



# "The Clinton Independent"

## 1984

CLINTON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



It pays to advertise. After reading Betty Minskys' State Journal article on Tom Teare's gift of Lincoln's "nib holder," given him by W. O. Stoddard, Jr., son of Lincoln's secretary, W. O. Stoddard, Jack and Dorothy Gillis of Lansing planned to attend our Mar. 22 meeting. The bad weather kept our members from a real surprise. Unable to come, they visited our museum Mar. 25 and donated an 1861 Land Grant signed by W. O. Stoddard, who had also signed Lincoln's

### FORD'S THEATRE REPLAYS KENNEDY, LINCOLN TRAGEDIES

WASHINGTON, D. C. - As the nation recalled the sadness of President John F. Kennedy's assassination 20 years ago, a group of people gathered in Ford's Theatre on Tuesday to listen to a lecture about another assassinated president, Abraham Lincoln.

Dr. John K. Lattimer, author of *KENNEDY AND LINCOLN: MEDICAL AND BALLISTIC COMPARISONS OF THEIR ASSASSINATIONS*, stood on the theatre's stage and vividly evoked the evening in 1865 when Lincoln, sitting in a rocking chair in the president's box, was shot by actor John Wilkes Booth.

The audience was spellbound as Lattimer explained that a notice in the newspapers that Union Gen. U. S. Grant and his wife were going to be the guests of Lincoln and his wife at a performance at the theatre alerted Booth to his opportunity. The Grants, however, cancelled.

Booth, who sympathized with the Confederate cause, had gathered a group of conspirators together in a plan to kidnap Lincoln and exchange him for Confederate prisoners. That plan failed and before another could be formulated, the Confederacy surrendered.

Booth, however, still clung to his belief that he could disrupt the union by killing Lincoln, said Lattimer.

Using a flashlight, Lattimer reconstructed Booth's movements that evening - from his easy entrance because he was an actor in the theater, through the theater audience to the balcony where he gained entrance to the president's box.

After the Lincoln shooting there was immediate controversy about who shot the president, how many people were involved and what was the angle of the fatal bullet which would indicate whether Booth was the assassin or someone else.

A similar controversy grew up around Kennedy's assassination and culminated in the Warren Commission report in 1964 which established that Lee Harvey Oswald had planned Kennedy's assassination by himself.

It was the correlations between Lincoln and Kennedy, their assassinations and surrounding events that most intrigued the audience.



ard, who had also signed Lincoln's name. They recognized the Stoddard name from among many family items they had been sorting through. These two items make a real treasure for the museum.

(Catherine Rumbaugh, co-dir.)

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### SOHN DISPLAY AT PGS

The dare-devil antics of Clem Sohn are coming to life with the Michigan Historical Museum's loan to PGS of Sohn's memorabilia. We are also interested in recording remembrances of those who knew him. Stop in on Wednesdays, 2-8 p.m.

Sohn is another Clinton County man making a belated name for himself through aviation. Remember Philip Parmelee? Visit PGS and reacquaint yourself with both.

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### ENDOWMENT FUND CREATED

A long sought plan to create a CCHS Museum Endowment Fund has come to fruition. Those desiring to make a gift through a will should use the entire name CLINTON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUSEUM ENDOWMENT FUND.

We trust this presents a cause for history-minded and philanthropic individuals who wish for the continuance of a museum. As this fund grows the interest can aid in its purpose - the preservation of our museum.

The nucleus of this Endowment Fund includes the gifts that have been given as memorials, the gift of corporate stock, a donation of Howard C. Wickes and 50 percent of our 1983 Trash 'n Treasure auction, totaling \$6,255.58. Future funds shall consist of: Monies donated explicitly for the fund; all monies donated to PGS Museum as memorial gifts that do not include a restrictive gift instrument; and other museum funds as approved by the PGS advisory board.

The interest is subject to withdrawal for expenses related to the operation and maintenance, upon approval of the PGS advisory board.

The principal is subject to withdrawal only for a PGS museum emergency or capital expenditure upon approval of the advisory board and the CCHS board of directors.

An annual accounting will be made on said fund.

As directors of your museum we sincerely hope you will remember PGS with your donations, memorial gifts and seriously consider naming the PGS Museum in your will.

(John and Catherine Rumbaugh, co-directors PGS Museum)

It was the correlations between Lincoln and Kennedy, their assassinations and surrounding events that most intrigued the audience.

Both Booth and Oswald lived two hours after being shot by a single bullet from Colt revolvers. Both Mary Todd Lincoln and Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis were society women when they married at 23 years old, both spoke French, both lost children while living in the White House, both allowed their children to ride ponies on the White House lawn, and both cradled their dying husbands in their laps.

Both Lincoln and Kennedy had a fondness for rocking chairs. Both were shot in the head. Both had relatives who had once been mayors of Boston. Both were succeeded by men named Johnson.

What did it all mean?

"I don't think there's anything metaphysical about all this. It's just interesting," said Lattimer, a noted urologist who got involved in the Lincoln-Kennedy research as an outgrowth of his collection of swords. He owns the knife that Booth carried and Oswald's rifle scorebook.

(ED. NOTE: Dr. Lattimer is a member of CCHS. The above article appeared in USA TODAY on Nov. 23, 1983. Dr. Lattimer's visit on the 20th anniversary of President Kennedy's death played to a full house despite fears that Thanksgiving night might cut the crowd. He demonstrated his conclusion that the Kennedy murder was the work of a Marxist who wanted to achieve credit as the individual who alone destroyed the leader of the world's most anti-Marxist nation. He also presented evidence, obtained through actual field experimentation, that Booth did not die by his own hand but by Boston Corbetts')



# GENEALOGY

# GAZETTE



The Genealogists recently received a request for the burial location of a Fowler, Michigan Civil War Veteran, who was a Medal of Honor recipient.

Walter L. Mundell, Corp. Co. E., 5th Michigan Infantry was awarded the Medal of Honor for action at Sailors Creek, VA on 6 April 1865.

He was born 4 August 1838 and died 20 April 1900 at Fowler, MI.

His widow was Isabell Wheeler Mundell.

Death certificate and other documents for Mr. Mundell can be found in his pension file at National Archives, Washington DC.

The request came from Medal of Honor Historical Society 121 N. Furman St., Alexandria, VA 22304. The information is be collected for their archives and the archives at Freedoms Foundation, Valley Forge, PA.

NOTE: Mr. Mundell is buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery, Bengal Township, Sec. 30, Clinton County, Mich...Mrs. Mundell was born 1846 - died in 1930.....J. M. Snyder

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## THE INGALL'S INQUIRER

Arlene Ingalls Schrader, 5640 W. Chadwick Rd., DeWitt, MI 48820 (now Publishing "The Ingalls Inquirer" a family research newsletter created for the purpose of promoting research and exchange of information on the surnames, INGALLS, INGELL, INGLES, INGLIS, INGLE, ENGEL AND ALLIED lines.

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## NEWS and NOTES

### CHANGE IN ORDERING PROCEDURE:

Effective Apr. 1 all requests for copies of military service records or passenger arrival records held by National Archives must be submitted on NATF forms 80 & 81 only. Old forms will be returned.

Also, a change in policy. Do not send payment with request. NAES will research and send a will and instructions for payment. A separate form is required for each record desired, even if same person. Forms NATF 80 & 81 may be ordered from: Reference Services Branch (NNIR), National Archives and Records Service, Washington, D.C. 20408.

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THANK YOU to those who gave money to CCHS in Feb. & March: Thomas Teare, Jeanette Huard, Mr.Mrs.Winchell Brown, Hilda Bancroft, Mr.Mrs. Elmore Randolph, Mr.Mrs. Gerald Myers, Mr.Mrs. Kenneth Johnson of St. Johns; Helen Wood Virginia Ackerman of DeWitt; Mr.Mrs.Earl Studt of Ypsilanti; Village of Fowler, Mi. M. Noble of Grand Ledge; Alice Ward of Lansing; R. Polombit of Grosse Pt.Farms; Doyle C. Fitzpatrick of Beaver Island; & Jeanne E. Wanhainen, Tell City, Ind. (Janet Snyder, corres. sec.)

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Michigan Week

The newsletter is published three times per calendar year, March, July, and November plus an index issue, by Arlene a member of the Clinton County Genealogists Society. Subscription rates are \$6.00 per calendar year. Queries are free to subscribers, as space permits. Arlene can be reached at above address or (517) 669-3219.



## The REAL Origin of Memorial Day

*Most history buffs accept the fact that a General John Alexander Logan, first commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, declared "Decoration Day" or Memorial Day, as we know it, for the first time in May of 1868. But what's the real story of Memorial Day?*

Well, it would appear that Waterloo, New York, *thought up* Memorial Day two years before General Logan proclaimed it. In May of 1866 the U.S. Congress agreed by passing a resolution saying Waterloo could officially claim the first Memorial Day celebration. I might add that it was a Connecticut Yankee, a Henry C. Welles, originally of Glastonbury, Connecticut, and a Vermonter, General John Boyce Murray, then Seneca County Clerk in Waterloo but originally a native of Arlington, Vermont, who conceived and implemented the Memorial Day idea, first celebrated in the North on Saturday, May 5, 1866, in Waterloo, New York.

However, the very first Memorial Day ever celebrated anywhere was on May 1, 1865, in Charleston, South Carolina. This can be verified by checking the May 2, 1865, edition of *The Daily Courier* of Charleston and

noting the reports of the preceding day's ceremonies in which some ten thousand people participated and 30 notables gave formal speeches honoring the dead of both the North and South. And, again, it was a New Englander's idea. It all began when one James Redpath, the Superintendent of Schools in Charleston and a former editor for Horace Greeley, came home one evening very upset after having viewed a field of only partially buried Union soldiers in nameless graves. His wife insisted that he do something about it. The ultimate result was the first Memorial Day celebrations — May 1, 1865. Mrs. Redpath was the former Mary Cotton of Malden, Massachusetts.

So we really have two Memorial Day legends — one for the North and another one for the South. And New Englanders thought up both of them. J.D.H.

## Obituary

Edna Whittemore, an Ovid historian who wrote the history of Ovid in 1967, died recently. She had retired in 1967 after a teaching career that spanned 37 years. Her book is still available and can be purchased at the Ovid Village Hall. Mrs. Whittemore contributed a story on the Ovid area for our 1980 CCHS history book. Burial was in Stilson Cemetery in Victor Township, the area where she was born.



## Clinton County Historical Society

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