

Clinton County Trails

Published Quarterly - June 1994

Volume 9, Number 2

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SMITH AND DAVIS PARKS PIONEERS OF DALLAS TWP.

This essay on the Parks families has been edited from a manuscript written in 1952 by Eva (Shafley) Craun. It was included in the genealogy material acquired by Marvel J. (Schriber) Lippert, a copy of which she has lately given to the archives. Eva Craun wrote extensively on the Parke/Parks lineage. See Lippert's 5-generation chart on another page.

Davis Parks was one of the nine children of **Smith and Mary (Lord) Parke**. Somewhere between Canaan, New York, where Davis was born (October 16, 1792), and his home as a man in Dallas, Michigan, his name became changed from "**Parke**" to "**Parks**."

Davis lived in Canaan, Columbia County, New York, until after his marriage in the autumn of 1811, at nineteen years of age, to **Catherine Coons** at Albany County, New York. Soon after marriage they moved to Madison County, New York. Here their first child was born in 1812. The second child was born in Genesee County, New York, in 1816. In 1821 they moved to Allegheny County, New York, and from there to Sandusky County, Ohio. They then settled in Novi Township, Oakland County, Michigan, in 1833, and finally located in Dallas Township, Clinton County, Michigan, in 1837.

There were several factors entering into this migration. In the first place there had been a leveling off of classes following the Revolution. These peoples were of European heritage where those with privilege were those with land. Speculators took advantage of the trend and circulated by the thousands glowing praises of the land just beyond.

In the second place, military pay was largely by land bounties. Nearly every man was a member of his state militia in order to protect himself and family during Indian uprisings and the numerous conflicts with the various nations claiming territory in America. Of necessity, the land bounties each time were

farther afield.

Another predominating factor in this migratory movement was the discovery of steam as a power. In 1825 the Erie Canal was completed, and a flood of travelers began pouring westward by means of water routes. By 1834 over 200 steamers were plying westward waters. Railway trains soon followed in the use of steam power. The first railway train into Michigan reached Adrian from Toledo November 2, 1836.

By this date it will be seen that the **Parks** families arrived before the railway train, and most likely came the whole distance from Canaan, New York, very near the Massachusetts border, to Clinton County, Michigan, by wagon train.

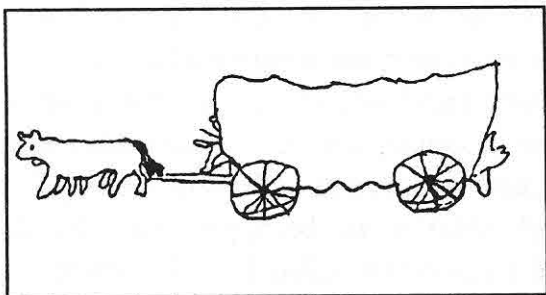


Illustration by Eva (Shafley) Craun

Smith III, an older brother of **Davis's**, came to Oakland County in 1827 and settled two miles south, and three-fourths mile east of the present village of Novi. **Davis** settled there in 1833.

John, another brother, probably came with one or the other. He was an early settler there, and records show an active interest in its development. He was one of the organizers of the Universalist Church of

South Lyons and at one time donated land for a graveyard. There were about one hundred burials. He died July 26, 1867, aged 78 years. His gravestone stands in a discarded cemetery, one mile south of South Lyons not far from Novi where the **Parks** settled.

These brothers, **Smith III**, **John**, and **Davis**, with large families of children, were the living representation of the **Parke** family again identified with the building of a new country and the history of its progress, for these families were among the first white settlers in Michigan. Even though the New England and other seaboard settlements were now 200 and more years old, it was not until after 1820 that Michigan began receiving her share of settlement as a territory and state. She had been explored and first owned by the French and was a part of Canada, surrendered by them to the English in 1759. She was not evacuated by the British until the U.S. Army took over. On July 11, 1796 at the foot of what is now Griswold Street in Detroit, the American flag was displayed for the first time in the Great Lakes area.

Until the treaty of 1807 the land belonged to the Indians. Even now it was of little benefit to the settlers as there were no roads except Indian trails; the Indians were hostile; and the territory was substantially a virgin wilderness. The few French settlers along the shorelines were occupied with the fur trade and the maintenance of army posts.

Until the War of 1812, Michigan had not been used for bounty lands. At that time an Act of Congress provided for the

designating, surveying, and granting of two million acres. Surveyors were sent out, and they reported:

"It is with the utmost difficulty that a place can be found over which horses can be conveyed. Taking the country altogether, it is so bad that no more than one acre out of one hundred, if there be more than one acre out of one thousand, that would in any case admit of cultivation." So the fame of the "great dismal swamp" went abroad and turned aside the tide of immigration.

From 1799 Detroit was head-quarters of the western Army of U.S., and several passable roads had been constructed for military use. Many thousand soldiers had viewed the beautiful rivers with sites for flour and saw mills, had seen the deep, wooded interior with its numerous oak openings, the lush-appearing prairie lands, and the now productive farms of the French settlers along the shores. As a consequence in 1818 the country had been toured again and all parts reported as suitable for agriculture. A land office was opened in Detroit. The entire state was surveyed and each section of 640 acres given a number in order that each settler's land could be specifically located. In 1820 an Act of Congress provided that parcels as small as eighty acres could be bought if desired, and all government land to be sold at \$1.25 per acre. When the government began offering these cheap, fertile lands, building roads, providing local governments, establishing post offices, and protecting her frontiers, the influx of permanent settlers began and among them were the **Parks** brothers and

their families.

It is understandable that these early settlers to Michigan should come from New England and New York. Migration in general moves forward in the same parallel as that from which it comes--on the one hand, compelled by economic changes which effected their old homes, and on the other, quickened by the circulated tales of a Michigan paradise.

Their first choice of location is explained by the fact that Oakland was the first inland county to be settled. It lay near the land office in Detroit and had the consequent priority in the survey of land; it had the natural resources of abundant and excellent timber and the water power sites for mills. Another characteristic was its oak openings which covered wide stretches of land free of underbrush, and in which trees were far enough apart to permit ox teams to go for miles without the need of chopping; the soil was fertile, and the openings insured quick cultivation and harvest and easy transportation.

Some of the **Parks** men were millwrights, and some had other occupations, but all were farmers.

According to Oakland County records, **Smith Parks** built mills at Northville, Pontiac, and Southfield. One of these still stands. A written account states: "The Rodgers Mill of Southfield Center was built by **David Goss** and **Smith Parks** in 1835."

The **Parks** brothers, **Smith** and **Davis**, with their large families of children (many of them married by now) lived in Oakland County until 1837 when they left there and settled in Clinton County. As the **Parks**

children married, they needed new land for new cabins for their families, and more produce for living necessities. Cash must be had, however, for the buying of more land. By selling their holdings at the advanced rate then prevalent in Oakland County and buying government land in some remoter place, this spreading out could easily and profitably be done. By 1837 the building of territorial roads made it possible to reach almost all parts south of the Grand and Saginaw Rivers. Surveyors were calling attention to Clinton County because of the comparatively level surface, good soil, extensive forests, and excellent water power. These were of prime importance to any settler, and especially so to the **Parks** who were millwrights and builders of mills.

The route they followed from Oakland County to Dallas was one which lay north of the old turnpike Grand River Road, and was called the Shiawassee Trail. This road went through Pontiac from Novi, then to White Lake, an overnight stopping place, then to Durand and Owosso, following nearly the route which is now No. 21. This track from Detroit, through Ionia to Grand Rapids was chopped out four rods but cleared only two rods wide, and was at best a wild and stumpy trail. There were few inns even on established roadways, and money could not buy avoidance of exposure to weather and the hardships which the vehicles and the highways of the times imposed. It was a 16 day trip from Dallas to Novi by ox team under favorable conditions and was a drain on energy and vitality, yet **Davis** made no fewer than five of these trips in order to bring his

possessions to his clearing on Stony Creek.

There is a story of their having cleared and planted an area of potatoes just prior to leaving on one of these trips. Due to misadventures they were detained long past the time of the expected return with supplies, and provisions having run out completely for those remaining in camp, they had to dig up and eat the seed potatoes in the plot.

Having no specific details other than the fact that they owned both oxen and horses, and having a large amount of supplies they made several trips, we must resort to a general medium to visualize a migration during this period in Michigan. Picture, then, a team of horses or oxen and a covered wagon in which were placed household goods, provisions, farming tools, and seeds for the first year's crop. Farm animals and chickens also were usually transported. A cast iron teakettle, a bake kettle, teapot, tin cups and plates, and a few other such utensils furnished the means of cooking meals over an open fire by the side of the road. The women, girls, and small boys slept inside the wagon, but the men and older boys lay on the ground by the camp fire. Inland settlers followed the roads as far as they extended and then were obliged to depend upon a trail or blazed trees for guidance to the land which they had bought. Indians trails along the streams aided in the search for mill sites and open clearings for their cabins. Often passage for the wagon must be chopped through thick forest. Streams must be forded or rafts built to float them across. Settlers were lucky indeed when they found

an abandoned Indian settlement on their land as this meant cleared land for a quick planting and harvest.

Upon reaching their land, the first work was to erect a cabin in which the whole family lived, cooked and ate their meals, did the family wash, slept, and spent the few idle hours their tasks permitted.

The pioneer man was not only a farmer but he must be a carpenter, furniture maker, harness maker, and blacksmith as well. If he followed a trade or profession, or held political office, he was busy indeed. The woman, besides doing the regular housework, was obliged to spin wool and flax into yarn, then weave the cloth and make the clothing for the whole family. Frequently, she also helped with clearing the land.

Children began helping very young as the family also made their own soap, candles, brooms, ox yokes, sleighs, ox carts, and handles for their tools. Cradles were often half a log hollowed out. Goose feathers were made into beds and pillows. Fire was still made by flint if there were no embers. A shoemaker came about once a year and lived with each family while he made footgear to last until his next visit.

Black bear and wolves were numerous and often very troublesome. There is a story of **Davis** having been treed by wolves when returning home one evening and having to sit all night trying desperately to keep from going to sleep and falling in their midst.

From a history of Clinton county, published in 1881 by Franklin Ellis, is taken the following excerpt on the early

settlement of Dallas township:

"The first pioneer family in Dallas Township was named **Welch**. They came in 1836 and were the only permanent settlers until the arrival of the **George Duttons** in 1837. **Smith Parks** with a family of seventeen children came close upon the heels of the **Duttons**. The entrance of the **Parks** families, and the numerical strength of the various branches who became pioneers, marked an event of consequence in the early history of Dallas. **Smith Parks** and his wife, married at the respective ages of sixteen and fifteen, boasted the possession of their many descendants. **Davis Parks**, now living in Fowler at the age of 88 years, was the next to follow his brother **Smith** and settle likewise on Stony Creek where there was a mill site, and where in 1840 he and his nephew, **Smith Jr.**, built a sawmill, the first in the township, hauling the lumber from Eagle Township over rough and roadless country.

"On **Smith Parks's** place a fine black walnut measuring 28 feet in circumference bordered the highway, and at its foot a flowing spring cheerily invited travelers to halt. This was a favorite spot for night encampments, so that the tree and the spring came to be well and gratefully known by many a tired traveler. There were no licensed inns on the road in Dallas, although every man's house was a place of entertainment."

It was eight years after the **Parks** had come to Clinton County that Dallas was made a township on March 19, 1845. **Davis Parks** and **George Dutton** were to

select a name for the new township. Polk was president at the time, and Dallas the vice president. Mr. **Dutton** wanted the name Polk and Davis liked Dallas, so they drew cuts and **Davis** won. The first supervisor was **Davis Parks**. He was also clerk. In fact, the whole list of officers for the new township looked like a family reunion election, there being thirteen of the twenty-one offices filled by **Parkses**. There were eight resident taxpayers named **Parks** as early as 1845, and doubtless others were daughters' husbands. There is mention of **Calvin Coons** and **Horace Butler** in Dallas and the nearby Watertown at this time, probably close relatives of **Davis's** wife, **Catherine (Coons) Parks**, and his daughter-in-law, **Zilpha (Butler) Parks**.

There was a township road laid out in 1847 upon application of **Davis Parks**, **Vinson Parks**, and **Smith Parks, Jr.** It was specific that these roads should be "cleared 32 feet wide with ample ditches on either side."

The first post office was called Dallas, with **Alanson Parks** as the postmaster. The name of the village was changed to Fowler when the first railroad came through ten years later, 1857.

Many of these early Parks men were sons of **Smith III**, nephews of **Davis**. **Smith** was fifteen years older than **Davis** and was married only one year after **Davis** was born. Thus his sons were nearer the age of **Davis** and were of an age twenty years or more older than **Davis's** sons. This family walked side by side with **Davis** through those early days and are an important part of his history and that of Dallas.

Smith Parks III; b Aug. 28, 1777, at Canaan, NY; d Oct. 25, 1859, age 82, at Fowler, MI. His wife Catherine; b 1778; d Feb. 20, 1856, at Fowler, MI. m 1793 in NY state.

They were both buried on their farm on Dexter Trail two miles south, one mile west of Fowler. (Cross the bridge over Stony Creek and turn east a short way.) Their stones have fallen from where they stood and now lean against a fence by the roadway, on the south side of the road.

Formerly there were many **Parks** buried in the plot on the farm but were removed to Oak Ridge after that cemetery was opened. The black walnut tree and the spring could not be found now. Of **Smith's** and **Catherine's** seventeen children, there are fourteen listed as definite. These names were collected from living members of the family and checked against census records, cemetery transcripts, and county records of marriage:

Ashley	b 1802	d 1883 (not proven as son)
Alanson	b 1804	m Betsey
Daniel	b 1806	m Ann
Vinson	b May 19, 1807	m Anginette Parks, dau of Davis
Smith IV	b Aug. 20, 1809	m Sophia Smith
Willis	b 1811	m Eliza Ann Austin
Morris	b Oct. 4, 1814	m Emily
Betsy	b 1818	m 1) Amasa Dorn m 2) Sidney Parks, son of Davis
Tompkins	b 1821	m Marguerite
Orion	b June 19, 1820	m Sally Smith
Isaac	b 1822	m Mary Calkins
Stephen	b Jan 1, 1825	m Mary
Alexander	b 1827	m Susan Sargent
John	b Oct. 7, 1828	m Mariah
(may be grandson)		
Caroline		m Tom Purdy

One daughter died in Oakland county

and was buried in a cemetery between Novi and Northville on Nine Mile Road. Probably the three whose dates are not found were born earlier than **Alanson**, since **Smith** and **Catharine** were married in 1793 and seem to be exceptionally prolific.

Two sons, **Willis** and **Tompkins**, returned to Oakland County and settled there permanently. They have descendants now living near Walled Lake. A brother of **Willis's** wife came to Dallas with them, but not liking it as well as Novi, walked the whole distance back carrying an iron kettle, an axe, and a log chain. These, together with a gun and a little salt were the customary equipment for forest travel. **Charles Tompkins Parks** of Walled Lake, Michigan, has this same kettle in his possession.

When asked about **Ashley** being a son of **Smith**, Mr. **William Orson Parks** of Fowler, a great-grandson of **Smith's**, aged in his late eighties, thought so but wasn't certain. He was able to name most of the others and whom they married by first name. These later checked as being correct, but no check was found on **Ashley**.

Several of the **Parks** cousins married during these early days in Dallas. There were few other families and many **Parks** men and women of marriageable age. It is said that during this period a stranger meeting any man could say "How do you do, Mr. **Parks**?" and be right nine out of ten times.

Davis's wife, **Catharine Coons**, was a descendant of one of the "**Kuhn**" family which came with the Palatine immigration from Germany and settled in Albany

County, New York, along the Hudson River in 1710. She spoke German fluently although her ancestors had been in America for three or four generations before she was born. They had clung to their old ways of speech and manner of living. Until in the 1800's laws were printed in both English and German, and there were regions where no word of English was spoken for several generations.

There is record of the first school which was started by **Smith Parks** and **Benjamin Welch**. It was held in the abandoned cabin of **Amasa Dorn**, a son-in-law of **Smith Parks**. They paid its teacher themselves and collected whatever they were able to get from the other parents. (**Amasa Dorn** committed suicide soon after moving to Dallas, thus leaving his new cabin unoccupied.) In 1849 a new log school house was built.

Although **Davis** could and did conduct church services, preach sermons, perform marriage rites, and officiate at funeral services, this proves not so much his religious trends as his ability to act in any needed capacity. He was a lawyer by profession and an easy, fluent speaker. For many years he was the leading figure in a new community where few of the needed officiants were trained for those offices. Those at hand capable of complying were called upon to act. He was a brilliant man; he was needed; therefore he served.

Davis Parks was a pioneer, a farmer, millwright, lawyer, and politician, and he was many other things. He had been a soldier of 1812; he was a leader, a teacher, a philosopher; he played the violin and he

sang; if needed and asked for, he dispensed remedies to the settlers, brewing herbs, roots, barks, and leaves in a manner he had learned from the Indians. A book, now long gone, had recipes of these entitled: "Grandpa Davis's Salve/Tonic/Croup Remedy/Colic Cure" etc. There were not only cures for humans, but also various remedies for animals and fowl.

This versatility was perhaps fairly common among early pioneer settlers and is remindful of the man who said, "Yes, I'm a first class cook, but I kin skin a bear, deal a hand of blackjack, or preach at camp meeting. I kin also sing purty good."

After more than half a century since his passing, **Davis Parks** is still a legendary figure of skill and prowess among the older inhabitants in the vicinity of Fowler and Stoney Creek, and in the minds of his descendants unto the fifth and sixth generations.

He had served faithfully in many posts, but as he became older he turned chiefly to his law, reading his law books, writing his briefs, entering in his day book the troubles and complaints of the settlers who looked to him for advice and help. He served as Justice of the Peace for many, many years. On **Davis's** personal side, he was famed for his readiness to serve and for his wit, his humor, his hospitality, and his friendliness.

The Michigan Historical Collection, v. 22, p. 71 has the following statements:

"**Davis Parks** was intelligent, cheerful, and contented, always very liberal in his religious and in his general views. His advantages of obtaining an education were very limited, but possessing a remarkable

memory and being of a studious nature, he acquired a good education and was a prominent lawyer of Fowler for a good many years. His parents were farmers, and during his early life he had acquired habits of industry and had laid the foundation of a strong and vigorous constitution. He was called into service by the New York State Militia in 1814 to serve in the War of 1812. He was in the Battle of Sackett's Harbor and served until the end of the war."

[He was a drummer, and was discharged November 13, 1814.] And again:

"In 1893 at 101 years of age, his mental faculties were almost wholly unimpaired, and his bodily health showed little effect of his age. He was about the streets at this extreme age and enjoyed the fruits of his honest and faithful life."

Since **Davis** did not die until 1895 and had been an exceptionally colorful figure whose life had been woven into an unusually interesting and attractive pattern, there were several of his great-grandchildren, and others living in the vicinity of Fowler at the time this material was collected who could relate many incidents of his later life and could repeat tales he had told them of earlier days. Following are quotes from some of those interviews:

■ Concerning his religion:

"Well, I presume he was religious enough, but he didn't go to church much, at least when he was older. Excellent morals--honest and straight forward--liked to joke, but if he was in serious talk, he was exceptionally truthful. His word was as good as his bond--didn't swear nor drink--

did lots of good for folks. Yes, I presume he was religious, more than most folks at least."

■ Concerning politics:

"Oh, yes! **Davis** was a great political man with many viewpoints," and then a chuckle, "all Democrat!"

■ Concerning economics:

"He had property and he had money; had a big family and had given them properties but had enough to be comfortable."

■ Concerning capabilities as a lawyer:

"He was good; had a wagon load of law books and was always reading. He could try a case and talk the other lawyer right out from under his wig. Keen and witty but just and fair. His eldest grandson also practiced law, and sometimes they were on opposing sides, and that was fun to see. **George** had to fairly sit on his papers or **Davis** would have them sneaked out of sight, to **George**'s consternation. **Davis** enjoyed those cases; he was almighty proud of **George** but thought it a great joke to confuse him--good training. **George** had to be alert."

■ Concerning his medical activities:

"Of course he wouldn't be allowed to mix remedies now even if he could find the stuff that grew around then, but I believe he did a lot of good--plain, old-fashioned remedies that were needed. Some folks haven't much initiative by themselves and get panicky over sickness...not many regular doctors and not always much money. **Davis** learned from the Indians and from experience, and was pretty skillful at judging what they needed, probably nothing harmful in any case, and eased

their minds; they believed in him. He had a wonderful ointment for burns and such. I've used it myself and know it's good."

■ Concerning physical attributes:

"When he was 99 years of age, **Sam Henry**, his first son was 79 and was beginning to fail in health and strength. It was common practice for **Davis** to help **Sam Henry** with the hoeing of his garden--they both had big gardens--and to help him in and out of a light wagon which he used, tucking him in then nimbly jumping in himself and driving away."

"At 100 years of age he was still erect and long-striding, a magnificent figure of a man, nimble of foot and wit. He was a tall, rugged, powerful man all his adult life, and a more than fair wrestler. The morning of his 100th birthday he walked past the undertaker's, and jokingly the undertaker told him that he should be ashamed to be still walking around; that he, the undertaker had been saving a coffin for him for the past ten years. **Davis** told him that he could still flatten him out. The man laughed and said he might try. The result was a flattened out undertaker although he was about one-half the age of **Davis**."

"At 101 years of age there was a huge birthday party--relatives, neighbors, and friends from far and near. He was still upright and active, being the life of the party. He danced with the crowd; he played the fiddle and sang, his voice fresh and young sounding, without a tremor. There was scarce a dry eye at parting, but he lived for two years after that, a lively character right up to the age of 103 years. He was never what you'd call feeble. About three

or four weeks before he died, he merely became less active, less and less. Finally, for a few days he didn't get up, and then he was gone. The **Parks** people live to be old, but he was the oldest." Silence for a long moment, and then with a twinkle, "There's an old saying that a **Parks** never dies; he dries up and blows away." and "But that was the biggest crowd at a funeral ever seen around here. He was liked."

These quotes are from **Parks** men in their 70's and 80's and still young, so it may be true that they'll dry up and blow away. **Davis** attained a new high, something for them to aim at, a hope to cherish and a faith to prize. God rest his soul!

Davis's wife, **Catharine**, died in 1846 at the age of 54 years, 10 months. After her death he made a trip to Nebraska to visit a daughter who had married and moved there, stopping to see other relatives in Iowa. He made at least one trip to Ohio visiting relatives there. He was married again in 1858 to Mrs. **Demise Bigelow Holmes** who survived him. **Davis** died March 28, 1895, aged 103 years and 5 months.

He and a very intimate friend, Mr. **Peter Jolly**, had agreed that the remaining one should preach the other's funeral sermon. **Davis** went first, so Mr. **Jolly** officiated at the service for his esteemed friend.

Davis and **Catharine** were both buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery, located near Fowler in Dallas Township, the place they had helped to build.

Davis Parks, b Oct. 16, 1792, at Canaan, NY; d Mar. 28, 1895 at Fowler, MI; m Sept. 14, 1811, Albany Co., NY. to Catherine Coons; b Nov 7, 1791 at Albany Co., NY; d Sept 1846, Fowler, MI. **Davis** m 2nd 1858 to Demise Bigelow Holmes. There were 11 children by Catherine; 1 by Demise; 5 boys & 7 girls:

Samuel Henry	b Oct. 14, 1812	m Zilpha Butler
Emaline	b Mar. 30, 1816	m Nathaniel Case
Sidney	b 1818	m Betsey (Parks) Dorn - dau of Smith
Anginette	b 1820	m Vinson Parks - son of Smith
Horace	b 1824	m Margit Davenport
Philo	b 1825	m Cordelia
Lucinda	b 1826	m Tom Ferris
Achsa Mariah		m & moved to Nebraska
Mary	b 1830	m Charles Smith
Smith Harmon	b 1835	m Cordelia Russell
Almira	b 1843	never married
Martha Jane	dau of Demise	never married

In 1893 at the time of his 101st birthday party, **Davis** had ten living children, forty-two grandchildren, one hundred and one great-grandchildren, and twenty-two great-great-grandchildren. Now in 1949, those great-great-grandchildren have grandchildren of their own. ■

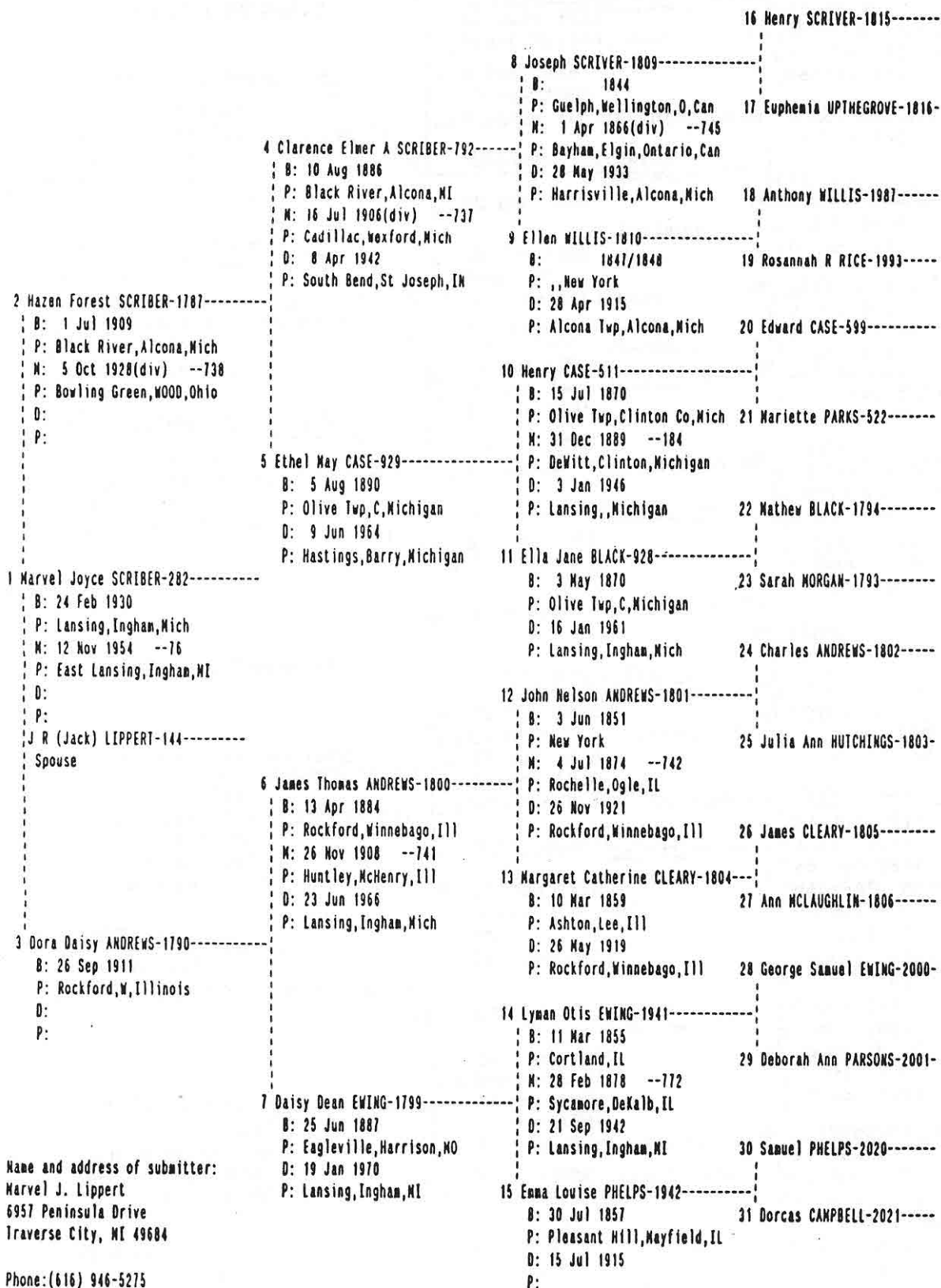
CHART # 1

The chart on page 31, with many Clinton County connections, was compiled by **Marvel Joyce (Schriber) Lippert**. It illustrates part of her **Case** genealogy which goes back 9 generations and part of her **Parks** line which goes back 15 generations. See "Recent Acquisitions."

PEDIGREE CHART

22 May 1994

Chart no. 1



Name and address of submitter:
 Marvel J. Lippert
 6957 Peninsula Drive
 Traverse City, MI 49684

Phone: (616) 946-5275

Ancestor Chart

Chart No. _____

Name of Compiler _____

Person No. 1 on this chart is the same

person as No. _____ on chart No. _____

Address BETSY J. RANDALL

City, State R #1 BOX 334

Date REED CITY, MI 49677

b. Date of Birth
p.b. Place of Birth
m. Date of Marriage
d. Date of Death
p.d. Place of Death

4 TOMPKINS, Raymond R.
(Father of No. 3)
b. 19 Dec 1879
p.b. Duplain Twp. Clinton Co.
m. 4 Mar 1903
d. 1 Jul 1957
p.d. St. Johns, MI

2 TOMPKINS, Richard S.
(Father of No. 1)
b. 4 Sept 1904
p.b. Greenbush Twp. Clinton Co. MI
m. 12 Sept 1931, Irving MI
d. 4 Mar 1952
p.d. Big Rapids MI

5 SILVERNAIL, Edah May
(Mother of No. 2)
b. 12 Jun 1881
p.b. Greenbush Twp. Clinton Co.
d. 9 Mar 1930
p.d. Greenbush Twp.

1 TOMPKINS, Betsy Jane
b. 17 Sept 1936
p.b. Kalamazoo MI
m. 17 Aug 1959, Big Rapids MI
d.
p.d.

6 PERRY, John Melford
(Father of No. 3)
b. 24 May 1882
p.b. Duplain Twp. Clinton Co.
m. 1 Mar 1906
d. 21 Dec 1961
p.d. Big Rapids MI

3 PERRY, Avis Clee
(Mother of No. 1)
b. 31 May 1907
p.b. Thornapple Twp. Barry Co. MI
d.
p.d.

7 KIDNEY, Bessie
(Mother of No. 3)
b. 18 Aug 1884
p.b. Leighton Twp., Allegan Co
d. 19 Jul 1974
p.d. Reed City MI

RANDALL, David Earl
(Spouse of No. 1)

b. 7 Oct 1935 d.
Reed City MI

8 TOMPKINS, Richard
(Father of No. 4)
b. 12 July 1832
p.b. Great Milton, Oxon.
m. 9 Apr 1864
d. 13 May 1909
p.d. Duplain Twp. Clinton Co.

0 SULLIVAN, Margaret
(Mother of No. 4)
b. 25 Dec 1834
p.b. Ireland
d. 12 Jan 1891
p.d. Ovid, MI

10 SILVERNAIL, Lafayette
(Father of No. 3)
b. 25 Jul 1857
p.b. Leslie Twp. Ingham Co.
m. 17 Dec 1879
d. 20 Jul 1933
p.d. Greenbush Twp. Clinton Co.

11 CROOKS, Dora May
(Mother of No. 5)
b. 11 Jan 1861
p.b. Tiffin, Ohio
d. 17 May 1943
p.d. Greenbush Twp. Clinton Co.

12 PERRY, Henry Franklin
(Father of No. 6)
b. 21 Aug 1855
p.b. Lebanon Twp., Clinton Co.
m. 27 Jul 1878
d. 26 Oct 1930
p.d. Greenbush Twp. Clinton Co.

13 GOTT, Jessie Sarah
(Mother of No. 9)
b. 21 Aug 1858
p.b. Jackson Co. MI
d. 15 Oct 1934
p.d. St. Johns MI

14 KIDNEY, Charlie H
(Father of No. 7)
b. 23 June 1856
p.b. Negaunee MI
m. 11 Apr 1883
d. 31 Mar 1924
p.d. Irving, Barry Co. MI

15 HEYDENBERK, Lydia Jane
(Mother of No. 7)
b. 6 Oct 1854
p.b. Wayland, Allegan Co. MI
d. 26 Aug 1931
Irving, Barry Co. MI

16 TOMPKINS, Edmund
(Father of No. 8)
b. 2 Mar 1783
m. 2 Jul 1807
d. after 1851

17 COPPOCK, Mary
(Mother of No. 8)
b. 19 Jun 1791
d. before 1851

18 SULLIVAN, Jeremiah
(Father of No. 9)
b. 24 Oct 1802
m.

19 BRESNAHAN, Johanna
(Mother of No. 9)
b. 7 Feb 1819
d. 8 Sep 1881

20 SILVERNAIL, Andrew
(Father of No. 10)
b. 9 Jul 1833
m. 27 Mar 1856
d. 9 Jan 1910

21 SITIS, Mary Helen
(Mother of No. 10)
b. Feb 1835
d. 19 Mar 1908

22 CROOKS, George
(Father of No. 11)
b. 19 Sept 1835
m. 6/13 Apr 1858
d. 6 Jun 1912

23 GREER, Sarah Jane
(Mother of No. 11)
b. 4 Sept 1838
d. 19 Mar 1908

24 PERRY, Abram
(Father of No. 12)
b.
m. "
d. 14 Mar 1858 (28-6-0)

25 GUYER, Emily (Emma)
(Mother of No. 12)
b. Mar 1838
d. 1917

26 GOTT, John
(Father of No. 13)
b. 27 Jul 1833
m. 9 Apr 1857
d. 25 Jan 1917

27 HALIFAX, Mary Ann
(Mother of No. 13)
b. 25 Nov 1840
d. 6 Jun 1917

28 KIDNEY, Edgar
(Father of No. 14)
b. 1817
m. 7 Jun 1844
d. May 1891

29 THOMPSON, Eliza Jane
(Mother of No. 14)
b. 8 Jul 1828
d. 20 Nov 1894

30 HEYDENBERK, William
(Father of No. 15)
b. 11 Dec 1828
m. 29 Aug 1853
d. 27 May 1905

31 CHAMBERS, Amanda Jane
(Mother of No. 15)
b. 8 Dec 1831
d. 26 Jun 1901

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CHART #2

On page 32 is printed the chart of **Betsy Jane (Tompkins) Randall** on which also appear several Clinton County families.

We would be glad to print your charts. Please submit them in a legible and reproducible 8-1/2 X 11 format. ■

DON BOTTUM RECALLS END OF WWI

Recently Mr. Don Bottom sent to Ginger Crosby of Clinton County his recollections of 75 years ago at the end of WWI. We are grateful that Mrs. Crosby has made them available to reprint here. Mr. Bottum, a native of Clinton County but now living in Frankenmuth, Michigan, was long affiliated with Marquette University where a building is named for him.

March 22, 1994. Seventy-five years is a long time. From March 1919 to March 1994 was 75 years. March 1919 was a memorable month.

The first week of March 1919 I had a pass from my army unit with "permission to visit Paris." What a week! The opera *Othello* in the world famous opera house, the Eiffel Tower, the Louvre Museum, the Tomb of Napoleon, the Madeline Church, the Notre Dame Cathedral, the gardens, and the castle at Versailles, plus, plus.

The second week of March 1919, I had my last box car ride. Fifty-seven soldiers with heavy packs in an American box car is

a bad ride. I remember figuring at the time that each soldier had between 6 and 7 square feet of floor space for himself and his heavy pack. You had two choices: You could stand up or sit on your pack. The trip took between 30 and 35 hours from Conlie, in central France, to near Brest. You stood up as long as you could, then sat on your pack as long as you could. There were few gripes. We were on the way toward home!

The third week of March 1919, we had a couple of moves: the first to a delouser; the second a burial.

The first one started our morning with orders to pack everything we had, except what we were wearing, in our barracks bag and an hour later go to the sterilizers, where we were to undress and put the clothes we were wearing in the barracks bags. Then we put the bags in the sterilizer for 30 minutes and during that time take a bath and have a medical inspection.

Everything moved along well until we were taking off the clothes we were wearing; then fire broke out in the sterilizers. It didn't do much to us. We just picked up our duds and bags and moved out, but for the engineers in the company ahead of us, it was a disaster. For a long time the engineers were in their birthday clothes-- They thought it was twice that long-- waiting to get equipment from the quartermasters.

The second exception to routine was the daily burial program. Shortly after noon a small procession came to the cemetery: a small band, a firing squad, an honor guard, two chaplains, two Red Cross nurses; and a

truck with (I think) eight rough boxes.

While arrangements were being made, we carried the boxes to some saw horses, and the service began. One of the chaplains said a prayer; the other chaplain read a few verses from the bible, then spoke briefly; the band played *Nearer My God, to Thee*; a chaplain gave a benediction; and the service was over. The procession was formed again and left for the hospital.

We placed the bodies in the graves we had dug in the morning, then returned to our quarters. It had been a brief, but meaningful service. You had time to think as you looked at the boxes, "There, but for the grace of God, go I."

For the last week of March 1919 we boarded a great ship and sailed for the U.S. It was the afternoon of March 21 we went on board, but lay in the harbor 'til the morning of the 22nd--75 years ago yesterday morning.

Our ship, the great British Aquitania, had a load of 5,500 soldiers, 1200 in the crew and 50-75 war brides in restricted quarters.

Six days after leaving Brest we were in the harbor at New York. The Statue of Liberty faces out to sea, and many of the soldiers told her that "If she ever saw them again, she would have to do an about face."

After two weeks at Camp Mills, we took the train to Battle Creek and on April 16, 1919, received our discharge and \$60 in cash. I have never been able to tell how I got from Battle Creek to St. Johns, but I did, and my older brother came and took me home.

The next morning I went out on the back

porch and called, "Where are you, Tom?" and got a bit Tom cat "meow" in reply. Shortly thereafter Tom came in from the orchard. I knew for sure **I was home.**

Note to Ginger. March is my favorite month of the year and 1919 the favorite year. By that time the war was over though many details had still to be settled. Nearly everything hung on the questions, "When do we go home?" and "What are you going to do when you go home?"

I was lucky. I was going to stay home and work on the farm until fall, then go back to my teaching job. While still in France I had a letter from the secretary of the school board at Lake City. He asked me, "When do you expect to be discharged?" and "If interested, would you like to come back to job here?" I had been principal one year and superintendent one year before going into service. I was very glad to answer, "Yes, Yes."



DON HOLLIS BOTTOM
1994

QUERIES

Please send all queries (with SASE) and replies to: Query Editor, Clinton County Trails, PO Box 23, St. Johns, MI 48879-0023.

Correction: In the last issue (Vol 9 No 1) the query on page 18 regarding **Justus W. Sage** was submitted by **Leona M. Sage**.

- Submitted by **Ida Knopp**: Interested in working with anyone who has knowledge or ties to the **Coffman-McKinstry** family.
- Submitted by **Vicky Stozich**: Looking for information on **Thomas & Alice Cox** with daughter, **Jane**, of Grand Ledge, 1870. Their three sons, **George, Jeremiah, & John** were in Ovid Twp. 1880. One of two daughters, **Mary (Cox) Leppo** also had two daughters, one named **Lucy** who married **Newton Loper**.

RECENT ACQUISITIONS AT THE ARCHIVES

- Issues of the following newsletters:
The Second Boat
Sanborn Signatures
The Pied Cow, (Chadbourne Family Assn.)
The Essex Genealogists
The Taber Tree
- *Historical and Statistical Gazetteer of New York State*, 1860, French; and index to same.

- *Collecting Dead Relatives*, Galeener-Moore, 1987.
- *Michigan Death Index 1867-1869*.
- *Michigan Cemetery Source Book*.
- **Janet (Staub) Dunn's** Autograph book.
- **Nathan Case** 1805-1887, Craun, 1952.
- *The Rufus Parks Pedigree, 17 Centuries of One Family's Ancestry*, by Berry, 1989.
- *The Parke Family from Mariette born 1845 through Nine Generations to Robert...*, Craun, 1949. ■

COMPUTER DOWN-TIME



Sorry the newsletter is so late. Don't blame me, it was Hessy, my computer's, fault. I fixed her good! Bet she won't do that again!