



HANDOUTS TABLE OF CONTENTS

July 12, 2016

<u>Handout Introduction</u>	Page 2
<u>Schaumburg Township District Library (STDL) Genealogy Blog</u>	Page 4
<u>Northwest Suburban Genealogy Society (NWSGS) Program for August 27, 2016</u>	Page 5
<u>DuPage County Genealogical Society (DCGS) Program for September 21, 2016</u>	Page 6
<u>Computer Assisted Genealogy Group of Northern Illinois (CAGGNI) Program for July 16, 2016</u>	Page 7
<u>Schaumburg Township District Library (STDL) August 9, 2016 Genealogy Program</u>	Page 8
<u>Financial Firms Offer Family History to Ultra-Wealthy Clients</u>	Page 9
<u>Why Was the Information Removed from Online?</u>	Page 11
<u>1950 Census Enumeration Maps Going Online</u>	Page 13
<u>"The Homesteaders"</u>	Page 15
<u>"Finding the Stories of the Fallen in World War II"</u>	Page 17

July 12, 2016 Schaumburg Township District Library Genealogy Program "Handouts"

Hi Everyone,

This document should be considered as the program "handouts" document for our July 12, 2016 Schaumburg Township District Library Genealogy Program.

What does this really mean?

Prior to this "new" process, our program handouts would actually be paper handouts that were based on me often printing up the first page related to a web site that I wanted to mention. Then on the paper for the web site I would handwrite what things of importance are associated with the web site that the researcher should know. Maybe it was a new web site or maybe an important date related to a significant event or maybe a new database was released. Whatever it was I noted it on the paper of the first page of the web site.

The source for the vast majority of what is in the Handouts is the monthly Schaumburg Township District Library Genealogy Newsletter. From within this larger document I extract information on upcoming genealogy programs local to our area, important items from Dick Eastman's Online Genealogy Blog, as well as I summarize some key periodical articles of interest that I think are important to be aware of. The Handouts simply provide me with the opportunity to focus in on what I consider are important genealogical bits of information important to the researcher as well as to share my own personal thoughts on why it is of note.

You will also see a small redesign of the PDF Handout package. You will now see a Table of Contents on Page 1 listing what the following "handouts" are by topic. Within the Table of contents you can quickly access the handouts by using the hyperlinks and bookmarks that will get you quickly to your handout of interest. You will no longer have to scroll through the entire package of handouts to get to the one you want.

I also plan on use the "yellow highlight" tool within Word and highlight certain areas of these notes that I think are important to note. The visual highlighting will take your eyes to areas of importance to note. Please let me know if you think this OK or if it may be a distraction? I thought I would give it a try.

Going forward I plan on creating this document on a monthly basis that will include my notes regarding a web site of interest and a link to the web site itself.

The reader of this "handout" list can themselves then read my overview summary of the site and then link to the site directly themselves to get more details or print out what they want from site.

I will clearly identify my own comments when the handout is a combination of material that came from some other source such as Dick Eastman's blog as well as my own comments. I will indicate my comments in Italics, clearly marked so the reader can distinguish between the original verbiage and my own comments. If a handout item was completely created by me then you will see that noted at the top.

In this case, the entirety of the handout was created by me and will not be shown in Italics.

This program "Handout" information will then be uploaded to the Schaumburg Township District Library Genealogy Blog that is titled "Genealogy with Tony". This blog will be accessible from the library's main web site page at www.schaumburglibrary.org. Select "Local History and Genealogy" at the top of the page, then look for the icon on the Local History and Genealogy page that says "Tony's Genealogy Blog". Open the blog link and then look at the right hand sidebar of the blog and you will see the "Handouts" information. The direct web address for the blog I author is <http://genealogywithtony.wordpress.com>

Here we go with the list of "handouts"!

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Handout #1 – VISIT THE SCHAUMBURG TOWNSHIP DISTRICT LIBRARY GENEALOGY BLOG

I will continue to remind participants of our library’s genealogy blog. You can access it through our library home page at www.SchaumburgLibrary.org by scrolling across the top of the first page and look for the tab that says “Research and Genealogy”. Click on that tab and look on the right side for our library genealogy blog on the right side that says “Tony’s Genealogy Blog”. You may have to scroll down slightly on the page to see the information for the blog.

Or you can just go directly to the blog at:

<http://genealogywithtony.wordpress.com>

You will find postings on upcoming programs, both at our library, and elsewhere in the area. You will also find a myriad of other kinds of postings, especially those that I offer on “Genealogy Tips” to help make your research efforts more productive.

You will also find our Schaumburg Township District Library Genealogy Newsletter and our “Program Handouts” at the blog as PDF files for you to view online, or download and save to your own computer for future referral.

Please remember that the blog will be the place to retrieve the newsletter and the “handouts”. I do not plan on making paper handouts of these available for distribution at the program or for mailing to individuals.

Try to visit the blog frequently to see what is going on. Subscribe to the blog via the RSS (Really Simple Syndication) and you will receive notices when a new post or comment has been made at the blog. Or, just click on the WordPress icon in the lower right part of your screen that simply states “Follow”. By clicking on the “Follow” link you will subscribe to the blog and will receive follow-up e-mail notices when I publish a new post.

Our blog is the way of the future and the future is here now!

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Handout #2 – NEXT MEETING OF THE NORTHWEST SUBURBAN GENEALOGY SOCIETY WILL BE ON SATURDAY, AUGUST 27, 2016

THE SOCIETY WILL NOT BE MEETING DURING THE MONTHS OF JUNE AND JULY 2016. THEY WILL RE-GATHER AGAIN IN ON AUGUST 27, 2016 INSTEAD OF A SEPTEMBER PROGRAM THAT WOULD CONFLICT WITH LABOR DAY.

The next meeting of the Northwest Suburban Genealogy Society will take place on Saturday morning, August 27, 2016. The program for the morning is titled **“Tapping the Power of FamilySearch”**. The speaker for the morning will be **Maureen Brady**.

FamilySearch, a free website sponsored by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, provides family history researchers with access to original historical records from around the world, indexes linked directly to many of those records, an ever-growing genealogical encyclopedia, instructional videos and much more. Even experienced researchers often do not know how to tap the power of FamilySearch’s many databases and articles. **Maureen Brady’s presentation will provide a tour of the website and will also discuss search strategies and helpful hints for organizing your research time at FamilySearch.**

This meeting will take place at the Arlington Heights Senior Center, 1801 W. Central Rd., Arlington Heights, IL 60005 at 10:00 AM. There is a round table discussion that takes place at 9:00 AM prior to the main meeting/program that starts at 10:00 AM. Participants are invited to attend this round table and bring their research questions for discussion.

You may visit the society web page at:

<http://www.nwsgenealogy.org/>

Please note that it has happened once in a while that the society may change a program schedule without actively sharing that fact. Checking their web site may also not give you notice of such a change if they do not change the web site. That is still the first place to check. You may also want to contact someone at the society if a phone number is available to verify that a program is still scheduled as they had advertised. That is always not available either.

We do our best here to try to be sure that information we convey about programs is accurate. However, sometimes we are unable to convey changes unless we are made aware of those changes.

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**Handout #3 – DUPAGE COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY NEXT
REGULAR SOCIETY PROGRAM ON SEPTEMBER 21, 2016**

Please note that there will be no meetings of the DuPage County Genealogical Society during the months of June, July and August 2016. Meetings will resume again on Wednesday evening, September 21, 2016.

Please note that meetings that will take place for the society will occur between September 2016 through May 2017. The September 2016 program will occur at the DuPage County Historical Museum located at 102 E. Wesley Street in Wheaton, IL. The October 2016 through May 2017 programs are once again taking place at the Wheaton Public Library in the Lower Level. The address of the library is 225 N. Cross St. in Wheaton, IL. Please note the times for refreshments and the program. Refreshments are offered at 6:30 PM. The meeting will start at 7 PM and last till no longer than 8:45 PM.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the DuPage County Genealogical Society will take place on Wednesday evening, September 21, 2016. The program scheduled for that evening is "To Be Determined". The speaker for the program will be To Be Determined.

You may visit the society's web page at:

www.dcg.org

The society also has a blog that you can visit to find out about "this and that" related to the society as well as find genealogical tips. You can visit the DuPage County Genealogical Society blog at:

<http://dupagecountygenealogicalsociety.wordpress.com/>

Please note that it has happened once in a while that the society may change a program schedule without actively sharing that fact. Checking their web site may also not give you notice of such a change if they do not change the web site. That is still the first place to check. You may also want to contact someone at the society if a phone number is available to verify that a program is still scheduled as they had advertised. That is always not available either.

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Handout #4 – COMPUTER ASSISTED GENEALOGY GROUP OF NORTHERN ILLINOIS (CAGGNI) NEXT PROGRAM ON JULY 16, 2016 AT THE SCHAUMBURG TOWNSHIP DISTRICT LIBRARY

The next regular meeting of CAGGNI will take place on Saturday morning, July 16, 2016 at the Schaumburg Township District Library in Schaumburg, IL. The program scheduled for this day is **"Who Got the Family Album? – Digitizing and Sharing Family Artifacts"**. The speakers will be **Mary Hoyer, Larry Olson and Michelle Wilson, CAGGNI members.**

Three CAGGNI panelists will review their projects including digital dissemination of a turn-of-the-century photo album, creation of a book using Lulu.com, and methods for high quality digitization of large-format materials.

Don't miss this informative session.

You may visit the organization web page at:

www.CAGGNI.org

Please note that it has happened once in a while that the society may change a program schedule without actively sharing that fact. Checking their web site may also not give you notice of such a change if they do not change the web site. That is still the first place to check. You may also want to contact someone at the society if a phone number is available to verify that a program is still scheduled as they had advertised. That is always not available either.

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**Handout #5 – SCHAUMBURG TOWNSHIP DISTRICT LIBRARY NEXT
GENEALOGY PROGRAM ON AUGUST 9, 2016**

Our next genealogy program will take place on Tuesday evening, August 9, 2016.

Our guest speaker for the evening will be Dan Niemiec. Dan will present a program titled "Tips and Tricks for Using FamilySearch".

The fastest growing collection of free genealogy records should become a major part of your genealogy toolbox and Dan will explain some special search techniques to get the most out of the data.

Dan Niemiec has been the Italian genealogy correspondent of Fra Noi for 10 years (over 120 monthly columns). He is co-founder and immediate past president of the Italian genealogy group called POINTers In Person, Chicago-North chapter. He has given many presentations to local and national genealogy conferences and societies. His Italian ancestral lines go back to the mid-late-1600s, and his Polish lines go back to the mid 1700s. By tracing descendant lines from his ancestors, he has found over 77,000 relatives, the result of 25 years of original research.

You may visit the library's web page at:

www.SchaumburgLibrary.org

to view a Calendar of Events section of the library web page for this program and for many more non-genealogical programs offered by our library.

You can also visit the Genealogy Blog of the library that is authored by Tony Kierna. Visit the blog at <http://genealogywithtony.wordpress.com> for all things related to genealogy and the genealogy programs at the Schaumburg Township District Library and other libraries.

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Handout #6 – FINANCIAL FIRMS OFFER FAMILY HISTORY RESEARCH TO ULTRA WEALTHY FINANCIAL CLIENTS

The following was found at Dick Eastman's Blog at www.eogn.com dated June 13, 2016.

Want someone to trace your family tree for you? If you are wealthy, several firms will be glad to do so. For a fee, of course. Financial firms working with ultrahigh-net worth clients increasingly are offering a new service to go along with their investment-management, estate-planning and tax-advice offerings: chronicling the family's history.

These services can include anything from tracing the family's ancestry to full-production biographical videos to historical role-playing presentations geared toward heirs as young as 4. Prices may range from tens of thousands to hundreds of thousands of dollars to produce expansive films with full crews, professional sound and lighting, hair and makeup and even aerial footage shot by drones. However, some firms such as Abbot Downing, the ultrahigh net worth wealth-management unit of Wells Fargo & Co., have in-house teams that provide family-history services to their wealthiest clients at no extra charge.

The *Wall Street Journal* has an article by Emily Glazer that describes the family tree services offered. The article is available at <http://goo.gl/P2g3nh>.

Comments by Tony Kierna

I don't think I ever saw such a service as this coming! But then again, I guess you just have to "follow the money" and who knows what that could generate. There is another famous phrase associated with genealogy. Sounds funny ... it is funny, but there is a core of truth to it. And that is the saying that if you want your family history done, just run for public office! So now we can add that if you want your family history done, just amass plenty of wealth over your working years and sure enough you can receive your family history through your financial services management company! (For a fee, I might remind you!)

Just as in the distant past with royalty, wealth and the power of wealth can generate that family history pedigree chart for you without you having to lift a finger ... except to lift the finger on your banking app to make payment to your financial managing company! Family trees from 500 years ago and more were a product for the royalty and wealthy.

Perhaps you have been enamored with watching "Who Do You Think You Are?" on TV. Perhaps you have a famous Hollywood star that was showcased on this famous genealogy oriented program. If you are wealthy enough you too may be able to have a mini-version of the show created just for you with a whole TV video production company at your beck and call uncovering your family history. Warts and all!

The link to the article mentions the term "ultrahigh-net worth" clients. One part of the article alluded to that amount being "10 million dollars of investible assets". So

if your wealth is somewhere in that range, you can now see if your asset managing firm can maybe finish the research you have already started doing! And then document it with a video crew. I am sure that if you have 10 million dollars in assets sitting around you can probably just hire a qualified professional genealogy researcher and not even work with your financial asset management team! But just remember your 10 million dollars in asset value does not provide you with your family history for free. You will still pay for the privilege to have your history presented to you on paper and for even more presented to you as a video TV production!!

Abbot Downing, a firm mentioned in the article, takes on 50 families per year for the service. Producing something easily takes up to 6 months. If you go the route of creating a video history, you and your family members may very well be incorporated as "stars" and "extras" in the production.

So if you are financially barely set for life, just continue to roll up your sleeves and keep accessing online material and historical archives all by yourself to fill in that pedigree chart. But if you have 10 million dollars sitting around and still want to pay someone to do your family history then just check in with your financial management firm to see if they can provide you with the research.

For me, I guess I will still be doing my own research!

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Handout #7 – WHY WAS THE INFORMATION REMOVED FROM ONLINE?

The following was found in Dick Eastman's Online Blog at www.eogn.com dated June 17, 2016.

NOTE: *This is a slightly updated version of an article I published about a year ago. A couple of newsletter readers have sent messages to me in the past few days expressing dissatisfaction with records that were available online but recently have disappeared. I am offering this republished article as an explanation about why we should not be surprised when that happens. I will also offer a suggestion as to making sure you keep your own copies of online records that are valuable to you.*

Two newsletter readers sent email messages to me recently expressing dissatisfaction that a set of images of vital records has been removed from a popular genealogy site. Indeed, removal of any online records of genealogical value is sad, but not unusual. Changes such as these are quite common on FamilySearch, MyHeritage, Ancestry.com, Fold3, FindMyPast, and many other genealogy sites that provide old records online. Removal of datasets has occurred dozens of times in the past, and I suspect such things will continue to happen in the future. I thought I would write a brief explanation.

In most cases, information of genealogical value obtained from government agencies, religious groups, museums, genealogy societies, and other organizations is provided under contractual agreements. The contracts specify what information is to be provided, how it is to be made available, and what price the web site has to pay to the provider for the records. All contracts also have a defined expiration date, typically 2 years or 3 years or perhaps 5 years after the contract is signed.

When a contract nears expiration, the two parties usually attempt to renegotiate the contract. Sometimes renewal is automatic, but more often it is not. Maybe the information provider (typically an archive) decides they want more money, or maybe they decide they no longer want to supply the data to the online genealogy service. For instance, in the time the information has been available online, the information provider may have learned just how valuable the information really is. The information provider may decide to ask for more money or may even refuse to provide the information any more since the provider may have a **NEW plan to create their own web site and offer the same information online on their new site for a fee.**

Sure, that stinks for those of us who would like to have the information everywhere; but, it makes sense to most everyone else. I am sure the budget officer at most any state or local government archive thinks it makes sense.

Every contract renegotiation is different, but it is not unusual to agree to disagree. The contract ends, and the web site provider legally **MUST** remove the information from their web site. The same thing frequently happens to all the other online sites that provide old records online.

Moral of this story: If you find a record online that is valuable to you, **SAVE IT NOW!** Save it to your hard drive and make a backup copy someplace else as well. If

there is no option to save, make a screen shot and save it on your hard drive or some other place where it will last for many years. Just because you can see the record online today does not mean that it will be available tomorrow.

Comments by Tony Kierna

The classic case of material that appeared online for free and then completely disappeared was that of the FamilySearch Cook County Illinois Vital Records. A few years back, you could access the various Cook County, Illinois Vital Records of births, marriages and deaths. You could search an index for the surname of interest, find a good hit, and then link yourself to the image of the original document. You could save the image to your own hard drive or storage device all for free.

As they say, "If it sounds too good, then something must be wrong". In this case it sounded good and actually was good until Cook County realized they could create a better deal for themselves. Researchers soon discovered that the images they saw linked to the surnames of their ancestors suddenly disappeared one day. Yes, you could still search an index and still get results of the transcribed, but the link to the image was no longer there. As researchers we know how valuable it is to be able to see an original document, especially one from which transcription was done. These document images often provided more information than what was contained in the transcribed index portion being shown on the screen.

I am so thankful that during this time that the full data was available online, that I had been downloading the image to my flashdrive for inclusion into my lineage program. I easily downloaded a couple of hundred images.

Where did the original images that were once provided go? They reverted back to the control of Cook County through their newly updated contract with FamilySearch. The initial contract through a certain expiration date allowed for these images to be shown. You see, by this time Cook County had created its own genealogy oriented website to access Vital Records online. They realized they were sitting on a goldmine of data that was no longer going to be available for free. And so through the website at www.cookcountygenealogy.com researchers could search the records for their ancestors. When a good match occurred from a searchable index, the researcher could now see the image if they were willing to spend \$15 for the privilege to obtain a PDF image of what was at one time free.

For me, I figure I probably downloaded anywhere between the equivalent of \$1,500 to \$3,000 worth of data if I were to have requested the material from Cook County.

The lesson to be learned here is that if you discover an image associated with an ancestral search you are doing online, be sure you download immediately if it is for free. DO NOT ASSUME THAT YOU CAN COME BACK TO THE SITE AND FIND IT AGAIN FOR FREE! It may now be available now only for a significant cost. Or, it may no longer even be available online at all as the holding organization may have simply decided to pull down all of the data it once freely made available.

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Handout #8 – 1950 CENSUS ENUMERATION MAPS GOING ONLINE

The following was found in Dick Eastman's Online Blog at www.eogn.com dated June 14, 2016.

The public will not be able to view the 1950 US Census until 2022 but about 8,000 Enumeration District Maps are being placed online now by the US National Archives and Records Administration. The new additions include all county maps and any map that includes five or more enumeration districts.

Quoting the US National Archives and Records Administration web site:

Enumeration Districts– or “E.D.s” as they are known among genealogists and other research communities– were established to help administer and control data collection. An enumeration district is generally the area a single enumerator, or census taker, could cover in one census period, approximately two to four weeks. Because the maps do not contain information protected under privacy restrictions, they have always been open and available for researchers to study. They also provide the primary access to the population schedules, which are arranged by enumeration district.

You can learn more in NARA's web site at <https://goo.gl/4YPljq>.

Comments by Tony Kierna

In the United States, our federally required population census enumerations occur every 10 years as mandated by the Constitution. The last census that is available to the public was the 1940 census that was released in 2012. There is a 72 year retention between when a census is done and when it is made available for public viewing. Hence the 1940 census was released in 2012. We should still consider ourselves lucky even for a 72 year interval because it is not uncommon for European countries to withhold public viewing of their data for a 100 year interval! See, 72 years does not sound so bad right now!

The 1950 U.S. census will be made public in 2022 in keeping with the 72 year interval for release. When the 1940 census was released, the genealogical community worked feverishly to transcribe all of the data into a searchable index connected to the actual image of the census ledger page. Within about 6 to 9 months all of this data was online available to search for free through various online services.

I actually went to the link above and saw that these enumeration district maps are associated with Record Group 29. Normally, my ancestors generally resided in the City of Chicago. I did not want to immediately search a high population urban center. Rather, I thought I would search a less populated collar county area for easier discovery. I chose to search for 1950 Enumeration District Maps for McHenry County, Illinois because I did have ancestors in that county.

I used a search term as “1950 McHenry County Illinois” and did get a series of 1950 enumeration district results, as well as some of which included 1940 enumeration

district maps (still don't know why I received these hits?). Maps were included at the county level entirely, as well as at the larger town level for those towns within McHenry County. Some of these towns were McHenry, Woodstock, Harvard, Crystal Lake and some others. Just scroll down the list of hits to find those for the 1950 census.

You are able to bring the image up and while holding down the mouse button you can easily pan the image left to right and top to bottom to find an area of interest to you. You can also zoom in and out on the maps.

I tried searching for districts within the City of Chicago but have not had any luck yet in eliminating extraneous results! Still working on it! I am just not having luck trying to search the material and get the list of expected results to view. I am glad I at least tried searching the data for a rural county and was able to produce some meaningful results.

This may be useful to know to prep for 1950 data because you may be able to access the beginnings of the indexing projects by enumeration district rather than by surname as the transcription process begins. You would at least be able to hone in on data to then read through to find your ancestors. However, if you are just patient at the time and wait until the names are indexed and searchable, you will find your ancestors at that time without needing to know the enumeration district.

If you are inclined to begin prep work for the 1950 census release, the enumeration district maps are one way to begin that process. It may still be a challenge to find what you are looking for and may be more frustrating than what it is worth right now.

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Handout #9 – “THE HOMESTEADERS”

The following review and comments were created by me, Tony Kierna, based on my having read an article that was seen in the May/June 2016, Volume 2, Number 2 issue of Your Genealogy Today.

I thought that a very good article in this issue is one titled “The Homesteaders”. The author of the article is Colleen Callahan Wells.

The twist on this article is that the homesteading topic covered is not for the United States. Rather the author has written the article about her ancestors that were homesteaders in Canada. So, homesteading was not unique to the United States. And another interesting twist as you read through the article is that while the author’s ancestors can be traced to an origin of Scotland, they then migrated to the United States. One of these immigrants to the United States chose to leave the United States for Canadian province of Ontario and participated in the Canadian version of Homesteading.

The author does note that her particular ancestor was originally in farming but had suffered during the Canadian recession that lasted a long time from 1873 through 1896. But the opportunity for “free” land in the western provinces of Canada enticed the ancestor to take another chance on working the land and then ultimately gaining access to 160 acres of land for fulfilling the rules for being a “homesteader”.

Canadian homesteading was formulated under The Dominion Lands Act which can be found according to the author at www.saskarchives.com.

The author’s ancestral family started the process in 1910. Family traveled to Calgary, Alberta where they paid \$10 for an application to become homesteaders. According to the rules of the Canadian Homesteading process, a family had to construct a habitable residence no smaller than an 18 x 24 dwelling. The home was usually constructed of log, sod or tar paper. A family had to live on the land for at least 6 months out of every year for three years. They had to enclose the property with substantial fencing. They had to cultivate a set amount of acreage. They had to build a fireguard to protect the farm buildings.

The author relates that just after 1 year of homesteading, her ancestor decided to call it quits. He returned to the Calgary office and filed a Declaration of Abandonment for his property that was located in James River Bridge. Reason given for abandonment was “not suitable”. Within 1 year the ancestor’s two younger sons persuaded him to join them in their own homesteading efforts. They went back to the land that had been abandoned by the other family ancestor and laid claim to it.

This time, their hard efforts began to pay off. They were able to complete the process of building a suitable log house that fit the dimensions of at least being 18 x 24. They constructed a log stable, hen house, cultivated and cropped 20 acres and fully enclosed their 160 acres with cross fencing. On June 14, 1921 they filed for the land patent.

The author's ancestor submitted a statement as part of the patent filing process for the land. This is what was in the statement:

"Thomas Darling, 73 years, from James River Bridge. I have 4 boys and 4 girls. I have obtained a Homestead on May 24, 1912 and began my personal residence in April 1917. I lived on my son's homestead from May 24, 1912 to April 1917 because there was considerable sickness from flu and other illnesses. Also lacks of means have been a great draw back. I have 10 head of cattle and 6 horses. I have 20 acres of crops, 5 acres of hay, 100 acres of timber, and 3 acres of swamp".

On August 19, 1921 a letter from the Department of the Interior, Land Patents Branch was sent to Thomas Darling to inform him "that as of July 7, 1921, that a patent for S.W. ¼ of Sec. 23, in Twp. 34, Range 5, W. of the 5th Meridian" has been issued in your name and that it has been forwarded to the Registrar of the Land Registration District of South Alberta who will issue the certificate of title upon receipt of your application to him therefor, and upon payment of the proper fees, if any.

Backbreaking work paid off with the successful registration of a land patent obtained through Homesteading.

It has always amazed me at the fortitude exhibited by homesteader, whether it be in the US or Canada, they exhibited in the pursuit of free land. All of the hard work that was put in and the success rate of actually getting the land was very low. Yet families found ways to make their efforts pay off with the completion of a patent to the land.

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Handout #10 – “FINDING THE STORIES OF THE FALLEN IN WORLD WAR II”

The following review and comments were created by me, Tony Kierna, based on my having read an article that was seen in the May/June 2016, Volume 2, Number 2 issue of Your Genealogy Today.

I thought that another good article in this issue is one titled “Finding the Stories of the Fallen in World War II”. The author of the article is Jennifer Holik.

Jennifer is an expert on World War II genealogical research and has been prolific in writing many articles for genealogical journals over the last 2 years on the topic of World War II research.

Jennifer notes that it is often the deceased military members for whom there is often a great amount of information that can be obtained. She mentions that the one key record for those fallen soldiers is called the Individual Deceased Personnel File commonly referred to as the IDPF. The IDPF is a death file created by the Graves Registration Services (GRS) to document the remains of soldiers located, and establish files for those who were still considered Missing in Action (MIA). A file was created for an MIA because as discoveries progress over time on behalf of the original MIA, the status of that individual could change from MIA to Prisoner of War (POW) and if remains would be discovered at a future time the status would then change to Killed in Action (KIA).

The IDPF always contained a soldier’s name, unit and service or serial number. When remains were recovered and they were not able to be identified the GRS used an X-number and the file was called an X-file. These remains would then be temporarily buried in a temporary cemetery.

These are the kinds of information you might expect to discover in an IDPF file for an individual:

- Report of Burial
 - Contained the soldier’s name, date of death, place of death and a copy of his identification tag.
 - Also contains the grave location with the names of the men buried on either side of the deceased soldier.
 - List of personal effects was included if any were found.
- If Deceased Was Unidentified
 - Three forms of fingerprints were used if the fingers were in good condition.
 - Skeletal form was used to document what bones may have been recovered.
 - Tooth chart used to document missing teeth.

- DNA technology did not exist at the time of World War II so analysis was done anatomically with the known information to determine who the deceased may have been.
- **Casualty Report**
 - Contains the usual service information plus the date of the casualty.
 - Name of the next of kin and relationship to the deceased as well as date notified of the casualty.
- **Report of Death**
 - Contained the usual service information, branch of service, date of birth and death, date of active entry in service, where killed, emergency contact and beneficiary information.
- **Telegrams**
 - Telegrams or letters sent to the next of kin.
- **Inventory of Effects**
 - Describes the personal effects collected, which were to be sent to the family.
 - If the soldier had effects elsewhere such as foot locker or storage locker, then these would have inventoried elsewhere.
 - Next of kin were required to sign and return a letter stating they received the effects.
- **Prisoner of War Cards or Information**
 - If a soldier was a POW in the European War, the IDPF usually contained the POW card and information from captured German records or the Red Cross.
 - May include photos of the soldier.
 - If POW in the Pacific theater with Japan, POW card not contained in the IDPF. Separate request needed to National Archives in College Park, MD to obtain this.
- **Report of Investigation Area Search**
 - After the war, members of the Graves Registration group searched areas where known battles occurred. Search details were recorded.
 - Often times information from local mayors or citizens are contained in this file.
 - Maps, drawings of cemeteries or areas where remains were recovered are often included.
- **Disinterment Directive**
 - Families were given the option to repatriate the remains of deceased soldiers for burial in the US or buried overseas in an official military cemetery.

- o Temporary cemeteries then disinterred remains and re-identified them, documenting everything in this form.
- o This form contained name, rank, service number, date of death, cemetery name, location of grave, name and address of next of kin, condition of remains, date disinterred and remains prepared.
- Family Correspondence
 - o May contain letters from next of kin to the military.
 - o May be very emotional letters.
 - o May be general questions from the family about how to get the remains home or personal effects found or not and who is legally next of kin when the soldier was married and the widow remarried.
- Final Disposition of Remains After the War
 - o Started working with families in 1947 for the European theater and 1948 for the Pacific theater.
- Requesting IDPFs
 - o Contact the US Army Human Resources Command through Fort Knox, Kentucky.
 - o Files are free after they have uploaded to an online transfer service. Email with download directions is sent to the requestor.
 - o It can still often take 12 to 15 months to receive the free file after being requested.
 - o All IDPF have been scanned through the letter "L" and only one person is working the scanning process.
 - o Send IDPF request by email to:
 - USARMY.KNOX.HRC.MBX.FOIA@MAIL.MIL
- To Learn More From the Author
 - o Order a copy of Volume I or II of the author's Stories from the World War II Battlefield at <http://bit.ly/1RMfaFD>.
 - o Subscribe to the author's blog via her main web site at <http://wwiiresearchandwritingcenter.com/> (Scroll down main web site to near bottom on the left side.)
 - o Attend one of the World War II programs that the author has in the US or in Europe (Jennifer will be a speaker at our genealogy program on November 8, 2016 and will present a program on "Using Fold 3 for World War II Research.")
 - o View full IDPFs across all branches in the Casualty Files at <http://bit.ly/1Ubj1JX>.

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