

MADISON COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER



P. O. Box 1031

Norfolk, Nebraska 68702-1031

VOLUME 20 - NUMBER 80

July 1999

4th QUARTER

ESTABLISHED JUNE, 1973

Meeting date and time - 3rd Tuesday of each month not including December

7:00 p.m. - First Baptist Church - 404 Benjamin Ave., Norfolk, NE.

OFFICERS: President - Audrey Polenske Vice President - Charlene Kolterman
Secretary - Ginger Houser Treasurer - Donald and Dorothy Monson
Newsletter Editors - Joyce Borgelt and Jeanne Rix



Library located at home of Harold Lyon, 604 So. 14th Street, Norfolk, NE Phone 402-371-2589

DUES: Due September 1 of each year

\$10.00 for individual or \$15.00 per couple

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Our April meeting was presented by Martha Hoile, "Beyond Tradition", a Potpourri of scrapbook photo album ideas. She stressed the importance of quality materials for photo preservation.

The May meeting was a "Browse and Help Night" with numerous research aids and mini workshops.

June found us with the program "I've Been Stumped By---Bring a Brick Wall" problem. July will be our annual meeting with election of officers. August meeting is undecided as of now. September the officers for 1999-2000 will take over.

This has been a very rewarding year for me as your president. Your cooperation and hard work has made it possible for us as a group to accomplish many projects. We have gained new members, answered numerous queries, printed a Surname Search Newsletter, with the leadership of Jeanne Rix. Many thanks to Charlene Kolterman for organizing the cemetery project. Also to the members for their help on this project. I would like to thank Jeanette Koehn and the other members who continue to record obituaries from the Norfolk Daily News. The Everton Workshop in October will be our last project for the 1998-1999 year.

I wish the officers for 1999-2000 the very best and the continued support I have received.

Sincerely,
Audrey Polenske
Audrey Polenske, President



FLOOR: The place for storing your priceless genealogy records.

WELCOME NEW MEMEBERS !!

M. J. VonGoebel
176 Commercial St. #3
Provincetown, MA 02657

Susan A. Hansen
1019 Elk St.
Schuyler, NE 68661-2038
402-352-5542

Tommie Ann Tracy
1227 Phillip Ave.
Norfolk, NE 68701-4922
402-379-1453

Karen Rogat 402-371-0956
905 E. Benjamin
Norfolk, NE 68701

Cindy Zurn
1203 Mississippi Ave.
Alliance, NE 69301

Audrey Louise (A. L.) Marple Potter
1383 North Vallejo Way
Upland, CA 91786
909-985-1571

Donald VanHoudenos
15260 S. E. Bevington Ave.
Milwaukie, OR. 97267-3354

Dr. Charlton Ryan
1227 Phillip Ave
Norfolk, NE 68701-4922
402-379-1453

CONGRATULATIONS!!!!

Harold Lyon and Audrey Polenske for being awarded certificates of appreciation from the Nebraska State Genealogical Society for their contributiouns to the local society and to the preservation of Nebraska Historical and Genealogical resources.

* * * * *



The Family Tree February/March 1999



Unclaimed doesn't necessarily mean dead

Old newspapers are filled with a wealth of genealogical information, but some of these items may be misleading. One often comes across a list of people who had letters waiting at the post office, under the heading of "Unclaimed Letters." An assumption could be that many of these people had died or moved away from the area. This is not always true. Here are some things to know that will help you not assume what may not be true.

Postage on letters, until 1845, was, for a distance not exceeding 20 miles, 6.5¢; over 30 miles and not exceeding 150 miles, 11.5¢; over 150 miles and not exceeding 500 miles, 20¢; and 25¢ for all distances over 500 miles.

In 1845, a partial reduction was made by Congress and in July 1851, letter postage was reduced to 3¢ per half ounce for all distances. A three-cent stamp and a three-cent coin for convenience in paying postage was at that time ordered by Congress.

During this time, postage for these letters was paid by the receiver. Times were hard and money was precious, so perhaps there wasn't enough money to pay the postage. Considering that these hard-working people sometimes lived miles from town and didn't go to town every day or even every week...or even every month. So, the letters remained at the post office until the next time a trip to town was planned.

* * * * *



DEAR GOD,

Grant me the Serenity

to accept the ancestors I cannot find, and yet
the courage to find the ones I can. and also
The wisdom to document my efforts thoroughly.

1930 CENSUS INFORMATION

The 1930 census will be released in 2002, though the exact date has not been set yet. This is pursuant to the 72 year restriction on public access to protect people's privacy. Only part of this census will be indexed-ten southern states. Nine of the ten are Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North and South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia, there are also seven unnamed counties in both Kentucky and West Virginia.

These indexes were a WPA project to employ people. When they started on the 1930 census, they started in the south. But before they could finish, World War II broke out and the labor force was needed elsewhere.

Apparently the National Archives & Records Administration (NARA) has NOT approached any "commercial" indexers about indexing the 1930 census. Looking further ahead, the 1940 and 1950 censuses have no index at all. Questions about census records can be sent to inquire@nara.gov for answers from the genealogy staff.

(From LaSalle Co. Gen. Guild, Jul-Aug 1998 and MCGS Apr 1999)

DON'TS WHEN USING THE CENSUS

(The following was compiled by Jan DeWitt and was first published in "Westward Into Nebraska", a publication of the Greater Omaha Gen. Soc.)

Census records are easy to use; what can go wrong? Plenty! for both the beginner and the experienced researcher. Here are some negative ideas:

1. Don't stop with the Soundex finding; go back to the original census record.
2. Don't believe the census indexes to be either correct or complete.
3. Don't assume the spelling of the name is as you know it now.
4. Don't assume the relationship to the head of the household is as it is stated. Has anyone found a listing of a "niece-in-law" for instance?
5. Don't assume the wife is the mother of any or all the children listed.
6. Don't assume the ages given provide a birth year.
7. Don't forget to copy the information at the top of the page as well as all the data to the right of the occupation column.
8. Don't forget to copy all the entries for your surname in the county. And better look over the neighbors, too. Four Smiths in a row with Jones in the middle could easily indicate a married daughter and her family.
9. Don't think the records before 1850 can't help.

They may only have the one name listed but at least you'll know how many to look for, for a whole family.

10. Don't think census data gives all the answers.
11. Don't forget the 1880-plus records when you're stuck in the early 1800's. 1880 and later censuses give the birth state of the father and mother.
12. Don't forget the 1890 veterans census if your ancestor was in the military. Widows are also listed.
13. Don't forget about state census records.

The fact that there are 13 "DON'TS" is no coincidence. Any one of them could mean bad luck in research.



THE CENSUS IN 2000

The U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia issued a ruling on Aug. 24, 1998 that the U.S. Government may NOT adjust the 2000 census figures by statistical sampling as planned. This decision resulted from the case of "U.S. House of Representatives vs. Dept. of Commerce." The three-judge panel said the Administration's plan violates the federal census law. It did not rule whether it violates the U.S. Constitution. All censuses 1790 to 1990 have been actual "headcounts". If an actual "headcount" is not made, the names of approximately 10% of the population will be omitted. It's being appealed, of course. (From Los Angeles WGS Newsletter May 1999)

COPYRIGHT INFORMATION

Do you want to protect the family history you've written? You can by writing "copyright" followed by the year in which you began writing and your name. This is called "Common Law Copyright" and will protect your work until printed. When printed the copyright notation need only appear on the title page.

To request Copyright Office publications, including application forms and circulars, write to Library of Congress, Copyright Office, Publication Section, M-455, 101 Independence Ave., SE, Washington DC 20559-6000, or to speak with an information specialist by telephone, call (202) 707-3000. On Internet: www.loc.gov/copyright/cirs/circl.html (From Mower Co Gen News, Feb. 1999, and LAWGS May 1999)



OLD PASSPORTS

Applications are located in National Archives: Write to: Diplomatic Records, Records Branch, National Archives, Room 5-6, Washington, D C 20520

Prairie Pioneers G. S. -- June 1999



It was the first day of the census, and all through the land
 The pollster was ready... A black book in his hand.
 He mounted his horse for a long dusty ride
 His book and some quills were tucked close by his side.
 A long winding ride down a road barely there
 Toward the smell of fresh bread wafting through the air.
 The woman was tired, with lines on her face,
 And wisps of brown hair she tucked back in place.
 She gave him some water as they sat at the table,
 And she answered his questions as best she was able.
 He asked of her children... yes, she had quite a few;
 The oldest was twenty, the youngest not two.
 She held up a toddler with cheeks round and red.
 His sister, she whispered, was napping in bed.
 She noted each person who lived there with pride,
 As she felt the faint stirrings of the wee one inside.
 He noted the sex, the color, the age...
 The marks from the quill soon filled up the page.
 At the number of children, she nodded her head,
 And he saw her lips quiver for the three that were dead.
 The places of birth she "never forgot."
 Was it Kansas, or Utah? Or Oregon... Or not?
 They came from Lithuania, of that she was clear,
 But she wasn't quite sure just how long they'd been here.
 They spoke of employment, of schooling and such.
 They could read some, and write some, though really not much.
 When the questions were answered, his job there was done,
 So he mounted his horse and he rode towards the sun.
 We can almost imagine his voice loud and clear,
 "May God bless you all for another ten years!"
 Now picture a time warp, it's now you and me
 As we search for the people on our family tree.
 We squint at the census and scroll down so slow,
 As we search for that entry from long, long ago.
 Could we only imagine on that long ago day
 That the entries they made would affect us this way?
 If they knew, would they wonder at the yearning we feel
 And the searching that makes them so increasingly real.
 We can hear, if we listen, the words they impart
 Through their blood in our veins and their voice in our heart.

Woodbury Co. G. S. Spring 1999

— Author Unknown

The
 Census
 of
 2000
 /
 hopefully
 will
 be
 different!



Using City Directories to fill in the Gaps

This source provides a yearly view of your ancestors. Older city directories listed all of the residents and businesses in the city, particularly if the town was relatively small. These directories started in the early part of this century. They are found in the city library but often some years might be missing.

Occupations are indicated along with the address and phone number. The genealogist will not have access to the 1930 census until 2002.

The city directories can profit an annual update in a sequence of a family. Through the years it can probably identify a death, if a name is not listed in a following year.

The directories provide the addresses where relatives lived.

It is believed that more can be learned about some families by searching known names of family members that resided in the same or nearby cities. In some cases little or nothing might be found from the directories. So give it a try. But search in more than one year of the directory and it could release much information to follow through for your research.

Prairie Pioneers G. S. June 1999

Veterans cemetery in works

Norfolk Daily News-

June 1, 1999



Those who want to be buried closer to home will benefit

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — Roger Olsen of Alliance was getting tired of seeing fellow veterans buried 150 miles away in South Dakota.

So at a meeting of the local Disabled American Veterans group to which he belonged, Olsen proposed that a cemetery be established in Alliance. The group got behind the effort, as did other area veterans clubs, local civic organizations and politicians.

Three years later, Olsen's mission is about to be accomplished.

A new state cemetery system will be created under a bill signed into law last week. The system will include a yet-to-be developed cemetery on a 20-acre site in Alliance and an expanded cemetery in Grand Island.

Olsen couldn't be happier.

"It's going to send a good positive message to (veterans) that somebody out there cares," he said.

The Alliance cemetery will be developed on donated land at the old U.S. Army base. The Nebraska Veterans' Memorial Cemetery in Grand Island, which accepts only residents at veterans' homes in Grand Island, Norfolk, Omaha and Scottsbluff, will be expanded to accept any veteran from across the state.

The Fort McPherson National Cemetery, located about 12 miles southeast of North Platte near Maxwell, is not included in the newly created state system

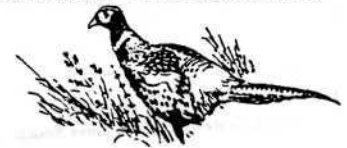
because it accepts veterans from across the country.

The state cemeteries will benefit those veterans who want to be buried closer to home so relatives don't have to travel so far on occasions like Memorial Day, said Keith Fickenscher, director of the state Department of Veterans Affairs.

The distance factor was what motivated Korean War veteran Olsen, 63, to act.

"A lot of the veterans, they don't have a lot and when they bury them up in South Dakota the family gets to go up there for the funeral and that's it," he said.

Similar efforts to expand cemetery space for veterans have been undertaken at the national level as well.



Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps

Many people who are researching their American ancestors have found the Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps very helpful, but they do not provide information for everyone. The maps were designed to give detailed information about commercial districts in cities. Usually residential areas were included only if they were one to three blocks from the business districts. Therefore, getting help from these maps depends upon the following:

- Did your ancestor have a store or a company of some kind?
- Did he live in a city's downtown area?



If so, the maps can reveal a lot about him. They can pinpoint his place of business or residence almost like a modern aerial map. They will show the exact shape and relative size of the building. They will describe its type of

construction: brick, stone, concrete or wood. Sheds, garages, wells, and number of rooms will be shown. The map will reveal the neighbors and other businesses.

The maps were frequently updated. Therefore, if your ancestor's home happens to be on the maps, you can learn when the house was built and how it changed through the years, revealing when rooms were added and porches built on.

The maps were issued during the years 1882 to 1970. They were usually reissued at least once every five years.

Check out your vicinity, historical society, library, a local or university library to see if the maps are readily available.

Much information can be obtained from such detailed maps.

(From Walworth Co Gen Soc.)

Prairie Pioneers Gen.Soc.—June 1999

PAPER PRESERVATION

Serendipity again! One afternoon the writer planned to do some library hours and in the search stumbled on a special book, *PRESERVING YOUR PAPER COLLECTIBLES* by Demaris C. Smith, Betterway Publications, Inc., White Hall, Virginia. 176 pp. 1989. (paperbound) An index and bibliography are included.

The jacket blurb tells it best: "What is a "paper collectible" and why (and how) might you want to preserve it? Paper collectibles include everything from . . .valuable historical documents to . . .theater tickets and children's school papers. The . . . popular collectibles are . . .stamps and first day covers; books and manuscripts; newspapers, comic books, and magazines; sheet music; posters, maps, and photographs; theater playbills and programs; . . .and, . . . sports cards---most notably baseball. . .

"This is a comprehensive guide for anyone who wants to understand the value of what he or she has accumulated and learn how to protect that

value from the . . .effects of time and the environment. The author . . .explains all the criteria that make certain paper items valuable and identifies those categories that are . . .likely to appreciate in value. In a chapter that tells all about paper, she describes the methods used today to preserve . . .for the future.

"The principal focus of the book, . . . is the steps people can take to protect paper items in the home: everything from . . .handling techniques to advice on creating the most acid-free environment possible."

The histories included within each chapter stimulates the need to 'know' and increases the enjoyment of the reading. Although primarily a reference book--it is most readable. The writer hopes to add the book to a personal library. Many family researchers may be familiar with the book but, if not, check with the local librarian--it's an excellent thumbnail guide for preservation of family treasures.

Hannesina GATES SHAFER

Tri-State Corners Gen. Soc.--May 1999

Land Records Research

Contributed by: Rita Bass Smith - 235 Maple St -

Chadron, NE 69339



I received the copies of my great grandfather Dowling's Application for Citizenship and his Citizenship Certificate by writing to the National Archives and requesting Homestead information on the NW1/4 Section 21, Twp 28, Range 4, Pierce County, NE. I had a copy of the "Receiver's Receipt" for his final payment on the land, which gave me the legal description. If you do not know the legal description but know the general location, your local County Clerk's office can help you locate it in Nebraska. My great grandfather Ormsby who homesteaded here in Dawes County, NE does not include half the information that was in the Dowling record. The legal description of the Ormsby Homestead on page 20, Vol 21, 1998 Edition of the Wagoner may be the land filed on by his son, John J. Ormsby, Jr. The address for land records:

National Archives and Records Adm.
7th and Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20408



Civil War and Revolutionary War Records - Address:
National Archives, Military Records Div.
P O Box 10021
Atlanta, GA 30384-0221

NWGS Wagoner Journal - VOL 22 - 1999 Edition

At long last, area veterans get diplomas

Special to the Daily News

LINCOLN — World War II interrupted the educations of former Northeast Nebraskans Elmer Jantzen and Ron Parrish.

After fighting in the war, the men returned to Nebraska but never got their high school diplomas — until now.

At a ceremony at the state Capitol Wednesday, they were given their diplomas as part of a new state initiative called Operation Recognition.

"I was hoping I could finish high school, but I couldn't," the 78-year-old Jantzen said. "I am very glad to receive this."

The diplomas came from the schools they attended in Macy and Madison. Both men now live in Omaha.

Gov. Mike Johanns announced the program, which is intended to give high school diplomas to World War II veterans who left school in the 1930s and 1940s without graduating, served in the armed forces and, for whatever reason, did not complete school.

The veterans may not have met high school requirements needed to graduate, said Keith Fickenscher, director of the Nebraska Department of Veterans Affairs. But that does not mean they are not qualified, he said.

"They earned life experience credits that students in the classroom could never duplicate," Fickenscher said. "They learned geography by traveling to foreign lands they would otherwise have known only in textbooks. Biology was a lesson learned when they gave medical attention to their wounded buddies."

There are no estimates as to how many veterans may qualify for the diplomas. It is limited to World War II veterans, state Commissioner of Education Doug Christensen said, because veterans of more recent wars still have time to go back to school.

"On the basis of what they have contributed to our country, they deserve this long overdue recognition," Christensen said.

Operation Recognition is a joint effort of the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Education. The idea for the program came after Fickenscher said he read about a similar one in Massachusetts.

All Nebraska schools are being asked to encourage students to identify relatives, neighbors or people in the community who served in the war but were unable to complete high school.

The goal is for schools to hold an assembly on Veterans Day in November to present diplomas to veterans.

Jantzen completed eight years of grade school in Madison, leaving school during the Depression to work on a relative's farm to support his mother, who was ill.

He entered the U.S. Army Air Corps in 1942 and served until 1945.

During that time, he was a waist gunner on a B-17 before transferring to the 379th Aero Material Squadron, stationed in Bassingbourn, England. He married his wife, Dorothy, there 53 years ago.

He is a past commander of VFW Post 2503 in Omaha. He also is a member of American Legion Post 112, the 40 and 8, and Disabled American Veterans. After his service, he drove a truck for United AG for 23 years.

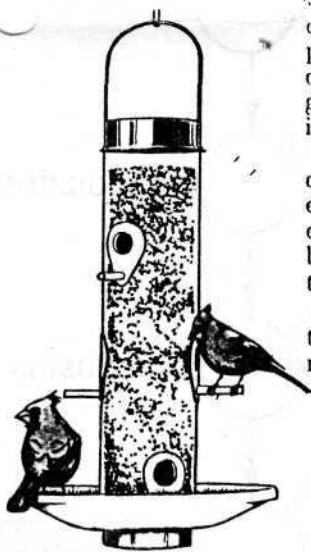
Parrish completed the 10th grade at Macy but had to quit to work on the family farm. He entered the U.S. Army in 1942 at the age of 21, serving until his honorable discharge in 1945.

He saw action in the Battle of the Bulge in Europe. Twice, Parrish was driving trucks when they were destroyed by land mines, resulting in permanent injuries to his back.

Parrish received eight battle stars for his participation in eight military campaigns in Sicily, Naples, Africa, Rome, the Rhineland and southern France.

Following the service, he was public property superintendent for the city of Omaha.

As a 16-year service officer for VFW Post 2504 in Omaha he completed hundreds of applications for veterans' aid.



Norfolk Daily News, May 14, 1999

* * * * *

Madison County Genealogical Society members who have received Nebraska State Genealogical Society Certificates of Appreciation.

1978 Myrtle Eddy	1986 Elvira Geske	1993 Don & Dorothy Monson
1979 Joyce L. Borgelt	1987 Leatta Stortvedt	1994 Bob Plisek
1980 Harlow Butcher	1987 Marie Rave	1994 Jeanne Allison-Rix
1981 Margerie Fuhrman	1988 Lottie Klein	1995 Rev. Walter M. Pinnt
1982 Eunice Coover	1988 Dee Sewell	1997 JoNelle Linnaus
1984 Mary Ellen Haas	1989 Mary Carlisle	1999 Harold Lyon
1985 Joan Moody	1990 Franklin Geske	1999 Audrey Polenske
1986 Joyce Barlow	1992 Ardith Logan	

CONGRATULATIONS!!!! to these loyal members of our organization.

STANDARDS FOR SOUND GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH

(Recommended by the National Genealogy Society)
Remembering always that they are engaged in a quest for truth, family history researchers consistently.....

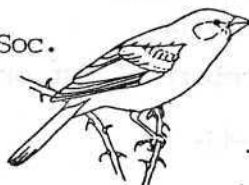
- ◆ Record the source for each item of information you collect.
- ◆ Test every hypothesis or theory against credible evidence, and reject those that are not supported by the evidence.
- ◆ Seek original records or reproduced images of them when there is reasonable assurance they have not been altered, as a basis for their research conclusions.
- ◆ Use compilations, communications and published works, whether paper or electronic, primarily for their value as guides to locating the original records.
- ◆ State something as a fact only when it is supported by convincing evidence, and identify the evidence when communicating the fact to others.
- ◆ Limit words like "probable" or "possible" any statement that is based on less than convincing evidence, and state the reasons for concluding that it is probable or possible.
Avoid misleading other researchers by either intentionally or carelessly distributing or publishing inaccurate information.
- ◆ State carefully and honestly the results of their own research, and acknowledge all use of other researchers' work.
- ◆ Recognize the collegial nature of genealogical research by making their work available to others through publication, or by placing copies in appropriate libraries or repositories, and by welcoming critical comment.
- ◆ Consider with open minds new evidence or the comments of others on their work and the conclusions they have reached.

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The National Archives offers a free pamphlet titled *Research in the Land Entry Files of the General Land Office*, a guide to record Group 49. This 20 page guide explains how our ancestors obtained land from the U.S. Gov. Visit the website of Nat. Archives and request leaflet number 67.

This handy-dandy chart has appeared in about a dozen genealogical publications recently, lastly in the Larmer County Genealogical Society (PO Box 9502, Fort Collins, CO 80525-9502) publication.

via Prairie Pioneers Gen. Soc.
June 1999



WHAT IS 'REMOVED'?

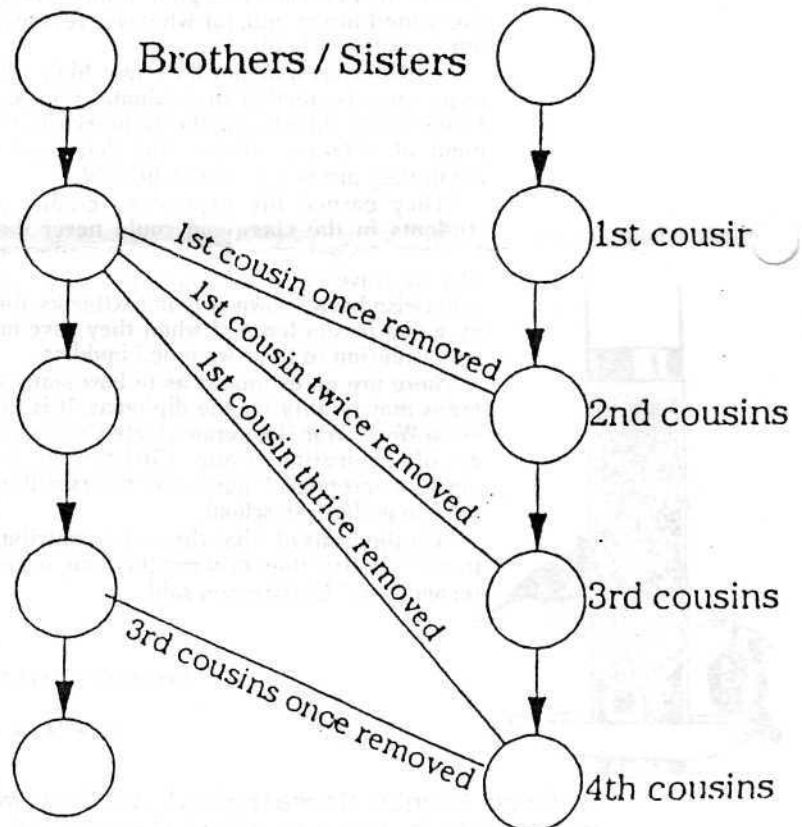
The term 'removed' is often cause for confusion in determining relationships. Simply put, it means that the two people are from different generations. You and your first cousin are in the same generation (two generations younger than your grandparents), so the word "removed" is not used to describe your relationship.

The words "once removed" mean that there is a difference of one generation. For example, your mother's first cousin is your first cousin, once removed. This is because your mother's first cousin is one generation younger than your grandparents and you are two generations younger than your grandparents. This one-generation difference equals "once removed".

"Twice removed" means that there is a two-generation difference. You are two generations younger than a first cousin of your grandmother, so you and your grandmother's first cousin are first cousins, twice removed.

(Family Tree Maker Newsletter, Aug '97)

COUSIN CHART



Children of first cousins are second cousins.
Children of second cousins are third cousins.
Children of third cousins are fourth cousins, etc.

The term "removed" is not used as long as the cousins referred to are in the same generation.

If cousins are a generation apart then the term

Dashes and Slashes—

What do dashes and slashes really mean in dates?
There is a real difference. A dash, as in 1774-5 or even longer, 1774-8 means a period of time which an event (such as date of birth,) may have occurred.

A slash -as "born 18 January 1734/5, refers to a period when some people followed the "Old Julian Calendar", in which the year started on March 25th, and others used the new "Gregorian Calendar", in which the year started with January 1st. This happened between 1582-1752. This "double -dating" involved January 1 to March 24, the rest of the year was the same on both calendars.

(Tri-State Genealogical Society)

A Good Genealogical Tip—It is well to be alert for occupations being capitalized as identification following a name without a comma. Very few people in the colonial period had three names. John William Carpenter in 1785 was probably John Williams, carpenter. John Henry Taylor may have been John Henry, tailor. Some wills and deeds have been found to have been indexed by occupation, not the surname.

(Via North Central Illinois Gen. Soc.)

Prairie Pioneer Gen.Soc.—June 1999

YANKEE IMAGES SOUTH

Do you have a photo of a Civil War veteran from the North? If you have, the Military History Institute would like a copy of it. If you do not have one, the Institute might be able to supply you with such. Contact: U. S. Military History Institute, Attention: Curator, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania 17013

NATIONAL CEMETERY SYSTEM

The web site of the Department of Veterans Affairs can be located at:
<http://www.va.gov/cemetery/index/htm>.

On this site you can find a list of the national cemeteries nationwide, arranged alphabetically by state then name of the cemetery. The list includes addresses and phone numbers.

Source: South Suburban Gen. & Hist. Soc., News via The Illiana Gen. & Hist Soc. (II.) Vol. 34, No. 2, Summer 1998; Westward Into Nebraska, Greater Omaha Genealogical Society (NE) Vol. 23, No 5 Jan. 1999



WHAT IS SOUNDEX?

The Soundex is a system begun during Franklin Roosevelt's presidency. His administration wanted to put many people to work in government programs. One of these programs was the WPA [Work Program Administration], which employed people to do many things for the government, including organizing the Soundex.

These workers each took the census records, one county at a time and wrote out a filing card for each household, naming all people listed in the census. Included on the card are: name, age location, birthday and relationship to the head of the household for every person in every household. Not all information on the original census is given, but enough to identify the members of each household. Every surname was given a code. These codes give numerical value to each letter of the alphabet.

The workers began with the 1900 census and listed each household in the entire United States on a separate file card. This system enables us to look at one surname in a whole state and find the exact locality of all persons in the state with that surname. Then we can go to the census records for that county, find the page listed in the Soundex and view all of the information collected by the census taker. No longer it is necessary to spend hours and hours looking at every entry, county by county to find the right entry.

Census records from 1880, 1900 and 1910 have been soundexed as of 1995. Other records will be processed in the future.

Soundex coding guide and more information will appear in next issue.

SOURCE: Genealogical Society of Wayne, County, Nebraska Volume 4, Number 14, January 1999.

NEW BRASS KEY Winter, 1999





Reconsidering Birth Announcements

In this northeast corner of Nebraska, our local newspaper publishes birth announcements from the regional hospital, from other area hospitals, and from people who have family in the area but who themselves no longer live here. These birth announcements can detail family relationships and are limited to one snapshot per birth. The mother usually gives information for the announcement which will appear in the newspaper and on the birth certificate.

But for our genealogical purposes, the information in these documents should be considered reliable only to the extent that it is what the documents show. For example, if a couple is in the process of divorcing and the woman has a baby, certain legal paperwork must be signed before either the birth certificate or the birth announcement can be released. Depending on the mother's relationship at the time of admission to the hospital, a woman could register as Miss Peters, her maiden name; Mrs. Frank, her first married name; Mrs. Jones, her legal name until her divorce is finalized; or even as Mrs. Smith, foreseeing a marriage to the actual father of her child. The hospital would need to gather a number of notarized signatures. The hospital would seek out Mr. Jones to verify he is not the father of Mrs. Jones' baby, so the baby's name would not be Jones. Then the hospital would try to get a signature from Mr. Smith, legally establishing paternity. If the hospital can not help establish paternity, the birth certificate and birth announcement would only list the mother's name. How a hospital establishes and records these facts would depend on policies and procedures of the particular hospital, the norms for the area, and state law. Some areas or states will let woman "name" the father of the child; in some states, the father becomes the man the woman is living with at the time of the child's birth; and in other states, paternity must be legally established. The policies are becoming more uniform because of federal and state child support laws, automatic payroll deductions, and income tax deductions. Because of all these factors, any announcement in the paper should be reconsidered when doing genealogical research.

Some birth announcements may pose genealogical problems for AngloAmerican researchers when the birth parents are from other cultural groups. For instance, some groups use different naming patterns for children. Our regional hospital uses translators to help those who are non-English speaking. As a result, how a birth certificate or a newspaper announcement is filled out depends on the translator. In some families the child could be known by a double last name, like Gomez-Hernandez, but in the AngloAmerican tradition, the child would be known by the surname Hernandez. Now this could even change if the family moves into an area with a larger ethnic culture with which they are familiar. Then the family might begin using names for the baby which until then had not been recorded. For the researcher, knowledge of these factors can even aid in tracking families who move from one location to another.

The cautious researcher will take into consideration the variables which determine what information appears in birth announcements and on birth certificates.



John Kielty



FREE GENEALOGY PACKET

The National Archives and Records Administration offers a free genealogy packet by writing their Publications Distribution, Room G9, Dept. P, Seventh Street and Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20408; phone 1-800-234-8861 --from The Clan Digger, Jul 1998; via The Illuminator, Nov. 1998

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THE DASH

(Author Unknown)

I read of a man who stood to speak
at the funeral of a friend
He referred to the dates on her tombstone
From the beginning to the end.



(You could be at ("dash mid-range"))

If we could just slow down enough to consider
what's true and real.
and always try to understand they
way other people feel.

He noted that first came the date of birth
and he spoke of the last date with tears
but he said what mattered most of all
Was the dash between those years

And be less quick to anger and show
appreciation more
and love the people in our lives like we've never
loved before.

For that dash represents all the time
that she spent alive on earth.
And now only those who loved her know
what that line is worth.

If we treat each other with respect
and more often wear a smile...
Remembering that this special dash might
only last awhile.

For it matters not how much we own,
the cars.. the house... the cash.
What matters is how we live and love
and how we spend our dash.

So, when your eulogy has been read
with your life's actions to rehash
Would you be proud of the things they say
about how you spent your dash?

So think about this long and hard.
are there things you'd like to change
For you never know how much time is left.

-borrowed from South Suburban Gen. Society News
July 1998. via "Twigs and Branches," North Central
IL, Gen. Soc.. Dec.1998. via LLCGS Newsletter Vol -
No .5 - Page 4 May 1999

*
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*



"That's your tummy, Jeffy.
Your heart is up higher."