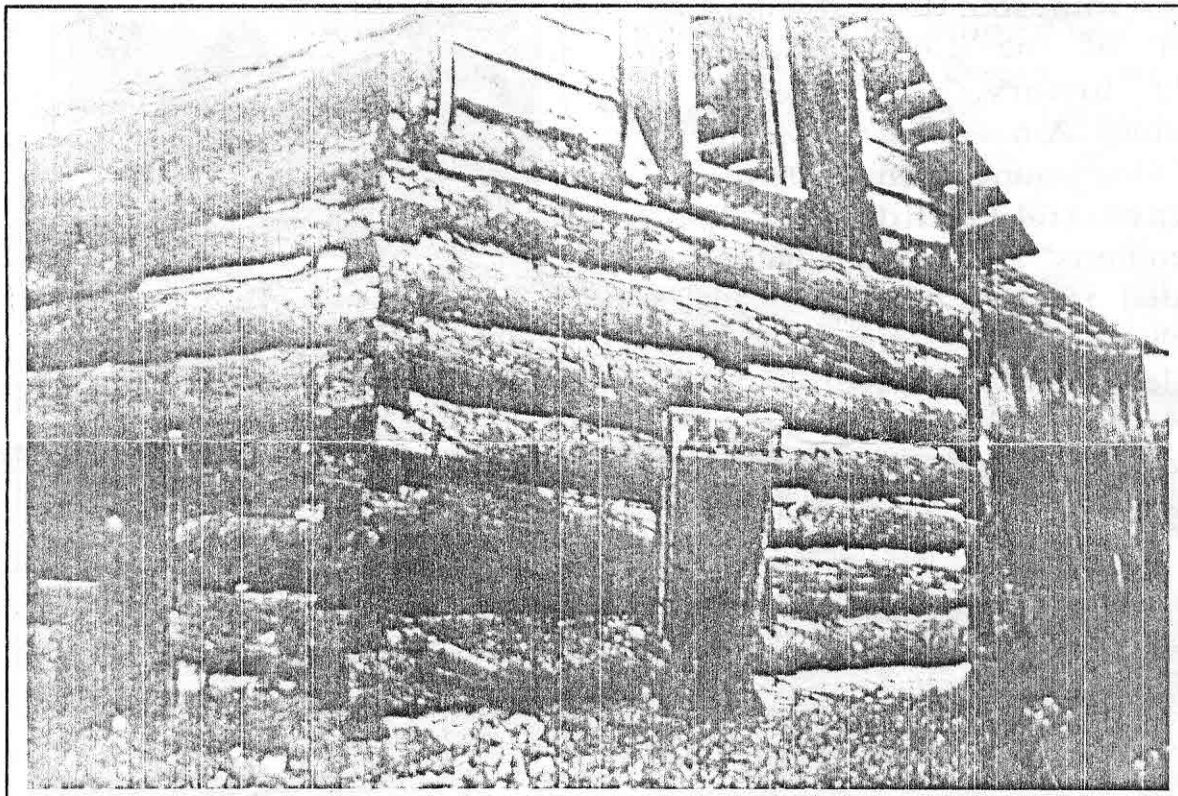


Published
Quarterly
1991 Vol. 6
No. 4
Oct-Nov-Dec

Clinton County Trails

Co-Editors
Myrna VanEpps
Arlene Smith



FRANCIS DOWNING LOG CABIN

The picture of the Downing Log Cabin, was taken in 1940 and was located on Curtis Lake, 5 miles south of St. Johns to Centerline Road and east 4 miles, (two small lakes back off the roadway and on private land now) It was located on the south side of the road about a quarter of a mile back, and occupied in 1875 by Francis Downing and his wife, Josephine Archer. The family called it the "Five and Ten" (five acres with ten family members.)

Francis Downing, served in the 100th New York Inf. in the Civil War. He married Mary Wright, who died in 1865 in Lockport, NY. He migrated to Michigan and married 2nd, Miss Josephine Archer of Whitford, Michigan.

His son, CHARLES H. DOWNING, is the subject of this article. Grandson, Ross Downing, author of the 1989 Downing family history, "Sir George Downing, Ambassador Master Spy, Nine young Men Of Hope, Harvard:1642 and Family Descendants" and son of Charles, provided information about his father's life and his art. Ross provided photographs of his father's paintings for this article and will be presenting them to the archives.



PORTRAIT



CHARLES H. DOWNING

1875 - 1963

Charles H. Downing was a colorful person, literally. He was a painter and artist by profession. Here is part of his legacy, a collection of photos of his art.

Charles was born April 2, 1875, one of nine children, living on the "Five and ten" and later on the family moved to Ovid, MI.

Charles attended St. Johns, Central School when it was a high school. When Charles was 17/18 years old he road his bicycle to Florida, working his way down and back. He could spin many tales to his children in his later life about his experiences.

At an early age Charles and another artist set up a gallery in Detroit, Michigan, planning to paint all the pictures of the Detroit Tigers and sell them to the management to be hung in the proper places. Charles's first was of Ty Cobb, in his rookie year, 1930. The Tigers would not pay him what he wanted for the oil painting, so he refused to sell it. He stored it until 1950, when he ran across it in the attic. He corresponded with Ty Cobb, and

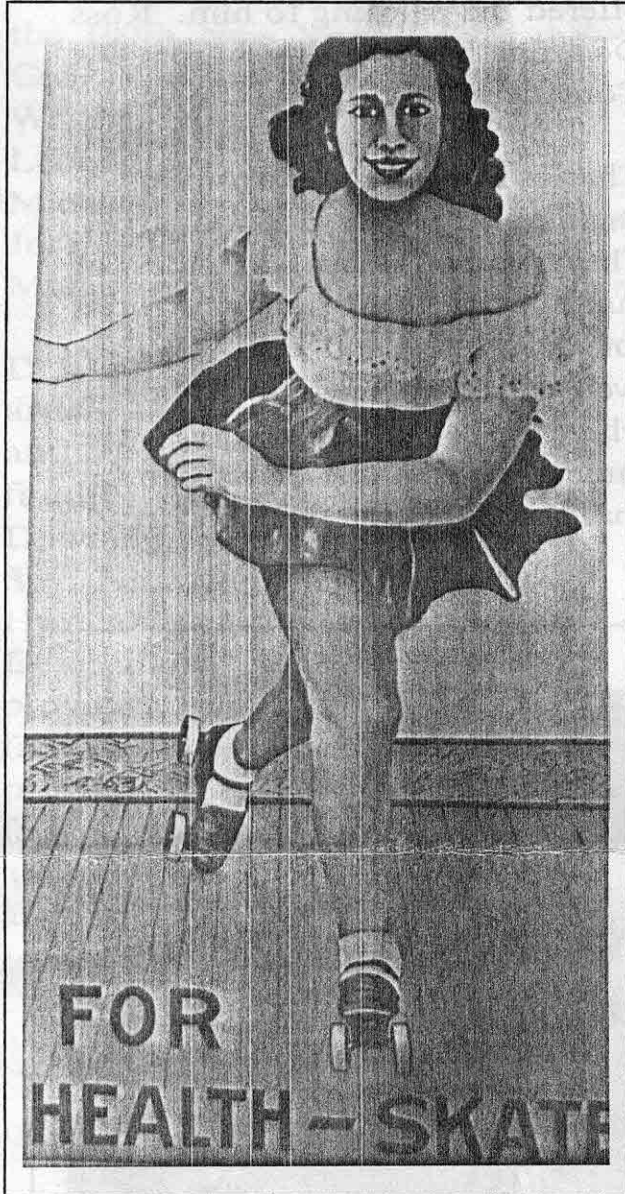
offered the painting to him. Ross Downing has two letters from Ty Cobb accepting the paintings.

During his career in Detroit, Charles learned much from his partner, who was a good artist. They painted signs on sides of buildings, lettered signs on trucks for businesses and ect. Charles eventually moved to Owosso, where he set up shop, doing the same as he had in Detroit. In his spare time, he practiced his art.



FAMILIAR DURING THE 1930'S/40'S

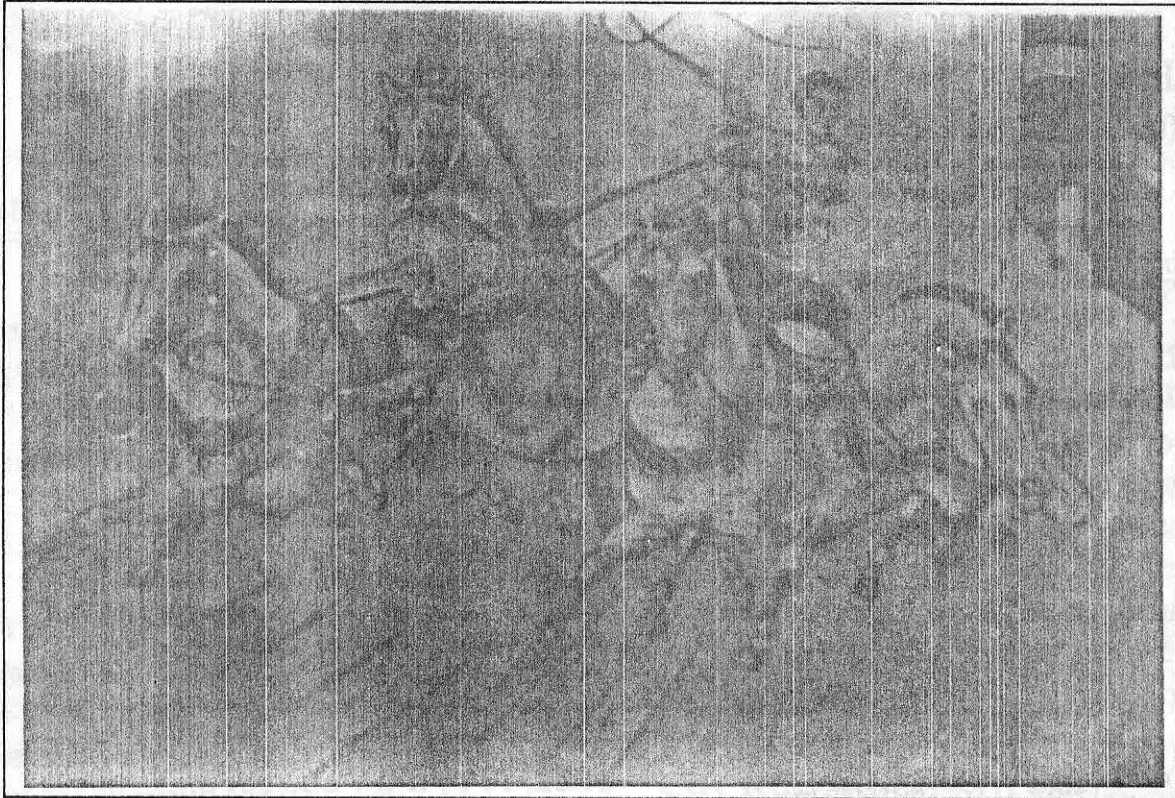
Charles painted almost all the signs, lettered all the trucks and painted the sign boards around the county for many years.



LIFE SIZE PAINTINGS AT ROLLER RINK, 1952

St. Johns Roller Rink across from the F.C. Mason Co.

An example of good advertising. Exercise for your health, sound familiar? This building burned sometime during the 50's.



"BEN HUR" PAINTING ON CANVAS

When the film, "Ben Hur" was presented at the Ovid Theater, Charles painted a large canvas of a Chariot & Horses which would roll down when the curtain opened. The photo of this painting will be presented to the Elsie Historical Society, by his son, Ross Downing. Ross will also present a collection of photographs of his father's paintings to the Clinton County Archives as a tribute to his father.

Charles H. Downing married 1st. Frederica Schult and had two children, Benjamin & Loretta. He married 2nd. Anna E. Kiel and had one child Serene and married 3rd, Evelyn H. Spencer by whom he had 5 children, Jimmie (dy), Doris, Ross, Carol & Joan. In 1934, Evelyn was killed by an auto, and Charles and his four children moved to St. Johns, where the children's grandmother could help out.

Here, he raised his family and lived his life until 1963 when he passed away at age 89.

FERRIS-PRITCHARD DESCENDANTS RECIEVE PIONEER CERTIFICATES

The four sons of LYLE FAYETTE SMITH and HELEN MAE (NEWMAN) SMITH (GLENWYN L., ROGER O., ROWLAN R., and GERALD L.) and their eleven grandchildren and three great-grandchildren were the recipients of Clinton County Pioneer Certificates in 1990. Their applications are on file at the Archives and document descendance from pioneers SELAH AND LYDIA (PRITCHARD) FERRIS.

The 1880 History of Clinton County says that Selah Ferris came from Tioga County, NY, and bought land in Watertown Township in 1837. He stayed in WILLIAM MOSHER'S cabin while building his own and was able to clear eight acres the first year.

The Smiths' grandchildren who received certificates are: MICHAEL G., STEVEN L., and JEFFREY G. SMITH (sons of Glenwyn); GREGORY A., ERIC R., PAMELA, and MICHELLE SMITH (children of Roger); SHEROLYN M. SMITH and KIMBERLY F. BANCROFT

(daughters of Rowlan); and SCOTT G., and PHILIP L. SMITH (sons of Gerald). The great-grandchildren are MELISSA M., BRANDON G. and DOUGLAS R. SMITH.

This is the lineage from the pioneers: (Places are in Michigan and/or Clinton County unless otherwise stated)

SELAH FERRIS; b 8 Jan. 1814, Tioga Co., NY; m LYDIA PRITCHARD; Farmer; d 6 Jan. 1889, Watertown Twp.; bur. South Riley Cemetery. LYDIA b 11 Nov. 1822, NY; d 2 Feb. 1878.

HENRIETTA FERRIS; b 20 Oct. 1858, Watertown; m 6 Aug. 1880 to FAYETTE WILNEY SMITH in Watertown; d 19 Sept. 1948, Watertown; bur. DeWitt Cemetery.

OTIS LYLE SMITH; b 31 Jan. 1886, DeWitt; m 12 Dec. 1906 to EVELYN ELZADA DUNDON; Farmer; d 18 Mar. 1956, DeWitt; bur. DeWitt Cemetery.

LYLE FAYETTE SMITH; b 25 Apr. 1909, DeWitt; m 23 Oct. 1929 to HELEN MAE NEWMAN; Factory Laborer; d 5 Sept. 1975, St. Johns; bur. Chapel Hill Gardens, Lansing.

CIVIL WAR MEMORIAL MARKERS

Submitted by Mary Jo Verran
(8th Michigan Vol.Inf. Researcher)

Memorial markers for seven Civil War soldiers of the 8th Michigan Volunteer Infantry, Co. C., have this year (1991) been placed in the memorial section of the Fort Custer National Cemetery, Augusta, MI.

"These gallant seven, in the advanced regiment, storming companies C and H of the 8th, were killed in action 16 June 1862, Battle of Secessionville, Tower Battery, James Island, SC. Burial for these men and others that died there was a mass grave in front of Ft. Lamar Tower Battery. Sometime after the war the remains of all were removed....They rest in SC in unknown graves.

In collaboration with Mr. Charles E. Sharrock, P.D.C., National Graves Registration Officer, these seven are remembered in Michigan 129 years later for their gallantry, honor and death as "Knowns."

Cpl. JOHN RICE BURWELL,
Gratiot Co, MI.

October 1991, markers placed for:

Cpl. of the Color Guard,
EPHRAIM BROWN,
Gratiot Co, MI

Cpl. DORR GOULD,
Gratiot Co;

Pvt. CLARKSON BURGESS,
Gratiot Co;

Pvt. ZACHARIAH HICKMAN,
Gratiot Co.

Cpl. SOLMAN KROLL,
Isabella Co;

Sgt.Mjr HENRY R. WILLIAMS,
Washtenaw Co.

I would like to hear from any descendants or interested persons. Mrs. Mary Jo Verran, 3470 Imlay City Rd., Attica, MI, 48412.

RECENT ACQUISITIONS

Michigan State College Alumni Catalog, 1857-1930.

Michigan Ghost Towns, Vols. I, II, & III; Dodge.

Michigan Death Index, 1867-1868.

Gardner School Records (Dist. #2, Bingham).

Group sheets for Clinton Co. ancestors of NORMA (LYON) MYERS.

QUERIES

Please send all queries (with SASE) and replies to: QUERY EDITOR, Clinton County Trails, P.O. Box 23, St. Johns, MI 48879-0023.

Submitted by ELSIE T. CAMPBELL:

STILES/FOX. Cornelia FOX, dau of Charles & Mary FOX, b prob. Clinton Co., MI, 9 Oct 1851; m George STILES 16 Apr 1865 at Bengal; d 9 Oct 1893 Greenbush, MI. Need all info on Charles & Mary FOX.

STILES/DAGGETT. Mary DAGGETT, b 1812; m James STILES 19 Feb 1836, Eagle, Allegany Co, NY; d 17 Nov 1879 at Greenbush, MI. Need all info on Mary.

KREPPS/COVERT. Alvina COVERT, b ca 1850, Seneca Co, NY; m 8 Sep 1867 to John KREPPS, Ovid, MI. John d 13 Jul 1930, St. Johns. Need all info on Alvina.

Submitted by ALICE L. ROBERTSON

Trying to locate a Bible belonging to LYDIA ____, m 1) BROWN, 2) DOAK. Lydia d 9 Nov 1896,

West Bengal Twp. while living with her gr-son, CHARLES FOSTER (son of MARIA, m 1) NELSON FOSTER, 2) JAMES BUSH. Lydia also had a son GEORGE FOSTER.

RESEARCHERS

These patrons of the Archives are researching the following surnames:

Donna L. SWENSON, 137 W. Glencrest Dr., Mankato, MN 56001 - BELL.

Dorothy CRESSMAN, 2327 W. Price Rd., St. Johns, MI 48879 - BECK, NELSON, CRUM, BANCROFT, FAIR, CONRAD.

Dorr HUDSON, 4902 Wilcox Rd., Holt, MI 48842 - HUDSON, STOWELL, NICHOLS.

Jean HUDSON, 4902 Wilcox Rd., Holt, MI 48842 - KIEFFER, PENIX, STEPHENS.

If you want to publish the surnames of your research in a future issue for the purpose of making new contacts and sharing information, just send us your list.

LOCATION OF ARCHIVES

The ARCHIVES OF THE GENEALOGISTS OF THE CLINTON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY are

located at 4700 Brook Road in the NE corner of the office building of DeWitt Charter Twp. Volunteers (William Serviss and Myrna VanEpps) are there to give research assistance from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Mondays and Tuesdays.

An index will be prepared for the 1991 issues. To obtain a copy, please send the donation of \$1.00 and a 4" x 9-1/2" SASE to Genealogists of the Clinton Co. Historical Society, Box 23, St. Johns, MI 48879-0023

Dorothy Cressman

We of the Clinton County Historical Society and various committees would like to wish Dorothy a quick recovery from her recent back surgery. We have missed her during her sickness and will be looking forward to having her back into circulation again.

1991 - 1992 HISTORICAL SOCIETY OFFICERS

Pres.....Catherine Reed
Vice Pres...
Sec.....Jean Serviss
Tres.....William Serviss
Corr.Sec....Janet Snyder

GENEALOGISTS OFFICERS

Pres.....Bill Serviss
Vice Pres...Dorothy Cressman
Sec.....Marilyse Brooks
Treas.....Janet Tiedt
Corr.Sec....Janet Snyder

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Mt. Rest Cemetery...Arlene Smith

MUSEUM

Co-Directors

Catherine Rumbaugh
John Rumbaugh

NEWSLETTER

Co-Editors

Myrna (Ward) VanEpps
Arlene (Conley) Smith



Clinton County Historical Society

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Phone _____ New _____ Renewal _____

ANNUAL DUES to join both Clinton County Historical Society and The Genealogy Committee are \$4.00 for single membership and \$7.00 a couple. Membership includes a quarterly newsletter, "The Clinton Trails". Checks should be made payable to the Clinton County Historical Society and mailed to P.O. Box 174, St. Johns, MI