

Finding the Correct Ancestor: using the example of Civil War soldiers and homesteads

The Homestead Act of 1862 gave priority to Civil War veterans. Any citizen of the United States who had never borne arms against the U.S., could file an application at the register of the land office where (s)he wanted to make an entry for a quarter section of land (160 acres).ⁱ Over two million homestead claims were filed during the 123 years the Act was in affect in the thirty public land states.ⁱⁱ

Anyone filing for a homestead had to meet specific requirements – the settler had to not only live on the land for five years but make improvements to the land such as building a house or farming the land. Proof of these improvements, along with witnesses that they were made, were filed at the land office before the settler was issued a patent (like a deed) to the land.ⁱⁱⁱ

Civil War veterans were allowed to homestead more than 160 acres. These were called “additional homestead entries.” Some correspondence files of the General Land Office (GLO), available on microfilm publication M25, deal exclusively with Civil War soldiers “additional homestead entries.”^{iv}

Are these records useful to genealogists? They can provide clues to locating additional information. For example, Charles Rockwell requested an additional homestead in Michigan in 1877. The microfilm contains two letters concerning Mr. Rockwell’s request, both denying the request. One of the letters gives the file numbers of the entry, H.E. No. 6999, T.C. No. 2791 which allows the researcher to request the homestead file from the National Archives in Washington.^v What can a researcher do to make sure that this is the Charles Rockwell in his or her ancestry?

Starting with just an index listing and two letters concerning Charles Rockwell, what can we find out about this homesteader? Charles Rockwell is a fairly common name. In the 1870 Michigan census, there are twelve Charles Rockwells, twenty in 1880, and twelve in 1900. Which one is the right one?

This problem is a fairly common occurrence in genealogical research. Frequently, researchers find a link in a genealogy, for example, telling us a wife’s name along with her parents but nothing else. Where can we look for information that puts us on the right path to the correct ancestor? What records might help us distinguish one Charles Rockwell from another? Since this specific problem concerns Civil War veterans, a good place to start is the Civil War pension index.

National Archives microfilm publication T288, General Index to Pension Files, cover Civil War pensions. Again, there are quite a few Charles Rockwells listed but only three who filed for their pensions in Michigan. This article will examine two of the three – Charles Rockwell #1, service

in the F Company, 15th New York Engineers, filed for a pension Feb. 17, 1882 and his widow Mary A. filed for a pension August. 23, 1890; or Charles Rockwell #2, service in the B Company, 56th Illinois Mechanics and Fusileers, filed for a pension Jan. 21, 1892 and his widow, Lucretia, filed Oct. 6, 1911.^{vi} We also find a gravestone application for a Charles Rockwell, private in Co. F, 15th Regiment, New York Engineers, for the cemetery at Ravenna, Michigan, date of death May 6, 1887.^{vii} How can we establish which one was the homesteader?

In order to determine which one homesteaded in Michigan, we need to collect information that helps us tell the two Charles Rockwells apart. Using the U.S. and state census, as well as pension information and some local records should give us personal information on each of these men. Let's take each one individually, starting with Charles Rockwell #1, and see what information we can collect to help us tell them apart and determine which one is the homesteader.

The 1870 Michigan federal census in Chester, Ottawa County, lists Charles Rockwell #1, age 47, with a wife Mary A., and a postal address in Ravenna. In addition to his wife Mary, he has three children in his household – Grenville age 21, Thirza age 19, and James age 15. Also living in the household is Ann Kates, age 18. The census gives the place of birth for Charles as New York along with his wife and children.^{viii}

The family appears again in the 1880 U.S. census in Chester, Ottawa County, Michigan^{ix} and Mary A. Rockwell, widow of Charles Rockwell, veteran, is listed in the 1890 Veterans Schedule for Chester, Ottawa County, Michigan, giving the year of enlistment as 1864 and discharge year of 1865, rank private in Co. F, 15th NY Engineers.^x So we know that Charles Rockwell #1 died before 1890, that he was born in New York as were his wife and children and we've learned his Civil War regiment from several sources.

The National Archives holds only the Federal population census records. The New York State Library and Archives in Albany, New York, have some very interesting records, including state census for New York completed on the "5" year, the agricultural census for the state, and Civil War registers and muster cards for New York towns and regiments.

On the 1855 New York state census, Charles Rockwell, age 32, farmer, with wife Mary A., age 28, and children Grenville E., 6; Theresey M., 4; Emily, 2; and James 2/12, are listed in Camillus, Onondaga County. Also in the household are Ebenezer (72) and Anna (66) Cates and a nephew Ebenezer Conway (12). Luckily, the state census lists relationships and tells us that Ebenezer and Anna are Mary's parents. It also tells us that everyone in the family was born in Onondaga County and that Charles owned the land where the family lived.^{xi}

He is also listed in the 1860 agricultural schedule for Camillus. We learn that Charles owned 50 acres of land, 40 of them improved and valued at \$2,500. Compared to other farmers in Camillus, Charles' holdings were modest as were his livestock holdings. His main crop was oats with smaller crops of wheat and corn. His farm included a small orchard and produce garden and his cows produced a modest amount of butter. Lastly, unlike most of his neighbors, Charles kept

bees and produced a small amount of honey annually.^{xii} While this doesn't help us determine which Charles is the homesteader, it does tell us that this man was a farmer, and if he is an ancestor, we can add to our family history that Charles was a modestly successful farmer. Since Charles is listed as a shoemaker on the 1850 population schedules in Camillus, perhaps his modest farming supplemented his shoemaking.^{xiii}

All this information is useful in giving the first Charles Rockwell an individual identity. In order to determine which ancestor is the correct one, the first step should be to give each of the like-named people an individual identity so that you can tell them apart. The New York State Archives holds two records that might give us more information on this Charles Rockwell. The New York State Adjutant General's Office compiled muster roll abstracts of New York state volunteers, U.S. Sharpshooters and U.S. colored troops. These records are microfilmed and arranged by county, then town, and lastly alphabetically by surname of soldier. The listing for Charles Rockwell tells us that he was 44 when he enlisted on Sept. 5, 1864 from Camillus, New York. He was discharged June 13, 1865 at Fort Berry, Virginia. It also tells us that he was born in Geddes, New York, had grey eyes, brown hair, light complexion, and was 5'10" tall.^{xiv} We now have a place of birth for this Charles Rockwell!

The New York State Archives also holds the *Complete Record, as required by Chapter 690, of the Laws of 1865, relating to Officers, Soldiers and Seamen, composing the quotas of the troops furnished to the United States* for each town in New York. Under the town of Camillus, born April 10, 1821 in Onondaga County, rank private in the 15th Calvary, enlisted Sept. 15, 1864, mustered in Sept. 19, 1864, the town paid a bounty of \$150 while the county paid a bounty of \$1000, the town didn't pay the family any relief for his service and he's listed as married. This record also lists his parents' names; Elkany Rockwell, a laborer, and Ann Barder. The last column gives information on promotions, resignations, discharges, deaths, etc., with dates and causes. This column tells us that Charles was still living in Camillus when the register was completed.^{xv}

So we've now learned that Charles Rockwell #1 was born in Geddes, Onondaga County, New York on April 10, 1821 to Elkany and Ann (Barder) Rockwell. He was fairly tall at 5'10", had a light complexion with grey eyes and brown hair. We know he married Mary A. Cates, daughter of Ebenezer and Ann Cates of Camillus, New York in the 1840s and that they had four children (Grenville, Therezy, Emily and James) and that one daughter, Emily, died young. We know that Mary had at least one brother because of the niece, Ann Kates, in the 1870 Federal census but the nephew Ebenezer Conway on the 1855 state census could have been Charles' or Mary's sister's son. The 1880 census also tells us that Charles' father, Elkany, was born in Connecticut and his mother was born in New York. We've found out he was a modestly successful farmer and shoemaker in Camillus and that he was in his forties when he enlisted in the 15th New York Engineers in 1864 and served one year.^{xvi} We also know that he received a pension for his service which means he must have been injured during the Civil War.^{xvii} And we know he died

May 6, 1886 and was buried in Ravenna, Michigan. If he were my ancestor, I'd be thrilled with what's been discovered so far – but is this the homesteader Charles Rockwell?

This Charles Rockwell's pension file tells us that Charles suffered from rheumatism, of the form known as sciatica on the left side. Unfortunately, the doctor who examined him, Harry Hull of Muskegon, Michigan, found that it was not a permanent disability so he was not allowed a pension. Charles wrote the War Department a letter on November 25, 1882, stating that he'd lived in Camillus for five years preceding his enlistment and worked as a shoemaker. After his discharge, he found that he was unable to "work on the bench on account of the hurt to my limb." He moved his family to Michigan in 1866 and tried farming but lost an arm so had trouble doing even the simplest chores. He gives the following account of how his Civil War injury occurred:

While we were out on drill one day near Fort Marion the officer in charge ordered us to double quick march. While passing down a hill which had been cleared from bushes leaving stubs about six inches high I struck my toe against or under a root and fell forward striking the ground which was frozen hard, heavily, injuring my hip. The surgeon gave me liniment for it. Since my discharge I have used liniment and medicine recommended by doctors and others but have not regularly employed a doctor. I have been troubled with rheumatism at different times since also with cramp in my limb . . . The limb that was injured as above stated has become much smaller than the other and the big toe has hardly any feeling in it and is very troublesome.^{xviii}

As his widow Mary A. was entitled to a pension. She had to provide proof that she was his widow and there are a number of affidavits in the file attesting to this fact. These tell us that Charles and Mary were married Sept. 16, 1846 and that Charles died May 6, 1886. The most interesting fact that comes out of these affidavits are the people testifying that they'd known the Rockwells since before they moved to Michigan. But the testators were also living in Michigan at the time the affidavits were done.^{xix} Several of these also give the children's names and their current residences. Four of these are especially interesting in helping us give this Charles Rockwell an individual identity, as follows:

1. Walter S. Averill testified on Dec. 13, 1890 that he was a farmer living in Chester township, Ottawa County, Michigan, and that he was born in New York and first knew Charles Rockwell when he worked for Walter's father. He further stated that he understood that Charles married Mary Cates and that he'd known them both in New York and Michigan as husband and wife. Walter says he helped bury Charles in 1886 and lived about two miles from them in Michigan.
2. Mary E. Ram testified that she'd known Mary A. Rockwell for forty-five years since she'd lived in Onondaga, New York. That she'd lived about one mile from the Cates' residence and was personally acquainted with both Charles and Mary and although she

was not present at their wedding, she did hear about it from conversations with persons who had attended it. She goes on to say that she lived one half mile of the Rockwells in Chester, Ottawa County, Michigan since they'd removed from New York in 1866.

3. Mary Rockwell, herself, also filed an affidavit in April 1891 attesting to the facts that she was the widow of Charles Rockwell, a private in Co. F of the 15th New York Engineers, that she was born in Cicero, Onondaga County, New York, on Feb. 22, 1826 and married Charles on Sept. 16, 1846 in Camillus at her father's home. She lists the witnesses to the marriage – her parents, her sister Emily and her cousins Nancy Miller and Myron Miller. She gives her complete maiden name as Mary Ann Cates. She also lists her three children living in Chester, Michigan as Grenville, Therza and James.^{xx}

And, possibly the most interesting affidavit in the file, giving us definite information that this Charles Rockwell is not the homesteader, was filed by William Averill, age 64, a resident of Casnovia (*sic*), Muskegon County, Michigan, stating:

4. I was acquainted with Charles Rockwell from Dec. 5, 1839 to the date of his death which was in May 1886. He was enrolled in the Government service Sept. 5th 1864 in a regiment of mechanics or engineers. Was discharged from the service June 13, 1865 by ocason (*sic*) of special order. Age at death about 66 years. I was acquainted with Mary Ann Rockwell his wife from the age of 10 years to the present time. She was married to Charles Rockwell Sept. 16, 1846. Present age about 66 years. She has two sons living. Charles Rockwell had 40 acres of land at the time of his death of which about 10 acres is improved and available. He also left a mortgage on it of \$150.00 which is still there. I estimate the value of the land about \$600.00 and would rent for about \$50.00 per anum (*sic*) of which the law of Michigan allows her 1/3 or \$16.66 6/10. Also interest on the mortgage at 7 prct. = \$10.50 leaving balce (*sic*) \$6.16 in her favor. And the average annual tax is about \$7.00 according to tax rates on hand for previous years leaving her 84/100 of a dollar in debt annually (*sic*). I think the Pension Bureau would act wisely in restoring this shortage at least or a more favorable decree of the Probate Court for the widowhood. Charles Rockwell was never in the service after the above mentioned discharge.^{xxi}

Since the smallest amount of land available to a homesteader was a quarter section or 160 acres, Charles' 40 acres were not enough to be a homestead although he may have had 160 acres in 1866 and sold off portions after the homestead was proven. He could also have mortgaged the property after that since the above affidavit says the property was mortgaged. A search of the database at www.glorerecords.blm.gov lists only two homestead entries under the name of Charles Rockwell, both in Michigan, both under the Act of 1862. The first was filed Feb. 10, 1874 at Traverse City, #1475 and the second was filed Nov. 20, 1877 at Ionia, #2791 – the one we know was an additional homestead request so both homesteads had to be

for the same Charles Rockwell. The homesteader Charles Rockwell obviously was trying to get more land, not sell off land so Charles #1 is mostly likely not our homesteader.^{xxii}

Once we get hold of the homestead file for entry #2791, it would appear that our Charles Rockwell #2 is the homesteader since he supposedly served in Co. B of the 1st Michigan Mechanics and Engineers. Homestead entry file #2791, in the name of Charles Rockwell, filed Feb. 11, 1876 at the GLO Ionia office, Michigan, gave Charles title of the east half of northwest quarter, section 21 in township 18N, range 16W under the Act of 1862 (Soldiers and Sailors). One of the reasons why Mr. Rockwell's additional claim was denied appears to be that the War Department could not find proof that he'd served in Co. B, of the 1st Michigan Mechanics and Engineers. He original entry for a homestead on the western half of the northwest quarter of section 7, township 23, range 14 was proved on Sept. 3rd, 1873 at the Traverse City GLO office.

An affidavit from the War Department, dated Oct. 18, 1884, acknowledges that Charles Rockwell enrolled on Oct. 11, 1861 at Pontiac, Michigan in Co. B, Mechanics and Fusileers, 56th Regiment of the Illinois Volunteers, for a 3-year period. There is also a statement from Captain James E. March of Charles Rockwell's service, enrolled Oct. 11, 1861 and discharged Jan. 28, 1862 at Camp Douglas, Chicago, Illinois, from the Co. B, 1st Regiment of Mechanics and Fusileers, that includes personal information including the fact that Charles was born in Fairfield, Connecticut, age 29 at the time of enlistment, five feet ten inches tall, fresh complexion, with blue eyes and brown hair.^{xxiii}

A quick search of the Civil War database at www.itd.nps.gov/cwss/soldiers confirms his service in the 56th Regiment of Illinois Volunteers but there's no listing for his service in the 1st Regiment. The search also revealed that no Charles Rockwell served in a Michigan company during the Civil War.^{xxiv}

On an affidavit for the additional homestead, filed at the GLO office in Ionia, Michigan, it lists Charles Rockwell of Mason County, Michigan.^{xxv} Of the twelve Charles Rockwells listed on Ancestry.com in the 1870 Michigan database, none are living in Mason County. None of the listings in the 1880 database lived in Mason County either.^{xxvi} It's possible that this Charles moved between 1870 and 1880 and settled temporarily in Mason County. If I lived closer to Michigan, I could visit the Michigan State Archives and use the state census records for 1874 to find this Charles Rockwell. And like the federal census for 1850-1880, Michigan completed agricultural and industrial schedules for 1854 and 1884.^{xxvii} A search of www.familysearch.org found that the LDS have the 1904 Michigan state census but none of the earlier ones although Lainhart states that they had some counties for earlier census; perhaps listed under the individual counties in the Mormon's on-line library catalog.^{xxviii}

The second Civil War pension index card for Charles Rockwell, living in Michigan, showed us that Charles Rockwell #2 served in the 56th Illinois Mechanics and Fusileers. So it would

appear from the homestead file that this is the Civil War veteran, Charles Rockwell, who filed for two homesteads in Michigan. Can we use the same techniques to give this Charles Rockwell an identity?

Let's begin again with the census. A search of the Michigan census for 1850-1900 for a Charles Rockwell born in Connecticut, brings up only one possibility. In 1850, Charles, age 17, was living with his parents, Charles G. (49) and Sara (44) in Pontiac, Oakland County, Michigan. His father was a farmer and the household also included Charles' siblings – Amelia, Morris, Amanda, Sylvester, Horace, William and Henry, all born in Connecticut.^{xxix} By 1860, Charles' father had died and Sarah was the head of household and in 1870, Charles had married Lucretia and was living in Bear Lake, Manistee County, Michigan where his real estate holdings were valued at \$500 and he had \$150 in personal property. The marriage was probably recent since they didn't have any children in 1870.^{xxx}

By 1880, their household had grown to include three children – Romain, Beatrice and Eva. It also confirms that both Charles' parents were born in Connecticut.^{xxxi} The 1890 Veterans schedule lists him as Charles G. Rockwell and tells us that he was a corporal in the 1st Michigan Fusileers, Company B, enlisted Oct. 11, 1861 and discharged Jan. 11, 1862 with no disability. His occupation was farmer and residence was Manistee County.^{xxxii} This disagrees with the statement in his homestead file that gives his length of service as three years instead of three months.

If this was my ancestor, I would probably spend some time looking at M1164, the U.S. Special Census schedules for Michigan for 1850-1880. These are available only at the National Archives facility in Washington or at the Michigan State Archives. Considering the farming information that we found on the New York schedules for the Charles Rockwell #1, it would be just as interesting if he was my ancestor to find the same information on this Charles to add some information into the family tree on what type of crops and livestock this Charles raised and how well he did at farming this homestead.^{xxxiii}

Charles appears in the 1900 and 1910 census in Maple Grove. His birth is given as Sept. 1832 on the 1900 census and he owns the farm free of any mortgage.^{xxxiv} In 1910, Charles is 77 and Lucretia is 66. She had six children with three surviving. Romane (or Romain on the 1870 census and Jesse R. on the 1900 census) is still living with his parents.^{xxxv} So it's possible that they married earlier than previously thought and lost several children before Romane's birth in November of 1871.^{xxxvi}

Charles' pension card lists his date of filing for a pension as Jan. 21, 1892 and Lucretia filed on Oct. 6, 1911 so we know that Charles died between May 15, 1910 when the 1910 census was completed and Oct. 6, 1911.^{xxxvii} There is no headstone application for this Charles Rockwell in M1845 so we can't get a date of death from the records we currently have available. If we order the pension file from the National Archives in Washington using

www.archives.gov's Order On-Line system, we could probably find a great deal more information about this second Charles Rockwell.

Since there's conflicting information in the Land Entry file and on the census, to confirm that this is the correct Charles Rockwell, we should examine a map, and see if we can find the location of the homestead versus Charles' residence on the census in Maple Grove, Manistee County, Michigan. Manistee County's western border is Lake Michigan. Going east from Lake Michigan, Manistee County's towns are Onekama, Bear Creek and then Maple Grove.^{xxxviii} The plat map for township 23-N, shows it to border Lake Michigan and shows Portage Lake in the bottom left quadrant.^{xxxix} A check of the atlas for Michigan shows Portage Lake right next to Onekama.^{xl} So the homestead site agrees with the residence of this Charles Rockwell that we found on several census in Maple Grove.

If we wanted to continue researching this Charles Rockwell for our family tree, a next step would be to look at the Hale and Barbour Collections. These are available at the Connecticut State Library in Hartford (cslib.org) as well as the New England Historic and Genealogical Society in Boston (www.americanancestors.org). The microfilmed Barbour Collection lists births, marriages and deaths in Connecticut to 1850, however many of the 1800-1850 listings are missing from the records. The Hale Collection includes an index to marriages published in Connecticut newspapers that might be useful. There are also a large number of published genealogies and town histories for Connecticut towns that may lead to information on this Rockwell family. And it's a distinct possibility that these two Charles Rockwells are related since the first Charles' father, Elkany, was also born in Connecticut.^{xli}

So, using a wide variety of records, we've compiled specific individual information on both Charles Rockwells and confirmed that the second Charles, born in Connecticut in 1832, was our homesteader. And along the way, we learned about some great new records to search for our common name ancestors as well as Civil War soldiers.

Which Charles Rockwell is Which - What We Learned

Charles Rockwell #1	Charles Rockwell #2
Born in Geddes, Onondaga Co., New York	Born in Fairfield, Connecticut
Born April 10, 1821	Born September 1832
5'10" tall, light complexion, grey eyes, brown hair	5'10" tall, fresh complexion, blue eyes, brown hair
Married Mary Ann Cates (Kates)	Married Lucretia ?
Parents Elkany and Ann Barder Rockwell	Parents Charles G. and Sara(h) Rockwell

Father b. CT, mother b. NY	Both parents b. CT
Had 4 children; 1 died young	Had 6 children; 3 died young
Served in the Civil War – 15 th New York Engineers, Co. F	Served in the Civil War – 56 th IL Volunteers, Co. B, Mechanics and Fusileers
Enlisted Sept. 5, 1864, in NY	Enlisted Oct. 11, 1861 at Pontiac, MI
Discharged June 13, 1865, Ft. Barry, VA	Discharged Jan. 28, 1862 at Pontiac, MI
Modestly successful farmer & part-time shoemaker	Farmer
Injured in Civil War and filed for a pension	Injured in Civil War and filed for a pension
Widow received a pension	Widow received a pension
Moved to Michigan in 1866, settled in Ravenna, Chester township, Ottawa Co.	Moved to Michigan before 1850 with parents, lived first in Pontiac, homesteaded in Maple Grove
	Received one homestead for 160 acres
	Filed for an additional homestead, denied
Died May 6, 1886	Died between May 15, 1910 and Oct. 6, 1911
Received a Civil War gravestone	Did not file for a gravestone
1850, 1860, 1870, 1880, 1890 Federal Census	1850, 1860, 1870, 1880, 1890, 1900, 1910 Federal Census
1855 New York State Census	Homestead Entry Files
1860 New York Agricultural Census	Civil War pension index
Civil War pension index	M25, General land Office Correspondence
Civil War pension file	www.glorerecords.blm.gov patent search and plat details sections
New York State Archives Civil War records including registers and muster rolls	Connecticut local town histories and genealogies
Civil War Gravestone applications	Barbour and Hale Collections

Finding the Correct Ancestor – Techniques and Processes

Much of my knowledge and understanding of this subject came from a lecture I attended at the Federation of Genealogical Societies in Boston in Aug. 2006. Tom Jones gave an extremely informative lecture, “Organizing Evidence to Overcome Record Shortages,” that taught me some analytical techniques I used in this article.

- Determine where your ancestor lived so that you can check the records for that area (vital records, census, newspapers, city directories, genealogies, etc.). Did (s)he have siblings, children, war service – records that you can locate to make him/her stand out of the crowd.
- If more than one person by that name lived in the same place, find person-specific information on each of them so that you can tell them apart (vital records, pension files, deeds, probate, occupation, voting lists, etc.)
- Use collateral lines to help you set your ancestor apart from others with the same name – find out information about the siblings, aunts, uncles, children of your ancestor and use that information to reach conclusions about the problem ancestor.
- Collect as much information on that name in that place as you can to help you differentiate between the individuals – be as exhaustive in your research as possible examining every type of record, even those that might not have ages or family information – sometimes it takes only one thing to tell the difference, like a listing on a voting record or town meeting minutes that’s too early to too late to be your person so it can help you differentiate between two people with the same name.
- Record complete information from each record source – exact dates, any relationships either implied or specific, witnesses, neighbors, signatures, land descriptions or locations, etc.
- Understand the records you collect: evaluate the records you find and assemble the information they contain into a useable framework; don’t just collect the records but analyze the information in them to get the facts out – think analytically about the records you find; pull together the information from different records to reach a conclusion or gain a “fact” for your family history.
- Try putting the information in a graph or timeline format arranged by given name, then location, religion, neighbors, or any other variable that can help sort out identities.

- Refocus your research as you assemble the facts found in records – don't just collect records and facts but use the pieces you collect to ask questions to take you to the next step of your research.

There are a number of really good articles on this topic that you might want to read:

Devine, Donn, "Evidence Analysis," in *Professional Genealogy: A Manual for Researchers, Writers, Editors, Lecturers, and Librarians*, ed. Elizabeth Shown Mills, ed. [Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 2001]

Jones, Thomas W., "Organizing Meager Evidence to Reveal Lineages: An Irish Example – Geddes of Tyrone," in *National Genealogical Society Quarterly* 89 [June 2001]: 98-112.

Jones, Thomas W., "The Road Less Taken: The Power of Indirect Evidence," in *Association of Professional Genealogists Quarterly* 20 [March 2005]: 21-26.

Mills, Elizabeth Shown, "Building a Case When No Record 'Proves a Point,'" in *Ancestry* 16 [April-May 1998]: 26-31.

Devine, Donn, "Information, Evidence, and Proof," *Ancestry Magazine* 19 [May/June 2001]: 46-48.

ⁱ Simpson, Michael, "National Council for the Social Studies and NARA: Partners in Teaching with Documents." [Washington, DC: NARA, *The Record*, Sept. 1998]. See also www.archives.gov/publications/record/1998/09/teaching-approaches.html. The entryman had to be a citizen or filed a declaration of intention to become a citizen, the head of household or over age 21, and never borne arms against the U.S. government or given aid and comfort to its enemies.

ⁱⁱ National Park Service, "Land Records Project," part of the Homestead National Monument of America at www.nps.gov/home/historyculture/landrecordsproject.htm, Feb. 26, 2007

ⁱⁱⁱ The complete text of the Homestead Act of 1862 is available on-line at www.time-passages.com/homesteadact.html, Feb. 27, 2007, sponsored by the Red River Valley Genealogical society in Fargo, North Dakota.

^{iv} An index to these letters is available at the Boston NARA facility. The Excel database provides roll number, page number, date of entry, addressee and address of letter, soldier or widow's name referred to in the letter, and the state where the homestead is located, if given.

^v NARA Microfilm Publication M25, roll 227, pp. 175-176 and 349-350, to Mr. C. J. Sawyer, Esq., Lindington, Michigan and response to Messers Laman and Zachery, Washington, D.C. Researchers can now order Land Entry papers on-line at www.archives.gov, using the Order On-Line system under Buy Reproductions in the Shop Online section.

^{vi} NARA Microfilm publication T288, General Index to Pensions, roll 401, pension index cards for 2 Charles Rockwells, filed in Michigan. T288 is now available on-line on Ancestry.com and Fold3.com. Only two of the Charles were used because the second one turned out to be the homesteader so Charles #3 was not needed.

^{vii} Charles Rockwell gravestone, Card Records of Headstones provided for Deceased Union Civil War Veterans, ca. 1879-ca. 1903, NARA Microfilm publication M1845, roll 17, also available on Ancestry.com

^{viii} Charles Rockwell household, 1870 U.S. Census, Ottawa County, Michigan, population schedule, Chester town, page 34, dwelling 232, family 235, NARA Microfilm publication M593, roll 697.

^{ix} Charles Rockwell household, 1880 U.S. census, Ottawa County, Michigan, population schedule, Chester town, enumeration district 231, page 9, dwelling 79, family 80, NARA Microfilm publication T9, roll 600.

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- ^x Charles Rockwell veteran, Mary A. Rockwell widow, 1890 U.S. Special Census of Union Veterans and Widows, Ottawa County, Michigan, veterans schedule, Chester town, enumeration district 241, house 200, family 206, NARA Microfilm publication M123, roll 20.
- ^{xi} Charles Rockwell household, 1855 New York State Census, Onondaga County, population schedule, Camillus town, page 11, dwelling 27, family 89, New York Microfilm 44147A, roll A900.
- ^{xii} Charles Rockwell farm, 1860 U.S. Census, Onondaga County, New York, agricultural schedule, Camillus town, page 9, line 24, New York State Library microfilm, roll 6.
- ^{xiii} Charles Rockwell household, 1850 U.S. Census, Onondaga County, New York, population schedule, Camillus town, page 262, dwelling 564, family 585, NARA Microfilm publication M432, roll 567.
- ^{xiv} New York State Archives, *Civil War Muster Roll Abstracts of New York State Volunteers, United States Sharpshooters, and United States Colored Troops [ca. 1861-1900]*, accretion #13775-83, roll 961, Onondaga County.
- ^{xv} New York State Archives, *Complete Record, as required by Chapter 690, of the Laws of 1865, relating to officers, Soldiers and Seamen, composing the quotas of the troops furnished to the United States*, town of Camillus, accretion #13774-83, MUI, roll 21.
- ^{xvi} If you want to find out more information about the regiment in which your Civil War ancestors served, www.civilwararchives.com/Unreght/ will give you a free history of a regiment. I learned that the 15th Regiment of Engineers was organized in Washington, D.C. on Oct. 25, 1861 from the 15th Regiment of New York Infantry and attached to the Engineer Brigade, Army of the Potomac. In 1864-1865 when this Charles Rockwell was in the regiment, they were involved in the Battles of the Wilderness, May 5-7; Spotsylvania Court House May 8-21; North Anna River May 23-26, etc., and in siege operations against Petersburg and Richmond from June 1864 to April 1865 as well as Appomattox in April 1865 and at Lee's surrender. This brief history also tells me that Co. F was mustered out at Washington, D.C. June 13, 1865.
- ^{xvii} NARA, T288, *op.cit.*
- ^{xviii} NARA, Civil War Pension Files, pension number 377540, Charles Rockwell and widow's pension number 488301, Mary A. Rockwell.
- ^{xix} People often moved in groups and here is another example of that process; several of the Rockwells' neighbors in Ottawa County, Michigan were also their neighbors in Onondaga County, New York. For more information on cluster migrations, see my articles "Where'd They Go? Finding Ancestral Migrations in Federal Records" and "Using Pre-1850 Census: Finding Parents without Vital Records." If you email me at jean.nudd@nara.gov, I will be happy to send you copies of these articles.
- ^{xx} NARA, Civil War Pension File, pension number 377540, *op.cit.*
- ^{xxi} *Ibid.*
- ^{xxii} www.glorerecords.blm.gov, Land Patent details, Charles Rockwell, number 1475 and 2791, Feb. 21, 2007. This database is operated by the Bureau of Land Management and contains land entry information for most of the public land states.
- ^{xxiii} NARA, Records of the Bureau of Land Management, RG 49, Subgroup 3, Records of Operating Division of the General Land Office, Certificate No. 2791, Homestead Application No. 6999, file of Charles Rockwell.
- ^{xxiv} www.itd.nps.gov/cwss is a database operated by the National Park Service of Civil War soldiers, including both Union and Confederate. The free database gives basic service information as well as brief regimental histories.
- ^{xxv} NARA, BLM, *op.cit.*
- ^{xxvi} www.ancestrylibrary.com, 1870 and 1880 census databases, Feb. 21, 2007.
- ^{xxvii} Lainhart, Ann S., *State Census Records*. [Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1992], pp. 62-66.
- ^{xxviii} www.familysearch.org, click on search and then the catalog becomes an option. A quick search using Michigan under place, showed only statewide census results, March 8, 2007.
- ^{xxix} Charles G. Rockwell household, 1850 U.S. Census, Oakland County, Michigan, population schedule, Pontiac town, page 105, dwelling 1361, family 1386, NARA Microfilm publication M432, roll 359.
- ^{xxx} Sarah Rockwell household, 1860 U.S. Census, Oakland County, Michigan, population schedule, Pontiac town, page 94, dwelling 663, family 663, NARA Microfilm publication M653, roll 556; and Charles Rockwell household, 1870 U.S. Census, Manistee County, Michigan, population schedule, Bear Lake town, page 4, dwelling 33, family 33, NARA Microfilm publication M593, roll 689.
- ^{xxxi} Charles Rockwell household, 1880 U.S. Census, Manistee County, Michigan, population schedule, Maple Grove town, page 3, dwelling 28, family 28, NARA Microfilm publication T9, roll 593.

^{xxxii} Charles Rockwell veteran, 1890 U.S. Special Census of Union Veterans and Widows, Manistee County, Michigan, veterans schedule, Maple Grove town, enumeration district 299, page 0, house 1, family 1, NARA Microfilm publication M123, roll 21.

^{xxxiii} For a complete list of the special non-population schedules for the Federal census for 1850-1880, see Dollarhide, William, *The Census Book; A Genealogist's Guide to Federal Census Facts, Schedules, and Indexes*. [Bountiful, UT: Heritage Quest, 1999], p. 111 for Michigan.

^{xxxiv} Charles Rockwell household, 1900 U.S. Census, Manistee County, Michigan, population schedule, Maple Grove town, enumeration district 40, page 2A, dwelling 29, family 29, NARA Microfilm publication T623, roll 728.

^{xxxv} Charles Rockwell household, 1910 U.S. Census, Manistee County, Michigan, population schedule, Maple Grove town, enumeration district 45, page 3B, dwelling 55, family 57, NARA Microfilm publication T624, roll 661.

^{xxxvi} Charles Rockwell household, 1900 U.S. Census, *op.cit.*

^{xxxvii} NARA T288, *op.cit.*

^{xxxviii} Andriot, Jay, compiler, *Township Atlas of the United States*. [McLean, VA: Documents Index, Inc., 1991], pp. 432 and 454.

^{xxxix} www.glorerecords.blm.gov/, in the Plat Details section, shows the plat map for Township 23-N, March 7, 2007.

^{xl} *Rand McNally Road Atlas: United States and Canada*. [Skokie, IL: Rand McNally Co., 2002], pp. 50-51.

^{xli} Stiles, Henry R., *The History and Genealogies of Ancient Windsor, Connecticut, 1635-1891*, actually lists a Charles Rockwell, bp. 2 Aug. 1801 (p. 655).