



Dane County Area Genealogical Society News

President's Message from Bob Rettammel

Happy Spring!

I know many of you have also made contributions to the field of Genealogy and I welcome you to write an article for consideration in future newsletters. Of course, you're not required to write articles but if you have a talent for writing, along with your genealogy research skills, please contact me to discuss sharing your own genealogy story.

DCAGS Speaker Programs on 2nd Saturdays at 11am

On **April 14th** we will welcome, Simone Munson, WHS Collection Development Coordinator, to speak to us about, "the history of photographic formats, and how to date and identify images for genealogy".

On **May 12th** we will have presentation and updates on the process to start Special Interest Groups (SIGs) within our society. You should have received the following message through email from the Outreach Committee, lead by Eleanor Brinsko and myself:

"DCAGS has been in the process of starting Special Interest Groups (SIGs) to give additional opportunities for members to take part in our organization in more meaningful ways to their genealogical interests.

Please take a moment to fill out the Google Form link that is listed below. By submitting this form, you are not obligated to take part in any of the SIGs. We are looking to see which groups would be most beneficial for our members and who would be interested in taking part in one or more. Thus far, SIG ideas with the most votes are: German/Prussian Genealogy, Computer/Genealogy Software, Irish Genealogy, British Isles, Breaking Down Brick Walls, and DNA Testing.

Complete the contact information. This is only available to the Outreach Committee and will only be used for creating potential members of the SIGs.

<https://goo.gl/forms/GzfF10DRQGbm0tXW2>

If you are interested, please go to the link and fill-out the form with your responses. It is only to collect ideas, it does not sign you up in a particular SIG, that will come later in the process, if you're still interested.

On **June 9th** we will have Heather Hoff, who will be speaking about tombstone/gravestone preservation and restoration. Thank you and hope to see you at our Saturday Programs.

*April 2018 - May 2018
Volume 12 Issue 2*

Regular DCAGS meetings are held on the 2nd Saturday of each month at 11:00 am at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints located at 4505 Regent, Madison, WI.

The DCAGS Governing Board meets on the 2nd Saturday of each month at 9:00 am at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints located at 4505 Regent, Madison, WI. For more information, see:

www.dcags.org

Upcoming Program

April 14 *Tips and Tools for Photograph Identification*

Simone Munson, Collection Development Coordinator, is an archivist and librarian at the Wisconsin Historical Society and has worked closely with the Society's photographic collections for more than 10 years.

A picture is worth 1000 words, but often those words are difficult to read. Join us for her presentation which will provide a brief history of photographic formats and then a deeper examination of resources, tools, and strategies for dating and identifying photographs. If you have inherited a large collection of unidentified family photographs this presentation will provide important information for tackling this daunting project.

Sponsor a Guest

DCAGS is offering an opportunity for members to sponsor a guest with a one year free membership. Here's how it would work:

1. Current members could sponsor a free one-time guest membership for a new guest and/or family with emailed newsletters and other electronic correspondence. No directories and no printed materials will be sent.
2. Thereafter, the guest may join as a regular member with full member benefits (newsletters, directory, emails, mailings and events).
3. The year for inclusion runs for the membership period-March 31, 2018 to March 31, 2019. Members who wish to sponsor a free guest member would send an email to the DCAGS email address at widcags@gmail.com with the following information:
 - sponsor's name
 - guest's name
 - guest's address
 - guest's phone number and email

This is an excellent opportunity to increase the visibility of DCAGS and promote membership. So, send us the name of a guest.

Ann Rutledge Legend or First Love?

by Margaret Handel

We've probably all had the experience of finding something or someone unexpected in your family tree. When I first started investigating my family history, I noticed that they came from Southern Illinois about the time that Abraham Lincoln was practicing law in the area. I assumed that maybe they had attended a Lincoln/Douglas debate. I discovered that they knew Abraham Lincoln much better than I ever imagined.

I had found through vital records that my family was from a small town called Carmi, located in White County, IL. In investigating the families, I located a publication called *Enfield Memories* by Mrs. Chalon T. Land. This was a compiled town history published in 1953 for the town's centennial. In it she lists the histories of some of the founding families of the village. I knew my 2nd great grandparents were Felix Willis and Mary Jane Miller. I suspected the Mary

Jane Miller's parents were James Miller and Jane Rutledge. They were all buried at the same cemetery. I was hoping to use this publication to confirm how the families were related. It did indeed confirm that Mary Jane Miller was the daughter of James Miller and Jane Rutledge. What it also revealed is that Mary Jane Miller has a very famous and somewhat controversial double cousin.

When I checked the history of the Rutledge family in this book, it stated that "Jane Rutledge was born in Georgia. After 1807 the family migrated to Henderson, Kentucky, then to Enfield, IL. James Rutledge (brother of Jane) moved with John Cameron to Sangamon County and founded the town of New Salem, that village on the Sangamon River where Ann, the daughter of James, knew and loved Abraham Lincoln".

I had never heard this story before, and was unaware of any family

connection to Abraham Lincoln, so that sentence made me pause. I immediately started researching Ann Rutledge and discovered a very romantic story that shaped the course of a nation.

Ann Mayes Rutledge was born in on January 7, 1813, near Henderson, KY, the daughter of James Rutledge and Mary Ann Miller. In 1829, along with John Cameron, James Rutledge founded New Salem, IL. There they built a dam. James Rutledge converted his home into a tavern and built an addition for guests.

When Abe Lincoln reached the age of 22 he moved to New Salem, where he would live for the next six years. Being penniless he worked as a clerk, storekeeper, postmaster, and surveyor.

Ann became engaged to a man named John MacNamar who had come west from New York. He formed a partnership with Samuel Hill and started a store.

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(Ann Rutledge continued from page 3)

With the profits he was able to acquire considerable property. In 1832 MacNamar left to see to his parents in New York. Time passed and MacNamar did not return.

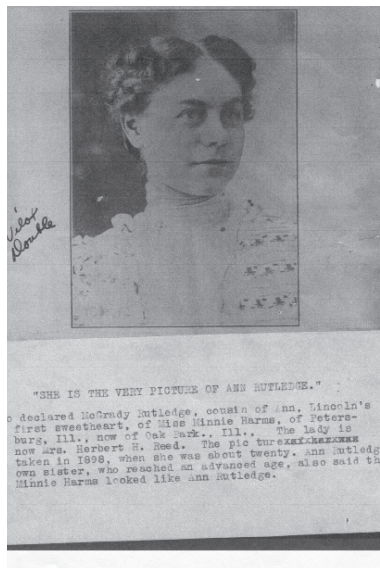
What happened next has been the subject of profound historical speculation.

It is known that Abraham Lincoln was boarding with the Rutledge family. Lincoln and Rutledge were also attending the same school together at Mentor Graham's and the two became very close. Just how close is still being debated by historians.

After a while, Ann Rutledge became ill with what may have been typhoid fever. Lincoln was called to her bedside. On August 25, 1835, Anne Rutledge passed away at the age of 22.

Lincoln eventually left New Salem to practice law in Springfield, IL. After the death of Lincoln, his law partner,

William Herndon, wanted to write a biography of his friend and partner. He wished to tell the story of the man he knew and not the martyr and legend Lincoln had become. Herndon spent two years interviewing hundreds of people who had known Lincoln personally in Illinois, Kentucky, and Indiana. When he was finished he gave a series of lectures. These lectures were controversial because Lincoln had never talked about his early life and many of the stories had not been published



before. The story that caused the most controversy was the story of

his relationship with Ann Rutledge. Many people confirmed that not only were Ann and Abe close friends, but they had actually been engaged and hoped to marry the fall of 1835, conditional upon her receiving an honorable release from her engagement to Mr. MacNamar.

After her death, it was reported that Lincoln was so bereft with grief that he experienced his first bout of major depression. Some reported that they feared for Lincoln's sanity and his friends put him on a type of suicide watch.

Mary Todd Lincoln, as well as some professional historians, never believed these accounts. Mr. Herndon and Mrs. Lincoln despised one another and it was felt that Mr. Herndon exaggerated the relationship in an attempt to get back at Mary Todd. He referred to Ann as Lincoln's one and only true love. Since Ann was still

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(Ann Rutledge continued from page 5)

technically engaged to Mr. MacNamar at the time, there was no written record of an engagement and some people in New Salem stated they were not aware of an engagement. Among the people interviewed were several members of the Rutledge family. It was felt they had a reason to claim a closer relationship between the two than actually existed. Plus, the interviews occurred thirty years after the events in New Salem. This brought into question how accurately the events were recalled after such a long period of time. The pendulum swung back and forth on the Ann/Abe relationship during the 20th century.

Among the interview notes are the following quotes:

“ I can never forget how sad and broken hearted Lincoln looked when he came out of the room from the last interview with Annie. No one knows what was said at the

meeting , for they were alone together.”
Quote from Ann’s sister, Nancy.

In 1865 Mentor Graham, the former New Salem schoolmaster, said of Ann, *“ I know Miss Ann Rutledge took sick while going to school. Lincoln and she both were studying at my house.She was beautiful and ingenious- amiable-kind exceptionally good scholar in all the common branches including grammar. She was beloved of everybody, and she loved everybody. Lincoln and she were engaged-Lincoln told me so- and she intimated to me the same. He - Lincoln - told me he felt like committing suicide after her death but I know him of God’s higher purpose. He told me he thought so too.”*

In his Biography titled *Lincoln*, David Herbert Donald relates this story: After his election as president, an old friend, Isaac Cogdal, a quarryman and former New Salem resi-

dent, visited Lincoln. He asked Lincoln if he had fallen in love with Ann. Lincoln replied -

“Abe is it true that you fell in love with & courted Ann Rutledge?”
Said Cogdale. Lincoln said, *“it is true – true indeed I did. I have loved the name of Rutledge to this day. I have kept my mind on their movements ever since & love them dearly”.*

“Abe – Is it true?” –
Said Cogdale, *“that you ran a little wild about the matter”.*

“I did really – I run off the track: it was my first. I loved the woman dearly & sacredly: she was a handsome girl – would have made a good loving wife – was natural & quite intellectual, though not highly Educated – I did honestly – & truly love the girl & think often – often of her now” said Lincoln.

The following three items were taken from a scrap-
(Continued on page 6)

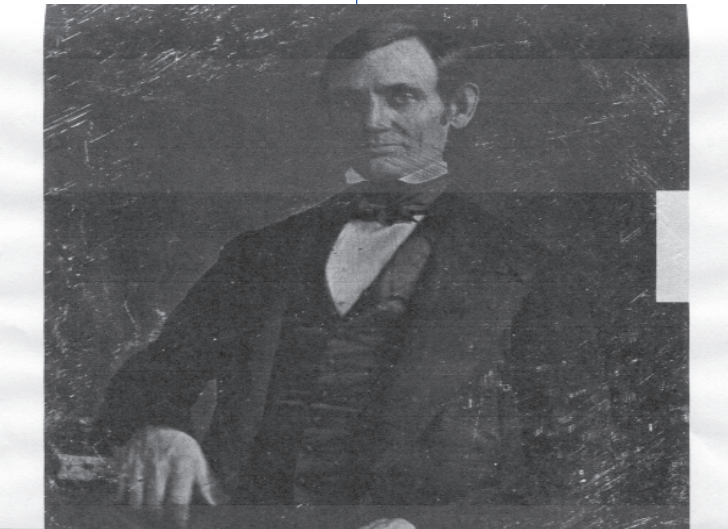
(Ann Rutledge continued from page 5)

book dated 1911 owned by the late Arthur M. Brown of southwestern Philips Township written by Uncle Peter (Miller) and printed in the Carmi Times Sesquicentennial Edition, December 9, 1965 by Patricia Davis.

he loved the name of Rutledge to that day.

2. Years later, Ann sister Mrs. Beny, said to Rev. R.D. Miller, “Ann’s whole soul seemed wrapped up in Lincoln.”

and transcripts of the interviews are available online. Read them for yourself and come to your own conclusion about this love story and what would have happened if Ann Rutledge had lived.



Daguerreotype of Lincoln, 1845, taken by Nicholas Shepard

1. According to McClure Tarbell’s Life of Lincoln, all who knew her (Ann) spoke of her beauty. She was well educated for that early day, gentle and cheerful. She would have been married to Abraham Lincoln in the spring of 1835 but for his poverty. And it was agreed that she would go to school another term while he finished his law studies. Years later, Lincoln confided to a friend that

3. It should be remembered that Ann Rutledge was a full double cousin to Rev. JM Miller, Mark A. Miller, Mrs. Elias Jerden, Mrs. J.H. Gowdy, and Mrs.
4. F.H Willis (my 2X great grandmother), who lived and died at Enfield. Their mother was a Rutledge. Ann’s mother a Miller.

Herndon’s notes and interviews are now kept at the National Archives

Herndon transcripts are at Southern Illinois University Online Digital Colleciton –

<http://lincoln.lib.niu.edu/islandora/search/ann%20rutledge?type=dismax>

Pictures are from Library of Congress Rare Book and Special Collections Division Alfred Whital Stern Collection of Lincolniana –

<https://www.loc.gov/collections/alfred-whital-stern-lincolniana>



Cemetery Games By by Alice Bredeson Zweifel

My “cemetery kit” sat ready in the trunk of my car for many years. It consisted of garden gloves and a trowel to pull or dig out a few weeds, a large scissors to clip tall grass near a stone, boots and a rain poncho (one doesn’t stop for a sprinkle), a brimmed hat for use on a sunny day, mosquito spray, a soft bristled brush to get rid of bird droppings or grass clippings or dust on letters, and a bottle of water to wash the flat surface of a stone if necessary. I learned to always take a camera to photograph the cemetery entrance and pertinent stones since I might never pass that way again. If I did, the stone might be gone. When a second person accompanied me, a few extra supplies were added to the kit.

I took my eldest son along on trips to local cemeteries in Dane, Green, and Columbia Counties, at first he sat in his stroller enjoying the ride, the fresh air, and the change of scenery. If the stroller kept moving, he was happy, but if I dawdled too long deciphering the information from a stone, he would become restless.

As he grew, he wasn’t content to sit in a stroller while I moved from stone to stone. He wanted to walk about looking for an occasional squirrel or chip-monk or grass snake.

Once he graduated from baby food, we would pack a couple of sandwiches, a few cookies, and a couple of juice boxes and call it a picnic. We would find a low tombstone to sit on to eat our lunch assuming that the person buried there would enjoy having company for a brief time. As we ate and talked, the crumbs we dropped would later be spotted by a bird or two. The boy would laugh as the birds devoured the crumbs.

Alphabet cards made with sandpaper letters were a big help. Handing him one, I would say, “Look for a B” or whatever letter started the name I was seeking. He would run from stone to stone trying to find a match and squealed with delight when he found one. The “B” found numerous Bredesons, Baumgartners, and Bablers. “G” found Gundersons whether related or not. The “Z” found Zweifel, Zentner,

Zimmerman, Ziegler, and Zopfi. The “E” found Elmers galore.



By the time he was age two, he could read and began looking for whole names rather than the first letter. He became the scout at each cemetery, charging ahead on a row and alerting me to any pertinent stones. He still enjoyed the wildlife he encountered and the freedom to run without restraint among the stones. As his attention span grew longer, we migrated from a few small cemeteries like those in Paoli and Belleville and Arlington to larger ones like the ones at Norway Grove, Spring Prairie, and the Swiss Reformed Cemetery in New Glarus.

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Another game was counting how many black stones in each row. Black was easy. Pink was more difficult to spot and raised questions like “How come no stones are yellow or blue?” He thought sitting on a tombstone was a great place to read. It soon became fun for him to see how many books he could read while I was writing inscriptions. Before we left home, he would ask, “How many books will it take to finish this cemetery?”

The Little Golden Books gave way to trips to our local library where his checking out five books at a time was the limit on my card. To avoid making two trips a day to the library, I arranged for him to have his own library card, so he could choose ten at one time. That solved the problem of his finishing whatever books he had brought before I finished the inscriptions I wanted from that cemetery that day.

Once my son started kindergarten, his weekday cemetery games were over. I trekked alone through more cemeteries and found the gravesites of numerous relatives, but doing so wasn't nearly as much fun as our previous jaunts. Some of the cemetery caretakers have been playing games,

too. Since original cemetery maps have been lost and broken gravestones discarded, a few old gravesites are now considered available for sale. I could kick myself for not taking my camera in the 1970's when I saw in Mount Horeb three gravestones of my relatives. Now those stones are gone, and the current sexton claims no one is buried there, so the plots could be resold.

I found a cemetery near Black River Falls where the caretaker became tired of mowing and trimming around randomly scattered gravestones. To make his task easier, he moved all of the numbered crosses to two straight rows along one edge of the cemetery. Next he moved all of the other gravestones into two straight rows next to the crosses, so the majority of the grass could be mowed without obstructions.

At a site in Dane County, gravestones were moved to make way for a church building expansion. In a different community, bones of unmarked graves were uncovered while digging a basement for a new larger church building on

the site where the previous building had burned.

Wisconsin winters have been tough on old stones, especially white ones, wearing away the lettering. Many inscriptions that I copied are no longer readable. Stones that broke have been discarded or completely buried at the site. Some stones, though mended, lost part of the dates. Other stones have been desecrated by vandals.

I joined the Wisconsin State Old Cemetery Society which encouraged many Wisconsin volunteers to put into print their lists of tombstone transcriptions and deposit a paper copy at its archives in Milwaukee. That archives was later moved to Mequon. The Wisconsin State Old Cemetery Society was eventually discontinued, partly because the lease on the storage building expired and partly because of a GenWeb project which began to put the lists on the internet. Some lists later became part of findagrave.com. Many such lists that were done by volunteers and formerly free to use are now part of internet sites like Ancestry.com and available only with a membership.

How to see Member-Only information on the DCAGS Website

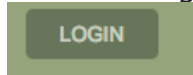
by Melodee Patterson

Want to see the current Newsletters? Or find contact information for another member? There are special pages just for members. Check them out today!

Login to the DCAGS website:

Go to the DCAGS website: dcags.org

Click the “Login” button in the upper left-hand corner of the window.



Enter your Email and Password and click “LOGIN” button.

How to see Member-Only information:

Click on the 3 lines at the right side of the menu.



Slide your mouse down until “Member-only” is highlighted. You’ll see the pages that are for members only listed on the left. (The pages you see will depend on whether you’re a Board member, Admin, or member.)



Slide your mouse over to highlight any of the pages that you want to look at and click.

For example, if you click on the Private Member Directory tab you’ll be able to see contact information for all members. (More about that in the next newsletter!)




Or, if you click on the Newsletter tab, you’ll be taken to the current newsletters that can be looked at online or downloaded.

If you have any trouble finding your member-only information, or have questions about the DCAGS website, contact Melodee Patterson at deekae99@gmail.com.

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