical research, as well as completing academic work in the area (certificate program in genealogy at Boston University). She has presented nationally and regionally on women's and ethnic minority genealogy, research methodology and health issues.

Wednesday, June 15 *9:00 PM - Eastern*
Have No Fear – Understanding Data for DNA is Here!
by Edward Swierczewski, Jr.



DNA testing has skyrocketed, and genealogists need to understand and correctly interpret the various data and results related to DNA. We will review: different data types; typical results for the various DNA tests; the Shared cM Project; the WATO tool and others on the DNA Painter site. We will focus on developing comprehension and comfort levels for the newest tools in our genealogical toolbox.

Edward John Swierczewski Jr. has been a professional educator for over 30 years, researching and lecturing in Psychology and Human Services at several major universities and government agencies in New York City. He has attended many webinars and conferences, completed several SLIG and GRIP courses, is currently in ProGen 53, and plans to earn the CG and CGL credentials. He has been researching his family history for over 25 years, and he has a deep passion for sharing his knowledge with others.

IMPORTANT MESSAGE

MCGS MEETINGS

?
VFW Post 3195
5209 Grand Haven Rd
Norton Shores, MI



**2022 Meetings
Hoping to meet soon!**

RESEARCH HELP
With



Torrent House Local History & Genealogy Department
315 W. Webster Ave.

Call for your one-on-one appointment!

231 722-8016

or email us at

1972mcgs@gmail.com

LOCAL HISTORY & GENEALOGY DEPARTMENT

Call 231-722-8016
Sunday and Monday — Closed
Tuesday through Saturday
10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

More on their website
hackleylibrary.org/local-history-genealogy/research-sources-at-the-torrent-house



2022 OFFICERS & COMMITTEES

President:.....Dawn Westcomb Kelley
Past President:.....Jane Appleton Schapka
Vice President:Ingrid Porritt
Secretary:..... Tom Shepherd
Treasurer:..... Nancy Clark Spoon

Facebook Norman Dagen
Michigan Genealogical Council
Gail Taggart, Delegate
National Genealogical Societies
Gail Taggart, Delegate

Committees

History Book Project....Kathy DeCormier
Jim Harkness
Newsletter Editor.....Tom Porritt
Pioneer Program.....Barb Martin
Programs & Publicity ...Ingrid Porritt
Tom Shepherd
Gail Taggart
Research.....Karen Fraizer
Fran Harrington

HISTORY BOOK VOL. 2

We care what happens to our members, their families, and everyone around us. Our History Book, Volume 2 will be extend until further notice. It is very important to start working on your stories now.

Do not wait to put your family history in Vol. 2

If you have any questions or need help, contact us at our 1972mcgs@gmail.com or send your information to Kathy DeCormier at middlaker@frontier.com — In the subject area put “History Book Volume 2”.

TWIG TALK

A monthly publication of:
Muskegon County Genealogical Society
c/o Hackley Public Library
Torrent House
315 W. Webster Avenue
Muskegon, MI 49440-1208

1972mcgs@gmail.com
genealogymuskegon.org
facebook.com/muskegongenealogicalsociety