

THE GENIE BUG

NORTH CENTRAL IOWA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY
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www.ncigs.org

Social Networking for Genealogy, Facebook, Pinterest and Blogs. Oh My!

Karen Van Deest, Information Literacy Coordinator and Network Analyst for the Waterloo Public Library will present this program. Plan to attend on **May 10, 2014 at 1:30 pm** at the Clear Lake Public Library. Did you know there are 1.19 billion monthly active users on Facebook, 70 million on Pinterest and millions of blogs in cyberspace? Have you ever thought about how you could harness the networking power of these social media sites to expand and improve your genealogy research?

Family Tale Sharathon Please share your story on **Sat 1:30 pm on 14th June** in Clear Lake Library. When researching our family genealogy we often come across some interesting facts or stories, which might have been humorous, startling, outrageous or even scandalous. Or, maybe there is a story about one of your relatives that has just been passed down the family, generation after generation. At our June meeting we are asking members or visitors to share the stories they have found or heard about their family over the years. You don't have to reveal any names, just tell the story. When you call to sign up to attend the meeting, let Lea know you have something to share, so that we can determine how much time to allow each one, so all get a chance to participate. I bet you all have an incident you could share, so let's see who has the most interesting tale to tell. I know I have several stories that range from humorous to scandalous. Is going to be a great meeting, sponsored by the NCIGS. Everyone is welcome.

July 12 2014 at Clear Lake, it is PICNIC TIME at MacGowan Park, 12 to 3 pm. Join in our NCIGS Potluck on 10th Ave N, just north of Dollar General in Clear Lake. NCIGS will provide a beverage, and we will email you a reminder and to ask you if are planning to attend. More picnic details later.



August 2014 – Our Tour of Northwood's Historical Main Street. Invite a friend to view the Stromstein Building with info shared by Peter Ausenus, and other historical landmarks in Northwood. We are planning to start our program at 1:15 pm. Details of the historic registry will be shared as well. Please contact Sharlene Stoddard at 641-324-2394 to make reservations for this grand event. You will need to call no later than Thursday the 7th.

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NCIGS Board Update on society activities:

Hello!

As you may recall, last November no one agreed to fill either the President or Vice President Offices in our society. Fortunately, Randy Opheim offered to remain as Vice President for an additional three months, hoping the extra time would identify someone to take his place. That extension of his service has now expired, with no replacements in sight. We have so many capable members who would bring fresh ideas and skills to these positions. Can't you help?

A huge "thank you" is extended to Randy. He met the challenge of serving as both President and Vice-President. He provided guidance and leadership to our organization. He developed interesting and valuable programs. He set a good example of commitment. The board and society are better through his efforts. When you run into him at our meetings, please extend a personal thank you to him and other board members for their dedication and hard work.

At the February 8, 2014 NCIGS board meeting, Randy Opheim formed a committee – The NCIGS Website Improvement Committee. This committee was formed to determine changes/improvements to our website. At this time, the committee has met twice, with another meeting scheduled for April 17th.

The website improvements were tackled from two angles. First, an updating and redesign of the current website and secondly, a decision process to decide the future of our on-line obituaries.

- Carol Tinkey has authored a proposed new website design, which was approved by the committee. It was decided to forward Carol's design to Carlyle Merritt for costing. A draft of our request to Carlyle was completed, but not yet sent pending clarification of other website details.
- Jay Lehmann and Loren Toomsen are working on the obituary component of the website. Dual backups for our 20 years of online obituaries has been achieved through a four terabyte personal cloud (Jay) and an additional back up to a three terabyte personal cloud (Loren). These actions created two complete copies on two separate hard drives in the event of future failures. Loren paid for both of these systems.
- A Western Digital AP will be installed on the NCIGS computer stored at the library. This AP is intended to provide NCIGS members access to the full obituary project on the society's computer.
- A three month extension has been added to the NCIGS website. The NCIGS website is now good through June 30, 2014. This cost was paid for by Loren Toomsen.
- Loren has also donated a digital subscription to NCIGS of the Garner and Buffalo Center, Iowa newspapers.
- After 20 years, the obituary committee has officially ceased to add obituaries to the website effective March 31, 2014.

For 20 years, PAF-Ways and NCIGS volunteers created and maintained our website, incorporating an online obituary file for the area. They can all take pride in this achievement. We congratulate those persons who gave so much of their time to this effort. Let us hope this redesign will meet the standards set by the pioneers of this work those many years ago. The update and revision of the website is an evolving project. We will keep the membership posted. Eventually the Website Improvement Committee will bring their recommendations to the society for approval.

Society members voted at the March meeting to change our meeting site to the Clear Lake Public Library. This meeting site provides wireless access to the Internet, which seems to be an increasing need. It also is provided to us at no cost and includes the use of a speaker system, a kitchen and other amenities. If driving from Mason City to Clear Lake for the meetings is an issue, please call Sandra Turner (Mason City landline 380-0339) so she can arrange carpooling for you. It seems we have been moving the meeting site around lately and there was concern we needed to settle into one spot. It was easier when we could meet just down the hall from our genealogy library, but since that was no longer an option, we have been experimenting with options. While The Manor was an excellent site, and we are grateful for their kindness to us, the lack of a speaker system and wireless access were real issues. So see you next month at Clear Lake!

We are once again looking for programming ideas. Are there needs you would like us to address? Can you recommend a speaker or a topic? Please let us know.

2014 Executive Board Members - NCIGS

President-- vacant position

Vice-President-- vacant position

Treasurer- Carol Tinkey - twotinkers@mchsi.com

Secretary - Sharon O'Neill - captain@netins.com

Librarian-- Sandra Turner -- turnersd@mchsi.com

Website Chair - Jay Lehmann - jay@ncigs.org

Research Chair - Linda Faridi -- research@ncigs.org

Membership Chair - Lea Norlinger -- lrprko@gmail.com

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Message from the LIBRARIAN

The NCIGS Library is located on the 1st floor of the Mason City Public Library, 225 2nd St. SE, Mason City, Iowa. The MCPL and the NCIGS Library are open M/T/W/TH 9 a.m. – 8 p.m.; F/SAT 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. If you need help from one of our library volunteers, remember our library is staffed M/W/F 9 a.m. – noon; 1-4 p.m.

Our volunteers are the life blood of our library. If you are interested, please call Sandra Turner at 641-380-0339 to sign up. Volunteering is a wonderful way to become familiar with our collection, share your interest in genealogy with other people and learn new research possibilities.

The major emphasis for the past three months has been working with the Cerro Gordo Naturalization Collection. The collection, massive in size, contains irreplaceable information. Storage of the collection has become an issue, since the bulky volumes should be stored flat and we no longer have that type of shelving. It was thought a closer examination of the collection could identify duplication of information, which would allow for offsite storage of some items. Fortunately, that supposition proved true. We have a few loose ends to finish and then we can move on to other projects.

Between January 1 and April 1, 110 researchers signed our library register. Of that number 75 were non-members of the society. We expect to see more visitors as the weather improves and genealogists get rolling. Documented volunteer hours totaled 805 so far this year with a value of \$17,822.70. If you haven't turned in your volunteer hours, please do so.

Thanks for all the help and support provided by so many people. Your willingness to serve is greatly appreciated.

Sandra Turner, Librarian



2014 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION Thank you for your Renewals !

Annual Membership: monthly programs, FEB, MAY, AUG, & NOV newsletters, and one free research query.

Renewal Membership dues are \$12.00 for this calendar year. *January 2014 - December 2014*

Name _____ Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____ County _____

Email _____ Newsletter Emailed or Newsletter by Post Office Mail

Amount enclosed is Cash _____ or Check _____ Today's Date _____



The Iowa Genealogical Society is ON THE ROAD AGAIN!

IGS is taking a 'BUS' road trip to: **The Midwest Genealogy Center Library**
(AKA the Mid-Continent Library)

The Iowa Genealogical Society is sponsoring a road trip to the Midwest Genealogy Center in Kansas City. The MGC is ranked as the best genealogy library and research center in our area and is also ranked among the best in the nation. This trip affords our members and friends a great research opportunity and time together to get to know local people, like ourselves, with a strong interest in genealogy.

The MGC will have extra volunteers ready to assist our travelers as they use MGC resources to search for family information.

The date for this road trip is **Monday, June 9, and Tuesday, June 10, 2014**. Our transportation will leave from the IGS library on Monday morning and return us late on Tuesday evening.

Included in the above amount:

A **Charter bus transportation**, door to door, by Windstar Lines; 3 meals at MGC; one night hotel stay at Drury Inn and Suites Independence (including breakfast); all taxes and gratuities.

Trip registration and payment deadline is May 2, 2014 .

In order to get our rooms reserved and finalize other arrangements, we need to know participant numbers by this date. This trip is limited to a maximum of 56 participants. After that number is reached we will establish a waiting list.

Schedule:

Monday

7:30 am - Leave IGS on our Charter bus.
10:30 am - Arrive at the library, break into groups and go on tour of the library.
12:00 noon - Break for lunch at the library (included in cost of the trip).
1:00 pm - Start researching your family tree with help of MGC volunteers.
5:50 pm - Dinner will be catered at the library (included in cost of the trip).
9:00 pm - MCG closes and we go to our hotel (6 minutes away).

Tuesday

6:30 – 8:30 am - Breakfast at the Hotel (included with your room) and pack
9:00 am - Return to MGC
12:00 noon - Lunch will be at the library (included in cost of the trip).
1:00 pm - Finish up your research
4:30 pm - load buses for return to Des Moines
5:00 pm - Dinner: stop before leaving KC area for dinner (**we will make reservations but cost is on your own**)
9:00 pm - Arrive back at the IGS Library facility.

>>>> Visit <http://iowagenealogy.org/?p=6315> for complete information
Debi Chase, Administrative Assistant/Librarian, Iowa Genealogical Society,
628 E Grand Ave, Des Moines, IA 50309-1924, 515 276-0287, igs@iowagenealogy.org

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Naturalization :

A **two-part program** dealing with the naturalization process and a hands-on opportunity to look through the original naturalization records held at our library was presented at the March and April meetings by **Sandra Turner, the Librarian** for the society. Some of the naturalization topics Sandra covered are discussed below.

Naturalization is defined as a process used to grant citizenship privileges and responsibilities to foreign-born residents. Not all immigrants who came to the U.S. became citizens of this country. Since the U.S. has never required alien residents to apply for citizenship, many foreigners have lived productive and happy lives in the US, while maintaining their allegiance to a different country.

So did your ancestor become naturalized? Possibly! But first let's get some background. Searching for naturalization records is generally divided into four different eras: 1) Colonial, 2) Revolutionary War to 1906, 3) 1906 – 1964, 4) 1965 to the present.

The Colonial Era

Naturalization records began in Colonial times. English law viewed English persons and their children in the colonies as full subjects of the king. However, the royal charters did not state if authority to naturalize non-English residents rested with Parliament or within the colonies. Legislative bodies from both locations ultimately issued separate and sometimes conflicting naturalization laws and forms.

In the colonies, under *Parliamentary* law, to obtain citizenship, an alien usually had to travel to England, which was inconvenient and costly. To circumvent this burden, it was common for the colonies to create local acts which offered naturalization to specific groups. After 1712, Parliament faced growing pressure from the colonies to legally allow local naturalization. Parliament finally responded in 1740 by allowing aliens to apply for naturalization within the colonies as long as they had resided in the colonies for at least seven years.

Turning to *Colonial* laws, though the 1740 Parliamentary Act imposed stiff fines for non-compliance, basically, if the colonies didn't like something about Parliament's law, they ignored it and drafted local law that, in their minds, superseded Parliament. Believing aliens made significant contributions to a colony, the leaders began to legislate enticements to gain alien settlers. For example, South Carolina attracted aliens by granting them the full citizenship while prohibiting the collection of any debts they had accumulated before they came to South Carolina. Another example, Pennsylvania in 1742 simply eliminated the 7 year residency requirement. The right to own land was perhaps the greatest enticement and all colonies offered this benefit.

To summarize: If your ancestor arrived prior to the Revolutionary War and was not a British citizen, he may have taken an oath of allegiance in the colony in which he resided or traveled to England to become naturalized. Naturalization records before 1790 differ vastly from later naturalization records. Colonial naturalizations consist mostly of lists of those who took an oath of allegiance. The Colonial Period records will usually have remained within the geographic area of origin and will often be found on the Internet or hardcopy publications.

Revolutionary War to 1906

The **second era** consists of records originating from the Revolutionary War to 1906. The Articles of Confederation continued the practice of local naturalization. It wasn't until the U.S. Constitution was drafted that a change in authority was established. The Constitution conveyed the control of naturalization to Congress. However in 1790 Congress directed states to continue performing this function. So nothing fundamentally changed. With local control there were local forms and local compliance to congressional law. So when you do research, expect variety.

Perhaps your ancestor was a non-British citizen who remained in the colonies after the Revolutionary War. If so, upon the adoption of the U.S. Constitution in 1787, U.S. citizenship was granted retroactively to 1776. Hence, all those living in the country (except Native Americans and African Americans) were collectively and automatically made US citizens. This process is called collective citizenship. There is no paperwork.

Through the years, as the United States continued to expand beyond its original boundaries, collective citizenship_of the residents was usually included in the acquisition agreements. A couple of additional examples of collective citizenship, where you will find no individual documentation, include the Louisiana Purchase in 1803 and the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo which allowed the residents of that area to choose whether they wanted American or Mexican citizenship. About 80,000 people living in Texas, California and the American Southwest choose U.S. citizenship.

If your ancestor did not arrive in the U.S. until after collective citizenship, he would have had to apply as an individual. He had a choice of around 5,000 federal, state, or local courts. The process he would have followed can be summarized as follows: He would have first filed his *Declaration of Intent* with the court of his choice. The *Intent* was known as the first paper, since this was the first document the alien submitted to the court. This one page document declared the person's intent to become a US citizen. The *Declaration of Intent* was portable, meaning the alien did not have to return to the same court to continue

the process toward citizenship. Usually, a specified time had to elapse before the alien could file his *Petition for Naturalization*. This time lapse allowed the applicant to achieve his residency status. The *Petition* was sometimes referred to as the second or final paper. The court would review the information contained in the *Petition* and approve or disapprove the application. If the alien was found worthy of citizenship, he would be asked to swear allegiance to the United States after which he would receive a *Certificate of Citizenship*. The *Certificate of Citizenship* is sometimes referred to as the third paper. There could be many more documents involved in the process but these are the basic forms.

Naturalization Forms

- Declaration of Intent
- Petition for Naturalization
- Certificate of Naturalization



Naturalization proceedings were most often completed in county, superior or common pleas courts or in state and US circuit and district courts. Because some municipal, police, criminal, probate, and other courts also provided this service, you may need to search the records of all local courts. Generally, these records will contain much less genealogical information than the records created after 1906. Be aware, however, there are exceptions. Some courts required significant genealogical information from an applicant in those early years.

These records are increasingly being digitized and may be found on the Internet. If not, then the traditional research approach of traveling, writing, calling, etc., may be necessary – giving you the opportunity of seeing what else is available about your ancestor in this place of his residence.

Naturalization Act of 1906

Era three of U.S. naturalization occurred after Congress passed the Naturalization Act of 1906 (effective Sept. 27, 1906). At that time, the federal government began regulating the naturalization process. The Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization {BIN} (aka: Bureau of Naturalization, later the Immigration and Naturalization Service {INS}, now United States Citizenship and Immigration Services {USCIS}) was formed. Only authorized forms could be used and the Bureau controlled the number of courts able to naturalize by controlling distribution of the forms. However, both state and federal courts were allowed to naturalize. For example, Cerro Gordo County naturalizations occurred in the State of Iowa, 2nd Judicial District Court (courthouse) and the U.S. District Court, Northern District of Iowa, Central Division-Mason City Term (Post Office). The naturalization records for these courts ended August 4, 1945 for the State District Court and in 1961 for the U.S. District Court.

The important thing to remember is after September 27, 1906, all proceedings were required to be recorded by the clerk of the court and a copy of the standardized documents had to be sent to the Bureau. The *Declaration of Intent* was completed in triplicate. The court kept the original and gave copies to the applicant and the Bureau. The applicant was to use the *Intent* to apply for the *Petition*. If the original *Declaration* is still in possession of the family, the immigrant probably did not complete the process and was not naturalized. The *Petition for Naturalization* was kept by the court and a duplicate was sent to the Bureau. One copy of the *Certificate of Naturalization* was given to the new citizen, a copy sent to the Bureau and the stub of the *Certificate* kept by the court. After all the forms were distributed, the court copies were filed together within the *Petition* file.

The national origins quota system was established by the Immigration Acts of 1921 and 1924. This system numerically limited immigration for the first time in United States history. Each nationality received a quota based on its representation in past United States census figures. The State Department

distributed a limited number of visas each year through U.S. Embassies abroad and the Immigration Service only admitted immigrants who arrived with a valid visa.

In 1929 the Bureau changed the forms and required photographs of the applicants. Because the new forms were not distributed immediately, many state courts ceased naturalizing. However, some courts continued to naturalization until 1990. In that year an administrative procedure for naturalization was set in place within the Bureau and judicial naturalization ended.

Immigration remained relatively low during the 1930-40s in part because of the numerical limitations imposed by the 1920s national origins system. Congress re-codified and combined all previous immigration and naturalization law in 1952. The 1952 act moved away from excluding immigrants based simply upon country of origin. Instead it focused upon accepting only those who were willing and able to assimilate into the US economic, social, and political structures. The 1952 act also dropped the legal age to become a citizen to 18 years, dropped the requirement to file at *Declaration of Intent* but retained the national origins quotas.

In summary, naturalization documentation became a federal responsibility starting in 1906. These records are currently under the control and supervision of the USCIS. The USCIS is the premiere choice for locating naturalization records created after 1906 and has established a Genealogy Program to assist researcher in locating records. For a fee of \$20 staff at USCIS will search their unique index. The form to order the index search can be downloaded from their site (<http://www.uscis.gov/history-and-genealogy>). What you get back will be a letter reporting whether or not the search identified a record for the immigrant. If so, the letter provides the file number, record series, and any additional information as well as instructions and applicable fees to request the record(s) from the USCIS Genealogy Program. In some cases the letter informs you of other record citations found, and provides instructions for requesting that record from the National Archives or elsewhere. Since in 2010 the USCIS began annually transferring A-Files of immigrants born more than 100 years ago to the National Archives, requesting a search first in the USCIS and having them provide the retrieval details can be a great help if your ancestor's papers are in the National Archives rather than in the USCIS files. After receiving your letter from the USCIS, you can either download the Records Request Form and order copies of the records from them (microfilm \$20; hardcopy \$35) or, since you now know the title and location of the records, you could search on the Internet for digitized copies.

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) is headquartered Washington, D. C., with regional records services facilities scattered throughout the US. It is the regional offices who hold the naturalizations created by federal courts in their regions. The regional records services facility for Iowa, Kansas, Missouri and Nebraska is located in Kansas City, Missouri. While the naturalization records remain the property of the agency that created them, such as the USCIS, the National Archives has physical custody for economical storage. Most records center holdings are not open to the public except through the agency of origin. Each regional records service facility has a web page, accessible from www.nara.gov/regional.

Era four of U.S. naturalization began with the 1965 passage of the Immigration and Nationality Act which ended the system of quotas based on nationality. The act established a preference system for the issuing of visas that strongly favored relatives of U.S. citizens and permanent resident aliens, as well as people with special skills. Wives, husbands, parents, and minor children of U. S. citizens could also enter without being counted as part of the quota.

The Immigration Act of 1990 retooled the immigrant selection system once again. It increased the number of available immigrant visas and revised the preference categories governing permanent legal

immigration. Immigrant visas were divided into 3 separate categories: family-sponsored, employment-based, and “diversity” immigrants selected by lottery from countries with low immigration volumes. A National Records Center (NRC) in Lee’s Summit, Missouri was opened in November 1999. The Center allowed for the centralization of the more than 25 million INS alien records (A-files) into a single facility. The NRC is not open to the public.

The first decade of the twenty-first century finds the United States in the midst of the largest wave of immigration in its history. One million immigrants enter the country legally every year. As a result, fully one-tenth of all residents of the United States are foreign born. The current form used for naturalization is USCIS Form N400. It is an extremely detailed 21 page document containing a great deal of genealogical information.

Now, back to the question “Were your ancestors naturalized?”, and, if so, “where?” If you suspect your ancestor was naturalized but are not sure, a check of the U.S. Census may be of help. The 1930, 1920, 1910, 1900, and 1870 censuses all have columns pertaining to citizenship. While the information is not always 100 percent correct, it does provide clues. Under the question of whether or not an individual was naturalized, you are likely to see one of three abbreviations:

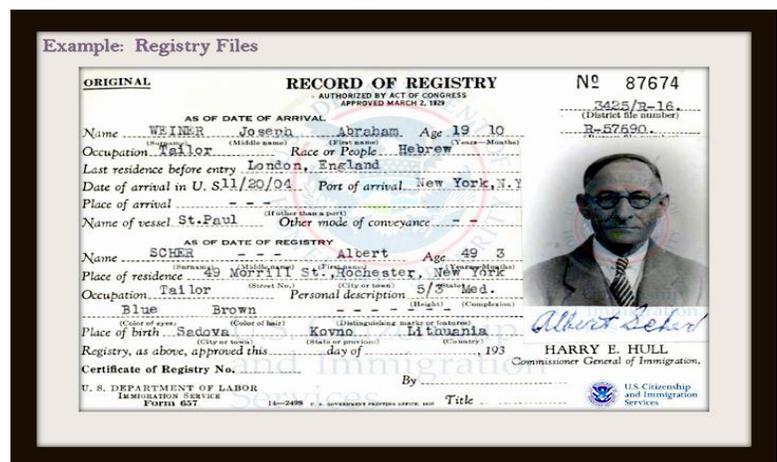
- AL — for alien (meaning they had not yet begun the process)
- PA – for papers (meaning the Declaration of Intent was filed) and
- NA — for those who had completed their naturalization

Once you have a general idea of the time and place of the naturalization, you can begin your search. Pre-1906, because immigrants were allowed to naturalize in almost any court, they often selected the one most convenient to them. If they lived in New Jersey but worked in New York City, either area could have been used for naturalization. If an immigrant lived on the border of a county, they may have naturalized in the adjacent county because the courthouse may have been closer.

Pre-1906 you might want to look first for the *Petition*, because they are usually easier to find in courts near where the immigrant eventually settled. Remember sometimes an immigrant filed his *Intent* soon after he arrived in the U.S. He then had to wait a specified time (usually established by colony, state, territorial or federal law) before he could submit his *Petition*. During the lull between filings, your ancestor could have moved several times and might file his *Petition* a long distance away.

Post-1906 your search might include some additional documents:

Certificate of Arrival, 1906 to the present-- Before 1906 proof of residency was provided by affidavits by individuals who witnessed how long a person had been in the U.S. After 1906 a *Certificate of Arrival* or its equivalent was required. This document was provided to the court during the *Petition for Naturalization* phase. While not all courts kept this form, Cerro Gordo did. You will find them attached to the *Petition for Naturalization*.



Certificate of Registry-- Immigrants admitted for permanent residence before 1924 could not naturalize if no record of their arrival could be found. In other words, a *Certificate of Arrival* could not be

completed. To qualify for naturalization after 1929 they could apply for Registry proceedings to create an immigration record. The Registry application is full of dates, places, and names, an account of the immigrant's travel to the United States, and an accounting for their activities (employment, residence) since arrival. In addition to the application, the files typically hold correspondence, affidavits, testimony, a photo, and a decision granting or denying Registry and other related papers. Documentary evidence can include school records, insurance receipts, rental agreements, or anything establishing the immigrant's residence prior to July 1, 1924.

Visa and Application—Beginning with the Immigration Act of 1924, all aliens had to have a Visa to enter the United States. To obtain a visa, the immigrant had to go to a US Embassy or consulate in the immigrant's home country. Upon arrival in the US, the visas were collected and sent to Washington DC, where they were given a Visa File Number and indexed by name, date and place of birth. This process was in place between July 1924 and April 1944. On April 1, 1944 a new filing system was created and the Visa File Numbers were transferred to the Alien Files (A files). A photograph was included in visas beginning in 1929.

Alien Registration

World War I – Following the beginning of US involvement in WWI, all resident aliens 14 years of age and up, who had not been naturalized, were required to register with the U.S. Marshall nearest their place of resident. This registration occurred between November 1917 and April 1918, World War II - The Alien Registration Act of 1940 required every non-citizen of the United States, age 14 years and up, to register and fill out the Alien Registration form. Alien Registration occurred between August 1940 and March 1944. Over 5 million non-citizen residents registered. All original alien registration forms were microfilmed and are usually found at the USCIS. The originals were destroyed after filming.

U.S. Passports - Early passports were issued upon request, but were not required until 1941 except a brief time during the civil war and a few years around WWI. While generally aliens were ineligible to obtain a U.S. passport, if an alien had declared his *Intent* to become a naturalized citizen, he could obtain a passport between 1863 and 1866 and again between 1907 and 1920. Passport applications dating between 1795 and 1925 are held in the National Archives. The U.S. Department of State holds passports from 1925 to the present.



Naturalization of Women

No discussion of naturalization would be complete without including information on women and children. Early naturalization laws did not restrict naturalization of women and in theory alien women could apply for citizenship. However, many courts would not process these applications. Before 1922, women generally became citizens only when their husbands or fathers naturalized or when they married a US citizen.

For instance, if a German woman immigrated to the US and married a US citizen, she automatically became a citizen. Or if a German couple immigrated to the US and the husband was naturalized, his wife gained what is called derivative citizenship. Derivative means the citizenship was derived from someone else's records. Few women pursued naturalization because few women could vote and, in many cases, couldn't own property. For example, of the over 200,000 naturalizations contained in the files at the Philadelphia City Archives, possibly fifty involve the naturalization of women prior to the passage of the 19th Amendment. Not only were women restricted from citizenship in some courts, but the Expatriation Act of 1907 declared any American woman who married a foreign national lost her citizenship. After passage of the 19th amendment, The Married Women's Act was passed by Congress on September 22, 1922. This act allowed women to apply for naturalization on their own. The women had to be over

twenty-one and the period of residence was reduced from 5 to 1 year. Also within this Act was a provision allowing American born women who had lost their citizenship due to their marriages to foreigners to file petitions to become citizens and in 1936 Congress passed an act allowing U.S. born women who had married foreigners between 1907 and 1922 to take an oath of allegiance and be reinstated as a US citizen.

So, if you are searching for a female ancestor, you may or may not find naturalization records for her. There would most likely not be records pre-1922, but it is possible. Generally before that time a woman's proof of citizenship was her marriage record and her husband's naturalization certificate. After the standardization of records in 1906, a woman's name will at least appear on her husband's *Petition* (it may appear on records prior to that time, but not all courts required it). After 1922, you can be pretty confident if your female ancestor became a citizen, she had petitioned in her own name.

Minor children were granted derivative citizenship when their father, or after 1922, their parent, was naturalized. This practice remained in place for children under the age of 21 from 1790 to 1940. There usually will be no record of a minor child's derivative citizenship unless he/she applied to the INS after 1929 for a *Certificate of Citizenship*.

Between 1824 and 1906 an alien who arrived as a minor, had lived in the US for at least 5 years before their 23rd birthday, and whose father had not become a US naturalized citizen, could file his *Declaration of Intent* and *Petition for Naturalization* at the same time. Although the forms used for this process varied from court to court, and state to state, the *Declaration of Intent* and *Petition for Naturalization* for a minor are usually found on one form. In the case of Cerro Gordo County's Minor applications, not only are they on one form, but are also filed in a separate volume.

The Homestead Act of 1862 stated any person who was the head of a family, or who had arrived at the age of twenty-one years, and was a citizen of the United States, or who had filed his *Declaration of Intention*, could file a homestead claim. **It your ancestor homesteaded, it is possible naturalization documents will be within those files.** This act did not impact the settlement of Iowa to the degree it affected territories further west. Very little of Iowa (less than 3%) was homesteaded. However, since this act only required the immigrant to file his *Declaration of Intention*, be aware many of these immigrants never filed their final citizenship papers.

Veterans were rewarded by the 1862 naturalization law, which allowed honorably discharged army veterans of any U.S. war to petition for naturalization without previously having filed a *Declaration of Intent* after only one year of residence in the U.S. A later law, in 1894 extended the same privileges to Navy and Marine Corps veterans. Civil War applicants were treated as special cases, and their naturalization papers are not always found in the usual places. You may need to search military records to locate the naturalization records. Many soldiers filed petitions and were naturalized the same day. Some courts filed military discharges, rather than the regular naturalization forms.

With the start of World War I in 1918, any alien who served in the military could be naturalized without meeting the residency requirements. The government did not want to send a soldier overseas unless he had the protection of US citizenship and therefore offered them naturalization. A WWI soldier did not just become a citizen by being in the military, they still had to go to court for it. The soldier was usually quickly taken to the nearest Federal Court where he would file all the papers. Over 192,000 servicemen aliens were naturalized during the years 1918 and 1919.

Military service still provides an avenue for citizenship. During the 20th & 21st centuries be aware military personnel did not need a green card to apply for U.S. citizenship if s/he served honorably and was on active

duty with the U.S. Armed Forces during our wars or conflicts. The military personnel can go straight from being an undocumented or illegal alien to applying for and receiving U.S. citizenship.

There are many resources available for researching naturalization records.

- **FamilySearch International**-- historically known as the Genealogical Society of Utah. The FamilySearch.org website provides free access to its on-line resources as well as free access to its Family History Library located in Salt Lake City, Utah and its Family History Centers located throughout the world. We are fortunate to have a FH Center in Mason City. FamilySearch began microfilming naturalization records in 1938; digitizing them in 1998.
- **Online Searchable Naturalization Indexes and Records**--This website contains links to naturalization indexes and records. It is arranged by state and gives the statewide indexes and records first. It then gives the countywide indexes and records.

North Central Iowa Genealogical Society
Post Office Box 237
Mason City, IA 50401-0237
www.ncigs.org

RESOURCES continued:

- **Fold3.com**--This website has a partnership with the National Archives to bring digital images of some of the National Archives collections online. Part of the website is free; other images are only available through a subscription.
- **Ancestry.com** has been very active in digitizing multiple naturalization collections contained in the records of the National Archives, FamilySearch and elsewhere.
- **Genealogy Records, Indexes and Databases on the Internet** was originally created to link resources for German genealogy research with a focus on Americans of German descent. The website includes listings of online naturalization records or indexes in a state-by-state list.

Here is a summary of the naturalization record holdings for Cerro Gordo County:

State of Iowa, 2nd Judicial District Court, Cerro Gordo County naturalization records are held by the NCIGS Library, Mason City, Iowa. This naturalization collection encompasses:

- Petitions for Naturalization – Series 1, June 11, 1880 through September 1906
- Petitions for Naturalization – Series 2, December 4, 1906 through August 28, 1944 with dates September 4, 1942 through April 3, 1944 missing.
- Declarations of Intent, April 1858 through August 4, 1945.
- WPA naturalization index cards, ca. 1850s through 1945
- Other miscellaneous indexes, calendars, certificate recordings, and associated documents.
- U.S. District Court, Northern District of Iowa, Central Division (Mason City Term) naturalization records are held by the National Archives at Kansas City (400 West Pershing Rd., Kansas City, MO 64108). NCIGS holds an index to this collection. The indexes are for the following records:
- Name index to the Declarations of Intention - 1944-1958
- Name Index to Naturalization Petitions 1942-1961