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THE YEAR IS 2020

For several years, the "Ancestry Weekly Journal" included articles about what was happening in many years from the 18th Century to the 1960s, and we have frequently used some of these articles in this newsletter. American History is very important in our family history research. As we study the lives of our ancestors, we trace them from the original east coast settlements, to the Revolution and the founding of our country, and as many of them travel from coast to coast to where we find ourselves in 2020.

2020 is a very important year in our history, and August is a very significant month in our past and present history. 2020 is the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II, and VE Day, VJ Day, and the final surrender of the Japanese in August, 1945 and the signing of the document of surrender in September marked major changes in the life of our country. Many of us remember these months and that year, and if we do not remember, we need to review these events.

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Al Morse

My wife, Dorothy, and I grew up in Bates County, Missouri, which borders Kansas. My parents, Albert Frank and Mildred Catherine (Janssens) Morse, never took the family on a vacation. One reason is that my father worked 7 days a week for several years. Dorothy's parents, Herbert Edgar and Dorothy (McDaniel) Newcomb, never took a vacation either. So we never visited other states, except Kansas on rare occasions. When Dorothy and I got married on August 18, 1963, we honeymooned in Eureka Springs, Arkansas.

I taught school in Independence, so I had the summers

off. I did teach summer school on several occasions, but, of course, they did not last all summer long. In June of 1964, Dorothy and I drove to California for our first vacation trip. We traveled Route 66, passing through Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California. The road was a 2 lane highway till we got near Los Angeles.

On the way west, we stopped for a couple of days in Flagstaff, Arizona. We went to the Grand Canyon and drove through Oak Creek Canyon. We then went to Torrance, California where we stayed with my mother's brother, Carl and Edna (Woodward) Janssens. When Uncle Carl and Aunt Edna and their two daughters, Diane and Judy, came to visit the family in Missouri, they always stayed at our house in Rich Hill, Missouri. So they were happy to have us stay with them, and we enjoyed visiting with their families.

We did the usual tourist things. We spent a day at a beach and got sunburns. We visited Disneyland and Knott's Berry Farm. We drove through Hollywood. We visited my cousin, Oliver Jack Morse, and his family. Uncle Carl took us to a California Angels and New York Yankees baseball game. Dorothy became a fan of the Yankees' first baseman, Joe Pepitone. So when we got home, we went to a Kansas City Athletics and New York Yankees baseball game.

As we traveled home, we went to Santa Fe, New Mexico and Denver, Colorado. We drove through the Rocky Mountain National Park. We finally got back to our apartment in Independence, Missouri. We were exhausted, but we did really enjoy seeing the scenery, the freeway system, and even the smog in Los Angeles.

In 1978, we made this same trip to California with our sons, Brian and Steve. They were 10 and 7 at the time. In fact, by staying in motels with swimming pools,

Brian learned to swim. Route 66 was now a four lane freeway, Interstate 10, except for a section in either New Mexico or Arizona. We went to the Grand Canyon. We stayed at a motel in Anaheim, California. We went to Disneyland, Knott's Berry Farm, and the beach. We toured Hollywood on a guided bus tour, which I really enjoyed because I could look at the sights without having to look for traffic while driving. The guide pointed out things that were interesting. Uncle Carl and Aunt Edna were now living in Williams, Arizona. We spent a night with them as we were headed back to Missouri. They enjoyed seeing our sons.

In 1983, we went to Florida. The boys were now 15 and 12 and had their earplugs to their music as we traveled. We went through Arkansas, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Georgia to get to Florida. We spent one night in Cocoa Beach. We visited the Kennedy Space Center. In fact, while we were there, a launch put Sally Ride into space. We then stayed in Kissimmee for 5 nights. We went to Disney World and Epcot Center. We had 3 day passes so we could take our time each day and not hurry. We did some other driving around. We then drove to Panama City, Florida, Biloxi, Mississippi, and Memphis, Tennessee. We, of course, visited Graceland, the home of Elvis Presley. This thrilled Brian.

In other summers we would go to St. Louis, Jefferson City, Lake of the Ozarks, or even local one day trips around Kansas City. We bought a tent and we did a lot of camping. We went a couple of summers to Branson, Missouri and stayed at Yogi Bear's Jellystone Park. We went to Silver Dollar City, saw some live music shows, and drove around to see the sights. We did purchase a membership to Lake Paradise, near Oak Grove, Missouri, about 25 miles from our house. Lake Paradise had 4 or 5 small lakes. We camped on Sunset Lake several times. We walked to another lake that had a nice sand beach for the swimming in the lake. We would go out there 2 or 3 or 4 times a year for the weekend.

After Brian went to Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis, Indiana, Dorothy and I traveled there a couple of times a year. We enjoyed driving around with Brian and seeing the sights. On the way home, Dorothy and I would travel around some of the

smaller towns. Dorothy would always buy a new cookbook or two and read recipes to me as we traveled. When Brian became the minister at the First Christian Church in Earlington, Kentucky, we then traveled there a couple of times a year.

So we got to see much of the country. We know that the boys also enjoyed the trips, whether big or small. We had many cherished memories from them.

TIMELINE FOR 1945

January 30--Six weeks after the German offensive in the Ardennes began, the Allies regain all the ground they'd lost. It had been the biggest battle of the war on the Western Front. More than a million men took part; 19,000 Americans died; 60,000 more had been wounded or captured or listed as "missing." Hitler's enormous gamble ends in disaster. He had lost some 100,000 men and virtually all his tanks and aircraft. February 7-12--At the Yalta Conference, U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and Soviet Premier Josef Stalin pledge to hold free elections after the war in Eastern Europe and divide Germany and Austria into three zones of occupation.

February 13-14--Nine hundred British and American bombers hit Dresden in two waves, dropping incendiary bombs in hopes of setting off a firestorm. They succeeded. At least 35,000 civilians were burned or blown apart — or asphyxiated as they huddled in basements and bomb shelters.

February 19--After 72 days of shelling the island, Marines land on Iwo Jima to capture the Japanese airfield. The intense fighting lasted a month; 6,821 Americans died, five times the number killed on Guadalcanal or Saipan. Twenty-seven Medals of Honor were awarded to those who fought on the island.

February 23--The flag is raised on Mt. Suribachi. Photographer Joe Rosenthal snaps one of the most famous photos of the 20th century.

March 19--Firebombing comes to the cities of Japan. Three hundred and thirty four American B-29s roared in low over Tokyo and dropped hundreds of thousands of 70-pound napalm bombs. Sixteen square miles of the city — built largely of pine and paper and bamboo — burst into flame. More than a million were left without homes. In the next ten days, the

Americans hit Nagoya, Osaka, Kobe and Nagoya again. Some 50,000 more people were killed.

March 31--Kamikazes target the USS Indianapolis for destruction off Okinawa. Damaged, she would be sent to Ulithi to have her hull mended, and eventually dispatched all the way across the Pacific to Mare Island, near San Francisco for further repairs.

April 1--The battle to take Okinawa commences. Okinawa — 60 miles long and home to almost half a million civilians — was the gateway to Japan. The Allies had to take it before they could move on to the home islands. They gathered the largest invasion force since D-Day — almost 1500 ships and more than half a million men. In the end, 92,000 Japanese soldiers and as many as 100,000 Okinawan civilians would be dead. More than 12,000 Americans died, 60,000 were wounded — the worst losses of the Pacific War.

April 12--President Roosevelt dies. Harry S. Truman is sworn in as the 33rd President.

April 25--American and Soviet forces link up at Torgau on the Elbe River. Germany has been cut in half.

April 26--The Russians enter Berlin.

April 30--Russian troops fight their way into the Reichstag, the symbol of German power. Less than half a mile away, beneath the rubble, Adolf Hitler and his closest aides huddle in their bunker. That afternoon, Hitler names Admiral Karl Donitz to succeed him, then shoots himself in the mouth.

May 5--Advance patrols of the American 11th Armored Division come upon Mauthausen in Austria. There, they find more than 110,000 desperate, so-called "enemies of the Reich" confined behind barbed wire. Many were too weak to stand.

May 7--Germany surrenders. The Reich that Hitler promised would last a thousand years had lasted less than a dozen.

May 9--V-E Day is proclaimed as Victory in Europe is celebrated.

July 15--The USS Indianapolis, her repairs now complete and ready to return to war, receives orders to retrieve special cargo at Hunters Point, California.

July 16--A successful test of the atomic bomb takes place at Alamogordo, New Mexico.

July 17-August 2--At the Potsdam Conference, the Big Three — U.S. President Harry S. Truman, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and Soviet Premier Josef Stalin — decide the fate of Europe and that Japan must submit to unconditional surrender or face

"utter destruction."

July 26--The USS Indianapolis delivers its mysterious cargo — the atomic bomb — to the B-29 base on Tinian.

July 30--A Japanese submarine sends two torpedoes hissing into the hull of the Indianapolis. They cut her nearly in half. Within the first few minutes, some 300 of the 1,196 men aboard are blown apart or burned to death. The ship sinks in 12 minutes.

July 31--Japan rejects the Potsdam ultimatum.

August 2--Awaiting rescue, 880 crewmen from the Indianapolis die. Only 321 are plucked from the sea.

August 6--Developed to drop on the Germans, the first atomic bomb tumbles through the bomb-bay doors of the Enola Gay. Forty-three seconds later, six miles below but still high above the city of Hiroshima, it detonates. With a single bomb, 40,000 men, women and children are obliterated in an instant. One hundred thousand more die within days of burns and radiation. Another hundred thousand would succumb to radiation poisoning over the next five years. Despite the devastation, the Japanese still would not accept the Allied surrender terms.

August 8--The Soviet Union declares war on Japan. The islands now face invasion on two fronts.

August 9--A second atomic bomb drops, this time on Nagasaki. Some 40,000 more civilians die instantly. In Tokyo, the Supreme Council for the Direction of the War remains split between those still determined to fight on and those willing finally to give up. That evening, all six members of the Council call upon the Emperor, who breaks the deadlock.

August 10--Japan requests conditional surrender terms but is denied.

August 14--Japan accepts unconditional surrender terms.

August 30--The occupation of Japan begins.

September 2--The Japanese sign ceremonial surrender terms aboard the U.S.S. Missouri.

November 1--The Allies' planned invasion of the Japanese mainland was to begin this day with the island of Kyushu. More than 500,000 Japanese troops were already in position to repel them and another six million were either under arms or ready to be called up. Women and school children were drilling with sharpened bamboo spears. (www.pbs.org), Published September 2007 | Copyright © 2007 WETA, Washington, DC and American Lives II Film Project, LLC. All rights reserved.)

THE WOMEN WHO CARRIED THE FIGHT: UNDERSTANDING THE LIMITS OF THE 19TH AMENDMENT

While the ratification of the 19th Amendment 100 years ago (August 18, 1920) was a key achievement in women's suffrage, the road to voter equality spanned generations – from the early efforts of suffragists and abolitionists in the 1800s, to breaking down barriers to voting for women of color in the mid-1900s.

You may recognize the names Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony and Ida B. Wells as famous suffragists, but there are many more women of all backgrounds who have made contributions leading up to and continuing beyond the ratification of the 19th Amendment.

Lisa Tetrault, Ph.D, Associate Professor of History at Carnegie Mellon University and a leading scholar of voting and democracy, writes about one of the grass-roots heroes of the voting rights struggle—Ms. Fannie Lou Hamer.

“Ms. Fannie Lou Hamer, a Mississippi sharecropper, stepped to the microphone and gave lie to a venerated American story—that in 1920, with the insertion of the 19th Amendment into the U.S. Constitution, American women had won the right to vote.

Hamer, along with the all-Black Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, had shown up at the 1964 Democratic National Convention in Atlantic City, insisting they be seated as the delegation from their state. Over the previous 100 years, Mississippi's government had—through vigilante violence and later, legal means—reduced Black participation at the polls and in state governance to almost nil.

Testifying before the DNC's Credential's Committee, Hamer explained why they (and not Mississippi's all-white delegation) should be seated.

‘It was the 31st of August in 1962 that eighteen of us traveled twenty-six miles to the county courthouse in Indianola to try to register to become first-class citizens.’ Hamer then described a tale of intimidation, assault, shots, eviction, jailing, and ongoing violence that targeted her and her fellow travelers for months

in the wake of their 1962 effort—merely to register to vote.

‘And if the Freedom Democratic Party is not seated now,’ she roared, ‘I question America. Is this America, the land of the free and the home of the brave, where we have to sleep with our telephones off the hooks because our lives be threatened daily, because we want to live as decent human beings, in America?’

Hamer's brief but powerful testimony went viral and shocked parts of white America. Although the DNC refused to seat the all-Black delegation, Hamer and others had intensified pressure that would help push landmark civil-rights reform through Congress the following year, the seminal 1965 Voting Rights Act. In the wake of that law, millions of women of color finally secured the ability to vote, many for the first time, accessing a right they had supposedly won in 1920.

Hamer's testimony the year before underlined an important reality too often unseen in this centennial. Women did not win the right to vote in 1920, although just about everyone and everything will assure you that they did.

The 19th Amendment simply stated that states could not discriminate in voting “on the basis of sex.” Many states still required voters to be “male,” which had disqualified millions of women from voting. In those states, the amendment struck down that word as now unconstitutional, eliminating the one obstacle many faced to exercising the franchise.

While a necessary and enormous victory, it was not sufficient, however, to enfranchise all women. The 19th Amendment left standing all the racially-inflected obstacles that states had erected in the 1890s—literacy tests, poll taxes, and more. Those stood, continuing to disenfranchise millions of women of color well after 1920.

Such laws—which extended across the nation, not just throughout the South—remained perfectly legal, because there is another gaping misunderstanding in our national lore: our belief that citizens possess a basic democratic right to vote.

That's right. There is no Constitutional right to vote, although just about every American will tell you otherwise. The framers decided not to create one. Those same framers then gave voting governance to the individual states, who drew up lists of qualifications one had to meet in order to vote. Those qualifications have changed over time, but states were free to erect them, precisely because there was no pre-existing, federally-guaranteed right to vote that such requirements abridged.

Where the 19th Amendment struck down "sex" as a qualification, the 1965 Voting Rights Act struck down other state qualifications, like literacy tests, as unjustly discriminatory. Black voting participation skyrocketed in its wake, from single digits to 65-85%.

Even the Voting Rights Act did not create a positive, affirmative, federal right to vote. Rather, like the 19th Amendment, it used the federal government to bar specific, targeted discriminatory practices in the states. But like that amendment, it left undisturbed the larger right of states to create voting eligibility criteria. Both have nevertheless extended democracy dramatically, creating some of the largest expansions in voting in U.S. history.

What federal protections the Voting Rights Act gave voters in states have largely been gutted since 2013, however, when the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Shelby Co. v. Holder*, struck down important provisions of that law, arguing that voter suppression in the states was a thing of the past. Thus, federal oversight was no longer needed there.

In response, state legislators have been rapidly erecting creative, new voter state qualifications (voter ID laws, closing polling locations, etc.) that are now—in 2020, the centennial of women supposedly winning the right to vote—disenfranchising tens of millions of women, disproportionately women of color, many of whom voted prior to these new state laws without incident.

This is possible because American citizens still have no federally guaranteed voting right—which is surely this 1920 centennial's most surprising lesson.

That fight for an affirmative, federally-guaranteed

right to vote—a fight kept alive by women like Ms. Hamer—remains unfinished, handed down to you and me, to run with." (Lisa Tetrault, Ph.D, Associate Professor of History at Carnegie Mellon University and the prize-winning author of *The Myth of Seneca Falls: Memory and the Women's Suffrage Movement, 1848-1898*, posted by Ancestry Team, www.ancestry.com, August 12, 2020)

THE YEAR WAS 1920

The year was 1920 and it marked the beginning of the "roaring twenties." It was an age of flappers and jazz music, of Bertha Mekalski Szucs, bootlegging, and speakeasies. It was the beginning of an era that redefined gender roles. Women were asserting their independence and with the passage of the 19th Amendment on August 26, all American women were guaranteed the right to vote. Dress styles were more revealing and young women shocked older generations by cutting their hair into short "bobs," a controversial style that some people associated with immorality, smoking, and drinking. To learn more about flappers, see the website, *The Jazz Age: Flapper Culture and Style*.

For the first time, more Americans were living in urban areas than in rural areas. With the beginning of Prohibition on January 16, cities found themselves home to a growing number of "speakeasies," places where patrons could get a drink, provided they knew the password, handshake, or other code required for entrance. Ironically, Prohibition ended up having a reverse effect in areas. In Cleveland, there were 1,200 legal bars in existence before Prohibition, as opposed to an estimated 3,000 speakeasies by 1923. Bathub gin and moonshine were made at home and mobsters found profit in rum-running and in supplying liquor to the speakeasies. As the crime syndicates became more involved in this lucrative business, violence increased as the various underworld enterprises fought for turf. Mob kingpins like Al Capone and Bugsy Moran gained notoriety in Chicago as archrivals. The FBI files on some of the better known gangsters of the era can be found on the FBI website.

Jazz fans flocked to "Black and Tans," clubs where blacks and whites mingled to hear music and dance, in a mix of cultures that was an extreme rarity for that

time period. ("Ancestry Weekly Journal", 20 August 2006)

U.S. CENSUS AND ELECTIONS

Marjorie Slavens

The year 2020 is remembered for many different events, as we have seen in the article about 1945 and the 100 anniversary of the 19th Amendment in previous articles. Most women were able to vote following several decades of struggle by the women who led the movement, but some were still challenged and did not receive the benefit of this amendment until many years later. After the end of World War II in 1945, there were many changes in our lives. There were more jobs and relative prosperity following the war than in the preceding decade.

The U.S. Census is very important for all of us as family historians. We trace our ancestors back from the latest census in which we can find them decade by decade. Although we can find our female ancestors in earlier census records, their maiden names are not included, and this presents many challenges as we try to trace the family lines of these ancestors. Marriage records are not always easy to find. In addition, the U.S. Census records before 1850 only include the names of the heads of house. The immediately preceding decades give information about males and females and some information about ages. The earliest Census records group the genders together, and it is difficult to identify those who were not heads of house unless we are able to find marriage, church, or will records that identify those who are grouped together.

Census records are very important for other reasons than tracing our ancestors. The number of U.S. Representatives in each state are determined from the previous Census, and some federal funds are distributed to the states according to the reported populations. 2020 has presented some additional challenges for the U.S. Census. Many of us were able to register for the Census online, and the spelling and writing errors that we have found in some earlier Census records should not be present. However, the pandemic presents some significant problems for those who could not or did not complete their Census forms online. We would like to think that everyone

has an opportunity to be included in these records.

From 1850 to the beginning of this century, the information provided in the Census increased. In 1850, the names of all people residing in a household are given for the first time. The 1880 Census provides the birthplace of parents of the people including, helping us trace them back to places from which they emigrated. In 1900, we are able to see how many children a woman had had and how many of them were living at that time.

This is the 60th anniversary of the election of the first Catholic President, John F. Kennedy. I cast my first vote in that election and have voted in 14 Presidential elections since that time. I have voted in two states, Missouri and Illinois.

I have been listed in 9 U.S. Census records, but I have not found myself in any of these records yet. We have not been able to find my family in the 1940 Census, and the 1950 Census will not be published until 2022, 72 years after this Census was taken. I have lived in Oklahoma, two cities in Kansas, five cities in Missouri, one city each in Florida, Ohio, and Illinois. We have much better records now because of technology, but if I had lived 100 years before, I would have been extremely difficult for future generations to find me.

In 1960, I was a student at Florida State University, and the Census taker insisted that I provide my Census records there. I told him I was a student, and my permanent voting residence was still at my parents' home in Missouri, but he insisted that I had to provide my information in Florida. Of course, I could not vote in Florida, but I counted for that decade in their records. My father was reported in the 1930 Census by his mother in Oklahoma and by his grandmother, with whom he lived then, in Asbury, Missouri, also being counted in two states..

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