



Mid-Valley Genealogical Society

NEWSLETTER

December, 1986

 **HAPPY HOLIDAYS** to all..it doesn't seem possible that it's that time again but it is and I'm glad. How many of you have taken the time to write down how you spent your childhood Christmases and the traditions of your family and your community? Wouldn't you love to have that kind of information from your greatgrandparents or even your parents. What a gift you can leave your descendants, if you'll give a little time now.

BITS OF NEWS is all I have, since my "news nose" has been into Christmas stuff. These things I have gleaned... thanks to Jean who loaned me her Iowa bulletins.

For 25¢ and a SASE, you can get a copy of old obituaries of someone who died in Illinois by sending the name, death date, and county of residence to: Illinois State Historical Library, Old State Capitol, Springfield, Ill 62706. (this from MonroeCo Genealogical Society News.

New Jersey research - the New Jersey State Library, located at 185 W State St, Trenton, NJ 08626, has a "Family Name" index on file. The staff will check index for a SASE. (this from the Iowa City Genealogical Society.

If your ancestor was a railroader, you may want to contact: UNITED STATES OF America Railroad Retirement Board, 844 Rush St. Chicago, IL 60611. They have pension information and will answer queries about an individual, if you provide info. SASE required. (this from Iowa Genealogical Society newsletter)

BENTON COUNTY PIONEERS - by Mabelle

Rachel L. Madill was born on November 28, 1856 in Whitby, Ontario, Canada to Benjamin and Jane L. (Park) Madill. She came to the United States with her parents in 1881 and settled in Freeland, Midland County, Michigan. She was married to Frank L. Kohn on February 24, 1886 in Freeland, Michigan. He was born in 1856. They had two sons and one daughter. The sons were Lemuel and Flery but the daughter's name has not been located but she married W. H. Messick and the couple lived in Ukiah, California. The Frank L. Kohn family lived in Kalamazoo, Michigan, Georgia, New York and Minnesota before coming to Portland in 1920 where they spent one year before locating at Summit, Oregon. Mrs. Rachel L. Kohn passed away at the family home at Summit on June 25, 1940 and was buried at the Summit Cemetery. Mr. Kohn died on April 12, 1948 in Portland, Oregon and he was also buried in the Summit Cemetery. At the time of Mrs. Kohn's death their two sons were living in Portland, Oregon.

Friendship is a chain of gold
Shaped in God's all-perfect mold.
Each link a smile, a laugh, a tear,
A touch of the hand, a word of cheer.

---Anonymous


Merry Christmas!
See you next year

December 13, 1986

RAKING THROUGH THE LEAVES
UNDER THE OLD OAK TREE



I have had an interesting development from the publication of Blairs of Drummond in 1985. I received an invitation to become a member of the BLAIR FAMILY SOCIETY, but was skeptical because it appears to be concerned with tracing Blair ancestry into colonial times in the States. Many of these would be Scotch-Irish. My book concerned the descendants of Robert and REbecca Blair who came directly from Scotland to Canada in 1822, and their descendants, most of whom stayed in Canada. However, when I realized that there was some interest in the roots in Scotland, I felt I could make a contribution and have been writing some articles, one on establishing BLAIRS in Scotland, another on finding your Scottish ancestors in Scottish History.

I had a phone call from New Jersey before I had received my copy. Mr. Blair wanted to know if I found my family over there and a number of questions. Something seemed to be bothering him. Then, just recently, I received a request for the references I had, to prove that Blairs were a sept of the Clan Grahams of Menteith. He had been invited to join the Council of the Clan Graham, but did not feel he should, unless he was confident that he would have the right to wear the Graham kilt and tartan. He had contacted the "prestigious" Scottish Tartan Society who had replied, that although there had been suggestions that this was so, they were unable to find evidence in support of this theory. Could I justify my statement that the Perthshire BLAIRS had been part of the Graham Clan?

Yes I could, but my reason for doing so had been one of trying to establish my ancestors in a geographic area. At Stirling Library I had been directed to the History of Leckie a Barony Estate adjacent to the estates of the Grahams of Menteith. In this book, there is mention of an incident involving Grahams and Blairs under the Earl of Menteith in 1593. I had also studied the Minutes of the Barony Court of Leckie 1687 to 1724, which covered disputes brought before the Baron, and here we found references to Blairs and Grahams, closely tied into the concerns of the estate. Later references located these names in the geographic area. Along with a knowledge of the feudal times, the conclusion was evident that Blairs, in that area, were closely associated with the Earls of Menteith.

My Friend in New Jersey is very happy!. Without a twinge of conscience, he has now agreed to accept the invitation to sit on the Council with the Clan Graham and he assures me that their genealogist is pleased to have this matter cleared up. He has also informed the Scottish Tartan Society that there is evidence to support this theory and he assures me that they too will be very happy. "By stating your references, you've opened up new vistas for a lot of people."

I think there must be a moral in this somewhere. One never knows what is going to be important...certainly I had not considered this to be earthshaking information but who knows what it will lead to. A woman from New Jersey has written with more information on Blairs in Perthshire. and because of her, I will be writing an article for the TAY FAMILY HISTORY JOURNAL. So maybe, I'll find some Blairs in Scotland.