

PRESIDENT'S NOTE

I would like to thank our Immediate Past-President Chris Rau, and the entire CCGS Board for their contributions during his term as President. Chris did a great job of condensing several years of accomplishments into a concise overview at our September meeting, so I won't repeat our Society's journey at this time. The success of our Society is due to the many efforts of all our officers, committee chairs and Society members since its inception. There is always room for new members on our board and a constant refreshing of talent is welcome and necessary due to our Society's term-limit policy.

I mentioned the plight of the Detroit Society for Genealogical Research, Inc. and the possibility that this organization may cease to exist. They began in 1937. When I was President of DSGR, Inc. about twenty years ago it was a very active group with over 1,200 members. Of course, this was before the internet and there were few other Societies in the state. Like any other organization, there must be a turnover of members, and from this group, there must be volunteers to step forward to direct the Society.

Although our Society is currently in good shape, there are some vacant board positions including committee chairs that need to be filled. If you are new to genealogy, you can still contribute to the progress of your Society. Many positions require common sense or business knowledge rather than research experience.

The value of accepting a board position is contributing to the direction that your Society will be taking during the next few years. Board meetings tend to be a bit informal and can be a good opportunity to listen to the experience of others as various projects are discussed around the table. If you would be interested in joining us, we meet the week before our regular meeting and your total time commitment is often less than a few hours per month. Please contact me or any other Board member for further information.

-Jim Jackson, President CCGS



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MEET GENE CALHOUN

Ever get an email from Gene Calhoun or email address michigancalhouncene@yahoo.com? Gene is a very special "person". Not really. Gene is a fictional name used for our society's email account.

Electronic Newsletter delivery is sent via this account. When you elect to receive your CCGS Newsletter, I (your editor) goes thru a process to validate YOUR email address and to ensure that you can

receive the newsletter as an attachment sent via michigancalhouncene@yahoo.com. Once validated you are added to the current year's contact group and you receive your newsletter for the year. Each year I check with our membership chair to ensure membership renewal and move all validated recipients to the new year's contact list provided your email

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MEET GENE CALHOUN (CONTINUED)

address has not changed. SO, if you want to keep the newsletter's coming to you electronically, reply to Gene on the validation emails, keep your membership current AND if you change your email address, send Gene the old and new address so we can update our lists.

Besides our newsletter, this Email address is used for other society correspondence and does get a LOT of junk mail. It is a generic address for the society and is NOT checked regularly at this time. To contact a society board or committee member, please use the email

addresses listed below.

Gene Calhoun is a tool for the society and no single person. He is a helpful tool!



CALHOUN COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

The purposes of the Calhoun County Genealogical Society (CCGS) are:

- To gather and preserve information of genealogical value,
- To encourage the deposit of such information in suitable depositories,
- To aid genealogists in the study of family history through the exchange of knowledge,
- To publish and promote Calhoun County and other genealogical materials.

CCGS is incorporated under the Michigan Nonprofit Corporation Act. Individuals, libraries or societies may join.

Annual dues for the year beginning September 1 are \$18.00 receiving postal newsletters and \$15.00 receiving electronic newsletters. Memberships are accepted year-round; dues received after May 1 will pay membership for the following year. Members receive the newsletter *Generations* six times per year. General meetings are held at 7:00 p.m. the fourth Tuesday of each month at the Gifford Schultz Educational Service Center—CISD building, 17111 G Drive North, Marshall, *unless otherwise specified*. No meetings are held in July, August or December. Programs are free and open to the public.

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All are invited to submit articles to the *Generations* newsletter editor. Permission is granted to reprint articles unless otherwise noted. Please give appropriate credit to the source. Copies of the individual pages from back issues of *Generations* at \$1.00 for the first page, \$0.50 for each additional page.

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NEWSLETTER FOCUS—CONVIS TOWNSHIP CONTINUED

Because of all the society business in the last newsletter, I was unable to fit all the items I received from members about Convis Township. So, this newsletter's focus is a continuation of the last one.

This newsletter has a

featured article about a family that had some ties to Convis Township. This article is a collaboration by two of our society members that met online and have worked together to trace their family roots. The power of the Internet in family research is AMAZING!



MEMBER PROFILE—SANDY REDMOND

While I haven't been actively pursuing genealogy in the past couple of years, I enjoyed many active years with the Calhoun County Genealogical Society.

I started my family history search in the early 1990's. My friend Nancy Hisbiske-Reed and I attended a meeting presented by Pat Geyer and Val Radee on a research trip they had taken to England to do family history research. The thought of traveling to your ancestor's homeland to dig into your roots all sounded very interesting.

Well, Nancy and I came back for other meetings and we soon learned that being involved in the genealogy society was a great way to learn; you can gain so much from fellow researchers and by taking advantage of what the Society has to offer in the way of educational meetings, seminars and publications. Eventually Nancy and I became co-editors of the newsletter. It was a new adventure for both of us, and something we enjoyed tremendously.

dously.

In time I became Vice President, then eventually President. During those years the CCGS organized some exciting activities. One of our proudest achievements was bringing in Curt Witcher, Manager of the Genealogy Center of the Allen County Public Library in Ft. Wayne, IN, for an Expert in Residence visit, sponsored in part by the Kellogg Foundation. Another milestone was the reprinting of the 1877 History of Calhoun County. The CCGS also brought in speaker Leland Metzler of Heritage Quest and organized research trips to Allen County Public Library on several occasions.

Around 1998 I was asked by the late Dick Branch to take over the MIGenWeb site for Calhoun County. Dick had started the Calhoun site, as well as Kalamazoo. The GenWeb sites were some of the earliest tools for doing genealogy research on the internet, and continue to be a rich source of free genealogy on the Web. About 2004 Ann Heisler joined me as co-

coordinator of the site and has done the lion's share of the updating for the last few years.

At the present time my husband and I are in the middle of rehabbing an historic home built in 1841. The Stow-Hasbrouck house is on the National Register of Historic Places, and was the birthplace of the Michigan Huguenot Society. By using a lot of the same tools used in genealogy research – census, court records, land records, newspapers – I have uncovered quite a lot of interesting history about the house. As a researcher and history lover I can't help but think about all of the people who have lived here before us, through the good times and bad. I hope the work we are doing would make them proud!

MEMBER PROFILE. Prepare your profile. You may be next. I'll be looking for someone for our next newsletters soon!

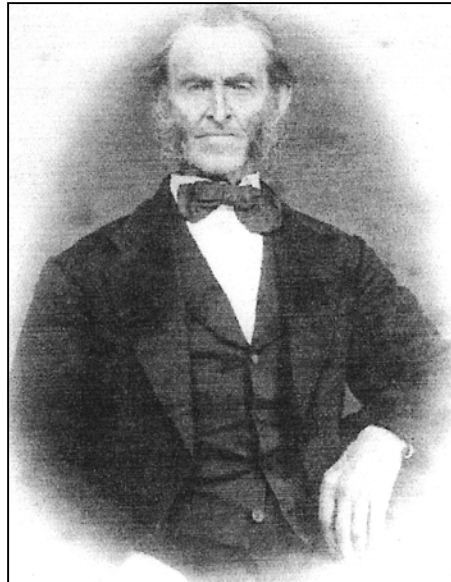
DAVID T ROBINSON

David T. Robinson was born in Newtownards Parish, County Down, Ireland in 1789, the year George Washington became President of this country. He left Ireland with his wife Mary and young son, James David [JD], in 1822. We believe they left Ireland because of persecution of their mixed Catholic and Protestant marriage. By this time, our country had elected it's 5th President, James Monroe. Mary died, we suppose in childbirth, when Mary Jane was born ca. 1826. Robinsons' son JD, was sent to live with an Uncle while a new Mother was sought. Father and son reunited with the new mother, Sarah McBradner in Richland, Oswego, NY in 1832. In 1835 David and Sarah settled in Convis Twp. Besides JD and Mary Jane from the first marriage, David and Sarah became parents of another son, Nathan D., and ten more daughters.

By 1840 David owned a property in Convis Twp. He and Sarah had 4 daughters and JD with them. Around this time Mary Jane married Zophar Scidmore from Sarasota Springs, New York.

As a youngster JD worked with his father on the farm but apparently has dreams of a different life than farming and set out on his own requiring David to hire help. In Grand Rapids JD learned masonry with his brother-in-law Zophar and remained there. Zophar and Mary Jane moved to Hastings, Calhoun Co.

The excitement of the California gold rush brought JD and Zophar back to Marshall to join others seeking riches. On 27 Mar 1850 they left for CA with Dr Cobden's company to seek their fortunes. JD kept a diary of the quest that exists today and is in the possession of a descendant. Enriched, Zo-



David Robinson 1874

phar returned to Marshall late 1850 and JD to Grand Rapids in 1851.

Tragedy struck in November 1853 when a fire swept through the Robinsons' home consuming clothing, all provisions, and one child whose name was Andrew Hogan. It is probable that the child was a son of Sarah's sister, Margaret McBradner, Talmadge, Upham.

In 1854 JD married Almeria Church, born in NY, daughter of Robert Church & Elizabeth Ennis Church of Marengo. The Churches with their nine children also had arrived in Marshall in 1835. The newly married couple moved to Grand Rapids to live in the brick house JD built.

In Grand Rapids, in 1861, a group of railroad engineers & construction men formed Michigan Engineers & Mechanics to support the Union soldiers. JD and Zophar returned to Marshall to recruited men for this new regiment. New recruits included: Nathan Robinson, Zophar's son Edwin and many of the men from the Gold Rush Days. The new regiment gathered on the Marshall Fair grounds in Oct 1861,

waiting for their uniforms and supplies and learning to be soldiers.

Preserved letters from Nathan reveal that he wrote faithfully to his sisters Phebe and Mattie (Martha) from the Camps. Libby, Evaline, and Rosetta often inserted a thought. That they were close is apparent and the letters reflected the playful personalities of all. In one letter Nathan said, "Evaline you asked me if I had grown any better looking. Well that is a queer question. I don't think this hot sun and hard crackers and such like is calculated to make me so and then you wanted I should send my likeness home." In that same letter Nathan referred to his older brother, "Lt. Robinson", as "strutting around big as ever." (Punctuation and spelling corrected to aid understanding.)

Other persons from Convis mentioned in Nathan's letters were George Garfield, (married to Elizabeth/Libby Robinson), Delos Woods, Ellna and Marcene Alvin Ford (brother and sister), Anna Ward, Alvin Harrison, Mr. McFaden, and James/Jimey Hogan. Nathan must have been a serious young man as he chided his sisters and other friends for not writing enough or admonishing them try harder.

JD, Nathan, Zophar, his son Edwin, and brother-in-law George Garfield were all in Co. C. 1st MI Eng. & Mech. The first line in JD's Civil War diary May 21 1862 reads, "We buried Nathan today." Nathan died of disease in a hospital near Corinth, MS They buried him leaving notes about the specific location. He was later moved to the Corinth National Cemetery.

Two of the Church brothers were also Union soldiers: Dr Ennis Church surgeon 9th Inf. Co S & 26th Inf. and 1st Lieu. John Philpot Curran Church Co H. 17th MI Reg. Inf.

JD's letters home to his wife, unlike Nathan's, were of a more serious tone. He described the work of the Regiment and professed his longing for his wife and three daughters during the long and arduous war. JD began his Civil War duties as a Lieutenant and advanced to Captain and commander of Company C remaining at that rank throughout the War. He followed Sherman from Richmond and finally marched in the big victory parade in Washington DC. JD and returned to his family in Grand Rapids

The Civil War, taking the lives of over 620,000 men, disrupted families. In the case of the Robinsons, farming became a tremendous burden. A couple of Nathan's letters during the war alluded to the hard times they were experiencing at home. Nathan remarked to his Mother that he would be home soon to help with the farm and offered advice as to how to proceed until that time.

David continued as a farmer until 1867. Since he was 78 years old then, it is likely age and health became a factor. David & Sarah lived the majority of their lives in Convis Twp. After David's death, Sarah lived within Eaton and Barry Counties with her grown children. She had daughters in Walton Twp., Charlotte, Olivet, and Hastings. Another four daughters moved to California after the Civil War.

Many of David's children married people from Calhoun County. Below is a list of the children with their spouses:

JD and Almeria Church Robinson, remained in Grand Rapids

Mary Jane and Zophar Scidmore, remained in Hastings

Catherine (C.C.) married 1st Golette Cone DuBois, settled in California and 2nd husband was a Ferresci

Margaret married Henry Hall, settled in Walton Twp., Eaton Co.

Sarah Elizabeth married George W. Garfield, Walton Twp., Eaton Co.

Mary Elnora married Thomas H. Epley, Settled in California

Charlotte Ann married Joseph A. Pittenger, Settled in Hastings

Nathan D. died Civil War 1862 at age 20, unmarried

Rosetta died 1867 at 23, unmarried

Martha married William McMerrial, settled in Charlotte

Phebe married Michael Tolbert, settled in Charlotte

Evaline married Alexander Norman, settled in California

Adeline married 1st Oscar Hood in

California and 2nd a Martin also in California

Adults friendships developed within the family. Zophar & JD were life long friends and referred to each other as a brother. (Early research was hampered because of this endearment between the two. It was only when Mary Jane Scidmore's maiden name was discovered that we realized JD and Zophar were brothers-in-law.) JD and Sister Mary Elnora Robinson, married to Thomas (T.H.) Epley, also forged a strong enough bond to warrant cross country travel. JD can be found in Census records of 1880 in Grand Rapids and again in California. That year he traveled with his daughters to visit the Epleys in Napa Valley. Ironically a letter exists where Mary Epley wrote home to another Sister and said, "We have all been very busy the first few weeks getting our house in order to receive our Brother James and two daughters. They will be here in two days now if nothing happens to detain them. I hope I shall like the girls better than we ever did their Mother. You know we thought her proud and haughty." In-law problems have existed over time. Mary & Tom's youngest daughter was married at JD & Almeria's home in GR. It is special for us to have this glimpse into the past.

David died in 1878, during the Presidency of Rutherford B. Hayes. He had lived through 19 Presidents. David is buried at Austin Cemetery in Convis Twp. beside Sarah who died in 1882. The cemetery plot in Austin Ceme-



(Continued on page 6)

NEXT NEWSLETTER FOCUS—UPDATES FROM AROUND THE COUNTY

IN SEARCH OF....

Information about People,
Places and Things from the
communities from Calhoun
County



I'm running behind again and because of this the November-December issue of *Generations* is already late. So, to speed up the deliverance of this issue, I'm going to take this opportunity to present to you articles I have received but did not fit into

previous issues AND updates to articles previously submitted. If you have an update or an article you would like to add, please send it to me and I'll see if I can fit it in. Send to annheisler@aol.com.

- Ann Heisler, *Generations* Editor

(Continued from page 5)

tery was owned by Golette Cone DuBois, spouse of daughter Catherine Robinson. The only other recorded burial in that plot is Rosette Robinson who died in 1867.

An obituary for Sarah was found in *The Republican*, Charlotte, Michigan, May 12, 1882. It reads:

'Obit: Monday, April 24, at the residence of her daughter, Mrs. M. Talbert, Brookfield, Sarah Robinson, aged seventy years. She with her husband David Robinson, moved from Oswego County, NY, to Calhoun County, in the fall of 1835, when the country was a vast wilderness and settled on a farm in the town of Convis, upon which they had lived until the spring of '67 and most of the time since has been a resident of Eaton County, making her home with her children, her husband dying about four years ago. She was the mother of eleven children, ten girls and one boy, of which nine are yet living. She united with the Methodist church in an early day and lived a devoted Christian until she passed away and was taken to her final resting place. Now whether sleeping in the grave or is in heaven above we all will miss our mother dear and a mother's love. H.M.H.

In 1890 after both David and Sarah

were gone, the family convened the first reunion of the remaining live Robinson family in 30 years, at the home of Mrs. George Garfield. Eight of the children attended: Capt. James David Robinson, Mary Jane Robinson Scidmore Williams, Mrs. Charlotte Pittinger, Mrs. Margaret Hall, Mrs. Mary Epley all the way from Napa Valley, California, Mrs. Phebe. discovery of this reunion we were blessed with a photograph of all the siblings that attended.

A lot of history has been preserved of this family. There are personal letters, photographs, and artifacts. Recorded histories of James D. Robinson and Thomas Epley (Mary Robinson's husband) are found in *Biographical Histories for Michigan and California*.

With all that we do have, we still have unanswered questions. If anyone has any connection to any of the names herein mentioned, we'd love to hear from you. Sharon Patton (duvcw2009@live.com) and Jeanette Studley (jstudley@verizon.net).

Sharon Patton & Jeanette Studley, cousins and friends, are together presenting a sketch of David Robinson who immigrated to MI in 1836 & was a resident of Convis Twp. Calhoun Co MI. We met on line through a 3rd cousin. Capt. J D Robinson, Jeanette's great grandfather, was a half brother to Sharon's great grand-

mother Charlotte A. Robinson Pittinger. We met in 2005 for a Flag marker dedication of JD Robinson's service during the Rebellion of 1861-1865, which Sharon arranged. We have been searching, talking, and visiting ever since. We shared early charts and photos and between us have discovered a wealth of information. It is with great pride we present our Robinson Family.

All the previous information about the family is from a published supposed interview with JD ca. 1878. *American Biographical History of Eminent and Self-Made Men of the State of Michigan, 1878*.

Marshall Statesman Wed 3/Apr/1850

Marshall Statesman Nov, 1853

Hoffman, Mark, *My Brave Mechanics The First Michigan Engineers and Their Civil War*. Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 2007.

Discover your roots. Link to the past.

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Calhoun County Genealogical Society

Name _____

Surnames you are researching _____

Phone _____

Address _____

City, State, ZIP _____

E-mail address _____

Feel free to attach a five-generation ancestor chart and/or a query to be published in *Generations*

☐ Membership card requested (please enclose SASE)

☐ Check if you would like to receive *Generations* newsletter by e-mail in Adobe Acrobat (.pdf) format instead of postal mail

Include \$18 if *Generations* newsletter by postal mail OR \$15 if electronic *Generations*.

Please make your check payable to Calhoun County Genealogical Society or CCGS. Send to Membership Chair, Calhoun County Genealogical Society, P.O. Box 879, Marshall, MI 49068-0879

CCGS NEWS AND HAPPENINGS

PROCEDURES DOCUMENTATION PROJECT:

Your new CCGS Board is continuing the process of documenting the procedures for all the board and committee positions. This is to improve the transition between those relinquishing their position and the newly elected/appointed officers and committee members.

CEMETERY TRANSCRIPTIONS:

Marengo Twp Cemetery publication was completed and sold at our June meeting. After publication we noticed some pages were missed. We have corrected our unsold copies and are asking those with copies sold prior to the correction to get us their copy and we will issue you a corrected version. If you haven't purchased the publication, see the CCGS website <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~micalhou/publications.htm>,

Also, expected soon is Fredonia Township Cemetery.

WEB SITE UPDATES: Pages are being updated for outdated text and links. Broken links are being corrected.

We have received for Calhoun County the following and will be adding or replacing pages for these items soon:

- Updated version of Dibeau Marriage Collection
- County Poor House Ledger transcribed
- Korean War Casualties
- Vietnam War Casualties

Plans are also being made to update the web pages for the *Generations* newsletter index and "back" issues.

501 c (3) NON-PROFIT STATUS:

Non-profit status means we can accept donations. Because of the non-profit status, the donations are tax deductible to

the donor.

HELP NEEDED!

We NEED you! Please consider donating a little time to our society. We need the following help ASAP.

- Board Position—Vice President of Program and Publicity.
- Membership Chairperson
- Michigan Genealogical Council Delegate
- Newsletter Editor / Co Editor
- Webmaster / Co Webmaster
- Newsletter articles
- AND more!

Contact a board member for more information.

Generations

Calhoun County Genealogical
Society

**Serving Calhoun County,
Michigan family history
researchers since 1988**

CHECK US OUT ON ROOTSWEB!

[WWW.ROOTSWEB.COM/~MICALHOU/
CCGS.HTM](http://WWW.ROOTSWEB.COM/~MICALHOU/CCGS.HTM)

CALHOUN COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY CALENDAR

CCGS monthly meetings are typically held the fourth Tuesday of each month except July, August and December and are free and open to the public. Unless noted, meetings are held at 7 p.m. at the Gifford Schultz Educational Service Center—Calhoun Intermediate School District Building, 17111 G Drive North, Marshall.



23rd Year of Calhoun County
Genealogical Society!

2010-2011

26 ... October

“How to Preserve Your Family Heirlooms” By Shirley Hodges. According to Webster an heirloom is "A piece of property that descends to the heir as an inseparable part of an inheritance or Something of special value handed on from one generation to another." People love to research the past but sometimes they do little to protect the pieces of family life they find for the future.

23 ... November

“World War I & World War II Research” by Cynthia Grostick.

December

NO MEETING