

MIDWEST COMPUTER GENEALOGISTS

NEWSLETTER

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THE HOLWELL SISTERS OF ADRIAN

On Saturday, May 19 at 9:30 a.m. in Bromwell Lounge at Brookdale Foxwood Springs in Raymore, Missouri, Midwest Computer Genealogists will present Peggy Buhr, Director of the Bates County Museum in Butler. Her topic will be "The Holwell Sisters of Adrian, Missouri: Minnie, Nadine, and Sallie Marie". She says she has a few artifacts that she will bring to display on a table.

Peggy has made several excellent presentations for MCG in recent years. Last year, she discussed "Missiles in Our Midst", which was about some of the memories of people in Bates County during the Cold War years of the 1950s and 1960s. In January, 2012, she portrayed three Bates County women, Christiana Toothman, Asenath Vale Barrows, and Prudence Woodfin, (a distant relative of MCG President Al Morse), two Confederate supporters and one Union supporter, who lived in Bates County during the Civil War. She talked about the hardships of war and separation of families they had to face. She portrayed Betty Shelby, the wife of Confederate General Joseph Shelby, in February, 2014.

In November, 2015, she presented "World War I: Bates County Answers the Call to Arms", discussing a few select men from Bates County who served in various capacities in WWI. Three of them succumbed to illnesses, and another died in a lightning strike. She also spoke about the first Bates County man to be killed in battle.

If you are interested in the history of western Missouri, you may want to visit the Bates County Museum and/or check out their web site, www.batescountymuseum.org. They have some interesting displays, and they maintain an excellent schedule of activities and programs. Some of us

started our genealogy research with U. S. Genweb, which maintains both state and county sites. The volunteers for these sites were interested and very involved with local history, and the sites were very helpful. The Bates County Museum site provides this kind of excellent local information about the history of the county. We are looking forward to this presentation on Saturday, May 19. Everyone is welcome to attend.

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Al Morse

My wife, Dorothy (Newcomb) Morse, and I go to decorate graves at five cemeteries, all in Bates County, Missouri. We usually do this a few days prior to Memorial Day or Decoration Day.

We go to the Greenlawn Cemetery just west of Rich Hill. My father, Albert F., and my mother, Mildred C. (Janssens) Morse, are buried near the plots of her parents and three brothers. They are David and Laura J. (Mooney) Janssens, Philip H., Lester, and Clarence F. Janssens. Also in the Greenlawn Cemetery, are buried Dorothy's aunt and uncle, Hazel (Newcomb) and Maurice West. Her cousin, Shirley (West) Tippie, is buried near her parents. I also have a great aunt and a great uncle, Ada (Miller) and Ora Garner, who are buried there.

We go to the Oak Hill Cemetery just east of Butler, where Dorothy's parents, Herbert E. and Dorothy (McDaniel) Newcomb, are buried. Her parents, James F. and L. Ethel (Burke) McDaniel, and one brother, Jewell E. McDaniel, are buried in the same combined plot. Also, Herb's brother & sister-in-law, Earl S. and Opal L (Ingersoll) Newcomb, are buried nearby. In another section, are Herb and Earl's aunt and her husband, Nora E. (Gaston) and Marcus R. McCann.

If we can and if the roads are not muddy, we go to the Morris Cemetery, about four to five miles southwest of Butler. We go to the graves of Dorothy's grandparents, Ralph W. and Sarah H. (Gaston) Newcomb. An infant daughter of theirs, Gladys M. Newcomb, is buried next to them. Dorothy's great grandparents, Sarah's parents, Isaac W. and Martha E. (Wilson) Gaston are buried in another section. Also, another two of their children are buried there, George W. and Alpha (Clark) Gaston and John (Jack) S. and Minnie M. (Gaston) Ehart.

If possible, we like to go to the Salem Cemetery at the south edge of Foster. My grandparents C. Frank and A. Dona (Miller) Morse are buried in the same plot with his parents, Peter Y. and Nancy (Ward) Morse. Another son of Peter and Nancy is buried here also, Peter Wade Morse. In another section of the cemetery, Peter's and Nancy's daughter, Ella (Morse) Briscoe, is buried. Also my wife, Dorothy, has a great grandmother, Barbara (Crawley) Newcomb, buried in this cemetery. Her husband is buried in Hickory County, Missouri in the Nemo-Bethel Cemetery. We have been to that cemetery a couple of times.

The fifth cemetery in Bates County that we try to go to is the Woodfin Cemetery, located about two to three miles northwest of Foster. Thomas and Sarah Woodfin came to Missouri from North Carolina about 1837. Some of their family also came, but some of them decided to move on to the west coast. But, John and Hannah (Hyatt) Woodfin stayed. John, through land patents, bought about a thousand acres in western Bates County south of the Marais des Cygnes River. Three of his sons bought even more property. The Woodfin Cemetery sits on their property. Thomas and Sarah were my third great grandparents and John and Hannah my great great grandparents. Hannah died in 1852 and John married Emily (Bryant) Granthem, a widow. John and Emily's graves are marked by a tall four sided monument. I imagine that Hannah is buried on the other side of John, but there is no stone, at least, anymore. I have to also believe that Thomas and Sarah are buried there as well, but no stone is

visible.

John has at least three children buried in this cemetery. Jason S. and Prudence (Miller) Woodfin have a stone. Also Jason's first wife, Ruth, is buried next to them. John R. and Mary J. Woodfin are buried in another section of the cemetery. Mary E. (Woodfin) and William B. Miller, my great grandparents, are buried there. William's mother, Charlotte (Brians) Miller is buried there. Her husband, Oliver Hazard Perry Miller, is buried in Springfield, Missouri. There are other uncles, aunts, and cousins buried in the Woodfin Cemetery.

We have also traveled to Miller County, Missouri. In the Colvin Cemetery, are George Washington and Ann Liza (Colvin) McDaniel, Dorothy's great grandparents. Their son, Charles McDaniel, is buried there. He was killed in WWI. At the Mount Zion Christian Church Cemetery, are Charles W. and Mary E. (Atkison) Burke. They are Dorothy's great grandparents.

MEMORIAL DAY

There are many explanations of the beginning of the celebration of Decoration Day or Memorial Day, and several communities claim that they created the tradition.

“Memorial Day or Decoration Day is a federal holiday in the United States for remembering the people who died while serving in the country's armed forces. The holiday, which is currently observed every year on the last Monday of May, will be held on May 28, 2018. The holiday was held on May 30 from 1868 to 1970 . Many people visit cemeteries and memorials, particularly to honor those who have died in military service. Many volunteers place an American flag on each grave in national cemeteries.

Memorial Day is not to be confused with Veterans Day – Memorial Day is a day of remembering the men and women who died while serving, whereas Veterans Day celebrates the service of all U.S. military veterans”.

www.wikipedia.com)

“Originally known as Decoration Day, it originated in the years following the Civil War and became an official federal holiday in 1971. Many Americans observe Memorial Day by visiting cemeteries or memorials, holding family gatherings and participating in parades. Unofficially, it marks the beginning of the summer season.

On May 5, 1868, General John A. Logan, leader of an organization for Northern Civil War veterans, called for a nationwide day of remembrance later that month. “The 30th of May, 1868, is designated for the purpose of strewing with flowers, or otherwise decorating the graves of comrades who died in defense of their country during the late rebellion, and whose bodies now lie in almost every city, village and hamlet churchyard in the land,” he proclaimed.

The date of Decoration Day, as he called it, was chosen because it wasn’t the anniversary of any particular battle. On the first Decoration Day, General James Garfield made a speech at Arlington National Cemetery, and 5,000 participants decorated the graves of the 20,000 Union and Confederate soldiers buried there.

Many Northern states held similar commemorative events and reprised the tradition in subsequent years; by 1890, each one had made Decoration Day an official state holiday. Southern states, on the other hand, continued to honor their dead on separate days until after World War I.

History of Memorial Day.

Memorial Day, as Decoration Day gradually came to be known, originally honored only those lost while fighting in the Civil War. But during World War I, the United States found itself embroiled in another major conflict, and the holiday evolved to commemorate American military personnel who died in all wars.

For decades, Memorial Day continued to be observed on May 30, the date Logan had selected

for the first Decoration Day. But in 1968, Congress passed the Uniform Monday Holiday Act, which established Memorial Day as the last Monday in May in order to create a three-day weekend for federal employees; the change went into effect in 1971. The same law also declared Memorial Day a federal holiday.

Cities and towns across the United States host Memorial Day parades each year, often incorporating military personnel and members of veterans’ organizations. Some of the largest parades take place in Chicago, New York and Washington, D.C. ([Www.history.com](http://www.history.com))

THE YEAR WAS 1868

The year was 1868 and, in the U.S., Andrew Johnson was serving the last year of his presidential term following the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln. It was a turbulent year with the country still bitterly torn and struggling with issues left by the Civil War in an era known as The Reconstruction. Pitted against Congress, Johnson was impeached on eleven counts by the House for firing the Secretary of War, but was later acquitted by the Senate. For a more in depth look at Reconstruction and the political events of 1868, see The Impeachment of Andrew Johnson website, which includes excerpts from periodicals of the day. In November of 1868, the Union General Ulysses S. Grant won the presidential election.

Americans continued to move westward and, in 1868, Wyoming Territory was organized from parts of Dakota, Utah and Idaho Territories. The young territorial government would go on to make history the following year when it became the first in the world to pass legislation allowing women the right to vote.

Further west, 1868 was the year of the first “Great San Francisco Earthquake”. On October 21 at 7:53 local time, a magnitude 7.0 earthquake was felt throughout northern California and Nevada and caused \$300,000 worth of damage in the city.

Disaster also struck in another part of the world. Following the 1867 summer of heavy rains, Sweden saw the reverse in 1868 with a terrible drought. These agricultural events caused a wave of emigration, with many Swedes going to America.

On a more positive note, 1868 was also the year that the world was introduced to Meg, Jo, Beth and Amy, when Louisa May Alcott first published the classic, *Little Women*. 138 years later, it remains a favorite of women, young and old—myself included. (Jliana Smith, “Ancestry Weekly Journal”, 27 August 2006)

FIND A GRAVE

An excellent free site for family historians is www.findagrave.com. It was founded about 20 years ago by Jim Tipton, who is its current Editor. Information and pictures may be submitted by individuals, who must be registered with the Findagrave site, which now belongs to Ancestry.com. If you have not yet visited this site, you should do so.

“The site was created in 1995 by Salt Lake City resident and Alma, Michigan-born Jim Tipton to support his hobby of visiting the burial sites of famous celebrities. He later added an online forum. Find A Grave was launched as a commercial entity in 1998, first as a trade name and then incorporated in 2000. The site later expanded to include graves of non-celebrities, in order to allow online visitors to pay respect to their deceased relatives or friends.

In 2013, Tipton sold Find A Grave to Ancestry.com, saying that the genealogy company had ‘been linking and driving traffic to the site for several years. Burial information is a wonderful source for people researching their family history’.

In a September 30, 2013, press release, Ancestry.com officials said they would ‘launch a new mobile app, improve customer support, and introduce an enhanced edit system for submitting updates to memorials, foreign-language support, and other site improvements’. As of October, 2017,

Find A Grave contained over 165 million burial records and 75 million photos. In March, 2017, a beta website for a redesigned Find A Grave was launched, gravestage.com. Public feedback has been mixed. Sometime between May 29 and July 10 of that year, the beta website was migrated to new.findagrave.com, and a new front end for it was deployed at beta.findagrave.com. In November 2017, the new site became live and the old site was moved to old.findagrave.com.

The website contains listings of cemeteries and graves from around the world. American cemeteries are organized by state and county, and many cemetery records contain Google Maps (with GPS coordinates supplied by contributors) and photographs of the cemeteries and gravesites. Individual grave records may contain dates and places of birth and death, biographical information, cemetery and plot information, photographs (of the grave marker, the individual, etc.), and contributor information.

Interment listings are added by individuals, genealogical societies, and other institutions such as the International Wargraves Photography Project.” (www.wikipedia.com)

VISITING CEMETERIES

Marjorie Slavens

My mother, Mildred Marie Welty Slavens (1910-2008), my sister, Carol, and I have made many research trips from Kansas to Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania, also including Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri. My sister, who usually drove, occasionally said, “Mother, there’s a cemetery. Do you think we should stop and see if we have anyone there?” Now such records are readily available on www.findagrave.com, and they are more accessible from home than when we first visited them.

One problem that we have had is that, although we believe a family member was buried in a certain place, there is no marker with which we might be able to verify the specific location. Mother was

certain her great grandfather, John Kerr (1810-1870), was buried in the Medoc Cemetery in Jasper County, Missouri. On her first trip to the location, there were too many weeds in the rural cemetery for her to be able to find a stone. Subsequently, we visited there when the weeds had been cut, and there was no stone. John Kerr died in 1870, leaving his third wife, Elizabeth Crawford Brannan Kerr (1829-1911), with two of her children from a previous marriage and four of her Kerr children; a grave marker was probably not something she could afford.

We visited the Las Vegas New Mexico Cemetery where Mother's grandmother, Elzina H. (Ella) Heape Kerr (1869-1895), was buried. There was no marker, but Mother found the name and location in a written record the cemetery custodian had. Charles Kerr (1863-1962) had three very small children when his wife died in 1895, and he returned to Missouri because he could not find an English-speaking care giver for his children.

Just as Al Morse has described about Bates County in "The President's Corner", we made frequent pilgrimages around Memorial Day to Jasper County, Missouri, where both of Mother's parents were born. In Jasper, Missouri, we visited the cemetery where two of her uncles, George and Walter Welty, are buried. Then, we went to the Nashville Cemetery about 8 miles away in Barton County, where her grandparents, Henry Welty (1837-1911) and Catharine Mary Eppright (1848-1928), their daughters Mary (1870-1935) and Nettie Lee Welty Derr (1890-1958), and Nettie's husband and infant daughter are buried. Of course, we took pictures. We later found a cemetery book which indicated that Mary was the wife because her stone was beside Henry's. However, Catharine's name was on the side of Henry's stone, and we knew who they were. We were also able to correct another error. Henry (1837-1911) was listed in a book as having been born in 1867; we corrected a list of Barton County veterans buried there by submitting both the 1890 Veteran's Census and a picture of the tombstone. We also had his military and pension records from his Civil War service.

Mother's grandfather, Charles Kerr, and his second wife, Millie Bain Kerr, are buried in the Crocker Cemetery between Pittsburg, Kansas and Asbury, Missouri, where they lived for more than 50 years. We have the record and know his brother, Millard (1859-1935), is buried there, but Charles did not pay for a grave marker for him, although he could have done so.

Mary

My father, Ralph Westmeier Slavens (1907-1983), was certain his great grandfather, Martin Hesler (1841-1862), was buried in a cemetery near the Springfield Hospital where he died in December, 1862. However, we found his grave in Good Hope Cemetery in Henry County, Missouri. His wife, Susan Hill McFarland Hesler Parks (1846-1928) and her father, James McFarland (1799-1863), took a wagon to Springfield and brought the body back for burial there. James McFarland is also buried there, having died three weeks after the trip to Springfield.

My father buried his parents, William Howard Slavens (1883-1940) and Edna Marie Westmeier (1883-1966), as well as his grandmother, Laura Martin Hesler Slavens Hesler (1863-1946) in Mt. Olive cemetery in Pittsburg, where he grew up. When I spent a month with my grandmother there about 70 years ago, she visited her husband's grave every Wednesday. The flowers she grew were for that purpose. Wanting to contribute, I asked if I could drape a clover chain over the stone, and, for some reason, she thought that was a good idea.

In the last year before her death, Mother discovered two cemeteries in Webb City and Carterville in Jasper County, where a brother, John Eppright, and a sister, Ellen Eppright Scott, of her grandmother, Catharine Mary Eppright Welty, are buried. Before doing her genealogical research, she knew nothing about this grandmother's family, but she was able to include pictures and information about them in her Eppright book.

We went to Jasper County in the spring of 2007 and visited those cemeteries. In 2008, Mother asked if I

thought Carol would take her there again; of course, Carol would have taken her. However, we planned a trip in May to St. Louis instead to attend my nephew's wedding. In mid-June, Mother had a bad fall, and she died two weeks later on June 30. The day she fell, she had been working on a revision of her Eppright book to include the new cemetery information. From the mid-1970s until that afternoon, she had been dedicated to her genealogical research, including this cemetery visit information, and continued to be dedicated to the preservation of that information through her family books.

JOHN BROWN (ABOLITIONIS)

John Brown (May 9, 1800- December 2, 1859) was the first White American abolitionist to advocate and practice insurrection as a means to the abolition of slavery. Mad Man or Holy Prophet, American Abolitionist.

President Abraham Lincoln said he was a "misguided fanatic" and Brown has been called "the most controversial of all 19th-century Americans." His attempt in 1859 to start a liberation movement among enslaved blacks in Harpers Ferry, Virginia, electrified the nation, even though not a single slave answered his call.

He was tried for treason against the state of Virginia and hanged, but his behavior at the trial seemed heroic to millions of Americans. Southerners alleged that his rebellion was the tip of an abolitionist iceberg and represented the wishes of the Republican Party, but those charges were vehemently denied by the Republicans. Historians agree that the Harpers Ferry raid in 1859 escalated tensions that a year later led to secession and the American Civil War.

Brown first gained attention when he led small groups of volunteers during the Bleeding Kansas crisis. Unlike other Northerners, who advocated peaceful resistance to the pro-slavery faction, Brown demanded violent action. His belief in confrontation led him to kill five pro-slavery

southerners in what became known as the Pottawatomie Massacre in May 1856, though it should be noted that this was certainly not the first use of violence in Kansas.

Brown's most famous deed was the 1859 raid he led on the federal armory at Harpers Ferry, Virginia (in modern-day West Virginia). During the raid, he seized the federal arsenal, killing seven people (including a free black), and injuring ten or so more. He intended to arm slaves with weapons from the arsenal, but the attack failed. Within 36 hours, all of Brown's men were killed or captured by local farmers, militiamen, and U.S. Marines led by Robert E. Lee. Brown's subsequent capture by federal forces, his trial for treason to the state of Virginia, and his execution by hanging were an important part of the origins of the American Civil War, which followed sixteen months later. His role and actions prior to the Civil War, as an abolitionist, and the tactics he chose still make him a controversial figure today. Depending on one's point of view, he is sometimes heralded as a heroic martyr and a visionary or vilified as a madman and a terrorist.

Brown's nicknames were Osawatomie Brown, Old Man Brown, Captain Brown and Old Brown of Kansas. His aliases were Nelson Hawkins, Shubel Morgan, and Isaac Smith. Later the song, "John Brown's Body", became a Union marching song during the Civil War. (www.fold3.com, Memorials, Added by bgill · July 10, 2007)

NEWS AND NOTES

Join us for the June 16 MCG meeting, when Julia Morse will discuss "Discover Hidden Ancestor Stories in Online Newspapers".

2018 dues of \$15.00 for individuals and \$20.00 for families may be sent to Treasurer Byron Gilbreath, 1412 W. Stone Blvd., Raymore, MO, 64083.

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