

ADL CEMETERY RECORDS—ADL has older transcriptions.

•Names are taken from *The Michigan Cemetery Source Book*, 1964; and listed by township; local/alternative names are in (); Obliterated cemeteries are indicated by an *. Cemeteries of the same name may be found in more than one township: Indian, Riverside, Woodcock, St. Mary's, etc.

Allegan City: Allegan Co. Fairgrounds, Oakwood (includes Blessed Sacrament Cemetery (Catholic))

Allegan Twp.: Allegan Co. Poor Farm (Brownell/Fairfield), Hudson Corners (Peabody Corners), Jewett*

Casco Twp.: MacDowell (McDowell), Stevenson (Stephenson, Kibbie), Stuller/Stullar (Thayer Burying Ground)

Cheshire Twp.: Baseline (Union Burying Ground), Chicora*, Indian, Lindsley, Pierceson (Pearson), Rowe

Clyde Twp.: Oak Grove (Whitemeyer), Pearl

Dorr Twp.: East Dorrr (Dorr), Jones, Saint Stanislaus' Catholic, Sprout (Sproat), Tanner (Richter), Visitation (St. Mary's Catholic Church, North Door)

Fillmore Twp.: East Holland, East Saugatuck, Graafschap - Memorial (Fillmore Twp., & Park & Holland Twps, Ottawa Co.), Memorial (All Saints Memorial Garden)

Ganges Twp.: Hutchins (Crane), Loomis, Plummerville, Taylor

Gun Plains Twp.: Gun Plains Twp., Hillside, Ives, Silver Creek*, Woodside (Woodcock)

Heath Twp.: Brookside (Dunningville), Dowd (Doud)*, Indian*, Riverside (Hamilton, Rabbit River)

Hopkins Twp.: Ingerson (Hopkinsburg, Round Family, Round Andrews, Pioneer), Lakeview (Ellinger or German Methodist), Maplewood (Ohio Corners, Hopkins), Saint Paul's Evangelical Lutheran (German Lutheran)

Laketown Twp.: Gibson

Lee Twp.: Lee Twp. (Johnson, Gingerbread), Saints

Leighton Twp.: Hooker, Saint Joseph's Catholic

Manlius Twp.: Fennville (McCormick), Manlius (New Richmond), Woodcock (Junction)

Martin Twp.: East Martin, South Martin

Monterey Twp.: Poplar Hill

Otsego Twp.: Mountain Home (includes removals of Congregational Churchyard), Pine Creek, St. Margaret's

Overisel Twp.: Bentheim, Diamond Springs (Old Settlers), Old Overisel, Overisel (New Overisel), Overisel (Oakland), Van Dam Family

Salem Twp.: Burnips (Salem), Saint Mary's Catholic Church of New Salem, Sheur Farm - obliterated

Saugatuck Twp.: Douglas, Douglas Annex, Indian*, Riverside

Trowbridge Twp.: 1834 Tombstone of drowning Elisha Williams on Waigand farm, Blackman (North Trowbridge), Mallery (Mallory, Grant Road), Trowbridge Methodist (Methodist),

Valley Twp.: Mill Grove (Millgrove), Valley Twp.

Watson Twp.: Hicks, Immanuel (Swedish Lutheran, Sheep of the Good Shepherd), Miner (Watson Corners), Saint Mary's Sacred Heart Catholic

Wayland Twp.: Bradley Indian Mission (Indian), East & West Elmwood, German (Germond), Hill (Barnes Burying Ground), Messer, Saints Cyril & Methodius' Catholic, Selkirk (Selkirk)

Many of these cemeteries have transcriptions, photos and grace locations online at <http://www.findagrave.com/>.

•**To Search for Michigan Cemeteries by name, township, or county:** go to "Michigan Cemetery Sources,"

• <http://libraryofmichigan.state.mi.us/MichiganCemeteries/>

•There are a few links to online transcription lists, but the database is not intended for grave searches. This site is useful if one only knows a cemetery name or wants to find names and locations of cemeteries in a county or township where possible relatives lived. Locations are given by section # & in relation to nearby roads and streets. Some alternative cemetery names are listed.



•**Transcriptions & Photos** of local cemeteries & stones are at **online** genealogy sites; most are updates of Ruth Robbins Monteith's data. For Allegan Co., try www.rootsweb.com/~miallega/cemeter.html or www.rootsweb.com/~usgenweb/mi/allegan/0301cem.htm & at the Genealogy Forum's Kalamazoo & Allegan Co. databases www.genealogyforum.org/resources/MI/mikalamazoo.php

•**Social Security Death Index**

•Includes only those who had SSI#s & whose deaths were reported by families or funeral homes; a good place to look!

•Before 1960s, SSI#s were not required for housewives, govt. workers, farmers, unemployed, & some retirees

•SSI began in 1937, but only computer records 1962+ are usually searchable online (Ancestry Lib. Ed., FamilySearch)

•SSID info: name, birth & death date, state issued, residence on record at time of death, [where death benefit was sent; may or may NOT be place of death]; search Michigan Deaths

•#codes prior to 1972 may/may not indicate place registered

•May obtain record with birth date, parent's names, residence, etc. great for immigrants, see www.ssa.gov for forms

•**Probate Records, Wills & Other Records:**

•Probate notices are listed with legal notices in newspaper ads; may be long after death

•Look in courthouses; may tell residence at death date, info.—Not everyone leaves a will; not all wills are recorded.

•Older plat maps may indicate "estate of xyz" & give clues to death dates; check family farm deeds & land transfers

•**Church Records** - where to look:

•Churches usually have a list of funeral services from each year & dates/info on those buried in church graveyards

•Church bulletins/newsletters may list thanks for memorial gifts for members who have died.

•Church clubs/organizations often carry obits or lists of members (with death dates), who have died in the preceding year, so knowing affiliations sometimes helps in finding obits/graves.

•Allegan Co. Catholic cemetery records may be in Kalamazoo, Grand Rapids, or Detroit; dioceses change with time

•**Other Persons**

•If you can't find a grave, look for family members in census & other records, read obits, locate their graves, & look nearby

•WWI /military deaths—national cemeteries or overseas, buried in France, etc. with/without a marker in family plot.

Allegan District Library

331 Hubbard St., Allegan, MI 49010; 269-673-4625

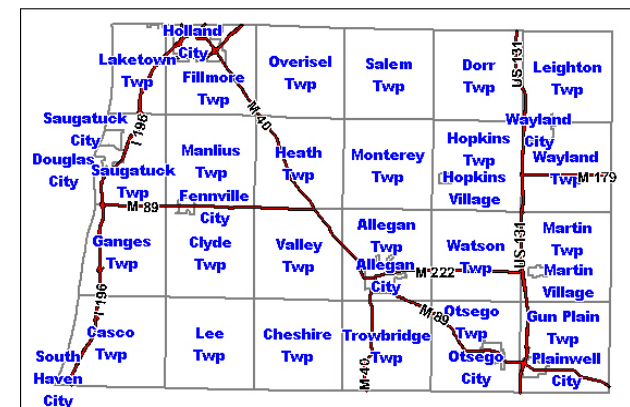
Our home page: www.alleganlibrary.org

Open M-Th 10-9, F & Sa 9-5:30; closed Su

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Locating Death Facts & Graves — Hints from Allegan District Library



•**Your Guide to Cemetery Research**, 2002, Sharon DeBartolo Carmack, Betterway Books; Out of Print, but useful

•**Michigan Cemetery Source Book**, companion volume to the *Michigan Cemetery Atlas*, 1994—GEN R 393 MICH—see <http://libraryofmichigan.state.mi.us/MichiganCemeteries/>

•**Michigan Cemetery Atlas**, over 3,800 Michigan Burial Sites, 1991- MGEN R 393 MICH—county maps & cemeteries

Obituaries & Newspaper Notices at time of death

• Need a death date or index to find newspaper obits, deaths

• Know which newspapers to search (death sites, hometowns)

• Papers usually tell funeral home/church of funeral service, but may omit burial place, survivors, full names

• Look at records/obits of survivors/loved ones for burial clues

• Look for Cards of Thanks, probates for survivors, relatives

• Accidental deaths, suicides/murders are usually news, 1st pg

• Most deaths in older papers are brief local notes:

• Many libraries have indexed obits or have an obit file; our city weekly newspapers death index starts in 1856-1888+; obits indexed 1978-2006, both death records vol. 1; other lists

• Less likely to have obits: farmers' wives, renters, poor, rural, not original settlers, not socially prominent; if a family/ funeral home did not put an obit in the paper or could not afford one

•Go to www.alleganlibrary.org —>genealogy —>How to search guides —> Where to look for obituaries in Allegan County [This may help you find obits elsewhere].

DEATH RECORDS – MI deaths start 1867; older ones “iffy”

- Co. tax assessor visited farms, # cows, # horses, asked any deaths previous yr.; left “deaths” for co. clerk to record—errors: bad memory of family, transcription errors, so official records may disagree with church/cemetery/tombstones.
- A recorded death date is found at the co. courthouse & used most often to find an obituary or obtain a death certificate.
- Death records for people dying out-of-county (hospitals, winter homes, or accidents on vacations) may be difficult to find

ADL CEMETERY RECORDS—we have older transcriptions

- An Ongoing Process: starting with few records in 2002; we now have hundreds of photocopied records in 3-ring binders
- Arranged by township; for each cemetery: map, driving map & location; available records (newer ones needed) 88+ cemeteries in Allegan Co., about 150 multiple names: (Rabbit River Cem. (Heath Twp) is also Hamilton or Riverside, & there is also a Riverside in Saugatuck Twp.; a few are “lost” (Chicora), plowed under (Doud), or abandoned
- Once you have located the cemetery for a burial, you may need to contact the township or city office to locate the sexton to determine hours of visitation and grave location

AT THE CEMETERY—once you locate the grave

- Search nearby stones & plots for possible relatives; this could save you a trip back; people on same/nearby lots are often related; look for other stones with the same surname
- Take photos of stones, nearby stones, front, back, side, foot; digital cameras are great, as you’ll be able to check your shots for clarity in reading transcriptions; carry an extra memory card & battery. Photos really help with interpreting notes!
- Tombstones may give birth dates & death dates, show family relationship (beloved Mother...) & organizational or religious symbols (stump for W.O.W., G.A.R. Union Civil War vets....).
- Deceased may have 2 stones: one at grave of 1st wife, plus 2nd stone (& burial) with 2nd wife; children on sides of stone
- Stones may have no death dates—common for double stones if no stonemason is hired to inscribe death date after burial
- Note unmarked stones (often infants); check with sexton!

DEATH NOTICES - lists of people who have died in the city/area; usually give name, age, general residence area (city, twp., co.); in some newspapers, resemble brief obits.

NECROLOGIES—lists of people who have died; usually are published at end of yr. in newspapers, journals, alumni lists

FUNERAL HOME RECORDS—a lot depends on the home

- Usually have death, burial, reburial, funeral dates, records
- Cremations (1880s+) may take place elsewhere, then back to funeral home for funeral, burial; body transport records
- May have original burial locations of reburials, memorials, persons owning cemetery lots or paying for funeral, etc.
- Suspect reburial dates if there is a long time between deaths and burial dates & especially



• AUTOPSY REPORTS: coroner’s records/hospital records—date, time, place death, cause; usually *not* burial site; personal info is usually “iffy” & hospital record access may be restricted.

• SEXTON RECORDS: vary in quality & accuracy of info

- Some records are hand-written, difficult to read, incomplete, inaccurate, but sometimes are the *only* burial record; some on window shades, maps, in sexton homes, sides of sheds...
- Cemeteries may have unique notations: Mt. Home Cem. (Otsego Twp.) “Jan 1” burial dates were NOT burials on Jan 1, but burials of unknown dates *during* that yr. or past yr.

• GENDIS—MI GENEALOGICAL DEATH INDEXING SYSTEM

- www.mdch.state.mi.us/gendisx/index.htm offers 170,000 MI death records, 1867-1884: year death, father’s last name
- Incomplete, hit or miss, but look; clues to places people lived
- SEEKING MICHIGAN - www.seekingmichigan.org has death record images 1897-1939 & many other features

• REBURIALS & MOVING BODIES

- Relatives had many Allegan Co. Poor Farm burials moved to Oakwood Cemetery; Congregational Church (Otsego) burials were moved to Mt. Home Cemetery....
- Reburial dates may be listed as death dates, & records often do not show if a reburial. Except in older burials, paperwork was needed if a body was moved; search for a paper trail. A sexton, township clerk or co. clerk may have the record, or it may be gone, destroyed when the sexton’s home caught fire.
- Check for transfer permits with railroads, states, counties

• MORTALITY SCHEDULES:

- Supplements to federal censuses; *deaths reported for only the year previous to census* for 1850, 1860, 1870, 1880; also a 1900 mortality schedule for Minnesota



• BIBLE RECORDS:

- Ask which relatives have family Bibles; be wary if everything is from the same time, in one hand; check copyright date—is it older/newer than oldest entry? Recopied dates or originals—check inks, handwriting? Recopied lists may have errors.
- Bibles may be found in larger libraries, historical societies, Family History Library (LDS), National Archives, DAR, Library Congress, other archives —see cyndislist.com & others.

DID YOU LOOK INTO...

- Journals, diaries, letters, photo albums, scrapbooks, family Bibles, medical records, marriage & birth records, census, military & service records, draft lists, social organizations...?
- Poorhouses, jails, prisons, asylums... MI Soldier’s Home in GR obits, 1899-1938: we have indexed all 4 volumes at APL! We have some Allegan Co. poorhouse census lists.
- Funeral notices, obits, memorial /funeral cards, death & cemetery records, school records; city & co. directories, phone books, local history files, local library/historical society files
- Consider depositing a copy of you family history with our library if your family tree has a branch in our county. We and family history seekers of the future will be grateful.

• SEARCHING FOR YOUR ANCESTOR IN OUR RECORDS (Background, Hints, and Places to FIND People)

- Farmers, rural folk—locate in land atlases, plat books & county directories, then look for nearby cemeteries.
- Businessmen, merchants—Allegan city/co. directories, look at business lists/ads; Michigan State Gazetteer & Business Directory MR 977.4 MICH lists by village, town; look in backs & indexes of Land Atlases for other location clues.
- Our Cemetery Indexes—good if person died < 1910; some cemeteries with newer/updated lists (Mt. Home, Taylor/Plumerville, Hopkins); ck recent lists, Internet updates
- Military—Grand Rapids MI Soldier’s Home Obits 1899-1938 indexed; also, Civil War Vets buried in MI & in Allegan Co., Oakwood vet list; civil war lists, G.A.R. lists; online lists
- Pioneer—*Michigan Pioneer & Historical Collections* (36 volumes + 2 indexes; *Allegan Co. Pioneer Notebook*, often gives death dates, residences, place of origin; year to MI....
- American Revolution—DAR books MR 929 HIST & look in “Sketches” book for Allegan county’s 2 Rev. War burials
- Obituaries—1978-2014 city newspapers; see our home page genealogy for a link to a search guide for Allegan Co. Obituaries by newspaper source or place the person lived.
- Deaths—1856-1883+ deaths in Allegan city papers; Allegan Co. Death Records vol. 1; necrologies, see courthouses & www.seekingmichigan.org (1897-1939) death records
- Marriages—1856-1888—in process; see Marriages notebooks; sometimes state if parent is deceased
- Births—Martin Maternity Cases, 1858-1901; Births v. 1 & a few others in a births notebook; lists infant/mother deaths
- Important Persons & Significant Settlers—see indexes for co. histories; if business man or farmer paid, included a family history; early settlers, many public officials; texts also searchable online at www.hti.umich.edu/m/micounty
- Persons in Regional Histories—look at the list of materials for info on persons mentioned in Allegan, Burnips, Casco Twp., Douglas, Fennville, Glenn, Holland, Otsego, Saugatuck, Watson, Wayland, western Allegan Co. histories
- Census records; we have Ancestry Library Edition (in library use only) HeritageQuest & FamilySearch remote access. We also have microfilmed census records for our county and the entire MI 1870 paper index.
- Think out of the Box! Ask! Do not be upset by various spellings of names or entirely wrong first names. If you cannot find a head of family, look for a wife, children, or close relative who may be living nearby. Then, search by actually examining census sheets. People usually migrated or settled with nearby relatives, neighbors, or with those who had similar religious or ethnic backgrounds.
- Ask for help. We might know that Salem Twp. was settled by Ohio folk, that most Overisel settlers came from the same Dutch village, that Irish settlers in Watson Twp. were usually buried in St. Mary’s cemetery, that Leighton Twp. obits were usually found in the *Wayland Globe* or *Grand Rapids Press*, and other helpful hints. Ask, and you really might find where the bodies are buried —or at least, where to look! LK 2015