



DAVIS COUNTY  
GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY  
NEWSLETTER

Davis County Genealogical Society  
Summer - 1990 - Peggy Arnold, Editor

Vol. VIII, No. 2 Bloomfield, Iowa

REGULAR MEETINGS: Third Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m., Library basement  
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OFFICERS: President: Reva Rupe, R. 6, Ottumwa, Iowa 52501 - Ph. 515-684-8931.  
Vice Pres: Sue Spilman, 401 Arkansas Ave., Bloomfield, Ia. 52537  
Secretary: Mary Kay Stephenson, R. 5, Box 40, Bloomfield, Ia. "  
Treasurer: Archie Rupe, 102 S. Washington, Bloomfield, Ia. 52537  
Corrs. Sec. Darrell Kerby, 406 E. Franklin, Bloomfield, Ia., Apt. 3-D  
Librarian: Peggy Arnold, 206 W. Goode St., Bloomfield, Ia. 52537  
Microfilm Rental: Verle Arnold, Goode St., Bloomfield, Ia. 52537

June 1990

Dear Friends,

As our president, Reva Rupe's, husband has been very ill for the past few weeks, I will try to take her place and write you a few words about the Davis County Genealogical Society's goings on during the past few months.

This society keeps busy. We have many visitors searching our records. New records are being added all of the time. A few of the projects going on are:

A bundle of Indiana news clippings (genealogical in interest) were given to Helen Walker by Vera McMains for reading. She has passed these on to our Genealogy room. Thanks .

Dorothy Goldizen has been busy with her scissors--clipping and clipping, then sorting and pasting. She turned in clippings from Bloomfield DEMOCRAT for years 1906, 1907, 1910 and 1911; FOR Davis County REPUBLICAN, years for 1912, 1913, 1916 and 1917. She says that she has four more years to clip. Thanks Dorothy. Helen Walker is busy indexing newspaper clippings too.

Watson Baumgarner is busy putting the 1856 Iowa State Census on computer. When done we'll send this census to IGS to publish on: cost-sharing. Victor F. and Olen McM. read the copy from film and made a pencil copy. Verle and I proofread. Thanks to all for the hard work.

Jerry Greene is nearly through making father and mother indexes for the Davis County, IA, "Record of Payment of Assistance Tax--1934-1937 records." Then off this copy goes to IGS for printing. Thanks Jerry.

At our last meeting, the members present voted to reprint the HISTORY OF DAVIS COUNTY, IOWA - 1882, providing we can get enough advanced sales to make sure the project will be worthwhile. Sue Spilman, and Dorothy Goldizen and *Jerry Greene* are undertaking this project. They will need help I'm sure.

SEPTEMBER 8, 1990, has been set as the date for the ANNUAL AREA MEETING TO BE HELD HERE IN BLOOMFIELD at the ~~Christian Church~~, 9-3 p.m. The theme is: TRAILS OF TIME. Archie Rupe and Darrell Kerby are in charge--with all local members given jobs. Mark this on your calendar and plan to come.

I'm busy working on the SURNAME INDEX file.

Have you 'spruced up' your genealogy records lately? It's now that time of year to get out and 'dig up' those Gene roots! While travelling around, stop and 'dig in' our genealogical library room. Welcome anytime.

Sincerely,  
Peggy Arnold, editor

SUMMER LIBRARY HOURS  
IOWA STATE GENE LIBRARY  
P.O. Box 7735 or  
6000 Douglas, Des Moines,  
Ia. 50322

Monday through Friday  
9:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Saturday - 10 - 4.

Tuesday & Thursday nights  
7:00 - 9:00 o.m.

Effective Easter through  
Thanksgiving.

*Remember - Society  
Volunteers Make A  
Difference* -----

With their interest in genealogy, they can help out-of-state visitors, or any visitors, concerning our records, or any data we have about their ancestors. Also, they can collect, record, file, type, etc. more available records. Ask our president for a job!

Our society received about 20 sheets of family info on the Hammans, Moss, Kimbler, Shewey, Doll, Tulk, Shearer, Carr, Tubble from Ellen Burch, P.O.B. 1325 Menlo Park, CA 94026.

# Cemeteries could be time bombs

CEDAR FALLS (INA)—Iowa's graveyards could be ticking timebombs, according to recent research conducted by the director of the Iowa Waste Reduction Center at the University of Northern Iowa.

John Konefes said the 4,156 recorded cemeteries in the state could hold up to 90 tons of arsenic - a poisonous and carcinogenic element once used to embalm bodies.

"In the 1860s, embalming was a little different from the way it's done today," Konefes said. A patented arsenic-solution embalming fluid was in use during and after the Civil War."

Up to three pounds of the poison were used to embalm a single corpse, he said.

Around 1900, arsenic was banned as an embalming agent. However, arsenic is a stable element, Konefes noted. Unfortunately, the wooden caskets often used in 19th century burials are not so stable—especially after 120 years.

"As caskets begin to degrade, rainwater will percolate through them, and it could con-

ceivably carry the arsenic into the groundwater," Konefes said. "It's a timebomb waiting to go off."

Konefes noted that no cases of arsenic contamination in Iowa groundwater have been traced to cemeteries yet. But he warned that in the future, if arsenic levels rise in tested water, people should examine nearby cemeteries as possible contributors.

"I don't know how big a problem it could become," Konefes said. "There are more than 4,000 cemeteries recorded in Iowa, from family plots to larger ones. A lot of them contain burials from the 1800s.

A certain amount of those—15 per cemetery, on average—could contain arsenic. That could amount to 90 tons in Iowa."

Konefes suggested that a study of soils around Iowa cemeteries to check for arsenic contamination.

"This is just another example of how practices that were once common and widespread are coming back to haunt us," Konefes said. "It is like the toxic wastes we are producing now."

--June 6, 1990, Democrat, Bloomfield, Ia.  
She just completed a 10 wk. trip of research thru this area and eastern states.

## Cemetery Warning--

As winter comes to an end and we begin to think about exploring cemeteries again, we need to be aware of a "growing" problem. That "growing" problem is the growth of marijuana in remote areas of our counties, particularly in south-eastern Ohio. Trip wires and booby traps are sometimes used to protect someone's crop near cemeteries. Beware! If the cemetery is in a questionable area, check with the local police and/or go with some well-known resident of the area.--  
Ohio Genealogy Society Newsletter 21:03 (1990)

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## How to Compute Age or Birthdate of an Ancestor--

The 8870 formula: using a calculator, enter 18890506 which represents the death date 1889 May 06, then subtract 710709 representing the age of the person, 71 yrs., 7 mos., 9 days. From the result of 18179797 you must subtract 8890, to correct the months and days. You have 18170927 or 1817 Sept 27, the correct birthday.--from Genealogical Helper, Mar. 1976.

DEATHS - 1884-1896<sup>7</sup>

Davis County, Iowa - as copied from original records - JUNE 1990.

Page	Name	Died	Buried	Born
30	Bride, Charlotte T.	14 yrs., 7 May 1884	Pleasant View Cem.,	b _____
30	Beard, Mary Ann	68 yrs., 25 June 1884	Orleans Cem., App. Co.,	b KY.
30	Barnes, Isabell	67 yrs., 19 May 1884	Bethel Cem.	- b-KY.
30	McDanel, Myrta	1 yr. 8 mo., 2 May 1884	Taylor Cem. App. Co.	- b-D.C.
30	Taggard, _____	f., 87 yrs., 8 Apr 1884	- _____	b-Fox River Twp.
31	Jones, Rachel E.F.	21 yrs., 24 June 1884	Pulaski Cem.	- b-Scotland Co., Mo.
31	Dodge, Nancy E.	65 yrs., 20 June 1884	Bloomfield Cem.	- b. KY
31	Patterson, Mary	7 yrs., 27 May 1884	Marshall Cem.,	- b-_____.
31	Grinstead, Richard	61 yrs., 8 June 1884	Blfd. Cem.	- b-Warren Co., KY.
31	Johnson, Jennie	15 yrs., 25 Mar 1884	Bethel Cem.	- b-Davis Co., Ia.
31	Howard, Hannah	23 yrs., 5 July 1884	Bethel Cem.	- b-Ohio.
31	Lemon, M. H.	63 yrs., 20 Apr 1884	Troy Cem.	- b-Ill.
31	Dively, Amanda	46 yrs., 17 July 1884	Mt. Gilead Cem.	- b-Washington Co. PA.
31	Bruce, Lucy	72 yrs., 30 June 1884	- _____	- b-VA
31	Tharp, Abigail	50 yrs., 26 July 1884	- _____	- b-Ohio.
31	Parsons, Ruth	2 da., 15 July 1884	Pulaski Cem.	- b- Pulaski, Ia.
31	Spurgeon, Mabel	2 mo., 31 July 1884	West Grove Cem.	- b-West Grove Twp.
31	Harper, _____	male infant 6 hrs., 14 Aug 1884	West Grove Cem	- Davis Co. Ia.
32	Denny, Chester	9 mo. 12 Aug 1884	Pierce Cem	- b-Davis Co., Ia.
32	Cheetham, George	1 yr 4 mo, 14 Aug 1884	Floris Cem	- b-Davis Co., Ia.
32	Johnson, Lena	35 yrs, 8 July 1884	Blfd Cem	- b-Springfield, Mo.
32	Boal, Paul Marcus	3 mo. 5 Aug. 1884	Stiles Cem.	- b-_____.
32	Runkle, Ira Francis	5 mo. 17 Feb 1884	Runkle Cem	- b-Davis Co., Ia.
32	Moon, Louisa J.	1 yr 8 mo, 5 Feb 1884	Drakesville Cem	- b-Davis Co. Ia.
32	Glassbourn, Rachel	77 yrs., 17 Aug 1884	Glassbourn Cem	- b-Westmorland, PA.
32	Hill, Ezabell	18 yrs., 8 July 1884	Blfd Cem	- b-Davis Co., Ia.
32	Stover, Earl	8 mo., 30 Aug 1884	Pulaski Cem	- b-Memphis, Mo.
32	Slonaker, John W.	8 mo., 17 Aug 1884	Pulaski Cem	- b-Roscoe Twp.
32	Weidrick, Nancy M.	5 mo., 9 Sept 1884	Pulaski Cem	- b-Roscoe Twp.
32	Johnson, Lena T.	6 mo., 2 Sept 1884	I.O.O.F. Blfd	- b-Davis Co., Ia.
33	Rawlings, Rebecca	66 yrs., 17 Sept 1884	Pollard Cem	- b-Jackson Co. Ind.
33	Teague, _____	male, 8 da., 28 Oct 1884	Pulaski Cem	- b-Blfd Twp.
33	Rowe, Helena	1 yr., 30 Sept 1884	Scotland Co., Mo.	- b-Scotland Co., Mo.
33	Jones, Earnest G.	1 yr 6 mo., 3 Oct 1884	Pulaski Cem--	b-Pulaski
33	Eppley, Wesley Eugene	8 mo., 12 Oct 1884	I.O.O.F. Cem	- b-Bloomfield, Ia.
33	Lowenberg, Stella	3 mo., 31 July 1884	I.O.O.F. Cem	- b-Bloomfield, Ia.
33	Pence, May	2 yr 6 mo., 5 Aug 1884	Chequest	- b-Perry Twp.
33	Eastburn, Margaret A.	48 yrs, 10 Sept 1884	West Grove Cem	- b-N.C.
33	Buttery, Barbary	76 yrs., 16 Aug 1884	Pella Cem	- b-KY.
33	Fulk, Joseph	25 yrs., 2 June 1884	West Grove Cem	- b-Lee Co. Ia.
33	Allen, William	67 yrs., 9 Oct 1884	Drakesville Cem	- b-Ohio.
33	Brooks, _____	male 2 yr 4 mo., 24 July 1884	Pierce Cem	- b-Lick Cr. Twp.
33	Kendrick, William	77 yrs., 1 Sept 1883	Floris Cem	- b- KY.
34	conner, Pearl F.	1 yr 8 mo., 21 Nov 1884	Troy Cem	- b-Troy, Ia.
34	Hiles, J.B. (Rev)	64 yrs., 25 Nov 1883	New London, Henry Co. Ia.	b-N.J.
34	Henry, J. B.	43 yrs., 19 Nov 1884	West Grove Cem	- b-PA.
34	Oneal, Martha A.	49yrs., 15 Nov 1884	West Grove Cem	- b-Mich.
34	Herrod, _____	male 4 da., 27 Nov 1884	Blfd Cem	- b-Bloomfield, Ia.
34	Hughes. Harriet	51 yrs., 27 Nov. 1884	Blfd Cem.	- b-Toronto, Canada.
34	Moore, Grace	10 mo., d. 25 Oct 1884	Council Bluffs, Ia.,	b- Bloomfield.

DEATHS - 1884-1896 - continued - Davis County, Iowa.

Page	Name	Died	Buried	Born
34	Bunten, Georgie, f.,	2 yr 7 mo.,	3 Oct 1884 - Drakesville Cem.	b-Drakesville
34	Epperson, _____, m.,	3 da.,	30 Nov 1884 - Coatsville, Mo., Cem	b-Fabius Twp.
34	Edwards, Charlie, 7 yr.	3 mo.,	24 Nov 1884 - Drakesville Cem	b-Drakesville
34	Jennings, Freddie, 1 yr	7 mo.,	25 Oct 1884 - Drakesville Cem	b-Drakesville
34	Walthers, Albert P.,	2 yr 6 mo.,	20 Nov 1884 - Pulaski Cem	b-Pulaski, Ia.
34	Slaughter, Omer,	2 yr 2 mo.,	27 Oct 1884 - Grove Twp	b-Grove Twp.
35	Shelton, U. S., f.,	11 mo.,	9 Dec 1883 - Pulaski Cem	b-Perry Twp.
35	Corrick, Ettie, f.,	6 mo.,	22 Aug 1884 - Round Grove Cem	b-Roscoe Twp.
35	England, Jessie, f.,	3 yr.,	1 Nov 1884 - Pulaski Cem	b-Pulaski, Ia.
35	Davies, Joseph,	16 da.,	Nov 1884 - Keokuk, Ia.	b- Floris, Ia.
35	Money, _____, m.,	1 hr.,	18 Nov 1884 - Bethlehem Cem	b-Salt Creek Twp.
35	Henry, J. B.,	43 yrs.,	19 Nov 1884 - West Grove Cem	b-PA
35	Miller, Robert C.,	77 yrs.,	4 Dec 1884 - Shunem Cem	b-Tenn.
35	Sawyers, Allen,	80 yrs.,	15 Dec 1884 - West Grove Cem	b-VA.
35	Berry, Nancy,	63 yrs.,	25 Nov 1884 - Lowe Cem	b- Muskingum Co., Ohio.
35	Moughler, F. Otis,	6 yr 4mo.,	5 July 1884 - Rowe Cem.	b-Union Twp.
35	Sammons, _____, f.,	10 da.,	17 May 1884 - Bloomfield Cem	b- Bloomfield, Ia.
35	Howell, David,	64 yrs.,	16 Oct 1884 - Wycondah Twp.	b-Ohio.
35	Hopkins, Eldridge,	2 yr 8 mo.,	18 May 1884 - Taylor Cem., Appanoose Co.	b- Appanoose Co. Ia.
36	Grinstead, _____, f.,	3 hr.,	18 Dec 1884 - Shunam Cem	b- Perry Twp.
36	Moor , Eliza,	66 yrs.,	27 June 1882 - Inland, Cedar Co. Ia.	b- Rocahontis, VA
36	Dysart, Francis L.	27 yrs.,	11 Nov 1884 - Shunam Cem	b-Lee Co., Ia.
36	Korn, Nathaniel Martin,	1 yr 8 mo.,	19 Dec 1884 - Bloomfield	b- Bloomfield.
36	McMains, Samuel, Jr.,	4 yr.,	7 Jan 1885 - Shunam Cem	b- Davis Co., Ia.
36	Pottorff, _____, m.,	4 mo.,	30 Dec 1884 - Dunville Cem	b-Perry Twp.
36	Baird, John H.,	68 yrs.,	13 Dec 1884 - Bloomfield	b-Petersburg, VA.
36	Brown, Lucile,	22 yrs.,	15 Jan 1885 - Bloomfield	b-Bloomfield, Ia.
36	Smith, Norah,	2 yr 6 mo.,	8 Jan 1885 - Bloomfield	b-Milton, Iowa.
36	Woolsey, Charles,	11 yrs.,	1 Dec 1884 - _____	b-Bloomfield, Ia.
36	Franklin, Harry, N.,	25 yrs.,	21 Dec 1884 - Old Blfd Cem.,	b- Missouri.
36	Wallis, Nancy,	43 yrs.,	21 Jan 1885 - Bloomfield	b- Ind.
37	Grogan, J. M.,	64 yrs.,	2 Feb 1885 - Pulaski Cem	b-Ill.
37	Stevig, William,	4 yrs.,	8 Feb 1885 - Pulaski Cem	b-Roscoe Twp.
37	Tannehill, Ezra,	41 yrs.,	17 Jan 1885 - Runkle Cem	b- not known.
37	Grisho, Frederick,	66 yrs.,	22 Feb 1885 - Runkle Cem	b- Sweden.
37	Hunt, Maria,	69 yrs.,	25 Jan 1885 - Bethel Cem	b-Rustin Co., W.VA.
37	Pierson, Harry A.,	6 mo.,	1 Mar 1885 - Troy Cem	b- Union Twp.
37	Hoyte, Henrietta,	24 yrs.,	18 Feb 1885 - Drakesville Cem	b-Clark Co., Mo.
37	Smith, _____, ?.,	1 da.,	4 Mar 1885 - Drakesville Cem	b- Drakesville, Ia.
37	Mustard, Martha,	52 yrs.,	24 Feb 1885 - Troy Cem	b- VA.
37	Bradbury, James,	18 yrs.,	5 Feb 1885 - _____	b-Iowa.
37	Baldridge, John,	85 yrs.,	21 Feb 1885 - Drakesville Cem	b- Tenn.
37	Bunten, Gertrude,	2 mo.,	11 Feb 1885 - Drakesville Cem.	b-Drakesville, Ia.
37	Spurgeon, _____, m.,	7 da.,	16 Mar 1885 - Hopkins Cem	b-Fabius Twp.
38	Foster, Henry J.,	37 yrs.,	18 Feb 1885 - Hopkins Cem	b-PA.
38	Rose, John H.,	66 yrs.,	23 Mar 1885 - Johns Cem	b- PA.
38	Miller, William,	19 yrs.,	24 Feb 1885 - Grove Twp Cem	b- _____.
38	Woodson, Sarah,	88 yrs.,	10 Mar 1885 - Pleasant View Cem.	b- KY.
38	McCants, Nina Pearl,	11 mo.,	19 Apr 1885 - I.O.O.F. Cem	b- Bloomfield, Ia.

To be continued in the next issue of the Davis County Genealogical Society Newsletter. The 1880-1884 - Davis County Deaths were published in pp 111-141, Vol. XIII, No. 3 and 1897-1900 - Davis County Deaths were published in pp. 187-193, Vol. XIII, No. 4 of the HAWKEYE HERITAGE, IGS, P.O. Box 7735, Des Moines, IA. Also available for sale at IGS for \$3.00. See list of publications for sale elsewhere in this newsletter.

# Like putting puzzle together

It was a bit like putting together a puzzle with some of the pieces gone.

At least that's what Elmer Ray and Betty Jones discovered when they set out to plat the Drakesville Cemetery.

Cemetery trustees approached Elmer Ray in 1987, asking him to consolidate a group of cardboard drafts of various sizes into a legible plat of the town cemetery.

"In doing so, I learned the interment records prior to the turn of the century, which consisted of approximately one-third of the cemetery, had become lost many years ago," Jones said. "With no drafts or records to go by, my wife proposed we measure and draft that portion of the cemetery."

The project turned out to be more complicated than that.

A problem arose when they discovered a "sprinkling" of graves in the so-called "newer portion" dated prior to 1900 and not recorded in the interment records. Likewise, they found several graves in the "older portion" that were dated after 1900—also with no records.

"So we decided we would plot the whole thing," Jones said.

They worked at the challenge the next two summers.

"Betty called the project our 'labor of love,' as we often worked at the cemetery a couple of hours or so in the morning, then a couple hours in the after-

--June 6, 1990, Democrat, Bloomfield, Ia.

noon," he recalled.

Sometimes she would fix a picnic lunch, and the couple would "make a day of it."

With no records, information had to be gleaned from the headstones, some of which were more than a century old and nearly illegible. That's easy to understand, considering the oldest stone dates back to 1833, when an infant girl named Lucinda Carr died on April 3. The earliest birth date of anyone buried in the cemetery belongs to Thomas Lockman, who was born Sept. 2, 1794.

But the couple made progress with their ball of twine and tape measure—which they practically wore out—and finally succeeded in laying out the cemetery and identifying all the markers. With the ground work completed, the drafting and plotting became a winter project.

If there was one major problem, it was the confusion created by constant use of the term "new addition." Each time a portion was added to the cemetery, records referred to it as the new addition, making it hard to keep track of which addition was being referred to. That problem was solved by replacing the description of new addition with numbered plots.

Jones said they also began to think about how handy it would be to have the interments recorded chronologically and al-

phabetically for easy reference, "so that was the next winter's project."

Several hundred work-sheets and cross-checks later, the records were completed to accompany the new plots. The paper work, neatly placed in a 3-inch thick ring binder, was completed in March 1989—the night before the annual cemetery board meeting.

If Jones had one regret, it was the lack of a duplicate record. That problem was solved when former Drakesville resident Darrell Downing, an assistant professor at the St. Louis College of Aeronautics, offered the use of his copying machine to make several hundred copies. The extra copy is now in safekeeping at Drakesville City Hall.

Now that the major work is done, all that remains is annual updating. That should be a snap for Jones, who despite some health problems, also manages to keep books for the city's Park Board, the annual Drakesville Reunion and the annual fall country music festival.

"It's nice," he said of such work. "It gives you some purpose."

But he wouldn't have tackled the cemetery job, he said, without the support of his best friend. "If Betty hadn't encouraged me, I couldn't have done it. She was a big help."

A few years ago some of the Davis County Genealogical Society members read the stones in the Drakesville Cemetery and compared this record with the Drakesville Cemetery trustee's record book, trying to get a record of people buried in this cemetery. This reading or record was published by the Iowa State Genealogical Society at Des Moines and sells for \$3.00. It also contains the readings of the Lester Cemetery in Drakesville township.

The Drakesville Cemetery had not been plotted at that time so no description as to where the stones or bodies were buried could be given. This is a wonderful volunteer project that Mr. & Mrs. Jones have accomplished for Drakesville and Davis County. Davis County has over 100 cemeteries and certainly needs more people to take an interest in the cemetery in his or her backyard or vicinity.

A certificate was presented to the Emerald Ambassador 4-H Club at the annual Awards Night Dec. 2 for club members cleaning brush and resetting stones at the Foster Cemetery south of Mark last year.

A list of the known cemeteries of Davis County was published in the Vol. VII, No. 1 - Spring 1989 Davis County G. S. Newsletter.

# CEMETERY HOPPIN'

by Joyce Hensen

Ever been cemetery hoppin'?

Well, even if you have, did you experience the full "whamie"? This article is designed to help you enjoy it to the fullest.

First, you must go to the courthouse. If you're lucky, they won't be closed that day. Go to the County Engineer's office or the County Clerk's office and ask for a map of the county. Explain that you want one that shows where the cemeteries are located. They will immediately know you are a genealogist.

Now it is time for lunch and the courthouse closes so the staff can go to lunch. They all go at the same time, you know. So now you have to find the local eatery and eat lunch when they do. You just had breakfast at 10:00 AM, but you *must* eat again.

An hour later you return to the courthouse and go to the office that holds the marriage records. That could be the County Recorder or the Probate Court. But you already know which office will have the records you need because you checked your *Handy Book for Genealogists* or the new *Red Book*.

## Look for Marriages and Deeds

Your first task here is to record all of the marriages of your family surname so you will know who married who. You can't find ancestors unless you know their names.

Next, you go to the County Recorder's office (or Register of Deeds), if you're not already in this office. At least, find the office where they keep the *Land Records*.

Ask for the GRANTEE index. This will impress the clerk. ("Oh, we finally got someone in here who knows what they are doing".)

But she will ask you anyway if you know how to use the books. Do not appear stupid. Pretend you do and politely tell her, "If I need any help, I'll 'holler'." They like people who talk "country".

About this time you will need to find the restrooms. So ask for help. After running all over the courthouse, you finally go outside, around the side entrance and into the basement. Now, some courthouses do have modern facilities.

Now you are back in the vault. You should write down every entry of your family surnames and the legal descriptions, book and page recorded - both grantee (when they bought the land) and grantor (when they sold the land). If you don't, you will need to visit this courthouse again because you did not do your job right the first time. You get to do it over, and over, and over again, until you do it right.

## Find the cemetery

You then lay out your county map and highlight where the land is located. You *know* most people were buried within five miles of where they lived.

After getting copies of the land transactions, you go to the local florist (if there is one). You order an inexpensive flower and have it sent to the Clerk's office. This will insure that they remember you so when you write them after you get home, they will answer your letter.

Now you head for the country to locate the cemetery your family *might* be buried in. This is always more fun than checking to see if the cemeteries have been put in print - or who the sexton is and where you can find him.

You follow the county map very closely, lest you get lost. You've marked exactly where the cemetery is. However, the road it is on is a dirt road. Do not attempt to go down the road if it has recently rained or you will become a permanent resident of that county.

After you have driven up and down the road five times you will now decide the cemetery *has* to be "here". So you get out and crawl over the fence. If you are smart, you will get out your gas weed-eater or sickle.

Oh, yes. Don't forget to spray your shoes and ankles with bug spray. The chiggers have secret messages they send to each other for miles around: "Come on down, boys. We have a live one here!"

You have now walked a half-mile through weeds up to your waist and you come across this lovely, well-kept cemetery. You then see you could have driven to it from the other side, but *that* road is not marked on the county map.

Now you don't know where your ancestor's grave is, so you need a 'location finder'. You put your hands over your head, turn around slowly, and yell loudly, "Allen Noble, where are you?" The spirits will guide you directly to his grave site.

Continued on next page...

## Cemetery Hoppin'...continued:

If by some chance this doesn't work, you can walk the cemetery, row by row. The first burials usually began in the northeast corner. If your ancestor had been an early resident, that's the place to start.

After you find the stone, you must, (a), take a picture of it; (b), write down the inscriptions (in case the picture does not come out clear); and (c), take a tombstone rubbing. Why a rubbing? Because there is so much vandalism, the stone may not be there next time you're there. If you ever want the stone replaced, you will have the means to duplicate the original. Rubbings can often pick up lettering that even the camera does not see. You did remember to bring the cemetery "kit", didn't you?

So what do you have in your kit. Let's see:

**A brush...**soft enough not to damage the stone, and strong enough to carefully clean the stone.

**A garden trowel...**to clear the grass from near the stone.

**A small shovel...**you might need to dig up the stone if it has sunken.

**A jug of water and mild soap...**for washing the stone, if necessary. Also, pouring water on a dark stone before taking a picture will enhance the lettering.

**Rubbing paper.** This can be architect paper, rice paper, shelf paper, or pellow. I prefer the pellow because it is easier to work with. You can purchase pellow at any fabric shop - get a medium grade.

**Tape.** Freezer tape is best - for holding the rubbing paper tight against the stone.

**Wax, crayon, or graphite...**for rubbing the image onto the paper or pellow. I prefer "boot wax" that you can purchase from a store that repairs shoes.

**Shaving Cream...**to use on the stone and highlight inverted lettering. This will not damage the stone, but wash it off afterwards.

**A Ruler...**to smooth out the shaving cream.

**Bug spray.**

**Aluminum foil...**to reflect light onto the stone if the sun is at the wrong angle for photos.

**Garden gloves...**to prevent poison ivy contact.

To make a rubbing, brush the stone lightly to remove excess dirt. Do NOT take off the lichen as it protects the stone from the elements.

Cut a piece of your material approximately the size of the stone and tape it tightly across the face of the stone. Begin rubbing in the upper left hand corner and at an angle. Rubbing vertically or horizontally will tend to "stretch" your paper or pellow. Do not rub hard. Many stones were made of sandstone which is brittle and pieces can come loose under the pressure of your hand. Make sure all letters can easily be read before removing the paper or pellow.

After you have completed your task, you might clean up the area a wee bit. Pull the weeds, straighten up the stone, and put a flower nearby. Ancestors like that. They appreciate your visiting their gravesite and will assist you in locating other records concerning them.

Go directly back to your motel (or wherever) and take a shower, lest you be covered with poison ivy and chiggers.

While you're in the area you might try to locate interment records or see if they exist. Don't forget to visit the local funeral director and check how far back their records go. Most funeral homes did not begin keeping records until the early 1900s. Burials prior to that time were performed by the local carpenter (who also built the coffin), friends, or family.

Before you leave, go to the library in the county seat and look up any obituaries. I'm sure you will find one because of the nice work you did at the courthouse and cemetery.

When you return home, you will be so proud of yourself. You will have so much information about your family and so many more papers to clutter up your dining room table.

I forgot. Was there a wide space between stones at the cemetery? There could be family members buried nearby without a stone. Some "grave witching" would have helped you determine if there is a grave there. You don't know about "grave witching"? Well, more about that at a later time.

By the way, don't forget to write a detailed description of your experiences.

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*EDITOR'S NOTE: Joyce Hensen lives in Kansas City, Missouri. She is without a doubt the luckiest and most "uncanny" genealogical researcher in the country — because she is forever finding everyone's ancestors...everyone's except her own, that is...*

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*No room to continue the membership & surname list this issue. Next time.*

The old adage about not seeing the forest for the trees is certainly appropriate in genealogy. How many times do we miss the obvious--either by not asking the right question or by failing to recognize a clue? At every step in your research, be sure that you ask yourself all of the important questions! You never know what you may find!

PASSPORTS

Did your ancestors ever return to their native lands for a visit? If so, they would have needed a U.S. passport. The passport application can provide the village of their birth. Passport applications through the year 1905 are in the Diplomatic Records Branch of the National Archives, Room 5E, Washington, D.C. 20408. Passports for 1906 and later are in the custody of the Passport Office, Department of State, 1425 K Street NW, Washington DC 20520. When writing for information give the name of the person who applied for the passport, residence, and the place and approximate date of application.--Copied from June 1984 O.G.S. newsletter.

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS FOR SALE ABOUT DAVIS COUNTY, IOWA, AT IOWA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY, P.O. BOX 7735, Des Moines, Iowa 50322:

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