



CLINTON COUNTY TRAILS



Published Quarterly

Sept 2020

Volume 35 - Issue 3

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The Ku Klux Klan in Clinton County

By Wayne Summers



During the 1920's a reorganized Ku Klux Klan found widespread support in much of the country including Clinton County. This reborn Klan was founded in Atlanta, Georgia, by **William J. Simmons** in 1915. By the early 1920's paid solicitors were promoting and signing up Klan members for a \$10 membership fee throughout the country.

The first organizer, who refused to reveal his name, arrived in St. Johns at the Steel Hotel in August of 1923. When interviewed by the *Clinton County Republican* he stated, "We are not an 'anti' organization. We are a 'pro' body. We believe in the Christian religion. We believe in white supremacy. We believe in upholding the Constitution of the United States." [23Aug1923]

The 1920's were a period of change. When life changes fear is a great motivating force. The automobile, improved roads, telephone, electricity, and urbanization meant the old ways of life were disappearing. The economy had slumped and labor disputes were erupting. The flow of immigrants into our country, most of them poor, many of them Catholic, was seen as a danger to American life as they knew it.

People feared immigrants were bringing a loss of law and order with their mafia gangs and crime. They feared Communists were creating labor disputes and trying to infiltrate our country. They feared Catholics would take over and force them to follow the dictates of the Pope.

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Ultimately, they feared the future loss of white Anglo-Saxon Protestant control of the country.

The Klan promised the return of true American values. It demonized blacks, Catholics, Jews, Mexicans, Asians, and Communists. It promoted white supremacy. It also presented itself as upholding Christian principles and a defender of conservative morality.

Some sounded the alarm against the Klan. **R. R. Sypher** wrote in the *Clinton County Republican*, "I have asked these expounders of the Klan to name its vantage points, and they have told me that it seeks the punishment of those offenders which the law will not touch and that it is anti-foreigner and anti-Catholic and allows the membership of no one but naturalized Americans...As all religions in this country profess the teachings of God an attack upon any one of them is an attack upon Christianity...We are told that foreigners are not good Americans, yet we are foreigners usurping the land of the Red man and living in the nation we have founded upon their lands." [18 Oct 1923]

Believing that Catholics should not be allowed to have their own schools as they feared they would not teach true Christian and American values; the Klan supported a constitutional amendment in 1924 that would have required all students to attend a public school in Michigan. Over the summer it was a point of emphasis in rallies prior to the November vote.

On May 25, 1924, over 5,000 people gathered at the baseball field in Elsie. The main speaker advocated for immigration limits and compulsory public-school attendance. "The Klan is going to band together the Protestant people...every other sect has its organization, why not Protestants," he stated.

About 1,700 people showed up at the St. Johns Fairgrounds on June 25, 1924, to hear a speaker tell how we needed to defeat the political power of the Catholics and demand the closing of all parochial schools.

A large group gathered in Maple Rapids on August 15, 1924. Along with several addresses it featured a program of music and sports, two large lighted crosses, and a model of a school house that was set on fire.

On September 1, 1924, a major Klan gathering took place in Lansing. A delegation from Clinton County joined the estimated 35,000 to 60,000 who traveled there in flag bedecked cars to listen to speeches and parade at the Capitol. This was followed by 22 Klan meetings held in Clinton County.

The strength of Klan support could be measured in some part by the results of the vote on the amendment that would have required public school attendance. The amendment failed statewide by a much larger margin than in Clinton County. Here the vote was 4,270 in favor and 4,481 opposed. Had it not been for overwhelming opposition in Dallas (63-590), Lebanon (75-275), Riley (96-240), and Westphalia (3-534) townships it would have passed here.

The Klan's popularity in the county began to quickly diminish after the election. There were rallies and parades, but they were not as well attended. Major Republican party leaders began speaking out against the Klan. A law was passed outlawing the wearing of masks to hide one's identity in public making it impossible to rally anonymously.

The economy improved and labor disputes faded. Congress passed restrictions on immigration. Corruption within the Klan began to come to light with some leaders found to have stolen funds and others like **David Stephenson**, a Klan leader from Indiana, convicted of rape and murder. All of these worked together to cause most to reject the Klan. By the Great Depression it had all but disappeared from Clinton County.

The Great 1920 Clinton County Tornado

Contributed by Alice Murphy &
Jenny McCampbell

Palm Sunday, March 28, 1920 began as a normal early spring day in Clinton County, Michigan but ended as one of the most destructive in its history. At about 5 PM a category L4 tornado with winds up to 260 mph touched down at the **William and Conrad Horman** farm in Riley Township. Mrs. Horman, ill in bed, and her visiting daughter were thrown 50

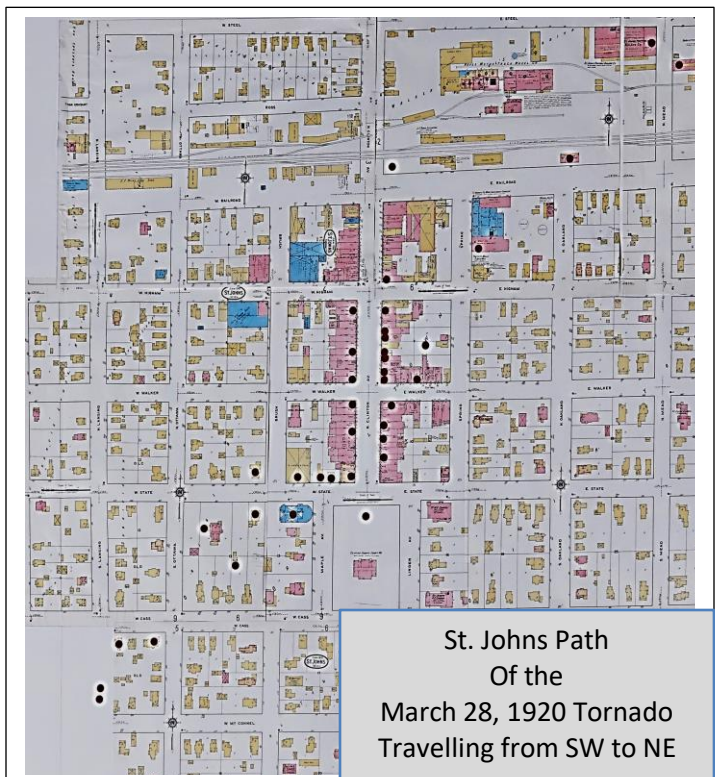
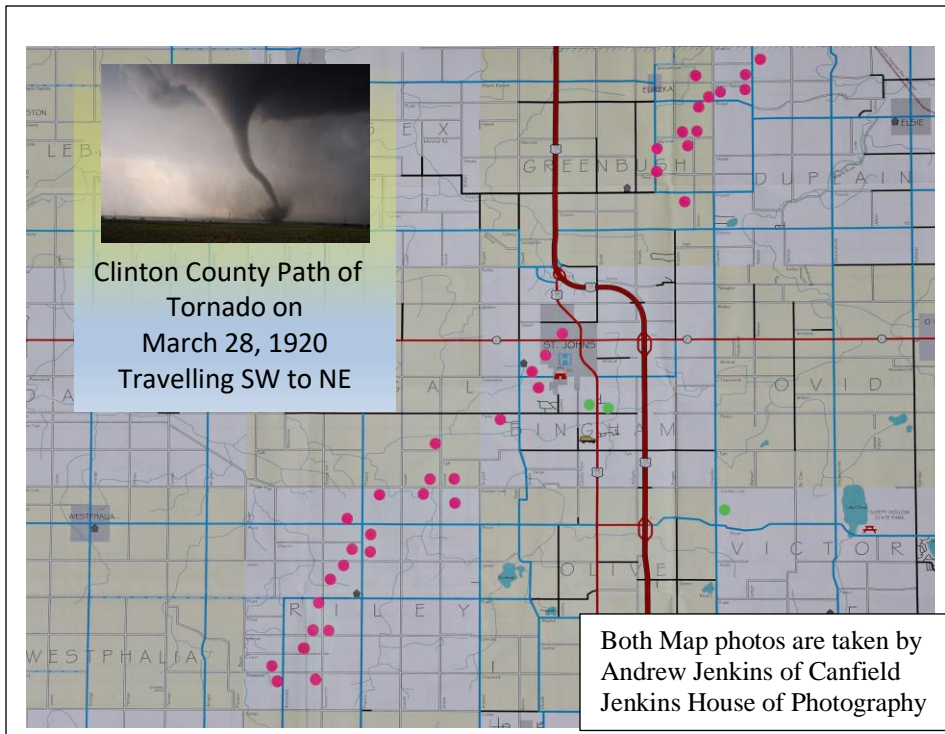
feet and the house destroyed. Three additional houses on the property were destroyed, one thrown 200 feet. Mrs. Horman died four days later from her injuries; her daughter was unhurt.

The 300-yard-wide funnel proceeded in a straight line towards St. Johns 12 miles to the NE, destroying or damaging at least 25 farms over its mile-wide wind path. It came into town at a category L2 level with winds of 113 to 157 mph. After traversing the City Park, it heavily damaged two houses and destroyed porches, sheds and chimneys in its path. The tornado lifted the roof of the Congregational church 3-4 inches and destroyed a large feed barn directly across adjacent State St.

The storm swept through town blowing out most of the storefront windows along the first two blocks of N Clinton Ave. The third story of the Fowler and Ball Hardware store was torn off and dropped as a whole onto Walker St. The FC Mason building lost the roof and some walls of its southern annex and the train depot at the foot of Oakland St. was destroyed. Four freight cars were toppled.

As a final blow to St. Johns, the tornado heavily damaged the front façade of the St. Johns Portable Building Co and completely destroyed the front wall and front roof of the Industrial Foundry Co building directly across Mead St. It jumped several miles before touching down again causing more destruction and damage to at least 14 more farms in NE Clinton Co, especially in Greenbush Township. Tornadoes and storms struck all over the southern lower-peninsula that day taking 12 lives.

Although almost no owners were covered by tornado insurance, Clinton County quickly began to



deal with at least \$250,000.00 in damage (about \$3.5 million in 2020 dollars). Barns and homes were repaired or rebuilt. Storefront glass was replaced. The hardware store became a two-story building and the annex of the FC Mason Co. replaced. The fronts of the industrial buildings were repaired and a new, larger train station was built just west of the old one. The Congregational church began a \$5,000 fundraiser to repair the roof and replace the heating system.

The following lists record all the farms, homes and businesses noted as damaged or destroyed in the Clinton County Republican newspaper in the days following the tornado. The map marks each farm affected by the tornado from first touchdown to leaving the county showing the straight-line direction and width of storm damage.

Michigan is struck by between 2 and 38 tornados each year (with an average of 17) according to Michigan government records. These are just numbers until one strikes the place where you live. A good reminder to us all to be prepared.

References: Clinton Co Republican Newspaper: Apr 1, 1920; Apr 29, 1920; June 28, 1956. Clinton County Reminder: Mar 24, 1996; Apr 5, 1998. Mitchell, Charles L (Apr, 1920) "Tornadoes of March 28 in Northeastern Illinois" Monthly Weather Review, Chicago, IL US Weather Bureau 28 (4): 191-196.

Clinton County Tornado Damage to Farms, March 28, 1920

Riley Township:

William and Conrad Horman - Mrs. Horman and daughter thrown over 50 feet, the mother badly injured and died 4 days later. Four houses destroyed, one thrown 200 feet.

William Witt - House, barn and all outbuildings destroyed.

Joseph Diehm - House and all buildings destroyed. Mr. Diehm broke his collar bone and some ribs.

Ernest Schaefer - House, barn, garage, granary and windmill damaged.

William Silm - Barn and outbuildings damaged.

Frank Schultz - House moved several feet off foundation. Outbuildings destroyed.

James Albert Craun - Barn destroyed.

John Pingel - Roof of barn and tenant house blown off.

Fred Alvin Jastram - Barn destroyed. Outbuildings damaged. Auto and garage moved off foundation. House moved into orchard.

Charles A Martens - Barn and outbuildings destroyed.

Henry Schrader - House roof gone.

Edward Homer Kincaid - House and orchard damaged.

William Hahn - New barn destroyed.

Simeon S Andrews - Barn roof damaged.

Greenbush Township

Boltis Argensinger - House and outbuildings destroyed.

John Mahar - Barn and outbuildings destroyed.

Richard L Welling - Barn and outbuildings destroyed.

John Shaw - House and stables destroyed, windmill and outbuildings damaged.

Robert Daggett - All trees in orchard damaged.

Wilson Brewbaker - Two silos, outbuildings, house chimney and barn cupola destroyed.

Will Albro - House, new barn and outbuildings destroyed.

George Oberlin - House, barn and outbuildings destroyed.

Alfred Ward - Roof of stables and house porch destroyed.

Arthur Hawkins - Some outbuildings destroyed.

Duplain Township

William Wright - House knocked off foundation.

James Henry - Barn destroyed. Son injured.

John J Hess - House and barn damaged.

Bart Hulse - House, barn and outbuildings destroyed

Victor Township

Theodore and George E Ashley - Some damage.

At least 2 horses, 11 cows, 1 pig and 40 chickens were killed.

Bingham Township

Joseph Bauer - Large barn and outbuildings destroyed.
Joseph Lee Kerrick - Barn roof destroyed, outbuildings and windmill destroyed.
Warren L Rosekrans - Barn and outbuildings destroyed. House damaged.
James E Crosby - Some damage.
William E Gegler - Some damage.

Bengal Township

Chapman school - Destroyed.
John Jacobs - Barn and windmill destroyed.
William Morse - Tenant house damaged.
Oramel C Lyon - New barn and tool shed destroyed.
Howard Pope - Trees damaged.

Businesses in St Johns damaged or destroyed by the March 28, 1920 tornado

1920	2020 address	2020 Business
First Congregational Church	100 Maple Ave	First Congregational Church
Livery and Feed (destroyed)	106 W State St.	St. Johns Post Office
Osgood storage buildings (2) on State St	parking lots between	Post Office and Dominos
Ferguson's Barbershop	103 N Clinton	Hot Prints, Inc.
McBride (Quality) Bakery	108 N Clinton	south side, Allaby & Brewbaker Insurance
Shaver Shoe Store	109 N Clinton or 217 N Clinton	
Zavitz's Meat Market	114 N Clinton	Simplified Tax
E I Hull and Son Furniture	118 N Clinton	Heritage Place Hotel
Emmons Jewelry Store	119 N Clinton	St. Johns Soy Candles
Fowler and Ball Hardware	122 N Clinton	Rehmann's Men's Clothing Store
Curtiss Drugs	125 N Clinton	Aardvark Tattoo
Atlantic and Pacific Tea Co.	127 N Clinton	Global Coffee
Murrey's Bakery	115 E Walker	Deb's Sereni-TEA Lounge
First National Bank	200 N Clinton	soon to be St. Johns Brewing Co.
Mack's Shoes	200 N Clinton	North side of former First National Bank
Parr's Drugstore	201 N Clinton	former Mercantile Bank of Michigan
Mazzolini's Candy Store	206 N Clinton	North side of old Radio Shack
Hicks Dry Goods	207 N Clinton	Main Street Pizza

St Johns Homes Damaged by the March 28, 1920 Tornado

Edwin H Wilson 200 S Ottawa St - Shingles blown off house & barn. Trees uprooted. Chimney destroyed.
Coleman C Vaughan 200 W State St - Some damage.
Elmer I Hull 201 W State St - West side of roof lifted off, windows broken.
John Hicks 205 W State St - Windows damaged. Some trees destroyed.
Newton Smith 208 S Lansing St - Porch destroyed.
Dart Parr 206 S Lansing St - Porch destroyed.
William R Osgood 204 W Cass St - Garage destroyed.
Reuben Brown 307 W Cass St - Garage shifted off foundation.
William Hildreth 205 Spring St - Garage destroyed.
Charles Dean 404 S Emmons - Garage destroyed.

Most houses in the southwest quarter of the city had chimneys damaged or destroyed

MIRACLE ON RAILROAD STREET

Contributed by Jenny McCampbell; Clinton Co. Arts Council

January 16, 1857 was a red-letter day for St. Johns: that was when the railroad tracks were extended from Detroit to St. Johns, where a hand-made sign was posted saying this was Johns Station (Johns St) because several of the founders were named John. When an official sign was made it was written St. Johns which has remained that ever since. In 1858 the tracks were extended to Grand Haven, which soon connected to a ferry to Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

In 1869 the Grand Trunk Railway finished the first official passenger depot for this area. By then there was a lot of commerce in St. Johns thanks in large part to the railroad. In 1879 there were 16,813 passengers out and 16,682 in. The amount of grain shipped out that year was 207,748,915 pounds!

By 1910 the City officials asked the Grand Trunk to build them a bigger depot; in 1911 the Grand Trunk said it would happen soon. The following article, written by the editor, appeared in the *St. Johns News* on September 17, 1914:

"The Grand Trunk Depot is being painted and fixed up this week. Electric lights are being placed on the platform outside. These alterations and improvements will no doubt take the place of the new depot, which a few years ago was to have been built.

This way of doing business is an outrage upon the people of St. Johns. For years the present depot has been an eye sore to our citizens and unfit in every way to take care of the needs of a city of this size. Three years ago, the Grand Trunk company promised the city officials of St. Johns that they would build a new depot here in the near future. They have made most of the elevator owners move their buildings to make room for a new structure and the people of this city have been given every reason to believe that the company would build right away. Now to have them come on with a gang of men and fix up that antiquated old trap, with the idea of longer continuing its use as a station is an imposition upon the people of this city. To say the least, they have their guts with them"

Of course, the City could do nothing about that. Then on March 28, 1920, which was Palm Sunday, one of several area tornadoes came through downtown St. Johns at about 5:15 PM. It came in from the City Park area to the southwest. During the 30 seconds it lasted, it damaged the porches, roofs, windows, chimneys and garages of multiple houses, picked up the roof of the Congregational church and moved it about 4 inches, snapped the courthouse flag pole, and headed up Clinton Avenue, taking out the plate glass windows of at least 11 businesses in town. The most spectacular damage was to the Fowler and Ball Hardware Store, where Rehman's now stands. It lifted the third story off that brick building and set it down carefully in Walker Street beside.

Then it went up to the 1869 depot, which was situated a block east of the current depot (on Oakland and Railroad) and smashed it. It completely removed the area closest to the tracks, which is where the station master had to sit to monitor all trains coming and going. Miraculously, that was the station master's first Sunday off in the 5 years he had worked there. His name was **Harry W. Buck**, and he was 23 years old. People in town had to run to his house on the corner of Baldwin and Mead, to let him know what had happened. He rushed to the depot, and knew he had to get a telegram to Grand Trunk, but the telegraph lines were down. So, a couple of men spotted a handcart farther east on the tracks and pumped him 6 miles to the Shepardsville train depot. He contacted the Grand Trunk, who stopped all trains and got to the depot wreckage in the next day or two. The newspaper editor now proclaimed: *"The way this ancient and almost hated landmark was gone after would indicate that its destruction was the tornado's real object in being born."*

The Grand Trunk Railroad proclaimed that they would have the new depot operating by the end of one year. True to their word, our present depot opened on March 17, 1921! Everyone was thrilled!

THE REST OF THE STORY: From the wreckage only the safe was salvaged by the Grand Trunk and moved to their offices in Tawas right away. Eventually, as the Interstate Highway System came in, the trains did less and less business in St. Johns. By 1962, the last passenger train went through town; in 1992, the last freight train went through and in 1995 the railroad tracks were removed by the company. Thankfully, the City of St. Johns saved the Depot by getting a grant to buy and restore it; it is now used for public meetings, performances, private parties and as a museum on Sundays, May – October. The building opened under the auspices of the Clinton County Arts Council in 2001. In 2002 the City received a call from Tawas. A building

there was about to be taken down, and the safe the Grand Trunk had saved was still there. It was returned to St. Johns and now sits in a place of honor in our depot, after the outside of the safe was refurbished by St. Johns city workers.

Searching Clinton County Newspapers Online

By Wayne Summers

Old newspapers are a great resource for learning about past events, finding obituaries, and discovering little tidbits about our ancestors' lives. If you are a history buff or family historian like me then you have probably spent time going through old newspapers. For me it was an experience that was often frustrating as I attempted to find mentions of my family by scanning pages around dates of known events. That has now changed. With the digitization of old newspapers one can quickly search through thousands of pages for any mention of Aunt Ruth or Grandma Campbell.

Clinton County in cooperation with the Clarke Historical Library and the Clinton County Historical Society recently digitized many county newspapers and added them to the Clinton County website. Best of all, they are keyword searchable and free.

The easiest way to search and view the newspapers is to go to www.clinton-county.org and put a keyword or keywords in the search bar in the top righthand corner. To narrow a search use quotation marks around any exact phrase you are searching for. For example, to search for Fred Smith you would type "Fred Smith". This search will show any newspaper or document on the website with those exact words along with a brief portion of the surrounding text. You then simply click on the file name (usually a date) to download and view that issue.

Each newspaper issue is a large pdf file. Therefore, it is highly recommended you not try to download newspapers on phones, mobile devices, or with a slow Internet connection.

The digitized newspapers are from 1858-1977 and include all surviving issues of the *Clinton County News*, *Clinton County Republican*, *Clinton County Republican News*, *St. Johns News*, *St. Johns Herald*, and *Clinton County Independent*. There are also a few issues from the *Maple Rapids Dispatch*, *Maple Rapids Press*, *Ovid Register-Union*, and *The Looking Glass*.

Advanced users might want to search using www.clinton-county.org/Archive.aspx. That link will allow you to select individual newspapers and narrow the search by date.

So, instead of traveling to a library and going through endless rolls of microfilm or bound volumes of old newspapers, sit down at a computer with a good Internet connection and enjoy reading about the past from the comfort of your home.

Museum News

Submitted by Bill McCarthy

The Museum board has decided to close the Museum buildings for public visitation due to Covid 19. It would be very difficult to assure visitors of a safe "environment". The situation will be evaluated for the Christmas season.

We hope to use this time off to do some much-needed work on the exterior and interior of the Paine-Giliam-Scott Home. The interior plaster ceilings and walls in four rooms have large cracks and need repair soon by professional help from people experienced in restoration of old buildings. Masonry work is needed on the front columns and cement of the front porch. The front parlor window is also in need of repair. Recommendations for tradesmen would be appreciated.

As you would guess, all of this work takes time and money. If you are currently a member of the Museum and Historical Society giving family, we would appreciate additional gifts for repair needs. We will also need volunteers for moving furniture and artifacts around to accommodate repairs.

We, the Board and Staff of the Museum, feel we have a major responsibility to maintain the buildings in the best condition possible.

Should you have questions or concerns please contact Jan Upton, 989.292.9096 or Bill McCarthy, 971.275.3942

Thank you. Clinton County Historical Museum, 106 Maple Street, P O Box 174, St. Johns, Mi 48879

HIRAM C. DUNN & SONS – BLACKSMITHS

By Ron Matson ~ Clinton County Historical Museum

Hiram C. Dunn was born in Wainfleet, Ontario, Canada on 5 March 1831. On 25 October 1855 he married Miss **Margaret Cottrell** of Palmyra, N. Y. Hiram was one of the charter members of the Merritt Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of Welland, Ontario, holding the office of Senior Deacon when it was instituted in 1864. In 1868 they moved to St. Johns, Michigan where Hiram would become a well-known and respected blacksmith. Prior to this Mr. Dunn had worked as a blacksmith for 15 years in Canada and western New York. He and his wife Margaret would have a fairly large family and eventually two of their sons, **Alonzo E.** and **Charles L.** would learn the trade from their father and work side by side with him as accomplished blacksmiths.

Hiram's first blacksmith shop in St. Johns was located on the corner of Higham and Brush street. One day in the summer of 1870 Hiram heard a gunshot and people shouting in the streets near his shop. A man on Clinton avenue had pulled a revolver from his pocket and shot another man and was heading west on Higham street on a dead run. He was finally stopped by **Fred Wilkinson, Esq.** In the ensuing struggle he managed to turn and attempt to shoot again, but was stopped cold by the strong arm of **Hiram Dunn** who had joined in the pursuit. The victim who was hit about three inches below his heart was patched up by a **Dr. Stewart** and survived the brazen act.

Hiram eventually took in **John R. Winans** as a partner in his blacksmith shop, at which time the business became known as Winans & Dunn. Then late in 1874 he sold his interest in the business to Winans and moved his growing family to a farm in Victor Township. At this time there were five boys in the Dunn family ranging in age from two to fifteen. I can easily imagine that Hiram and Margaret may have figured that a farm would be a better place to raise five hungry and highly energized young boys. By 1884 those boys started taking on wives and leaving the farm. **George H. Dunn** married **Louise L. Hicks** of Bingham on October 25th and **Alonzo E. Dunn** married **Alice E. Smith** of St. Johns on New Year's Day of 1885.

In 1886 the Baptists in St. Johns were planning to build a new church. Hiram bought their old church and moved it from Trowbridge (Church) street to Brush street just north of Higham and used it for a blacksmith shop. In this time period horses were the only mode of transportation except for the steam train, which could only take you from station to station, so shoeing horses was naturally a very large portion of their business. The 12 January 1888 *Clinton Republican* claimed **Alonzo E.** set 712 horse shoes in a six-day week, with a record 137 in one day---now that is a lot of horseshoeing!

Charles L. Dunn and **Mary L. Harvey** of Bengal were married in September 1893. Also, in 1893 **Albert J. Ballentine**, a blacksmith from Canada began working for **Hiram Dunn**. In January 1895 pneumonia took the life of Hiram's wife Margaret. He then sold the blacksmith shop to his son **Alonzo** and **Albert Ballentine** and it became known as Dunn & Ballentine. In November 1896 **Charles Dunn** moved to Laingsburg where he had secured a business location, but little is known about this venture. In November 1896 **Alonzo E. Dunn** was elected Clinton County Sheriff and consequently had to sell his interest in the blacksmith shop back to his father Hiram. Alonzo's term was 1897-1900, at which time he lived in the sheriff's residence in the old County Jail located on the SW corner of McConnell and S. Clinton. This would mark the end of his tenure as a practicing blacksmith.

In 1898 **Charles Dunn** took employment as a keeper (guard) at the State House of Corrections and Reformation in Ionia. Then in June 1899 **Albert Ballentine** contracted typhoid pneumonia and within six weeks departed this life at the age of 35. This development probably led to **Charles Dunn's** decision to eventually resign his position at Ionia and return to St. Johns and form a partnership with his father to keep the Dunn blacksmith business operating. In 1906 **Charles L. Dunn** and **George H. Marshall** were granted a patent on a rail joint designed to connect sections of railroad track without the use of bolts. How successful this invention was is unknown? In early 1909 **Hiram Dunn** finally retired at the age of seventy-seven! **Charles Dunn** then moved the business to a new blacksmith shop on west Higham street across from the Steel Hotel. **Hiram Dunn** died in 1911, his last days spent peacefully at the home of his youngest son, **Dr. Frank C. Dunn**. His obituary recalled that "Uncle High" as he was often called, was kind, generous, and of vigorous manhood, "the remembrances of whom will ever remain a pleasure to all who knew him." In 1912

Charles Dunn sold his blacksmith shop to **Ernest Glasbrook** of Jackson, thus ending over 40 years of blacksmithing by the Dunn family in St. Johns. Charles had taken a position with the Atlas Drop Forge Works in Lansing.

Sometime after **Alonzo E. Dunn's** term as Clinton County Sheriff ended, he took a position with a company in Chicago, Illinois and subsequently became involved in the construction of gas plants that manufactured gas, which at that time was a strong competitor to electricity for lighting homes. Over the next several years he would be involved in the construction of gas plants in fifty-six different cities in the United States. Then in 1917 **Alonzo E. Dunn** moved to Muskegon Heights, Michigan where he built a gas plant on his own and organized the Muskegon Heights Gas Company. Two of Alonzo Dunn's sons became prominent attorneys. Attorney **Robert H. Dunn** was appointed to the Michigan Public Utilities Commission by **Governor Green** in 1927. Attorney **Glenn R. Dunn** was appointed legal advisor to **Governor Fitzgerald** in 1935. Both of those men were born in St. Johns.

B LACKSMITH WORK OF
all kinds. Go to Dunn's blacksmith shop for horseshoeing and general repair work. We give you the benefit of care, skill and experience and guarantee satisfaction.

H. DUNN & COMPANY.

Brush Street, one door south of Higham street west.

BLACKSMITHS IN CLINTON COUNTY IN 1850

Submitted By Myrna VanEpps

The local blacksmith provided one of the most vital skills required in early Clinton County. Since the majority of the residents were farmers, the smithy was called upon to shoe the draft animals--oxen, horses, mules—and craft or repair tools. Most of them supplemented their income with farming and turned to other work as the need for smithing services diminished. The 1850 census reveals fifteen blacksmiths in Clinton

Co. as detailed below. A couple of the men are referred to as a “master blacksmith.” However, the term was not regulated in early Michigan as it was in other areas where a young man would be indentured to a Master Smith for five to seven years, function as a Journeyman for several more years, and then, if skilled enough, be allowed to set up his own forge and train apprentices.

☪ **Philo Beers** (20 Dec 1793 – 26 Jan 1851) of Eagle, was born in Connecticut where he married **Sally Hawley**. Lore says he had lost a fortune to P. T. Barnum before coming to Michigan in 1836. He built the first sawmill in Eagle Twp. in section 14, on the south side of Lookingglass River, and this was also the location of his farm and smithy. He and Sally are buried in Niles Cemetery.

☪ **Lafayette Brown** (1830 – 12 Dec 1873) of Bingham, was born in Steuben Co., New York. He married **Lovina A. Webster**. At the time of his death he was a merchant in Maple Rapids. Lafayette and Lovina are buried in the Sowle Cemetery in Essex Twp.

☪ **John Crawley** (ca 1815 - 1879) of Duplain, was born in North Carolina (1850 census) or New York (1860 census). He married **Lydia M. Conn**. By 1860 he was a master blacksmith living in Bingham Twp. where he had started a business in St. Johns with **Hiram Harrington**. He died at his home one mile west of St Johns and he and Lydia are buried in Mt. Rest Cemetery.

☪ **Isaac Fletcher, Sr.** (5 Jun 1787 - 20 Feb 1859), of Bath was born in Fairfield Co., Connecticut. He married **Esther B. Cole**. He was farming in Bath Twp. in 1860 and 1870 and he died there. The couple is buried in Rose Cemetery.

☪ **James L. Fletcher** (22 Aug 1848 - 18 May 1925) of Olive, was born in Michigan. He married **Mary Margaret Oberyman**. According to an early Olive Twp. historian, he “pretended to be a blacksmith” but was a complete scoundrel. After poisoning some of his neighbors’ cattle, he narrowly escaped a lynching and was jailed. His profession was farmer, residing in Bath Twp., in both the 1870 and 1900 census reports. He died in Bunker Hill Twp., Ingham Co., Michigan, and is buried next to his wife in Rose Cemetery.

☪ **Arvin Groom** (ca 1814 – 27 Jan 1892), of DeWitt, was born in New York. In 1855 he relocated to Paulding Co., Ohio, where he remained as a farmer until his death in Carryall Twp. The 1860 & 1870 census both note that Arvin is blind. His wife, **Almira (Beebe)**, was buried in Maumee Cemetery in Paulding Co. Probably Arvin is buried there with no extant marker.

☪ **William Hildreth** (ca 1797 –) of Riley was born in New York. He married **Laura**.

☪ **Ira W. Hill** (2 Jun 1803 – 5 Feb 1883) of Eagle was born in New York. On 4 Nov. 1850 he was appointed Eagle postmaster. He was a farmer in the 1860 & 1870 censuses. By 1880 he and his wife, **Mary Hewett**, were living in Pine Valley, Clark Co., Wisconsin, where he was employed as a gardener. The couple is buried there in Neillsville City Cemetery.

☪ **Horace Marshall** (1804 – 1884) of DeWitt was born in Syracuse, New York, and was in DeWitt as early as 1841. In late 1850’s he bought a house located at 300 S. Scott St. in DeWitt, He married 1st **Betsey Baker** and 2nd **Ruth Gage**. Horace’s sons, John Caleb and James E., were also blacksmiths. Horace and Ruth are buried in the DeWitt Cemetery.

☪ **James E. Marshall** (ca 1836 – 25 Dec 1938) of DeWitt was born in New York. Only age 15 and living with his father in the 1850 census, he was also labeled as a blacksmith. In the 1870 census he was a blacksmith in Meadow Lake, Nevada Co., California, and living with wife, **Nellie**. The 1910 census shows him employed by the city of Spokane, WA, as a watchman. By 1930 he is a widower living in Minneapolis, Minnesota, with his daughter’s family. That is where he died at age 102.

☪ **John Caleb Marshall** (12 Feb 1831 – 19 Nov. 1901) of DeWitt was born in Bristol, Ontario Co., New York. He served for 2 years as a private in Co. C 24th MI Inf during the Civil War. He married 1st **Martha A. Parker** and 2nd **Mary Eliza Woodruff**. The 1900 census shows him still working in DeWitt as a blacksmith. He died in Marshall, Michigan, probably living with his son, Dr. **Emory Jason Marshall**, who signed his death certificate. He is buried in DeWitt Cemetery.

☪ **Alfred Olin** (1819 – 1856) of Greenbush was born in Windham Co., New York. He married **Caroline P. Barnes**. He died at about age 36 and is buried in Portland Cemetery, Ionia Co., Michigan.

☪ **Bethel Osborn** (18 Aug 1825 – 31 Aug 1910) of Olive, was born in New York. In 1850 his family was also recorded in Brighton, Livingston Co. He married **Hannah M. Merrihew**. The *Michigan State Gazetteer*, 1863, identified him in business in St. Johns as a jeweler and gunsmith. He kept this store for many years, even as his occupation in 1870 and 1880 census records was given as “farmer” living in Greenbush. In 1910 he was living at 914 Clinton Ave., St. Johns. His obituary noted he was a retired farmer and jeweler. Bethel and Hannah are buried in the Merrihew Cemetery.

☪ **Henry A. Shaw** (4 Nov 1818 – 7 May 1863) of Duplain was born in New York. By 1860 he was occupied as a farmer, living with his wife, **Barbara A. Scott**, and five children yet the *Michigan State Gazetteer* of 1863 lists him as a blacksmith. He served in the Civil War in Co B 2nd MI Cav, was discharged 3 Sept 1862 as a Major, and probably died from his injuries. Henry and Barbara are buried in the Duplain Cemetery.

☪ **Henry Joseph Webber/Wieber** (11 Oct 1810 – 16 Mar 1863) of Westphalia was born in Hessen, Germany. He married **Catharine E. Pfeffer** and was a farmer in Westphalia Twp. in 1860. Husband and wife are buried in St. Mary’s Cemetery.

Philip Orin Parmelee MI Historical Monument

Hello I thought you might be interested in supporting this GoFundMe, <https://gf.me/u/yfurpm>. Even a small donation could help Karol Sanborn reach their fundraising goal. And if you can't make a donation, it would be great if you could share the fundraiser to help spread the word. Thanks for taking a look!

Did you know we have an aviation hero laid to rest in East Plains Cemetery, Lebanon Township, Clinton County MI? His name is Philip Orin Parmelee. It's my goal to establish a Michigan Historical Monument at his gravesite. Currently the CC Historical Society has a marker at his site, but the backside wording is weathered and not readable. I learned Philip has a MI historical monument at the Capital Regional Airport in Lansing but it was damaged and is currently being put back up but thought it would be great to have one at his gravesite as well. This is why I started this Go Fund Me. The \$2,700 is for a smaller 2-sided sign. I met with the township and they are aware of my plans. No one objected to my plan at that time, this was on 7/13/2020.



The **Archives of the Clinton County Historical Society** is located at 16101 Brook Road in Dewitt Township Community Center. Volunteers are there to give research assistance from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Mondays and Tuesdays and from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. on Thursday. Phone: 517-482-5117 Ext. 2. E-mail: ccgensoc@yahoo.com Web page: dewittlibrary.org/CCHS.

CCHS members have free usage of the Archives, non-member cost \$5.00 donation per day.

The **Historical Society** meetings are held on the first Monday of each month at 1:00 pm Nov. through March and at 7:00 p.m. Apr. through Oct. at the Redeemer Church – St. Johns Campus on State Street, at the northeast corner of the courthouse square in St. Johns, with entry through the south backdoors. Regular meetings are not held in June & December.

The **Clinton County Historical Museum** complex is located on the west side of the courthouse square in St. Johns. pqsmuseum@gmail.com. To join the Friends of the Museum and make a donation of \$25, contact them at: www.pqsmuseum.com; or PGS Museum, P.O. Box 174, St. Johns, MI 48879.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY ARCHIVES MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL

Mr./Mrs./Miss _____

List 5 Names you are Researching: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip _____

Phone: _____

Do we have permission to share your information with other researchers: (please circle Yes or No on each):
Name & Address: Yes No E-Mail: Yes No

New _____ Renewal _____

Membership for the Clinton County Historical Society is \$20 annually.

E-Mail Address: _____

Date: _____

Send me Clinton County Trails by e-mail _____ Yes _____ No

Annual Dues to join both the Clinton County Historical Society & the Genealogy Committee are \$20.00 per household. Membership is based on the calendar year and includes subscription to the quarterly newsletter, *Clinton County Trails*. Checks should be made payable to the Clinton County Historical Society and mailed to **P.O. Box 174**, St. Johns, MI 48879.



Volunteers Needed

For the Clinton County Depot

We have had a hard-working crew of volunteers for as long as 15 years. Unfortunately, they are now getting past the age when they can easily do the work, although they are still willing to do some of the smaller jobs. We would love to be able to put in a plea for more people in their 60s and 70s who would have an interest in woodworking/painting, etc. We are working on the two 80-foot cars now. The crew never worked more than a few half-days a week, usually in the mornings when it isn't so hot. If we could attract some new volunteers, we would love that!

If interested please call

Gary (517-402-2392) or Jenny (517-402-5812) McCampbell

Clinton County Historical Society Board Elective Terms up for election

There are two openings for directors on the Board of CCHS for 2021 to be elected at the annual meeting on 7 Dec 2020. Wayne Summers and Rowlan Smith, both currently on the Board, have been nominated to remain. If you want to nominate somebody, first obtain their permission. Then send their name and contact information to the attention of the Nominating Committee, CCHS, P.O. Box 174, St. Johns, MI 48879. Nominations should be made by 2 Nov 2020

CLINTON COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O. BOX 174
ST. JOHNS, MICHIGAN 48879

