

# Context is Key When Presenting Family Stories, Documents, and Lore

Tracy Lawson, Presenter

# Who Are You?

- The cultural influence of our ancestors fades with each generation.
- The culture in which we are raised is what shapes us.
- Yet the stories of our ancestors fascinate us...

# Finding A Meaningful Connection to Your Past

- Dates and charts do not tell us about an individual's personality.
- We remember things that we find interesting and relevant.
- Information presented with detail and context has broader appeal.

# Generation Gap

- Part of our fascination with family history research is the quest for a personal connection to our ancestors, our community, or an historical event.
- Our technology and our society are changing so fast that even stories from ten or twenty years ago might be difficult to fully understand.

# Context is Key

- We sometimes need additional information to fully understand a story set in another place and time. Context may provide answers to questions like:
- What were my ancestors really like?
- How were their day-to-day lives different from our own?
- How did the larger events in history affect them?

# How to Share Your Findings?

- Memoir
- Expanded Genealogy
- Nonfiction
- Historical Fiction
- Genealogical Quarterly
- Historical Society Publications

# Theme

Your search for the details relating to:

- An event in your ancestor's life
- Their Travels
- The History of a Family Business
- A Journal
- Letters

# Voice

- Speech Patterns
- Grammar
- Archaic Expressions
- Non-standard spelling
- Old Handwriting

A long we are all well and  
enjoy our selves well I suppose  
it is Sunday in old portago it  
is fourth of July here The Band  
is a playing and so are the concerts  
I suppose you would like to know  
how Camp life goes well it goes  
so it does we have our Nations  
cooked rats and served in flap  
pails by the Sarnbos we have a  
plenty of bread and meat and

# Google is Your Friend!

- Research any time it's convenient
- Digitized rare books and documents
- Federal Census Non-Population Schedules
- Local and Regional History Books
- Occupational Licenses and Draft Registrations

# Wait...Grandma Lied?

- When your research debunks a cherished family story

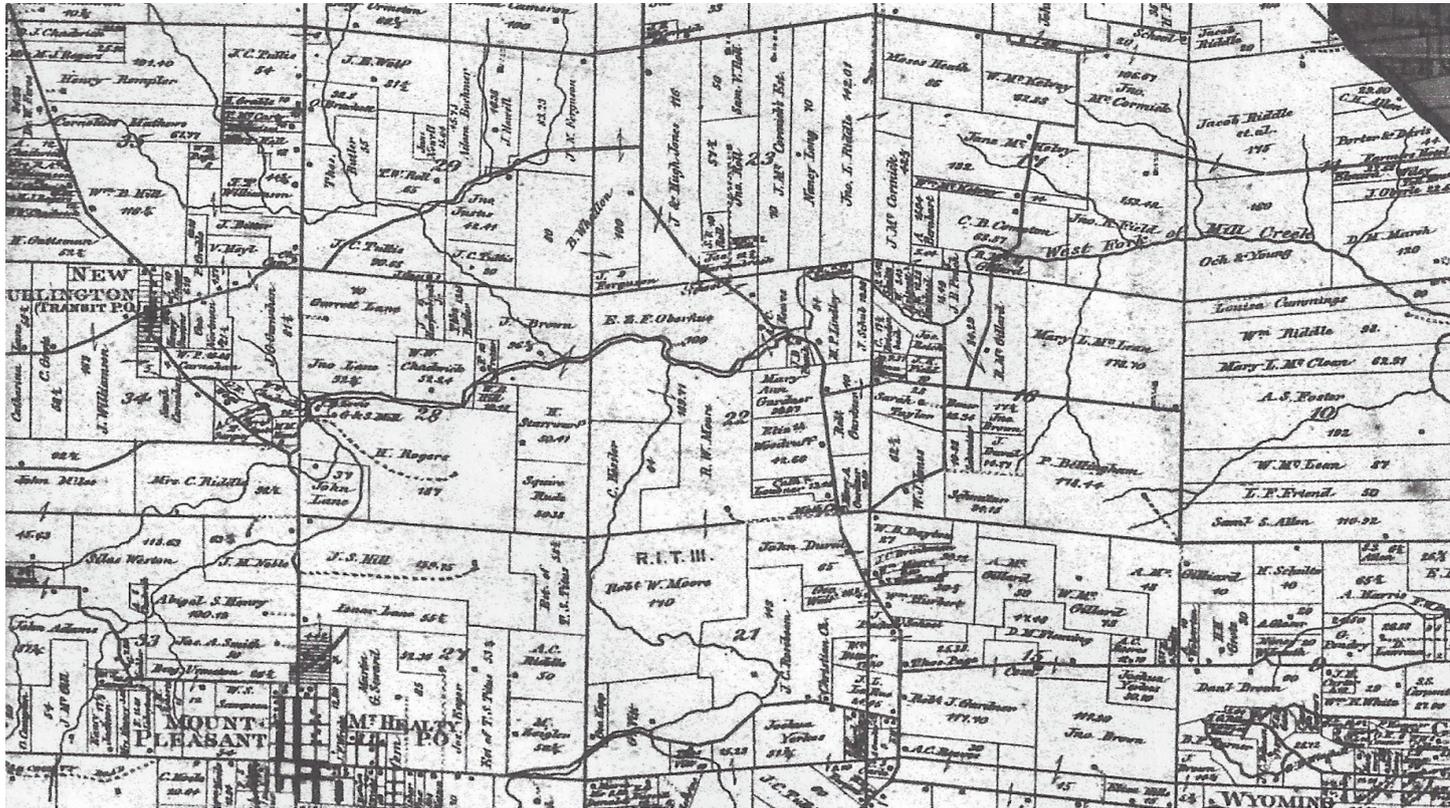
# Take a Field Trip

- Check out the neighbors
- The Noun Method
- Cemeteries
- Find-a-Grave Index
- Plat maps





# 1869 Hamilton County Map



# Research Like a Roomba



# Continuing to Connect

- If a school or student organization was interest in pursuing a project like this, I'd love to come to a future conference with the students who'd participated and present their research.
- It would be fascinating to see the yield of different research methods
- It would be a chance to start students on a very personal journey, and nurture their interest in history.

# Tracy's Books

## Nonfiction

- *Fips, Bots, Doggeries, and More: Explorations of Henry Rogers' 1838 Journal of Travel from Southwestern Ohio to New York City* (McDonald & Woodward, 2012)
- *Pride of the Valley: Sifting through the History of the Mount Healthy Mill* (McDonald & Woodward 2017)
- *And I Can Tell You War Stories* by James A. Lowry, Sr., as told to Tracy Stone Lawson (2011)

## Fiction

- *Counteract: Book One of the Resistance Series* (2014)
- *Resist: Book Two of the Resistance Series* (2015)
- *Ignite: Book Three of the Resistance Series* (2016)
- *Revolt: Book Four of the Resistance Series* (2017)