



**MADISON COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY**  
 PO BOX 26  
 WINTERSET IA 50273-0026  
 Fourth Quarter Newsletter 2023

**MEETING:** Our meetings are held the first Tuesday of each month (except January and February) in the Winterset Public Library meeting room at 6:30 pm.

**DUES:** Payable January 1 of each year. \$10 per person or \$15 per family. Life membership is \$115.

**RESEARCH:** \$10 per hour plus cost of copies and postage. Send inquiries to the above address or to our email address.

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This Issue:  
**Identifying Photos**  
**ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL**

## Message from Our President

Greetings Family Seekers,

The weather feels more like Winter as we head into our colder months in Madison County, but only one light snowfall so far.

The topic of this newsletter is photographs. Everybody has pictures in their homes whether it be pictures of their kids, parents, grandparents, or group photos from events such as weddings. Pictures give a road to the past or the present.

You likely have pictures in boxes, desk drawers or in notebooks. Sometime people have no idea who is looking back at them, but know they are some distant relatives. But pictures need care or someday they won't be around anymore.

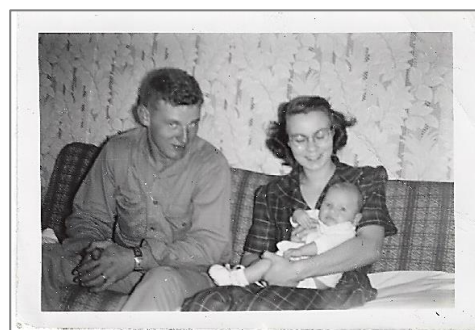
Inside you will see tips on dating photos that may help with your unknown photos. How great it would be to put a name with a face.

I have pictures all over the house and on the walls. I was asked to include a couple pictures in this newsletter. Below is one of me as a baby with my parents in 1951. The other is with my younger brothers in 1958. Some change!

Merry Christmas,  
 Skip Greenwood

President, Madison County Genealogical Society

PS. Since Pammel State Park turns 100 this year, we have included a short history that may surprise you.



# Dating 20th Century Photo Types

*adapted from everpresent.com*

Let's begin with photos we are familiar with to practice dating them by their format and fashions. Although photography was performed in special studios for decades in the 1800s, eventually it moved into the homes of our parents in the 1900s. You can likely tell by hair styles, furniture, even men's white belts and shoes, just what time period yours were taken. Maybe a review by decade will solve some 20<sup>th</sup> century photo mysteries for you.



1930s: toned photos with decorative borders



1940s: Black/white prints with scalloped borders



1960s: Black/white with square white borders.



1970s: Color with square white borders



1970s: Polaroid with white border, wider at the bottom to hold the photo as it was waved to dry



1980s: Color photo with rounded edges (and getting more colorful with age!)



1990s: 4-inch x 6-inch print

## Did You Know?

- **Kodak's Brownie camera** became available in 1960 with film that took only black and white photos.
- **Color photography** became commercially available to the general public after Kodak's invention of the slide film, Kodachrome, in 1935.
- **35mm film** became the most popular photographic film size option by the late 1960s.
- **Polaroids** – the first instant camera, easily identifiable by their characteristic white border, were first unveiled in 1948. The company was in peak production around the 1970s and declined in the early 2000s.
- **Disposable Cameras**, first released by Fujifilm in 1986, used 35mm film. Kodak's 1987 version used 110, but they released a 35mm version in two years. Disposable cameras popularity peaked in the early 2000s.

# Identifying and Dating Old Photos

Now that you are warmed up identifying 20<sup>th</sup> century photos, next are some basic steps and information to help you date and, hopefully, identify your collection of photos, no matter which century they originated. The two main questions to be answered are: “Who are these people?” and “When was this taken?” Sometimes the first question is answered and leads to the answer to the second. Or the order may be reversed – you find the correct timeframe then begin digging into which family members fit.

You will likely find that you need to fill some holes in your genealogy work (How many brothers *did* my grandfather have?) before you can successfully identify the photos. It’s not a quick process, but it can be oh-so-rewarding to put a name to a face and embrace them as family.

## Step One: Who Gave You the Photo?

This is known as the “chain of ownership.” Was it part of an album given to you by your aunt, your mother’s sister? Then you know it came from your maternal side and not your father’s. You just cut the search in half. Are there a number of photos of the same person at different ages? Likely this person was very dear to the original owner of the photos.

Keep the photos in the order you received them. It is a common mistake to remove them from albums to sort them in some modern way. But it is better to keep them “as is” since the original arrangement can give you clues to which family they belong.

You will likely want to make some notes as you gather clues. If so, you may want to make a quick copy of the photos – one per sheet of paper – then you can write assumptions, note other places you want to check, etc. on that paper. That allows you to put the original photo safely away and only handle the copy. Always touch the original by the edges only so that oils from your hands do not remain on the photo that may discolor it over time.

## Step Two: How Was the Photo Made?

The development of photography and type of photos created in the mid-1800s to early 1900s can help you identify the timeframe of the photo. Another newsletter article explains seven photo types from that period. Most photos before the 1870s have a sepia (brownish) tone. True black and white images weren’t produced until at least the 1890s.

## Step Three: When Was the Clothing in Fashion?

By examining the style of fashion worn by the subjects in a photograph, it is possible to approximate the date it was taken. For men, look at vests, collar (or lack of), neckties, jacket fit (loose or fitted) and how it is buttoned. Men’s hat fashions can help narrow the date range, too. Women’s fashions change with regularity so look for types of sleeves and collars, presence and size of a bustle, location of the waist, and the fullness of the skirt.

Hairstyles and placement of a part can provide more clues. Babies, both boys and girls wore loose-fitting “dresses” until a certain age. Note that here in the Midwest, any of the fashions or customs you research may have taken a few extra years to become popular here.

There are many websites to assist with photo dating, including:

- <https://www.legacytree.com/blog/womens-fashion-date-old-photos> (women’s fashions)
- <http://www.photosmadeperfect.com/Photo%20Dating%20Page%20Top%20pg/AA%20Mens%20Fashions%20By%20Decade.htm> (men’s fashions)
- <https://www.olivetreegenealogy.com/photos/fashions-photos.shtml> (both men’s and women’s)

## Step Four: What Else Do You Know?

This is when you pull in your genealogical work to compare photo clues to available records. You may already have family group sheets to use. Or start with state and federal censuses to make a list of family members you suspect may be in your photos. If the photo has a photographer’s mark/location, you can research when he was in business there through censuses or city directories., or history books

**Case Study:** This woman’s photo came from an album passed down from my maternal grandfather’s mother [Susan (Brummett) Houston] who was raised in Missouri. The woman’s hairstyle plus her hoop skirt, bell sleeves, and long jacket places the photo in the Civil War period. Luckily, it has the name Harriet Houston written on the back, so I pursued my great-grandfather’s Houston line. Censuses showed that he was born in Maryland and had three brothers and one sister – Harriet. **Bingo!**

Linda Smith



# Dating 19th Century Photo Types

*adapted from familyhistorydaily.com*

Sifting through a pile of vintage photos can be a family historian's dream., until you find out that you just can't seem to identify the time period in which certain photos were taken. Knowing some of the history and evolution of photography can be beneficial when it comes to identifying the origins of old photos.

The following common types of vintage photos, their photographic processes and characteristics could help you positively identify some of your long-lost ancestors.

## 1. Daguerreotypes



The daguerreotype was created by Louis Jacques Mande Daguerre and is known by photography experts as the first practical form of photography. Daguerreotypes were produced on a thin copper metal support that had a polished coating of silver that was mirror-like. Daguerreotypes were sealed in glass for protection. In America, daguerreotypes were often placed in hinged, wooden cases with paper or leather coverings.

- **Height of Popularity:** 1839 – 1860s
- **Distinguishing Features:** They can either take on the look of a negative or a positive depending on how the light hits them and the angle in which you're viewing them. Also look for their highly-polished silver support.

A daguerreotype of Bernice Pauahi before marriage, 1849/50. [Wikimedia Commons](#).

## 2. Salt Prints (Talbot's Process)



In 1841, William Henry Fox Talbot patented the process of salt printing — the first photographic process that used sodium chloride to make photos more light-sensitive. Salt printing was also the first process to utilize both a negative and a positive allowing photographers to create prints of larger quantities.

- **Height of Popularity:** 1839 - 1860s
- **Distinguishing Features:** This photo type can encounter serious fading problems, so if you find a very faded old photo coupled with a smooth yet dull surface, lack of fine detail and a silver image inside the actual fibers of the photo's support paper, you could have a salt print on your hands.

A salt print, possibly by Henry Fox Talbot, 1843/47. [Wikimedia Commons](#).

## 3. Albumen Prints



In 1850, Louis-Desire Blanquart Evrard improved upon Talbot's salt prints by introducing albumen paper. Photographers would coat a thin sheet of paper with egg white which would hold light-sensitive silver salt on the surface of the paper, preventing image fading. Once it was dry, albumen prints were used just like salted-paper prints and the image would form by the darkening properties of the sun on the chemicals. Most of the surviving photographs from the 19th century are on albumen paper.

- **Height of Popularity:** 1855 - 1890s
- **Distinguishing Features:** Albumen prints take on a rich, purple-brown hue. When you examine these photos, look for paper fibers through the albumen overlay. You can also usually see a fine lateral cracking across the glossy photo surface. The support is typically thin and also coated with albumen.

Albumen print of an unidentified confederate Civil War soldier. [Wikimedia Commons](#).

#### 4. Carte de Visite (CDVs)



Albumen prints were often mounted on cardboard carte-de-visite (CDVs). Introduced in the 1850s in Paris, France by Andre Adolphe Eugene Didier, CDVs were very popular in both the United States and Europe until the turn of the 20th century.

- **Height of Popularity:** 1860s - 1890s
- **Distinguishing Features:** You can distinguish a CDV from other card mounts mostly by the size: 2.5 x 4 inches — or slightly less at times. The image was glued to sturdy cardboard and takes on a reddish or purplish tone. Look also for the photographer's imprint for additional avenues of dating.

Carte de visite above is of Sojourner Truth, 1864. [Wikimedia Commons](#).

#### 5. Ambrotypes



In 1854, the ambrotype became a popular photographic print method which used the wet-plate collodion process to create a positive photograph on glass. Each photo was unique and could not be duplicated — much like using a Polaroid camera.

- **Height of Popularity:** 1854 - 1860s
- **Distinguishing Features:** Look for dark purple, blue or red glass support. These photos may also be found presented on a mount with a case just like daguerreotypes. You can easily distinguish a daguerreotype from an ambrotype since ambrotypes always appear positive when viewing from any angle.

Ambrotype of Peninsular Wars veteran and his wife, hand-tinted, 1860s. [Wikimedia Commons](#).

#### 6. Tintypes



Introduced in 1856, the tintype — also known as a melainotype or ferrotype — was produced on a plate of thin iron. And just like the ambrotype and daguerreotype, the method didn't use negatives and was directly exposed in the camera. Small tintypes were often placed inside paper frames. Photographers took these at carnivals and fairs so the subjects may have less serious poses.

- **Height of Popularity:** 1856 - 1870s
- **Distinguishing Features:** Look for a thin, metallic plate holding the positive image to distinguish a tintype from an ambrotype. Also try to look for mount plates that are brown or red. The most common size to look for is 2 ½ x 3 ½ inches, but smaller (1" x 2") were also common.

Tintype of a family, 1880. [Wikimedia Commons](#).

#### 7. Cabinet Cards



Introduced in 1866, the cabinet card, like the CDV, was an albumen-coated, card-mounted photograph which was also quite popular in America until the 1890s.

- **Height of Popularity:** 1870 - 1890s
- **Distinguishing Features:** Look for card-mounted photos that are 4.25 x 6.5 inches. Most are portraits and don't include the name of the subject. A photographer's artistic logo can typically be found on the back of the thick cardboard card.

Cabinet card of Annie Oakley, 1890s. [Wikimedia Commons](#).

## A Bit about Photo Albums

The first photographic albums came about in the mid-1860s. Having a book of family photographs out for all to see was a sign of affluence. A slot was cut to slip in usually one photo per page for cabinet cards. Other pages might hold two same-sized photos turned to be side-by-side and other pages might hold four smaller ones for carte de visites. The increase in popularity of cabinet cards saw the decline of the photo albums, as they were sturdy enough to be displayed on a table among other decorations. Scrapbook popularity did not recover until its massive revival with the invention of the Kodak brownie in February, 1900 and the advent of the “snapshot” style photography.



Black construction paper albums were commonly used prior to the 1950s and throughout the 1960s. Gummed corners held the photos in place.

Magnetic albums, with pages composed of a sticky surface that held photos in place plus the thin clear film over them, gained popularity around the 1970s. Salvaging photos from these albums takes special techniques and may require photographing the page while the photos are IN the scrapbooks to avoid ruining them.

Modern scrapbooking came about in the 1980s, with the square 12”x12” scrapbooks becoming popular in the 1990s to accommodate the larger 4” x6” prints.



## Society News

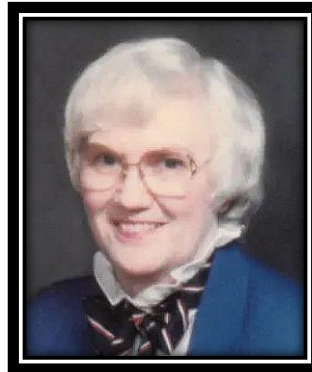
Work continued during autumn weather, with some still underway on mild days. Recently walked cemeteries include King, Sayre, and section G and S of Winterset. Associated row-by-row and alphabetical listings will be updated over the winter then put in the Winterset Library.

More iowagravestones.com photos for Madison County are receiving a “Cemetery Row X” link that will take you to a cemetery map with the rows marked. This is nice if you want to walk to a grave, or just get a better feel of where the stone is located within. See a sample [here](#).

Seven more veteran gravestones were placed in October: four were Civil War veterans, two for the War of 1812 and one from the Spanish-American War. Members of the Madison County Historic Preservation Commission assisted MCGS members with the installation of the 175 pounds gravestones. And imagine their surprise when the War of 1812 gravestones were twice as thick AND twice as heavy at 350 pounds! Look for the updated gravestone photos at IAGenWeb.org/madison, under MILITARY RECORDS, in the Civil War section: [Civil War Gravestone Project](#).

Seven more gravestone applications have been submitted to the Veterans Administration and their stones are arriving but will be stored until spring to be installed.

## Ida (Plunkett) Morse



**March 24, 1935 - August 9, 2023**

Since our last newsletter, one of MCGS’s relentless volunteers has passed away. Ida Morse worked in the Madison County Treasurer’s Office for 24 years. After she retired, she was very interested in the work of the Madison County Genealogical Society, especially concerning cemeteries and gravestones. She cleaned gravestones in cemeteries around the county, took photos, then recorded them on-line at the Iowa Gravestone Photo Project as well as in documentation available at the Winterset Public Library. The MCGS is deeply indebted to Ida for all she contributed over many years.

# Pammel State Park Turns 100

by Linda Griffith Smith, Sept, 2023

Pammel State Park celebrated its 100<sup>th</sup> birthday on November 3, 2023. Most of what we enjoy there was established in its first 10 years. Here is a look at that early development.



The State Park Board, created by the Iowa Legislature in the State Park Act in 1917, had been eyeing this tract due to its variety of limestone, water, trees, and plants and considered it one of the most unique land forms in southwest Iowa. The rocky ridge rises 200 feet with the Middle River flowing within 100 feet of each side. On the west side, the river flows north, meanders two-plus miles, then flows to the south on the east. The tunnel under the ridge was first created by the Harmon family around 1860 to provide water power to a grinding mill. At that time there were very few trees on its limestone ridge, so it acquired a local name of the “Devil’s Backbone.”

On November 3, 1923, the State of Iowa purchased 210 acres of land on either side of Middle River in sections 15 and 16 of Lincoln Township to create the Devil’s Backbone State Park. The landowners involved in that transaction were named Bertholf, Gray, Egy, Elderkin, Moore and Smith.

Improvements to several of the earliest state parks, including Madison County’s Devil Backbone State Park, was accomplished using convicts from the prison at Fort Madison. The park had annual camps of convicts from 1926 to 1930, with their first task to widened and cement the Harmon tunnel to be safe for automobiles. The convicts also built the rock road to the summit of the backbone by hand (hard labor with only pick and axe), installed the ford, and constructed the lodge made of walnut logs and limestone that still stands west of the ford. They lived in wooden buildings east of the ford that were constructed from reclaimed wood when the brick First Christian Church replaced a frame church at the corner of First Avenue and Green Street in Winterset in 1925.



In 1929, a cement bridge on the east side of the tunnel was completed. Rock roads to and from the park came in 1930 that we are familiar with to the east, west, and south. The road into the park, that commences three miles west of Winterset from Hwy 9,2 became State Highway 162 (later renumbered to 322) and was the only state road that went through a tunnel.

Devil’s Backbone State Park was renamed Pammel State Park and dedicated on June 30, 1930. Dr. Louis H. Pammel was a 40-year botany professor at Iowa Agricultural College (now Iowa State University), world renown in his field, and served as the State Park Board Commission chair from 1918 to 1929. George Washington Carver was a student and friend. Dr. Pammel visited this park and the Winterset City Park many times in the 1920s, noting plant and tree species and suggesting how they could be preserved. Renaming the park also cleared up the confusion with Iowa’s first park, Backbone State Park, established in 1920 in Delaware County. Dr. and Mrs. Pammel and other noted conservationists were present at the dedication of Pammel Park. Dr. Pammel died in March, 1931 at the age of 68 and was buried in Ames.



Another early group that made improvements that we still enjoy was the Civilian Conservation Corp (CCC), created in the Great Depression to give young men work and discipline in a quasi-military setting. They had a tent camp on the east side of the backbone for a few weeks before building a more durable camp south of Winterset. Usually occupied with farm conservation, the CCC men spent the 1934-1935 winter building the current rustic shelter at the top of the Backbone ridge, campground areas, tables and benches, over 5 miles of walking trails, four retaining walls to stabilize the tunnel, and the west and south gates.

# Bits and Pieces

## Next Meeting – March 5, 2024

MCGS does not meet during January and February each year to avoid possible nasty Iowa weather. Our next meeting will be March 5, 2024. You can contact us anytime with your questions or requests at our email: [madisoncountyiagenealogy.com](mailto:madisoncountyiagenealogy.com)

## A Kindness Shared; a Kindness Repaid

Winterset veterinarian, Dr. Stan Jones, asked MCGS for the best way to read weather-worn Native American gravestones. The Society had paper with one uncoated side that is put toward the gravestone and a blue-inked side that is rubbed with a tennis ball to reveal the inscription. We gave him the partial roll we had left in 2022, and wished him luck at finding more, as we hadn't been able to replace it. Dr. Jones used it to identify gravestones at the Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota. And in 2023, after he found a source, he gifted a full roll of this special paper back to MCGS. Thank you, Dr. Stan! We appreciate your kindness.



## MCGS Membership Renewal Information

The Madison County Genealogical Society "year" runs from January 1 through December 31. Please cut (or copy) and mail in this form with your dues.

- Annual Dues are \$10.00 per year, per person or \$15.00 for a family membership.
- Perhaps it is time to consider a Lifetime Membership at \$115.00.



Amount Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Rates: (check one)

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ \$10.00, single – 1 year

City: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ \$15.00, family – 1 year

State: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ \$115.00 Lifetime Membership

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Is this a

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Renewal or  
\_\_\_\_\_ New membership?

Please make your check payable to **Madison County Genealogical Society** or just **MCGS**.  
Mail to **MCGS, c/o Colleen Peterson, 320 NW 7th St. Earlham IA 50072**