

DAVIS COUNTY GENEALOGY SOCIETY

P.O. BOX 94

BLOOMFIELD, IOWA 52537

VOLUME XII NO.3

SUMMER 1994 JULY AUGUST SEPT.

Davis County Genealogical Society, P.O. Box 94, Bloomfield, Iowa 52537. Regular Meetings: Third Thursday of the month, 7:30PM Public Library Basement.

1994	President: Jerry Greene	Treasurer: Verle Arnold
Officers	V-President: Pat Howk	Corresponding Secretary:
	Secretary: Alice Huffman	Darrell Kerby

To the members of DCGS:

I think we have probably had a banner summer in the numbers of family researchers that have been through the Library. Even had a couple of "new" relatives myself.

The newest feature for our genealogical library is a new "slightly used" microfilm reader-printer. As you know our efforts to obtain grants have been fruitless. The salesman from Koch Brothers in Cedar Rapids was on the lookout for a good used machine. The reader we got was only a few months old because an insurance company was switching to a rather exotic state of the art system and would no longer require it. Since we have been actively trying to buy a reader-printer, the cost of what we wanted increased about \$1000 to about \$7200. With the microfiche adapter, we paid \$2650 for the reader. The money we had gotten from the reprinting of the 1882 Davis County History paid for it. It really is nice just to punch a button and out comes the copy. No fluid to fill or pump up when you want a copy.

We are always looking for ways to add to and improve the library. If you have any suggestions about what we could do, why not tell us? Of course, all things are not possible immediately.

Remember, The Bloomfield Democrat is sponsoring a picture book about Davis County. They are looking for pictures and some accompanying text. Even though they will not be able to publish every one submitted, the more they have to choose from, the better the book.

Jerry S. Greene,
President

SOME OF THE EARLY FAMILIES

George W. Lester was one of the earliest settlers in the Drakeville community. He entered the land upon which one of his daughters, Mrs. W. A. Wishard, still lives, in 1843, and built a log cabin. In 1844 he moved his family from Pike county, Illinois, in a covered wagon to the claim. There the large family was reared and among the honored teachers in the old school house described were three of his daughters, Elizabeth, Isabel and Emily to whom the writer is much indebted.

Of all the early arrivals in the community of which I have any knowledge, Samuel B. Downing was the earliest. White settlers were not permitted west of Van Buren county prior to May 1, 1843, because of stipulations in the treaty made with the Sac and Fox Indians. But Mr. Downing came into Iowa in 1838 from Pennsylvania, and not a great while after was in the Drakeville community. He finally established a home on "The Road" directly west of Drakeville about two and a half miles, where he lived many years, removing late in life to Bloomfield. He was the repository of all of the first things. He assisted in the first breaking of prairie sod and the first ever turned in that locality was on what afterwards became the John Clarke farm, and was just across the road south of where the house on that farm still stands.

A peculiarity in the life of Mr. Downing was that as a youth he traveled alone on horseback from Iowa down into Old Mexico through a wild and a practically uninhabited country. What prompted the solitary horseman, whether curiosity, the love of adventure, or the thought of a new location, I never could ascertain. Later he made another trip to Mexico but this time as a U. S. soldier in the war with Mexico. He was at the battle of Buena Vista and the storming of the City of Mexico where he received a saber wound in the shoulder.

He was honored frequently by the people of Davis county, serving them as representative in the 18th, 19th 27th and 28th General Assemblies.

Ezra Kirkham's life was from choice a life of hard work. There may, indeed, have been behind it the urge of necessity, but without that stimulus, his would have been an active life. He lived on "The Road" three-quarters of a mile east of town. He built the original frame house there, a rather large one for that day. He had, however, previously opened up two farms two miles directly north of Drakeville and built on each of them a house of almost exactly the same size and plan as the one just mentioned. One of these he sold to Wm. Van Benthusen, the other to Hiram Pagett. Kirkham was a precise, careful, methodical man. He was an example to his fellow farmers of that day. There was nothing slovenly about his farm. It was clean. His fields were like gardens before he planted and his corn rows were straight to perfection. As might be anticipated he was a rather austere man.

There was no effusiveness about him--no humor. He did his work in his own exclusive atmosphere which did not appear particularly warm and inviting to others. Notwithstanding that he acquired the sobriquet of "Old Ezra" he was in much esteem as a strong, upstanding man. The forcefulness of his life is strikingly manifest in the fact that he made these farms, one of them in the edge of the Soap Creek woods, and built these three houses within a few years, the largest I think, the community has known even to this day, all, however, replaced by others some years ago. He must have come to the Drakeville community at least as early as 1847-8 or 9, because Hiram Pagett, coming from alta, Morgan county, Ohio, purchased and occupied the south one of the two north farms in 1851. It was on these farms that the first orchards in the community were set out by Kirkham:

Pagett was a rather small man of fine mould. He was quiet, unobtrusive, gentle. The finer things of life, the beautiful, appealed to him. He loved trees, plants, fruits and flowers and cultivated them. Flowers in abundance in their season were always about his home. It was, indeed, surprising for that day the amount of really fine fruit he produced. Four boys and two daughters constituted his family. The boys did the work on the farm which left him free to cultivate his esthetic faculty. He always seemed to me an old man yet he lived long afterwards, dying in his ninety-fifth year at the home of his daughter in Drakeville.

B. F. Updike, a very good man, kindly disposed toward all men, and who, if a good life counts in the Beyond, expressing the materialistic theory as to such, certainly is in high favor there. He also came from Malta, Ohio. It is hardly to be resisted that there was something of a romance involved in this coming; he followed so soon, in 1852, the Pagett family, whom he must have known at Malta, and early in 1853 he married Mary. They lived many years in a log house just east and near the Pagett home when he then cleared out a farm immediately south of Drakeville, where, after seventy years, his life closed.

Charles Clarke, a brother of John Clarke, came from Indiana in 1854. His farm joined that of this brother on the east. He was a Mexican War veteran, and was in the Vicksburg campaign in the War of the Rebellion with the rank of Captain.

Wm. Van Benthusen was from Indiana and came to the farm adjoining Pagetts, I think, in 1853. He was an exceedingly strong man physically, tremendously energetic and resolute, abounded in good humor, kind and affectionate, intolerant of wrong, despising injustice. In defense of the moral forces and the right things of life he was no mean atagonist. He was intensely patriotic. In later years during the war no one who knew him can ever forget how kindly, affectionate and helpful he was to "the boys" in the army and how great his anxiety for them and for the Union cause. What a shadow fell upon his life and Aunt Fannie's (they were the writer's uncle and aunt) when two of their stalwart sons at close to the same time died of sickness in the army and also a little son

at home. Then after a few more years two grown daughters, while visiting a sister in Illinois, were drowned while boating. Tragedy upon tragedy. With what unevenness do the hardships and griefs of life sometimes seem to be dispensed. Afterwards, Uncle Will moving to Bloomfield served as County Auditor and eventually died there after a long and most worthy life.

Another most worthy and influential citizen of the Drakeville community whose farm joined Van Benthusen's was Horatio A. Wonn. He came from Zanesville, Ohio, in 1853. Very soon after, he built a frame house out of native timber, as all houses at that time in that locality were, and for some years after. In this house he lived until his death in 1888. Mr. Wonn was distinguished by the fact that he was one of the agents of the John Brown underground railway and his place was one of the stations on that mysterious road. Negroes escaping north to freedom were sheltered and protected there and assisted on their way to the next station. Of course Wonn was then a republican. But in reconstruction days he was greatly influenced by Horce Greeley and the New York Tribune, and, strange as it may appear, he was at last led to affiliation with the democratic party. In that faith he was twice elected to State Senate, serving in the 14th, 15th, 16th and 17th General Assemblies. He was a man well informed on public questions and as to public men in general and was entertaining in conversation. He was sincere man of high character, greatly esteemed.

He was a lover of fine stock and, was a breeder of Shorthorn cattle and it is believed, held the first sale of pedigreed cattle ever held in the county and was also the first exclusive breeder of Jersey cattle.

An early emigrant to the community whose home was established just two miles north of Drakeville was Alexander Breeding. He came in the spring of 1848 from Shelby county, Indiana. His son, silas, came at the same time and made his home two and a half miles northeast of town. These were very worthy families and for many years dwelt in the community a credit to it. But none remain there now. This seems strange when one reflects that in these two families there were twenty-four children. Only two, one of each family, now survive and in counties distant from Davis. This serves to call to mind that there were many large families in those days. The writer readily calls to mind six of ten children or more, and six others of six to eight each, in the Drakeville community. Only once in many hundred are there families so numerous any more. Like many things of pioneer days, their representatives appear no more.

There were two excellent families of Elliotts--George and John, who came early from Pennsylvania. John established himself in a long, low, log house a mile and a quarter northeast of Drakeville. George's home was a mile north of town. He started the first nursery in Davis county and he or his son Frank in partnership with John Clarke, bought and used in the community the first corn planter, a crude looking affair. Here it may be said

that Henry Taylor owned the first moving machine, called the Russell Screw Power, and John Lockman the first reaper, the McCormick Self Raker, Elliotts (George) had the first cane mill and made the first sorghum molasses.

Here one is reminded of a tragedy. Willis Morgan and his family came some time before the war to Drakeville from Indiana. He was a blacksmith. The track of the Rock Island Railroad in the west part of town runs over the spot where his house stood. The Morgan family was a most extimable one. One of the girls, I think the oldest one, Married John Elliott, one time clerk of the District Court of Appanoose county, and her son is the present clerk. Many years ago, in the night time, their home was destroyed by fire and Willis Morgan and his wife lost their lives in the conflagration.

John P. Gaston come to Drakeville from Morgan county, Ohio, in 1856, and no one having continued the "tavern" business he opened up an undertaking establishment in the erstwhile "Routh House" and administered the burial rites for the departed in that community for fifty-four years, or until his death in 1910,--a remarkable record. All caskets, or coffins, they were called, were for many years made by him not of native walnut lumber. Mr. Gaston never looked like he had a very firm hold on life for himself, being very tall and very slender, yet he lived to be seventy-nine years of age. He was a quiet man and a good citizen. His widow still lives in Drakeville at the age of eighty-six years.

The family of thomas Lockman were early arrivals in the Drakeville community, coming from Hendrix County, Indiana, in the fall of 1847. Mr. Lockman purchased and settled upon a claim adjoining the town site of Drakeville on the west. The family consisted of one son, John B., and six sisters. Of this family one still survives, the youngest one, Mrs. Joseph Higbee of Bloomfield. John B. married Nancy M. Drake, thus becoming allied with the Drake family, and for years was engaged in farming and stock business and later a general mercantile business also in the town under the firm name of Drake and Lockman. This business in all of its features was successful and for many years the name of Lockman filled a large place in the community. Thomas Lockman died at Drakeville in 1862, and John B. in 1896, but for very many more years the name and the large farm immediately adjoining will be inspearably connected with earliest days in Drakeville.

In about 1852 or 1853 the little State of Rhode Island made a contribution to Drakeville in the person of the Sayles and Nightingale families. The New England States made no other contribution to Drakeville pioneer life so far as I am able to recall. Indeed, I doubt whether the community has ever at any time had a single other Yankee representative. Yet my knowledge of the last fifty years is not nearly so accurate as my memory of more than sixty years ago. These representatives were of the true, genuine, Yankee type. There were in all six I know, and I think seven of the Sayles children and down to the last one and the last

day of the speech of each one of the, like Peter's betrayed them. It was distinctly New England. Nightingale was a son-in-law of Sayles and before coming to the far-inland country had been a sailor on the stormy Atlantic.

How strangely and how quickly were our western communities sometime made up. In these recollection not a larger space than three by five miles is included, nor any time later than 1857, except in extending over facts, because it was found impractical: yet into this small space came representatives of six states. These were the very familiar names of the community. These never went on or went back. They stayed and made the life of the Drakeville people. I do not recall but one who ever went back. Ben Chambers, from Indiana, who lived in the Lester neighborhood, after a few years, returned.

The family that did the most in the way of developing the community under consideration, the most forward moving and enterprising of all, the one that contributed most to the common good not only of that day, but also of the future, the one that really gave Drakevill a permanent name and place in the history of the State, was the Drake. They were capable people. They could and did do things. Withal they were most estimable people. They were distinguished by high character, right purposes. The town by any other name would have won its place because of them alone.

John Adams Drake and Harriet Jane Oneal, the founders of this family, and of the town of Drakeville (the name of the town is Drakeville, not Drakesville) were originally from the South. Both were born in North Carolina and were married there in 1827. They moved to Tennessee, then to Illinois, then to Ft. Madison, Iowa, then to where is now the town of Drakevill, in 1846. The town was platted February 12, 1847, on Drake's land. He engaged in merchandising, superintending farming, established a mill for manufacturing flour and meal and sawing lumber. After some years it was destroyed by fire. His business ventures were prosperous. Some of them engaged in after some years, under the name of Drake & Sons. In after years they extended them to other places. He established the first bank in Drakevill. He served the County as its Representative in the Fourth General Assembly. The business ability and character of the sons is discoverable in their careers as bankers and merchants in Drakeville, Unionville, Centerville and Albia, in the brilliant military career of Francis Marion in the War of the Rebellion, in his railroad building career, in his generosity in the matter of assisting in establishing and developing Drake University and his general charitable, helpful life and in his political carer as Governor of Iowa. General Drake was sixteen years old when the family came to Drakeville. It was there that the substantial foundations of his life, directed through his young manhood, by the forceful personalities of his father and mother, were laid, and which enabled him to become, measured by things done, far and away the first of all of the men who have every lived in that community. It was the Drake family, as such, its men and its women, that made the locality known away

from home. This is not to say that all the people mentioned herein did not contribute largely to the wholesome, high-minded life that has ever distinguished the community. They did. Only now and then in far distant and widely separated places can one of their descendants be found. They are gone, all gone. The writer has seen them pass and knows that they handed on a community possessing all the best American characteristics, traditions and ideals. Nor will he allow it to be said that the men of that day contributed one whit more to such result than did the women who have not been specifically mentioned. They did not. The brunt of the world, its greater hardships, its great trials of wearing endurance, its greatest responsibilities are borne by the women and much more especially so in the early or pioneer days. The immortalities of that time belong to the Aunt Janes, the Aunt Rhodas, the Aunt Harriets, the Aunt Margarets, the Aunt Fannies and Aunt Marys and many others.

It was not my purpose, after I saw the length to which these reminiscences were going to reach, to get at all into the Civil War period, but as I close I have just now written down the names of all those I can at once recall who from the first to the last, enlisted in the army from the little space covered by the community considered. The names are forty. I saw them drill. I saw them go away. Some of them sleep at Pea Ridge, some at Donelson, some at Shiloh, some at Vicksburg, some at Atlanta, some at other fields, some by the wayside on long marches, other here, other there. They made the community glorious forever. May the Drakeville Community of the long future ever be a credit to the men and women of the early days.

Geo. W. Clark

(This was copied from the Pioneer History of Davis County, Iowa pages 64-69)

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS

Social security numbers can help to determine the locality of a person's residence. The first three digits of the number indicate the state in which an applicant resided at the time of application.

001-003 - NH	261-267 - FL	503-504 - SD
004-007 - ME	268-302 - OH	505-508 - NE
008-009 - VT	303-317 - IN	509-515 - KS
010-034 - MA	318-361 - IL	516-517 - MT
035-039 - RI	387-399 - MI/WI	518-519 - ID
040-049 - CT	400-407 - KY	520 - WY
050-134 - NY	408-415 - TN	521-524 - CO
135-158 - NJ	416-424 - AL	525/585 - NM
159-211 - PA	425-428/587 - MS	526-527 - AZ
212-220 - MD	429-432 - AR	528-529 - UT
221-222 - DE	433-439 - LA	530 - NV
223-231 - VA	440-448 - OK	531-539 - WA
Part 232- WV/NC	449-467 - TX	540-544 - OR
233-236 - WV	468-477 - MN	545-573 - CA
237-246 - NC	478-485 - IA	574 - AK
247-251 - SC	486-500 - MO	575-576 - HI
252-260 - GA	501-502 - ND	577-579 - DC
	700-728 - RR Retirement Board	

Lee County Genealogy
Society of Iowa

P.O. Box 303
Keokuk, IA
52632-0303

30TH YEAR ANNIVERSARY

Saturday, September 24, 1994

Trinity United Methodist Church
2330 Plank Road, Keokuk, Iowa
Fellowship Hall (Use back parking lot - Handicapped Accessible)

- 8:00 - 9:00 Registration**
- 9:00 - 9:10 Welcome/Introductions:** (Recognition of Past Presidents)
- 9:10 - 10:10 Keith & Connie Street:** Iowa Genealogical Society and its chapters
- 10:10 - 10:30 Break/Browse**
- 10:30 - 12:00 Keith & Connie Street (continue)**
- 12:00 - 1:30 Lunch** (Light lunch included in registration fee or bring brown bag)
- 1:30 - 2:30 Dr Lillian Snyder:** Icarian Colony at Nauvoo and French Ancestry Research
- 2:30 - 2:45 Break/Browse/Door Prizes**
- 2:45 - 4:15 Herman Radloff:** German Research and translation

Registration Fee \$5:00
To Pre-register or reserve a free exhibit table
return lower portion to the society

Name _____

Address _____

Tracking Elusive Ancestors

1994 Iowa Genealogical Society Conference

Friday, September 30 - Saturday, October 1

Iowa Valley Continuing Education Conference Center
3700 South Center Street (Highway 14), Marshalltown, Iowa

[Continuing Education College Credits Available]



Two days of stimulating lectures on a variety of family history topics

Doors open at 8 a.m. Conference begins at 9 a.m.

Featured speakers

Trudy Peterson, Archivist of the United States, is our keynote speaker on Friday. Her topic will be The National Archives, Washington, D.C.

Elizabeth Shown Mills, of Tuscaloosa, Ala., is an instructor at Samford University, editor of the National Genealogical Society Quarterly, and noted author and lecturer.

Friday, September 30

Your choice of workshops include:

10:45 - 11:45	#1 Armchair Genealogy	<i>Daniel Hay</i>
	#2 Research Sources for Czech & Slavic Ancestors	<i>Marilyn Sychra</i>
	#3 Finding Your Swedish Roots	<i>Jane Wickham/Bonnie Bloom</i>
	#4 Before You Turn on the Computer	<i>Joyce Brown</i>
	#5 Exploring the Mid-Continent Library	<i>Helen Lodge</i>
	#6 Finding Your Civil War Ancestor	<i>Steve Meyer</i>
2:30 - 3:30	#7 Migration Patterns	<i>Scharlott Blevins</i>
	#8 New England Research	<i>Alice Sloane</i>
	#9 Help! I Want to Get Started	<i>Lorna Baldner</i>
	#10 Discover Your Relationship to a U.S. President	<i>Keith Street</i>
	#11 Your Genes 'Become' You - Family Health Pedigree	<i>Marge Moothart</i>
	#12 Choosing Computer Software	<i>Tom Boelling</i>
3:45 - 4:45	#13 Researching at the IGS Library	<i>Sue Cochran</i>
	#14 Computerizing Your Genealogy	<i>Daniel Hay</i>
	#15 So You Want to Teach Genealogy	<i>Panel Discussion</i>
	#16 Researching Church Records	<i>Ray Gooldy</i>
	#17 Sources for Adoption Research	<i>Marilyn Sychra</i>
	#18 Using Census Records	<i>Loren Horton</i>
	#19 Court Houses and Public Records	<i>Ted Sloane</i>
5:00 - 6:00	Annual Meeting	(yearly reports, election results, forum for members)
6:30 - 8:30	I.G.S. Awards Banquet, followed by "A Year With a Pioneer Family" performed by <i>Living History Farms Readers' Theatre</i>	

Saturday, October 1

No workshops. Elizabeth Shown Mills will present:

Genealogical Problem Solving: Professional Techniques for Everyday Success

Evaluating Your Evidence: How to Avoid Asking 'Where in the Sam Hill Did I Get THAT From?'

The Elusive Ancestor: There's No Such Thing as 'Too Poor to Trace'

Finding Females: Wives, Mothers, Daughters, Sisters, and Paramours!

EXHIBITORS WILL OFFER A VARIETY OF GENEALOGICAL SUPPLIES BOTH DAYS

REGISTRATION
"Tracking Elusive Ancestors"

Sept. 30 & Oct. 1, 1994

(Please add \$10 late fee after Sept. 17)

Payment must accompany registration.

Make check to: Iowa Valley Continuing Education. Mail check and this form to:

I.G.S. Conference, IVCE, P.O. Box 536, Marshalltown, IA 50158.

Concerns or questions should be directed to 1-800-284-4823.

<u>Registration Fees</u>	<u>Member</u>	<u>Non-member</u>
<i>ALL EVENTS</i>	(\$60) _____	(\$75) _____
Friday lectures & lunch	(\$40) _____	(\$45) _____
Saturday lectures & lunch	(\$30) _____	(\$35) _____
Friday Banquet	(\$13) _____	(\$15) _____

Please indicate your workshop preference. You are not obligated to attend the sessions chosen.

10:45 _____ 2:30 _____ 3:45 _____

Davis County Genealogical Society
P. O. Box 94
Bloomfield, IA 52537