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Parke's Family News

"That we may more clearly appreciate and cherish our rich heritage"

February, 1975

1974 ANNUAL MEETING

An attendance of about 30 participated in the annual meeting and reunion of the Parke Society on Saturday, Sept. 28, in the legendary Park-McCullough Mansion, North Bennington, Vt.

Members and their families had ample opportunity to visit the famed Bennington Museum, view the comprehensive collection of Grandma Moses originals and see other sights in that historic locality.

Thanks to the kindness of the Park-McCullough Association trustees, and the willingness of staff guides to give of their own time, guests were afforded individual conducted tours of the 30-room Victorian mansion and its priceless carriage house.

A preprandial business meeting in one of the downstairs parlors was brisk and to the point. Dispensing with the reading of the minutes of last year's meeting, the members heard a summary of activities of the Board of Trustees, then accepted the report of the nominating committee and elected the following to three-year terms: Douglas P. Adams, Charlestown, Mass., re-elected; Miss Dorothea B. Cogswell, Newton Highlands, Mass., re-elected; David L. Parke, South Dartmouth, Mass., newly elected.

The complete list of trustees is printed elsewhere on these pages.

The new Board immediately met to choose officers for the coming year. All re-elected, they are: President, William G. Cook, Buffalo, N.Y.;

vice president, Stuart Park, Wells, Vt.; secretary, Mrs. Richard (Nancy) Poole, Norwich, Conn., and treasurer Wilfred A. Park, Preston, Conn.

The president appointed as secretary pro tem Miss Kathryn E. Parke, Cobleskill, N.Y.

These results were announced to the guests at the sumptuous and delicious catered dinner served at a long table in the imposing main corridor of the mansion.

Among the special guests introduced were Averill Brown, president of the Park-McCullough House Association and several of his trustees; John McCullough, a descendant of the builder of the mansion, and Lieut. Gov. John S. Burgess of the State of Vermont, a Parke descendant who especially welcomed visitors from other states.

Honors for longest distance traveled went to Dr. Sonney Park of California and for second longest to Mr. and Mrs. Raymond R. (Betty) Ruppert of Washington, D.C.

Trustee Douglas P. Adams of Charlestown, Mass., described a proposal for a Parke memorial service on June 15, 1975, in connection with the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Bunker Hill (see separate story).

Final item on the program was a slide presentation, "Ancestral Safari II," by President Cook. It was the second half of the talk he began at the 1973 reunion, on places in England, Scotland and Wales which are identified with ancestors of Thomas² and Dorothy² (Thompson)

Parke of Preston, Conn.

Special thanks were expressed to Vice President Stuart Park, who so ably handled all arrangements for the event. A resident of Wells, Vt., he made many trips to North Bennington to confer with the mansion management, arrange for a caterer and procure maps and other materials for promotional mailing.

MEMORIAL SERVICE AT BUNKER HILL?

Trustee Douglas P. Adams is working on a proposal he made recently that the Parke Society, Inc., hold a memorial service next June to honor members of the family who died in the Battle of Bunker Hill.

This early engagement in the American Revolution was fought on June 17, 1775, and two Parks died on that occasion.

There will be a 200th anniversary celebration of the battle as part of the American Bicentennial. Doug's suggestion is that the Society borrow the facilities of the nearby Baptist Church and hold memorial services there on Sunday, June 15, two days before the actual anniversary.

All members of the Society would be invited, along with friends and relatives. The services would be open to the general public, of course.

The membership will be kept informed as to future developments.

Please, cousins, send family news, anecdotes of the present or past, results of your research for inclusion in the Parke/s News to Nancy Poole's assistant:

Mrs. Raymond R. Ruppert
1515 Ritchie-Marlboro Rd.
Washington, D.C. 20027

Many thanks for copy from Kay Parke, Bill Cook and Donald Gilbert, whose descriptions of his trip through Robert Parke's English countryside will appear in the next issue.

ANCESTRAL SAFARI - Part II

Those who heard Bill Cook's 1973 slide presentation will remember that he took his audience through the southern English shire, stopping briefly at various castles, cathedrals, abbeys and battlefields identified with ancestors of Dorothy² Thompson, wife of Thomas² Parke.

At the 1974 reunion, after a short review, he conducted viewers to other ancestral haunts: Bath Abbey (King Edgar crowned 973); Wantage (King Alfred born 849); Twyford, Bucks, (home of the "good" Giffords); Gestingthorpe (seven generations of Parkes, including Robert^I) and other sites in East Anglia.

They saw the abbey ruins at Bury-St. Edmunds where the barons in 1214 swore to wrest Magna Charta from King John. There were stops in Norfolk (the Lestranges); the Wash (a quick tide stole King John's baggage when he tried to take a shortcut, 1216), and Preston Capes, Northants. (Dorothy² Thompson baptized 1624).

In the banquet hall of Oakham Castle were the king-size horseshoes deposited by visiting royalty and nobility, and the carved heads of Ancestors Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine.

They saw Newark Castle, Linds. (King John died 1216 after gorging on peaches and cold cider); beautiful Lincoln Cathedral and its famous

Lincoln Imp, and the priceless Roman, Saxon and early Norman treasures found in recent excavations at York Minster.

In Durham Cathedral they peeped through a window into the monks' garden where Earl Gospatric I is buried. They "shared" an Elizabethan dinner at Lumley Castle; crossed the Wall of Hadrian; saw Morpeth Castle (William de Merlay and son Ralph); Alnwick Castle (Scots King Malcolm Canmore died in battle) and Bamburgh Castle on the North Sea (Waltheof, Earl of Northumbria).

After a quick look at some ruined Scottish abbeys, they sped to Edinburgh (many Scottish kings, including Malcolm Canmore, whose wife, the saintly Queen Margaret, built a tiny chapel still in use).

They crossed the Firth of Forth for stops at Old Scone (once home of the stone); Glamis Castle; Fettercairn (King Kenneth MacDonald slain 995) and Lumphanan where Malcolm Canmore slew Macbeth (no ancestor) in battle.

Elgin on the Moray Firth was the northernmost stop. Then came famous Loch Ness (no monster visible); Ben Nevis, tallest peak in Britain; the sacred Isle of Iona (early Scots kings buried); Dunadd (first capital of the Scottish kingdom founded by Ancestor Fergus the Great, an Irishman).

The tour moved east and south through more pretty scenery, re-entering England at Greta Green. In Chester Cathedral were the flags carried by the Cheshire Regiment at Bunker Hill. Then across the River Dee (where King Edgar made eight conquered Celtic chiefs row his barge) into Wales for a look at the empty sarcophagus of our Prince Llewelyn the Great in Llanrwst Church; his colorful statue in Conway; the tomb of his grandfather, Owain Gwynedd in Bangor Cathedral; then southwest through purple Welsh mountains

and back to England; Shrewsbury Cathedral (tomb of Sir Roger de Montgomery); Worcester Cathedral (tomb of King John); Brimpsfield, Glos., (home of the "veddy wicked" Giffards) Fladbury (tomb and memorial brass of Sir John Throckmorton and Alianore de la Spine). They saw the rain-washed statue of Ancestress Lady Godiva in Coventry and ended the tour in Stratford, birthplace of William Shakespeare (no ancestor).

SHAKING THE FAMILY TREE

Everyone has elderly relatives who know all about the family. You don't need to remember your great-aunt's real name-you can always "ask Cousin Clara". So you don't bother to write such things down. You've heard all Uncle Harvey's stories a hundred times, too, for heaven's sake don't let him get started again! But what will happen when Cousin Clara and Uncle Harve aren't around any more? Can you recall all those things accurately?

Go visit such elderly relatives. Take a long, leisurely afternoon and have pen, paper, and if possible tape-recorder all in good supply and good working order. Get 'em started, and WRITE IT ALL DOWN.

Such things as the following are invaluable-and terribly perishable-genealogical information:

Names (full names, as well as the commonly-used nicknames) of all family members.

Birth and death dates and places.

Places of residence, schools attended, what kind of work followed.

If now living, get the person's full address down.

Their children-all this information about them, too.

Reminiscences school life, work experiences, vacation and travel, accidents and close-calls, accomplishments and disappointments, world or national events as seen from the personal point of view. Get the

intimate details that museums cherish, such as "What kinds of tools did you use, and how did they work?"

You can easily expand the list. If Uncle Harve really gets going, and you stay alert (not always easy!), you should have a million questions. Ask them! And write down the answers.

Cousin Clara may want to shy away from some things-she'd rather forget the family feuds. Well-you must be kind of course; maybe you can let some things go, rather than distressing her. Still-such things can also be history. See if you can get the facts, while tactfully skirting the emotions.

Try to get at least one anecdote in Uncle Harvey's own voice, even if you have to record your questions too and make it a dialogue. He may demur-and may be frightened of his own voice, if he's never heard a playback before. But he'll think it over, and the next time you and the tape-recorder show up, I'll bet he'll have another incident-one you never heard before-to record. Note: it's always profitable to plan on making more than one information-gathering visit. Some of these afterthoughts may be more valuable than the first.

You'll doubtless want to check on dates and such facts, using official records,

family Bible, other relatives. If you find discrepancies, see if you can resolve them. Once in a while, Aunt Clara might be right, and the Town Clerk might have goofed!

OFFICERS AND TRUSTEES

Pres. Wm. G. Cook, Buffalo, N.Y.
V.Pres. Stuart Park, Wells, Vt.
Treas. Wilfred A. Park, Preston, Ct.
Sec. Nancy Poole, Norwich, Ct.
Asst. Sec. Kathryn E. Parke
Cobleskill, N.Y.

Trustees with Expiration Years.

1975

Brainerd T. Peck, Lakeside, Ct.
Mrs. Raymond R. Ruppert
Washington, D.C.
Mrs. George Thurber, Manchester, Ct.

1976

Stuart Park, Wells, Vt.
Kathryn E. Parke, Cobleskill, N.Y.,
Parke Spicer, Poquetanuck, Ct.

1977

Douglas P. Adams, Charlestown, Mass.
Dorothea B. Cogswell, Newton
Highlands, Mass.
David L. Parke, S. Dartmouth, Mass.

NEWEST MEMBER

If you wondered where Secy. Nancy Poole was on the day of the reunion, she was busily taking care of Jessica newest member of the Parke Soc. We hope to see her back at future meetings. In the meantime, Kaye Parke is secretary pro tem. Congratulations to Nancy and husband.

Park/e/s Family News
c/o Mrs. Nancy L. Poole
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Norwich, Conn. 06360