

Genealogists of the
Clinton County Historical Society

Mailing Address
P.O. Box 23
St. Johns, Mi 48879

Clinton County Trails

Published Quarterly, September 1998

Volume 13, Number 3

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Pres.....
V-Pres. Maralyse Brooks
Sec'y Myrna Van Epps
Treas... William Serviss

GENEALOGISTS

Pres..... Maralyse Brooks
V-Pres. Michael Pease
Sec'y Arlene Lounds
Treas... Carole Henry
Program.... Maralyse Brooks

MUSEUM

Director
Catherine Rumbaugh

ARCHIVES

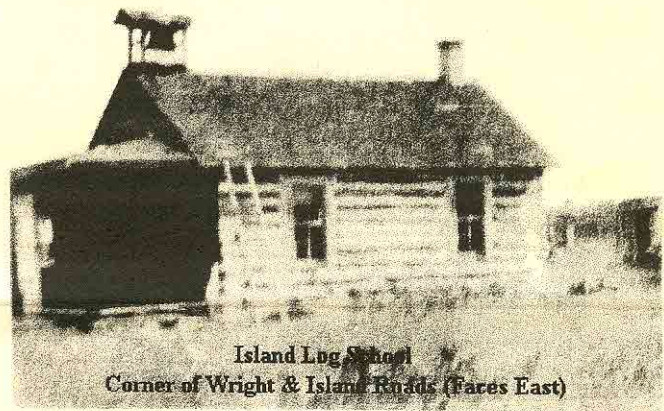
Myrna Van Epps

NEWSLETTER

Co-Editors
Myrna Van Epps
Arlene (Conley) Smith

ISLAND LOG SCHOOL

Dist. No. 7, Lebanon Twp., Clinton Co., MI



I will endeavor to give a short history of the Island School. The district records that we have date back to 1866 in the old log school house which stood on the corner west of here. But we have some names of teachers who taught before that. My own mother, **Eunice Randolph [Pinkney]** taught in 1864. We have her school record, also her certificate and contract to teach at that time. Her certificate was for 6 months and was signed by Albert H. Burch and Pliny Moore, School Inspectors. The contract was for 3 months for \$3 a week and was signed by J. F. Owen, Director; Jacob Handsby, Moderator; Tiras Terwilliger, Assessor.

The log school house was square with two windows in north and south sides each and door in east side. There was a row of seats all around the wall except in front where there was a short seat and desk for the teacher. In front of these seats was a row of

desks and attached to these desks in front was a row of seats for the little folks. Back of the door were shelves for the dinner pails.

The school was conducted very much different than it is now. The money raised by direct tax was \$1 a scholar. The number of scholars was from 35 to 49. The wood was furnished by the people who had children attending the school. They furnished from one-quarter to one-half cord of wood a scholar. I have here the report of the director, J. F. Owen, in 1866: (They had 7 months school.)

Amount on hand, Sept. 2, 1866	\$12.79
Received from two mill tax	19.88
Primary Fund	17.55
Direct Tax	39.00
Dog Tax	6.99
All other Sources	<u>2.50</u>
	\$98.71
Paid Teacher	\$67.78
Contingent Expenses	<u>3.90</u>
	\$71.68

In 1869 they voted to buy 15 cord of hard body wood. **Tiras Terwilliger** furnished the wood at 60 cents a cord. In 1870, '71, and '72 they voted to raise \$100 each year for building fund. In 1872 they voted to build a school house the next year (1873), the cost of the school house not to exceed \$600. The building committee was:

John Pinckney, Jerome Delong, and **John P. Castler;** and they voted to raise \$50 for a building site; and as they could not agree where to buy a site, they voted to have the school commissioners establish the site for the school house. In August 1873 the district hired [borrowed] \$350 of **E.G. Bement** at 10 percent interest. The

old school house sold for \$8. I could not find out just what the school house did cost as so many of the orders did not state what they were for. The bell was \$13.50.

In 1880 they voted to have 8 months of school and the next year went back to 7 months. In 1888 there was 8 months school until 1903 when the vote was for 9 months; and we still have 9 months.

Teachers' wages varied from \$10 to \$42 until the year 1889. From then on no record was kept of teachers' wages. They usually hired a man teacher in winter when the larger scholars went to school and a woman teacher in summer as they could hire them cheaper.

The school year of 1914 and 1915, the number of scholars enrolled was 4 through the winter and 5 in the spring. We now have 13. In 1921 this school district voted to raise \$1,000 by direct tax.

In 1881 I found where **Frank Lamphere** furnished 10 cords of body wood, 2 feet long, at 75 cents a cord. In 1885 the job of cleaning school house was let to **J.A. Jaquish** to clean it twice for \$2.

Note: This essay was unsigned but was probably written by **Anna (Pinckney) White** for a school reunion after 1921.

ISLAND SCHOOL STUDENTS - Sept. 3, 1900

Name	Age
Baxter, Herman	5
Baxter, Loyal	15
Baxter, Willie	13
Chapman, Bernice	8
Chapman, David	9
Charleston, Alzine	15
Charleston, Viola	10
Feazel, Howard	8

Feazel, Loyal	6
Finlay, Asa	18
Finlay, Dicky	9
Finlay, Jeanie	13
Finlay, John	15
Finlay, Maggie	19
Jaquish, Clyde	12
Jaquish, Earl	9
Jaquish, Nellie	5
Lambie, Hattie	18
Lamphere, Fred	18
Lamphere, Hugh	14
Leonard, Fred	6
Leonard, Lizzie	11
Lewis, Grace	7
Lewis, Hudson	11
Lewis, Naomi	7
Lewis, Roger	9
Randolph, Edna	15
Randolph, Jennie	19
Randolph, Lee	5

Sheldon, Cora	15
Sheldon, Maud	18
Terwilliger, Ethel	15
White, Glen	6
Winans, Elva	5

ISLAND SCHOOL TEACHERS

Eva Harris	1900
Velma Smith	1903
Isabel Findlay	1903-4
Nina Webster	1908-9
Mabel Hart	1910-13
Lilian Dobson	1914
Eva Hart	1915-18
Marion Jones	1920

ISLAND SCHOOL STUDENTS



Mildred (Cowles) James, teacher (back row, left)



ISLAND SCHOOL STUDENTS
IDENTIFY PLEASE!

In July the archives received several photographs of Island School students and teachers, including the pictures above. However, none of these pictures included identification or dates. The archives staff would be grateful to anyone who could help identify anyone.

Note the school in the photos is a wooden building, not the original log school.

REUNION - 1931

Clinton County Republican News
Sept. 10, 1931, page 8

The Island School reunion was held on Monday, September 7, with an attendance of about 135. The forenoon was spent in visiting and at noon a picnic dinner was served in **Jaquish's** orchard across the road from the school house.

The meeting was called to order by the president, Mrs. **Mina Gordanier**, in

the afternoon. The program opened with community singing which was followed by The Lord's Prayer. The address of welcome was given by Mrs. **Mary Pinkney** and responded to by Mrs. **Homer Greenhoe** of Lansing. This was followed by the reading of the roll call by the secretary, Mrs. **Moss Van Sickle**. The officers for next year were then elected as follows:

President, **Hugh Lamphere**
Vice President, **Glenn White**

Sec. & Treas. **Mrs. Irving Reist**
A farce, "How the Story Grows,"
was given by **Mrs. Mary Pinkney, Mrs. Hugh Lamphere, Mrs. Walter White, Mrs. Mina Gordanier, Mrs. John Jaquish, Mrs. Clyde Jaquish, and Mrs. David Chapman.** The singing of "God be With You Till We Meet Again," brought the program to a close.

People were present at the reunion

from Lansing, Flint, Owosso, Trenton, Milwaukee, Wisc., St. Johns, Carson City, Hubbardston, Crystal, Mt. Pleasant, Battle Creek, Ionia, Lyons, Fowler, Middleton, Fowlerville, and Maple Rapids. ©

FAMILY HISTORIES

Featured here are family histories which were submitted ca 1993 for a proposed supplement to the 1980 Clinton County History book. (See *Clinton Co. Trails*, Vol. 12, #1.) The following essays were written by **Leanne K. Walling.** See previous issue for another of her essays.

DELBERT PHILIP WALTER FAMILY

Delbert Philip "Del" Walter was b. in Jackson, MI, on Mar. 5, 1888, son of **Lewis and Eva Walter.** He m. **Nettie Ann Ott** in Corunna, MI, Oct. 21, 1908. Nettie was b. in Henderson, MI, Dec. 4, 1891, daughter of **Seth and Mary L. (LaClear) Ott.** Del was a farmer all his life and was well known as the area "egg man" for many years. Nettie was a homemaker. Del retired from farming in 1965, and in 1973 sold his 80-acre farm on Hollister Rd. in Ovid to his youngest son, Gerald. Del died Mar. 22, 1973, and Nettie died on May 28, 1984. Del and Nettie rest at Ridge Road Cemetery in Brady Twp., Saginaw Co., MI. The couple had four children: **Helen May, Eathel Florence, Harland James,** and Gerald Lewis.

Helen, b June 13, 1909, died at the age of 3 on Nov. 2, 1912, due to a ruptured appendix.

Clinton County Trails

Eathel, b Jan. 21, 1911, married **Elmer Davis** in St. Charles, MI, in 1933. Elmer worked for WJIM-TV in Lansing,

MI, until he died Sept. 26, 1976. Eathel retired from the Okemos School District. The couple resided most of their lives in Okemos. They had two children: **Wayne Elmer and Ronald Lee.** Eathel currently lives in Okemos.

Harland, b May 22, 1915, married **Vera Louise Joy** in Lansing. Vera died in Feb. 1956. Harland then married **Una Caroline Walker** in Waterford, MI, on Nov. 24, 1956. He retired from General Motors, and Una is a retired hairdresser. Harland and Una currently reside in Largo, FL. Harland had no children.

Gerald, b July 10, 1925, married **Winifred Jeanne Baker** in Ovid on Oct. 14, 1944. Gerald was employed as a seed corn salesman and died May 15, 1983. Jeanne retired from the dental office in Ovid. The couple had three children: **Randall Allen, Robert Kent,** and **Leanne Kay.** Jeanne currently lives

Volume 13, Number 3

in Ovid and still owns the Walter family farm. ☺

GERALD LEWIS WALTER FAMILY

Gerald Lewis "Jerry" Walter was b. in Owosso, MI, on July 10, 1925, the son of **Delbert Philip** and **Nettie Ann (Ott) Walter**. He married **Winifred Jeanne Baker** in Ovid, MI, on Oct. 14, 1944. Jeanne was born in Ovid on Apr. 24, 1926, the daughter of **John Barton "Bart"** and **Ethel Mae (Yariger) Baker**. Jerry graduated from Elsie High School in 1943, and Jeanne graduated from Ovid High School in 1944.

Jerry was employed by Wilson's Dairy in Ovid, then worked for a time for Clinton Co. before he went to work for Great Lakes Hybrids shortly before the

company moved from Lansing, MI, to Ovid. Jerry also purchased the 80-acre farm on Hollister Road in Ovid from his father in 1973 and farmed every year as well. Jerry died May 15, 1983. He rests at Maple Grove Cemetery in Ovid.

Jeanne worked most of her lifefor Dr. Jackson Bates, the dentist in Ovid, and retired from the dental office in 1983. She currently lives in the home that she and Jerry built in 1960 in Ovid and still owns the Walter family farm.

Jerry and Jeanne had three children: **Randall Allen**, **Robert Kent**, and **Leanne Kay**.

Randall lives and works in Ovid; Robert lives in Mason, MI, and works in Lansing. Leanne married **Thomas Edwin Walling**, son of **Robert** and **Leatha Walling** of St. Johns, MI, on Sept. 24, 1977, in Ovid. They work in Lansing and reside in St. Johns. ☺

CEMETERIES IN CLINTON COUNTY

MT. REST CEMETERY

St. Johns

The Clinton Republican; Aug. 5, 1920, page 1

Mt. Rest Cemetery has always been noted for its excellent location and its well-kept grounds. However, an addition which gives promise of being more beautiful is about to be laid out. A number of years ago, when the present grounds were beginning to prove inadequate space, 25 acres toward the east were purchased. Since then a magnificent mausoleum has been erected on this land which will be finished sometime in September, the estimated cost of which is \$80,000.

Plans to lay out the additional land are now under way, and an expert *Clinton County Trails*

landscape gardener, C. P. Halligan, who has charge of the campus at the Michigan

Agricultural College, will plot the ground. The contour will be left as nature made it, and there will be a beautiful park in the space in front of the mausoleum. The drives will be wide and promiscuously arranged so that they will pass through the natural valleys. After the grounds have been laid out in level, well-kept lawns, and shrubs and various plants have been planted in the spots which the gardener will suggest, then St. Johns can well feel proud of the fact that our dead sleep in one of the most beautiful cemeteries in Michigan. ☺

Volume 13, Number 3

SIMMONS CEMETERY

The Clinton Republican; Apr. 15, 1909, page 2

Over in the township of Eagle, there is a rural cemetery which is greatly admired by strangers who pass it. Only a few years ago it was a wilderness, but through constant effort, it has been transformed into a model burying place. The land was donated by the late **David A. Simmons**, of Portland, father of Mrs. **Susan Knox** and Mrs. **E. W. Blanchard**, and many Portland people have relatives buried there.

For years the place wore a deserted look, and in time it resembled a wilderness, but that was before the Simmons Cemetery Society was organized. In the last seven years a wonderful transformation has taken place and the society is about to spend \$300 for an iron fence, with two fine entrances, over each of which will appear the words, "Simmons Cemetery." The ladies, who are the life of the society, have raised the greater part of this sum, but an appropriation of \$100 by the township will complete the fund. Along the entire front of the cemetery, which lies just south of the **Artemas Briggs** farm, is a continuous stretch of gas pipe for the use in hitching horses, and just inside of the yard is a neat looking building where the undertaker can drive in with his equipment. The entire yard is mowed about four times each season so that it always has a neat and well kept appearance.

While the subject is certainly a grave one, the ladies of the society have mixed a little mirth with their work. Fifty members met with Mrs. **Lou Monroe** April 1st and greatly enjoyed the joke when inviting looking little cakes which

Clinton County Trails

had been passed around were found to contain cotton batting. More substantial things came earlier, so that no hardship was suffered.

Note: The Simmons Cemetery is now known as the North Eagle Cemetery and is located on Grange Road in section 9 of Eagle Twp. ☺

STILLSON CEMETERY

The Clinton Republican; Apr 3, 1913, page 12.

A paper prepared and read by **Annie Schoals** at a Victor Cemetery meeting.

At the township clerk's office is a deed bearing the date of April 19, 1856, given by Christopher Passage and his wife, Elizabeth, to the township of Victor for a cemetery, the purchasing price being \$25. **Thomas Jamison, Isaac T. Hollister, Charles S. Curtis, Spencer B. Stillson** were Board of Health at that time. It derived its name from **Russell Stillson**, a pioneer of the township who that same year settled on the farm now owned by **Thomas Plunkett**.

The land was surveyed by **Charles Hollister**, and at that time was an unbroken forest. The state had laid out the roads, but the settlers followed the blazed trail through the woods and in order to reach this cemetery, they had a logging bee and cut a road from the **Davison** farm, now owned by Mrs. **R. Gregory**, to the south line of the cemetery. The brush and trees cleared from the burial plot were drawn in a huge pile just to the south. So this little information will show you all what a gloomy, dismal place it must have been 56 years ago.

Not long ago I had the privilege of spending a day with an old lady living in

Volume 13, Number 3

Bengal who had been a resident of that township 64 years. Always interesting to me, I asked her about her early life here and she informed me that she came to Michigan from York State at the age of 22 years. In part she said:

"When my husband got the Michigan fever, little did I know of the hardships of pioneer life. It all went well until we started on our trip which was made in the month of March with a yoke of oxen hitched to a pung from the city of Detroit to Bengal, where we took up government land. With the aid of our nearest neighbor, who lived three miles away, we built a log cabin in the woods and started life incidental to the pioneer of Michigan."

In August of the same year their baby girl of three years was taken sick, and after an illness of three days, died. The dear old lady folded her hands and after a moment's meditation, said. "The grief of losing her was not so terrible for my hope was beyond the grave, but the agony of it was to have to bury her in the woods." Upon inquiry, I found that she was not alone in that sorrow; but many others, namely, the friends of those that were first laid to rest in the Stillson cemetery. Could they go to the telephone and call an undertaker who would come by auto and prepare the body for burial and bring a hearse to carry it to its last resting place; then someone write an obituary and have it printed in *The St. Johns News*?

Let us just note the difference 56 years has made. In those days when one was taken sick, all sorts of home remedies were used with vigor, and if the disease did not yield to the treatment, some member of the family would go after **Dr. Hollister** or **Dr. Flint**, who

were the first physicians in the township, and who made their professional trips on the back of an Indian pony.

In case the patient died, then there would be a house to house canvass for a neat piece of muslin or homespun to make a burial robe. Next would be the making of the casket. To make it plain, I will relate my father's experience. He, being a fine workman in wood, made a number of caskets in the early days.

A young man by the name of **Bear**, living on what is known today as the **Patterson** farm, was taken sick and after a short illness died. It was in September; the settlers were just ready to sow their wheat. My father had just finished a hard day's work when the news came that they would like him to make the casket. So the same night he made the trip with his oxen to the chair factory on the **Brunson** farm, made the casket for the unfortunate man. He started for home in the early hours of the morning with the casket all ready for the lining. My mother took some white muslin and made a pillow and lined the casket, and with bands of velvet ribbon taken from her wedding dress gave it a finished appearance. After a brief rest the oxen were again hitched to the wagon, the casket loaded in, and my parents went to the house of mourning and helped get things ready for the funeral which was held that afternoon. A Mr. **Sutherland**, a good Christian man visiting in the neighborhood, officiated, and my aunt, Mrs. **Ambrus Smith**, sang two hymns, and the procession wended its way through the woods to the Stillson Cemetery where he was laid to rest.

The first burial in our cemetery was a young man by the name of **Peter Geize**, who made his home with **J. Denison**.

Along about this time a young married woman by the name of **Melvin**, who with her husband came from Vermont and settled on a piece of land just across the road from the **McCollum** farm died. My father made her casket, and she is one of the first to be lowered in an unmarked grave in our cemetery. Mr. **Goodwell**, our first minister, officiated at her funeral.

The question might be asked, "Could they not buy caskets in those days?" Yes, and quite cheap too. But there was no money in circulation; no money to buy anything with. So a Mr. **Upton** and my father, **Edward Smith**, made a great many more caskets than were purchased in those days. **Thomas Woodhams** was the first sexton, he being appointed in the year of 1877 when the cemetery was plotted out and driveways laid. After he moved away, **Theore Curtis** (now deceased) filled the vacancy.

Fifty years ago my parents suffered the loss of a baby boy, 13 months old. With sorrow my mother has told of the sad trip through the woods on that September afternoon when they passed by the banks of the Curtis Lake, and a large band of Indians were camping there and how the Indians gazed in wonder at the procession of ox teams as they made their way to the cemetery.

Sad indeed was death and burial in the pioneer days, and what is a more fitting estimation of our deep respect we feel for those that bore these trials than the organization of this association to beautify this sacred place. A few of them are still living in the township and will wait with interest and pride to see every improvement we made for the little silent city.

Clinton County Trails

Note: The Stillson Cemetery is located near the SE corner of Price and St. Clair Roads in Victor Twp. ☺

SOUTH BINGHAM CEMETERY

The Clinton Republican; May 28, 1931, page 1, with photograph of **Elmer Emmons** and the pump house.

Members of the South Bingham Cemetery Association are grateful to Mr. and Mrs. **Elmer E. Emmons** of St. Johns for their recent gift of an automatic electric pumping system which will be of great assistance in maintaining the cemetery's record as one of the most beautiful and best kept rural graveyards in Clinton County.

Over 1,300 feet of 1" pipe is included in the new system, together with 21 faucets with plenty of pressure to operate sprayers. The big supply tank is kept full at all times by the automatic pump. A manhole drain has been sunk to drain the entire system and prevent any possibility of freezing in the winter. Electric current is obtained by an extension from the Consumers Power Co. line which supplies the infirmary [County Farm].

The pump house is located on the eastern boundary of the cemetery. Its cornerstone, in which was placed the contract for the building and other records, was laid early this month and the entire water system is now ready for operation.

Mr. and Mrs. Emmons' gift to the association represents an outlay of nearly \$1,000. ☺

Charts

The chart on the following page was submitted by Debra (Sunday) Trinter.

Volume 13, Number 3

Ancestors of Debra Sondag

Bernard Sontag *Portland,*
 b: November 22, 1868 in Ionia ~~MI~~ county MI
 m: May 13, 1935
 d: July 04, 1935 in Portland MI

Edward J. Sontag
 b: March 18, 1902 in Portland MI
 m: September 04, 1926
 d: January 30, 1972 in Lansing Michigan

(Gertrude) Louisa Petsch
 b: July 22, 1872
 d: 1946 in Portland MI

Robert Edward (Bob) Sondag
 b: July 22, 1930 in Portland MI
 m: September 09, 1950 in Fowler MI

Charles Heyer
 b: October 10, 1867
 m: May 23, 1893 in Westphali MI
 d: November 04, 1961 in Westphali MI

Anna Heyer
 b: November 23, 1906 in Westphalia MI
 d: July 19, 1992 in Ionia MI

Mary Rademacher
 b: August 24, 1872 in Westphali MI
 d: October 07, 1969

Debra Sondag
 b: October 09, 1954 in Ionia MI
 m: December 14, 1985 in Las Vegas NV

Thomas Weber
 b: November 28, 1856 in Westphali MI
 m: Septémbér 26, 1882

William Weber
 b: February 23, 1887 in Westphalia MI
 m: May 16, 1911
 d: October 21, 1955 in Fowler MI

Helena Schafer
 b: May 04, 1859 in Westphali MI
 d: August 28, 1909 in Dallas Michigan

Rita Eleanor Weber
 b: August 29, 1930 in Fowler MI

Lawrence Goerge
 b: 1854 in Westphali MI
 m: November 11, 1884 in Westphali MI
 d: 1930

Catherine Goerge
 b: July 04, 1889
 d: January 05, 1979 in Fowler MI

Katherine Wacker
 b: 1863
 d: 1919 in Clinton County Michigan

Please contact for further information:
 Debra (Sondag) Trinter
 2644 Shanad Road
 Las Vegas NV 89146

GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY MEETINGS

Note the schedule for the Genealogy meetings for the coming months

Tentative Schedule - 7:30 p.m.

Dec. 7 - Xmas Party Arlene Smith home.
Jan. 4 - Comm. 1st Bank, St. Johns
Feb. 1 - Comm. 1st Bank, St. Johns
Mar. 1 - Comm. 1st Bank, St. Johns
Apr. 5 - Comm. 1st Bank, St. Johns
May 3- Comm. 1st Bank, M. Van Epps☺

RESEARCHING THESE SURNAMENES

Members can submit five surnames to be published in this newsletter, as space permits, when they pay their membership dues. See form on last page of this issue. Non-members can submit five names for a \$2 fee.

- Submitter: **Raymond A. Davis**, 38317 Golfview Drive, Farmington Hill, MI 48331: **Walter Norris**, b.19 Feb 1788 - d. 28 Mar, 1873; **Reuben Norris**, b. 24 Feb, 1817 - d. 26 Jun, 1878; **John Hettinger**, abt. 1840; **Stephen Price**, b. 6 Feb, 1818 - d. 5 Aug 1882; **Elsena Wilcox**, b. 29 Jun, 1833 - d. 11 Oct, 1889.
- Submitter: **Dwane V. Norris**, 4540 Hendee Road, Jackson, MI 49201-9414; **Norris; Bauerle; Peters; Blizzard; Tout.**
- Submitter: **Sandra Post**, 2375 W. Clark Rd., Lansing, MI 48906; **Stutson; Bond; Longcor; Tanner; Boardman.**
- Submitter: **Yvonne Sablich**, 233 Rogue River Hwy # 324, Grants Pass, *Clinton County Trails*

OR 97527-5429. **Briggs; Barker; Abbott; Sanborn; Harrison.**

- Submitter: **Sandra Royston**, 7790 Knox Rd., Portland, MI 48875-9715; **Kerr; Doty; Brokaw; Voorhies.**
- Submitter: **Gerald C. Benedict**, 2525 Aspen Way, Sandpoint, ID 83864 **Hiram Benedict; Nelson Benedict; Gerald & Margaret Benedict; and Orla & Wilma Clark.**

RECENT ACQUISITIONS AT THE ARCHIVES

- Descendants of **John Cogswell** 1635-1996
- A history, misc. papers, & pictures of Island School and students.
- Data on the Shepardsville School.
- Data on the Maple Leaf Cheese Factory in Shepardsville.
- North Cemetery Burials, Delhi Twp., Ingham Co.
- Descendants of **Isaac Morden.**
- **Perry** family research.
- Greenbush United Methodist Church Centennial 1898-1998 (history).
- **Davies** family history.
- Descendants of **Seth Marshall.**
- Descendants of **Matthew Grant.**
- Family charts & stories of **Debra (Sunday) Trinter.**
- Misc. issues of:
- Nexus, New England Historic Gen. Soc. newsletter.
- Gen. Record, New Hampshire Soc. of Gen. quarterly.
- Maine Genealogists, Main Gen. soc. quarterly.
- Mayflower quarterly. • American Genealogists

Volume 13, Number 3