



Mount Clemens Public Library

Local History Sketches

The Founders and Builders of Mount Clemens

The following biographies were researched and compiled by C. Bernard McGhee for a program at Clinton Grove Cemetery entitled "A Walk Into The Past," which was presented in 1993 in celebration of the platting of Mount Clemens by Christian Clemens in 1818. All biography subjects in this document are buried at Clinton Grove Cemetery in Mount Clemens, Michigan. This material is posted with the permission of Mr. McGhee.

CHARLES H. MELDRUM, Bath House Owner, (1856-1936)

Born in Griffin's Mills, New York; came to Mount Clemens in 1875. Married **Anna Gentz** (d.1950). The Meldrums built the Fountain Bath House in 1875 and the Fountain Hotel in 1876. This hotel became one of the city's famous, being the scene of many brilliant social affairs and the stopping place for many prominent people. The Fountain Bath House was the first to have electricity installed in 1888. Meldrum served on the Board of Public Works for 6 years.

HENRY R. BABCOCK, M.D. (1811-1876)

Born in New York; came to Mount Clemens in 1837. Married **Della Smith** (d.1887). An early physician in the community.

HENRY W. BABCOCK, M.D. (1842-1910)

Born in Mount Clemens, son of **Henry R.** and **Della Babcock**. Married **Maria F. Bonney** (d.1885). Served in the Civil War as a drummer boy under Colonel Judson S. Farrar. Was in the drug and grocery business with **Judson Farrar** until 1884. Manager of Western Union Telegraph for 12 years. A founder and Past President (1907) of The Old Crowd.

JOHN KUHN, Merchant, (1843-1924)

Born in Hessen, Germany; came to Mount Clemens in 1874. Married **Anna C. Ullrich** (d.1907). He entered into business with his brother-in-law, **Paul Ullrich**. This business became John Kuhn and Company. He was an alderman in the Zion Evangelical Church and served on the building committee of the church. Member of The Old Crowd.

WILLIAM JENNEY, Lawyer, (1837-1920)

Born in Poughkeepsie, New York; came to Frederick in 1843. Married **Cora Steevens** (d.1919). His preparation for the bar was interrupted by the Civil War. He was commissioned a captain and attained the rank of colonel. He was admitted to the bar in 1866. He served as Secretary of State in 1875 and was elected to the State Senate. He was appointed postmaster. Probably has the longest tombstone inscription in the cemetery.

ROBERT P. ELDREDGE, Lawyer, (1808-1884)

Born in Greenwich, Washington County, New York. Married **Louisa Crittenden** (d.1841) and **Jane A. Leonard** (d.1898). In 1826, he saw a circular describing the advantages of Michigan. Started for Detroit taking three days traveling by stage to Rochester, by canal packet to Buffalo and by steamer to Detroit. Taught school in one of the debtors rooms of the jail and studied law with **Henry S. Cole**. He went to Pontiac and in 1827 walked into Mount Clemens, where he continued his studies until his

admission to the bar in open court at the old capitol building in Detroit. He was the first lawyer to hang out his shingle in Mount Clemens. He was a partner of **Giles Hubbard** and later with his son, James B., who was one of the founders of The Old Crowd in 1880. He served as prosecuting attorney, Secretary of State, and was elected to the State Senate and attended the first session of the Legislature held in Lansing.

JUDSON S. FARRAR, Merchant, (1836-1915)

Born in Mount Clemens. Married **Caroline Eldredge** (d.1916, daughter of **Robert F. Eldredge**). Established the firm of Babcock (Henry W.) and Farrar, Groceries and Drugs. Sold his interest to **William C. High** in 1861. He served throughout the Civil War and was discharged with the rank of colonel. He was Adjutant General of the State Troops of Michigan. He served 2 terms as mayor of Mount Clemens. He was Internal Revenue Collector and Register of Deeds of Macomb County. He was appointed U.S. Consul to Port Sarnia, Ontario. He was engaged in mining and mercantile from 1867-1872 in Wyoming, Montana, Idaho and Utah. He was Past President (1885) of The Old Crowd.

EDGAR WEEKS, Lawyer, (1938-1904)

Born in Mount Clemens. Married **Mary S. Campbell** (d.1933). Son of **Aaron** and **Laura Weeks**, who established the first oak stave factory in eastern Michigan. Left school to work in a printing office in New Baltimore. Worked for the *Lake Superior Journal*, the *Free Press* and *Tribune* in Detroit. Began the study of law in 1858 with Eldredge and Hubbard. Admitted to the bar in 1861. Mustered out of the infantry as a brevet major in the Civil War with injuries. Served as Judge of Probate. Elected to the 56th and 57th Congresses. Established the *Monitor* with **Talmadge Lee**. As a member of the Bacon Congressional Party, he traveled around the world for 6 months. Two Rodman guns were secured by him for the Court House Square in honor of General Macomb and the soldiers and sailors who fought in the Civil War. This cannon was donated to the war effort of World War II. Founder and Past President (1890) of The Old Crowd.

FREDERICK G. KENDRICK, Building Contractor, (1836-1913)

Born in Scholothheim, Schwartzburg, Germany. Married **Henrietta Hoffmeyer** (d.1927). He and his wife had 10 children. Came to Belvidere, Macomb County, in 1844 and later to Mount Clemens. Engaged in the hardware business, the manufacturing of lumber, owner of a sawmill in Saginaw County. He served in the State Legislature, as Sheriff of Macomb County, and Postmaster of Mount Clemens. He was one of the originators and General Manager of the Mount Clemens Bitter Water Company. He had an interest in the Brick and Tile Company. He was a stockholder in 3 state banks. He served on the Board of Trustees of the Clinton Grove Cemetery Association, and the stained glass window in the Chapel/Office memorializes him. He was a member of The Old Crowd.

BISHOP JOSEPH F. BERRY, Minister, (1856-1931)

Born in Ontario, Canada; came to Mount Clemens in 1879. Married **Alice Johnson** (d.1933). Served as Minister of the First Methodist Church in 1879. Chosen Associate Editor of the *Epworth Herald*, the official organ for the Epworth League. Elected Bishop in 1904. He headed the Genessee Conference in the Buffalo area for 8 years. He served as Bishop of Philadelphia until his retirement. He retired to Winter Park, Florida, where he died. His body was brought back to Mount Clemens to be buried with his two sons who died during his tenure in Mount Clemens. His father, mother and wife are also buried in his lot.

THOMAS MARTIN CROCKER, Lawyer, (1825-1902)

Born in Vermont; came to Macomb County in 1844. Married **Fandira Emery** (d.1876). Was elected Justice of the Peace in 1852. Passed the bar in 1859 and entered law practice with **Giles Hubbard**. He was a member of the Constitutional Convention. Served on the School Board for 12 years. Also served as President of the Village and City Attorney. Upon the death of Hubbard, formed a co-partnership with his son-in-law, **H.B. Hutchins** who went on to become President of the University of Michigan. He

was a member of The Old Crowd.

MARTIN CROCKER, Lawyer, (1858-1938)

Born in Mount Clemens, the son of **Thomas** and **Fandira Crocker**. Married **Emily Sabin** (d.1920). Studied law in the firm of Crocker and Hutchins, and was admitted to the bar in 1880. Served on the City Council for 3 years, and also served as City Attorney. Elected to the State Legislature and served as Floor Leader. Appointed Special Deputy Collector of Customs, Huron District. Elected Mayor of Mount Clemens. Formed a law partnership with **Seth Knight** and **Frederick C. Miller**. Appointed Postmaster of Mount Clemens. He was the largest real estate operator of his times. He donated money for the Macomb Crocker Bridge and also donated land for a street with the understanding it would always be called Crocker Street (Boulevard). Many times took horses in trade for his lots. Tendered a 50th anniversary testimonial by the Masonic order. Past President (1927) of The Old Crowd.

GUSTAVUS JONAS, Janitor, (1937-1929)

Born in Germany; came to Mount Clemens at the age of 14. Married **Louisa Kargus** (d.1891). Went from street to street lighting the corner lamps prior to the advent of electricity. Was janitor for 10 years at the Presbyterian Church. Served in the capacity of janitor for 15 years at the Grant School (located where now stands Beth Tephilath Moses Synagogue). Part of his duties was ringing the "Order Bell," which started the school day. He saved many citizens of this community from being marked tardy by not ringing the bell until he saw the running student safely into the building.

EBENEZER HALL, M.D. (1783-1865)

Born in Woodstock, New York; came to Mount Clemens in 1835. Married **Olivia Rich** (d.1869). Established the first industry in Mount Clemens - the Glass Works, with his son-in-law, **Frank Grovier**. (All medicine bottles were green. Hall thought they should be white. Developed his own recipe). Believed to have built the first brick house in the area.

TRAUGOTT LUNGERSHAUSEN, Merchant, (1833-1927)

Born in Arten, Prussia; emigrated to the United States at the age of 18. Married **Emilie Stechert** (d.1914). Came to Michigan to work as a carpenter. Employed in the construction of the Sault Ste. Marie Locks. Operated a flour and feed store. Elected Register of Deeds after serving 18 years as Deputy. A partner in the first Abstract and Title Company which became the Macomb County Abstract and Title Company.

WILLIAM CANFIELD, Farmer, (1809-1877)

Born in Saybrook, Connecticut; came to Mount Clemens in 1829. Married **Ann Clemens** (d.1879), daughter of **Christian Clemens**. Brigadier General in the Union Army during the Civil War. A founder of the State Agricultural Society. Served as State Senator, and as Sheriff in 1832. The homestead was located on North Gratiot. The great-great granddaughter of **Ann Canfield** lives in our area.

ROBERT F. EASTMAN, Merchant, (1814-1849)

Born in Chelsea, Vermont; came to Mount Clemens in 1835. Married **Harriet Rutter** (d.1902). One-time partner of **Edward C. Gallup** in the mercantile trade.

ARTHUR R. EASTMAN, Hotelier, (1843-1915)

Born in Mount Clemens, the son of **Robert F.** and **Harriet Eastman**. Unmarried. Owner of the Eastman Hotel which became the John R. Murphy Hotel. In his last will and testament, he added a codicil naming the Clinton Grove Cemetery the beneficiary of a building on Cass Avenue in downtown Mount Clemens which became a bar adjunct to the Medea Hotel. The beneficence was realized in 1987. Past President (1898) of The Old Crowd.

FREDERICK R. EASTMAN, Businessman, (1841-1914)

Born in Mount Clemens, the son of **Robert F.** and **Harriet Eastman**. Unmarried. At age of 14,

attended school in Philadelphia. Served in the Civil War and was a prisoner at Andersonville. Had great financial success in Denver. Built several businesses in Mount Clemens. One-time partner of **Edward C. Gallup**. Director of the Chamber of Commerce and of Mount Clemens Savings Bank. Past President (1894) of The Old Crowd.

ELISHA HARRINGTON (1776-1848)

Born in Massachusetts; came to Macomb County in 1806. Married **Susanna**, (d.1849) daughter of **Richard** and **Margaret Conner**. Settled at the site known as the Moravian Mission and later known as the town of Frederick. His home still stands on the site.

RICHARD CONNER (CONNOR) (ca.1719-1808)

Born in Maryland; settled as a neighbor of the Indians in 1813. Married **Margaret (Bovier) (Bauer)** (d.1913). Seems to have lived with **William Tucker**. Margaret was captured by Indians at the age of 4. Conner bought her from them. As a part of the bargain, Conner was to give to the Indians, James, their first born son, and James was later redeemed by Richard. Their daughter, Susanna, was the first born white child of English speaking parents born in Macomb County. Conner's remains were moved to Clinton Grove Cemetery by a member of the Harrington family after the establishment of the cemetery. The National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution, Piety Hill Chapter, Birmingham, Michigan, installed the historic plaque in his honor. The family has the earliest marker (1808) in the cemetery.

GILBERT LONGSTAFF, Farmer, (1792-1872)

Baptized in Spennithorne, North Riding, England in 1792. First wife was **Elizabeth Russell**, mother of his three sons. Second wife was **Elizabeth Pratt**. Came to Macomb County in 1837 and then moved to Mount Clemens about 1861.

WILLIAM LONGSTAFF, Printer, (1821-1891)

Born in Yorkshire, England; came to Macomb County with his father, Gilbert, in 1837. Married **Ruth Ann Van Horn** (d.1877). Associated with **James B. Eldredge** in the publishing of *The Mount Clemens Press*. Active in Democratic politics in Clinton Township. Elected Constable of Clinton Township. Served 33 years in this office. When Mount Clemens was incorporated as a city, became Constable of the Second Ward. Served as Under Sheriff and the Sheriff of Macomb County. Member of Grace Episcopal Church, and served as Vestryman. Member of the group that purchased the property for the church in 1867. Charter member of the Masonic Order. Member of The Old Crowd.

ROBERT WELTS, Farmer, (1783-1866)

Born in Hunterdon County, New Jersey; moved to Macomb County in 1835. Married **Frances Opdyke** (d.1861). Owned a 300-acre farm on the edge of Mount Clemens. Sold to Clinton Grove Cemetery the original 5 acres of land of the cemetery for five hundred dollars.

EDWARD C. GALLUP, Merchant, (1808-1877)

Born in Connecticut; in 1837, came west and then to Mount Clemens with his friend, **Henry D. Terry**. When his first wife died of cholera in Detroit, married **Elizabeth Hawkins** (d.1899), daughter of **Christian Clemens**. He entered into a partnership with **Robert F. Eastman**, mercantile trade. Conducted a wool commission business. Made a journey with Brigadier General Cass to negotiate a treaty with the Indians on the lake. First President of the Village in 1853. Subscriber to the establishment of Clinton Grove Cemetery.

PRESCOTT B. THURSTON, Lawyer, (1807-1866)

Born in Barre, Vermont; came to Mount Clemens about 1836. Married **Prudence** (d.1833), sister of **Joshua N. Dickinson**. Defeated **Christian Clemens** as Judge of Probate.

THOMAS W. SNOOK, Merchant, (1822-1901)

Born in New York City; came to Mount Clemens in 1836. Married **Emily A. Hubbard** (d.1859) and then **Harriet J. Rice** (d.1916). Served as President of the Village, member of the Board of Education. With **William Beer**, built the first steam sawmill in eastern Michigan. Subscriber to the establishment of Clinton Grove Cemetery.

HENRY F. TAYLOR, M.D., (1802-1889)

Born in New York State; came to Mount Clemens in 1826. Married **Nancy Walling** (d.1882). First lived with the Tucker family and taught school in addition to practicing medicine. First President of the Michigan Medical Association. Member of The Old Crowd.

HENRY O. TAYLOR, M.D., (1832-1876)

Born in Mount Clemens, the son of **Henry F.** and **Nancy Taylor**. Married **Marion Ferris** (d.1932). Was one of several in establishing the Original Bath House. A subscriber to the establishment of Clinton Grove Cemetery, and served as the first sexton of the cemetery.

HARRY FERRIS TAYLOR, M.D., (1862-1921)

Born in Mount Clemens, the son of **Henry** and **Marion Taylor**. Married **Maude Embrey (Childs)** (d.1964). There were two children born of this marriage. Read medicine with his father and attended Detroit College of Medicine. Medical Director of the Original Bath House, a position he held for 12 years. For 99 years, there was a doctor in the Taylor family. Member of The Old Crowd.

BENJAMIN ROBERTSON, (1807-1871)

Married **Mary P.** (d.1861). Subscriber to the establishment of Clinton Grove Cemetery and served as Secretary of its Board of Directors.

GEORGE B. VAN EPS, Tanner and Merchant, (1823-1887)

Born in Madison County, New York; came to Mount Clemens in 1845. Married **Maria Ashley**, **Mary E. Robertson** (d.1851) and **Matilda A. Fitch** (d.1900). Bought an interest in a tannery and entered into the boots and shoes, bindings and leather and harness business. Served as President of the Village of Mount Clemens, Assessor, and member of the School Board for 18 years. Subscriber to the establishment of Clinton Grove Cemetery and served as its first treasurer.

SAMUEL NUNNELEY, Farmer, (1804-1858)

Born in Marketborough, County of Leister, England; came to Mount Clemens in 1847. Married **Naomi Wareing** (d.1897). Farmed on South Gratiot (Nunneley Road). The fifth generation of this family, bearing the same name, lives in Mount Clemens. It is known that Samuel's remains, among others, were removed from the Old Cemetery on Gratiot Avenue in Mount Clemens (now known as Clemens Park).

JAMES DONALDSON, Blacksmith, (1820-1856)

Born in Markethill, County Armagh, Northern Ireland; came to Macomb County in 1844 and to Mount Clemens in 1847. Married **Isabella Trew** (d.1892). Worked on the Clinton-Kalamazoo Canal as a smith. He and his 4 sons, William Samuel, Andrew T., Thomas and James were smiths. Family of 7 children, including daughters Sarah, Susan and Isabella are buried in Clinton Grove Cemetery.

JAMES F. FENTON, Cement Worker, (1818-1863)

Born in Scotland; came to Mount Clemens in 1848. Married **Ann Dunn** (d.1912). Served in the Union Army as a Drill Sergeant under Captain **Judson S. Farrar** and subsequently, after the first Battle of Bull Run, under Colonel **Henry D. Taylor**.

WILLIAM BEER, Construction, (1791-1884)

Born in Somersetshire, England; came to Macomb County in 1835. Married **Sarah Hollidge** and **Isabel Van Norstrand** (d.1882). Built a sawmill with **James Snook**. Constructed the locks on the Clinton-Kalamazoo Canal between Mount Clemens and Utica. Built the first flouring mill in Mount

Clemens. His daughter, Mary Ann, married **E. Wright Hall**, son of **Ebenezer Hall**. The monument marking the family lot, Beer-Hall, was once featured in Ripley's "Believe It or Not." Beer was one of the first officers of the Village.

GEORGE M. CROCKER, Lawyer, (1848-1918)

Born in Greenville, Illinois; came to Mount Clemens in 1867. Married **Katherine Dickinson** (d.1882), daughter of **Joshua** and **Catherine Lee Dickinson**. There were 7 children by this marriage. Upon her death, married **Harriet Steele** (d.1887). There was an infant by this marriage who died at this time. Upon her death, married her sister, **Cecelia** (d.1937). There were 3 children by this marriage, one of whom was **Ann Alexis Steele Crocker** (d.1968) who was City Librarian for 30 years. George Crocker was admitted to the bar in 1870. He became mayor upon the death of **Joshua Dickinson**, the first mayor. Crocker was co-founder of the Ullrich Savings Bank. He served as prosecuting attorney and Probate Judge. He was a member of The Old Crowd.

THEOPHILUS VAN DAMME, Architect, (18??-1938)

Came to the United States in 1854 from Belgium. Married **Margaret Rosenagle** (d.1909). Proprietor of a cigar store, furniture factory and was a pipe organ carver in Detroit. He came to Mount Clemens and worked for **Northrup J. Gibbs**. He went into business as an architect in 1892. Made the plans for the Park, Colonial, and Medea Hotels and the St. Joseph Sanitarium, Clementine Bath House, Olympia Bath House, Mount Clemens High School and the Carnegie Library (now the Art Center). President, Mount Clemens Brick and Tile Company. Designed some of the finest business buildings in Mount Clemens. The Clinton Grove Cemetery Chapel/Office is one of his creations.

JOHN STOCKTON, Military, (1790?-1878)

Born in ?. Married **Mary Allen**, the step-daughter of **Christian Clemens**. Served in the War of 1812 and the Civil War attaining the rank of colonel. The first clerk and first postmaster of Mount Clemens. Also served as Register of Deeds, Justice of the Peace, and President of the Village. Erected the first frame house in the county which was an addition to the home of Christian Clemens.

GEORGE LEE, M.D., (1802-1876)

Came to Mount Clemens in 1827 to practice medicine. Married **Harriet Clemens** (d.1827), daughter of **Christian** and **Elizabeth Clemens**. Built his home on Market Street. Highly respected doctor in the community.

JOSHUA N. DICKINSON, Real Estate, (1811-1879)

Born in Orange County, Vermont; came to Mount Clemens in 1842. Married **Catherine Lee**, (d.1856), daughter of **George** and **Harriet Lee**. Three of the four Dickinson children also died in 1856. One of the builders of the Romeo and Mount Clemens Plank Road. Chairman of the County Committee. Served on the building committee of Grace Episcopal Church. First mayor of Mount Clemens, serving one month only before his death. His home became the home of his daughter, **Katherine** and **George Crocker**. The home is now known as The Crocker House, headquarters of the Macomb County Historical Society.

FRANCIS H. BENTLEY, Jeweler, (1837-1894)

Born near Rochester, New York; came to Mount Clemens in 1840. Married **Maria Lovell** (d.1921), England. Succeeded his father in the jewelry business. Served as town clerk. Member of the I.O.O.F. (Odd Fellows). Active member of Grace Episcopal Church, served on the building committee of the church, and participated in the cornerstone laying in 1870. Member of The Old Crowd.

WILLIAM FLUEMER, Businessman, (1856-1906)

Born in Mount Clemens. Married **Mary M. Dierlan** (buried in 1904). Succeeded to ownership of Fluemer's Mill which was founded by his father. Dealt extensively in flour and feed and was one of the pioneers of shipping on the Great Lakes. His obituary reads: "Yesterday witnessed one of the largest

funerals in the city's history of Mount Clemens. Over 53 carriages and autos wended their way to Clinton Grove Cemetery where the last rites were solemnized over the remains of the city's most beloved and respected citizen. William Fluemer again demonstrated the fact that success is not a matter of genius, but is the outcome of clear judgment, good will toward men, and a square deal for all." Member of The Old Crowd.