

The Parke Society

Newsletter

Clearinghouse for research on all Park/e/s immigrants from the British Isles.
Promoting Fellowship, Genealogical Research and the Preservation of our Heritage

2006 Convocation Held in Wethersfield, CT

by Curtis Parks, PS#1166

We chose Wethersfield because Robert Parke (MA 1630) helped establish the settlement on his return from England in the mid-1600s. The consensus seems to be that holding our Annual Convocation there in September was a good choice; New England in the fall was very enjoyable. The hotel was comfortable and the banquet hall served us well as both a research room and for our annual banquet.

An optional tour was offered with our registration, and about half of us were treated to visits to several historic properties and a lunch in the historic Village Tavern. The tour was divided between Old Town Wethersfield on Friday, followed by Historic Glastonbury on Saturday morning. We began with a guided tour of the Webb-Deane-Stevens Mu-

seum. These three homes are beautifully restored to their eighteenth-century glory: 1752 (Webb), 1766 (Deane), and 1789 (Stevens). Each differed in architecture and furnishings. Our guide's descriptions of the historic use of various rooms and items in them were a great help during this part of our tour. Our one bit of disappointment during this part of our tour was to learn that we would not be able to identify where Robert Parke had built his home, as even the streets shown on the old map had been re-aligned many years ago. We then proceeded across the street and behind the Old Meeting Hall and Church to the Old Burying Ground.

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Interesting gravestones seen in The Old Burying Ground

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Who to contact:

PARKE SOCIETY Board members live all over the country. Before sending a request, inquiry, article, suggestion, dues, or lineage materials, please check the listing below to be sure the material is directed to the proper Board member.

ADDRESSES AND OTHER MEMBERSHIP LISTING CHANGES:

Send all changes of mailing address, name, phone number, email address, or any reports of deaths or other important family events to our Executive Director, **Fr. Michael (Tad) Parks** #425H at 70741.2122@compuserve.com, or by surface mail to him at

P.O. Box 590
Milwaukee, WI 53201-0590
Phone: (414) 332-9984 (evenings only)

CONVOCATIONS: Send questions about convocations to our Vice President and Convocation Coordinator, **Curtis H. Parks**, PS#1166, at chparks@mdo.net.

DNA TESTING: Send DNA questions to our DNA Group Administrator, **Ken M. Parks**, PS#1406 at kenparks@earthlink.net.

DUES: Send dues and dues-related questions to our Secretary:

Mrs. Arlene Parks Callahan, PS#396
324 Sullivan Road
Schenectady, NY, 12304-3625

Make dues payments payable to The Parke Society, Inc. (Note: please do not send these questions to the Treasurer.)

GENEALOGY QUESTIONS AND MATERIALS: Send these to our Historian, **Fr. Michael (Tad) Parks** #425H at 70741.2122@compuserve.com, or by surface mail to

P.O. Box 590
Milwaukee, WI 53201-0590

Please also send such materials to your Lineage Leader, if you have one.

GENERAL COMMENTS, SUGGESTIONS, AND CRITICISMS:

Send all general correspondence of this kind to our President, **Mr. Keith G. Harrison**, PS#710, at pcinc@prodigy.net, or by surface mail to him at

4209 Santa Clara Drive
Holt, MI 48842-1868

LIBRARY: Send all questions relating to the Library, including loans of materials, to our Librarian, **Mrs. Jean Churchill**, PS#934, at sdtjs2001@yahoo.com, or by surface mail to her at

221 S. Wyomissing Ave
Shillington, PA 19607-2535

MEMBERSHIP: Send questions concerning Parke Society membership, requests for membership packets, and all application materials to our Registrar, **Mr. R. Dan Park**, PS#1422, at registrar@parke.org, or by surface mail at

10942 Firecreek Dr.
Houston, TX 77043-2732

MISSING LINKS: Send all questions relating to "Missing Links" and Missing Link articles to our **Librarian**. See above for her address.

NEWSLETTER: Send article submissions and comments to our Editor, **Dr. Paul Jordan-Smith**, PS#1451 at parkeditor@csedl.org or parke-news@csedl.org. Please send to one address or the other, *not both*. If you don't have email, send all *typed* materials to

Fr. Michael (Tad) Parks #425H
P.O. Box 590
Milwaukee, WI 53201-0590

Please note: handwritten submissions cannot be accepted.

THE PARKE SOCIETY NEWSLETTER VOL. 43, NO. 1

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THE PARKE SOCIETY (org. 1963) serves as a clearinghouse for research on all Park/e/s immigrants from the British Isles. Regular membership is open to any descendant. Associate membership is open to any interested person. Inquiries and requests for membership should be directed to the Registrar. Fees are:

Application Fee	\$ 15.00
Annual Dues	\$ 25.00
Life Membership	\$250.00
(US funds only)	

THE PARKE SOCIETY NEWSLETTER is published by the Society for its members three times per year. Copies sent to libraries and genealogically oriented societies on request. Articles on research, historical records, as well as news items and queries are always welcome, as are photographs, document scans, and other significant visual materials.

Editor: Dr. Paul Jordan-Smith
Email: parkenews@csedl.org or parkeditor@csedl.org
(Please use one or the other; please do *not* send to both.)

Immediate Past Editor: Percival D. Park #140

Publisher and Editor Emeritus: David L. Parke #13H
Email: davcel080@aol.com

President: Keith Harrison #710
Email: pcinc@prodigy.net

Immediate Past President: Jeanne Reisler #514L

Vice President: Curtis H. Parks #1166L
Email: chparks@mdo.net

Executive Director: Fr. Michael (Tad) Parks #425H
Email: 70741.2122@compuserve.com

Secretary: Arlene P. Callahan #396
324 Sullivan Road
Schenectady, NY 12304-3625

Treasurer: Lu Terock #861

Registrar: R. Dan Park #1422
Email: registrar@parke.org

Registered agent: W. Scott Park #264

Historian: Fr. Michael (Tad) Parks #425H

DNA Group Administrator: Ken M. Parks, PS#1406

Librarian, Dana Parks Jr. Memorial Circulating Library:
Jean C. Churchill #934H
Email: sdtjs2001@yahoo.com

Archivist: Mrs. Corabelle E. DeClerg #842H
873 Kent St.
Portland, MI 48875-1741

Website: <http://www.parke.org>

Webmaster: Curtis H. Parks #1166L
Email: chparks@mdo.net

Annual Convocation

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By noon we were ready for an enjoyable lunch for our group at The Village Tavern. Following lunch we went three houses down to the Keene Building, home of the Wethersfield Historic Society. This building had once been a school and now used to showcase the Historic Society's exhibit "Legendary People, Ordinary Lives." Another of the docents of the Museum met us at The Cove. He explained how there had been a great bend in the River which provided a good anchorage for the sailing ships. There had originally been three log warehouses at The Cove but now only one remained. This warehouse was opened for our group, and we enjoyed the collection of early tools and some items that had at one time been aboard ships.

Saturday morning we again headed out, this time crossing the river to Glastonbury. At the time our Robert lived here Glastonbury was part of Wethersfield. We were given a tour of the Museum-on-the-Green which included an interesting collection of books and early documents, as well as exhibits of various implements from the colonial era. The folks at the Historical Society had researched our ancestor and had found documents indicating where Robert owned land in Naubuck Farms and a reference to Robert in *The History of Ancient Wethersfield*, by Henry R. Stiles, A.M, M.D. (We are indeed fortunate to have a copy of this rare old book in our Society Library.) Next door was the Ancient Burying Ground where we were guided among interesting old stones. Our group caravanned to the Museum's Welles-Shipman-Ward House. The name relates to three successive owners of the early eighteenth-century home which has been restored to the way it was in 1755. This home included many interesting items, such as a sink carved from stone (most sinks of the period were made of wood) complete with a channel in the back for draining dirty water through the wall into the back yard. We were told that the well was also in the back yard, and that many early homes indeed had problems with contaminated water. The tour of the home included a workshop and a two-story barn. The barn housed an interesting collection of old

carriages. Among them was a beautiful hearse and a large sled that had been used for hauling blocks of ice cut from the Connecticut River. Our tour concluded, we headed out separately to lunch, shopping, and for some, going back across the River on "the oldest continuously-operating ferry in the U.S."

Our Banquet speaker was Ruthie Shapleigh-Brown who has 15 years experience with various Connecticut organizations dedicated to preserving gravestones which were carved prior to 1800. She used slides to make several points that may help our cemetery searches. One was to bring out the text on a gravestone a large mirror can catch the sun which when angled so the light crosses the stone at just the right angle really makes the carvings stand out. Another point was that lichen does need to be cleaned off the stones, but use only water and a very soft brush. Spray the plants, wait a few minutes, then gently brush them off. Ruthie also presented pictures of markers produced by a number of the stone carvers that her organizations have identified. One of her hand-outs was a compilation of some 59 carvers whose works are found throughout New England.

During the dinner, Ken Parks, our DNA Testing



Conclusion of our banquet

Annual Convocation

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Coordinator, presented an old family bible that was being auctioned to one of our own who was related to the original owner.



Ken Parks presenting old bible

This was indeed an enjoyable Convocation. We enjoyed the company of many of the folks who have helped our Society so much over the years, and we also welcomed and enjoyed meeting with some who were not members. We would especially like those who were our docents and guides during our tour:

Webb-Deane-Stevens Museum, Wethersfield, CT:

Len Wasserman - Webb, Deane, and Stevens homes

Katie Sullivan - The Old Burying Ground

Wethersfield Historic Society:

Cynthia Reyes - "Legendary People, Ordinary Lives" Exhibit

Phil Lohman - The Old Cove Warehouse

Glastonbury, CT:

Jim Bennett - Director, Historical Society.

Phyllis Reed - Museum-on-the-Green genealogy

Jean Greene - Ancient Burying Ground

Lyn Scarduzio - Welles-Shipman-Ward House

Our special thanks to **Phil Santopietro**, General Manager of the Best Western Camelot Inn, and his staff for helping us plan our stay and making sure all our events went smoothly.

Park Family Bible Presentation at PS Convocation 2006

By Ken Parks PS #1406

Back in December of 2005, a message from one of the Park mailing lists appeared in my inbox alerting list members about a Park family Bible for sale on eBay. I went to the site and took a look at the names and dates listed in the bible. Though I knew this family had no connection to my own Parks line, I decided to bid on it and investigate whether I could learn more about the family involved and perhaps locate a PS member with a family connection to the bible.

My bid was successful and once the bible arrived, I did some initial census work on the family. They were located mainly in Warren County, NJ and though my intention was to track them forward in time, at some point I got sidetracked and the bible sat on the shelf. As the PS Convocation 2006 neared, I decided to bring it along and donate it to the PS library with the stipulation that should a PS member with a family connection turn up in the future, the bible could be handed over to them.

As luck would have it, a few weeks before the Convocation I received an email from John R. Parke, asking for information about joining the PS and the DNA project, and informing us he and his wife Sue would be attending the Convocation in Wethersfield. As I began to look at his lineage information, the location in NJ rang a bell and I went back to the Park family listed in the bible. Sure enough, there was a connection! Though not in John's direct line of descent, the **John Park** (b. c.1834) listed in the bible as being married to Mary Ann Dennis, and father of the eight children listed, was the younger brother of **John R. Parke's** 2nd great-grandfather, Morris Green Park (1826-1890). We thought the Convocation banquet was a perfect time to present the bible to Mr. and Mrs. Parke, thus returning a family heirloom back into hands that would cherish and preserve it for future generations.

Be sure to renew your membership!

The Park/e/s DNA Surname Project in 2006

by Ken Parks PS #1406

Group Administrator

PARK/E/S DNA Surname Project

100 Strong and Growing!

Thanks to the cooperation of our PS members, we have already reached our goal of 100 participants in the DNA database, well ahead of our year-end schedule! Congratulations and thanks to all who helped make this possible.

Of course, there's nothing special about the century mark in and of itself, but it shows that the database is reaching a size that can effectively offer valuable information to anyone joining the project in the future, as well as continuing to provide clues to those already in the database. Our goal for the coming year is to target unrepresented lineages from our membership to ensure as many Lineage Keys (LKs) are included in the DNA database as possible. There are still lots and lots of distinct Park/e/s DNA haplotypes, or "signatures" out there, so our work is far from over!

Convocation 2006 and DNA Website News

At the recent Convocation 2006 in Wethersfield, CT, I had the opportunity to meet several members for the first time, which is always a pleasure. I had met past President **Jeanne Reisler** #514 last year in Salt Lake City, and it was good to see her again. It was especially gratifying to meet **David Parke** #13, and **Cecilia Parke** #535, two members who contributed so much to the Society long before this newcomer became a member.

The opportunity to spend time in the research room with members and officers was the most gratifying aspect of the gathering for me, and I wish we were able to do this sort of thing several times a year. One of the happy outcomes of this personal interaction was a conversation with our VP and Webmaster, **Curtis Parks** #1166. Benefiting from his knowledge of computers, never my strong suit, I was emboldened to take a few tentative steps into the mysteri-

ous realm of writing html code. What this resulted in was a DNA project web page which is now a bit easier to navigate, with more changes to be added as time permits. With these changes in the web page, as well as the constantly changing test result information, it is hoped members will visit the DNA project webpage on a regular basis to see what new information is there. As always, it can be found at:

<http://www.familyreedna.com/public/park-e-s>

One of my goals with the DNA project webpage is to put an updated analysis for each group online, rather than here in the newsletter. This would enable members to view the current status of all groups whenever they wish, rather than wait for a particular group to appear in a newsletter article, which could be outdated soon after publication due to new test results.

Another addition will be a brief descendant outline showing how each test participant fits into the family tree, when enough information is available to enable us to do so. These new additions will not likely be online by the time this article appears, but will be added on a regular basis as I can get to them. We are all volunteers here at the PS, and cannot always devote as much time as we would like to Society business, so sometimes projects take a bit longer than we would like. We apologize in advance for any delays and ask for your understanding and patience.

DNA in the News

For those of you interested in the broader aspects of DNA research, I would like to draw attention to a few items of interest. The first is a recent article in the October 2006 issue of Smithsonian magazine, entitled "Neanderthal Man". It discusses the efforts of researchers to extract DNA from fossilized remains and reconstruct the entire genetic blueprint of the Neanderthal, an early archaic human. Their goal is to compare the Neanderthal DNA with that of modern humans to see if there is any evidence that Neanderthals may have interbred with the modern humans who migrated out of Africa.

Another item of interest is a new book giving an

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DNA Surname Project cont'd from p. 5

excellent overview of the history of ancient humankind. *Before the Dawn—Recovering the Lost History of Our Ancestors*, by Nicholas Wade (New York: Penguin Press, 2006) draws together current knowledge regarding the origins and development of humans from the fields of genetics, archeology, anthropology, linguistics and others areas of research.

Lastly, an exciting new introduction is worth noting here. Roots Television has finally arrived, available only online. What this means, unfortunately, is that only those with a good high speed internet connection are able to take full advantage of this new channel, but for those who can access it, there is a wealth of genealogically related videos, lectures, books, etc. here for viewing at your leisure. There are videos about DNA and genealogy, but also any and all topics relating to genealogy: records preservation, oral history, as well as current news items such as video of the news conference announcing the successful genealogical search for Annie Moore, the first person processed through Ellis Island and much, much more. I would urge all of you who can access this new resource to take a look for yourselves and discover the wide variety of wonderful material available there.

<http://www.rootstelevision.com>

As always, I look forward to hearing from members with questions about joining the DNA surname project. To those participants currently in the project waiting to hear from me about results—hang in there, I'm working to catch up with the ever growing amount of results to be processed!

Have you renewed?
Check the date on your envelope.
Don't miss the next issue!

Historian's Corner: On Genealogical Executors

by (Fr.) Michael (Tad) Parks+, PS #425H

An incessant rhythm exists in our world and in our lives. As seasons come and go, so does our life move from youth to adulthood and into the senior years. I enjoy this ever changing seasonal pattern (they being much more noticeable here in Wisconsin, than say, in Arizona or Florida). They keep me from being bored with the weather, and serve as a constant reminder that not all things will remain the same.

And as I prepare for the winter by putting down the flower beds, hanging the storm windows and in general closing up for the year; so also I need to be preparing for the fall and winter of my life.

Unfortunately, too many people put off that important task, thereby leaving a lot of puzzled survivors. Decisions will be made, that may not have been the real desire of the decedent. But without instructions, what are the heirs to do?

This came startlingly to mind this fall when a close relative suddenly passed away in his sleep at the age of 49. The cause was *cardiomegaly* (enlargement of the heart), and there had been no warning whatever that there was any problem at all. For much of the family, and a lot of his friends this was an important wake up call to see that our things are in order, be we 49 or 89.

It would be safe to state that to each of us, our genealogical work is very important. We probably have spent hundreds of hours, if not dollars writing letters, collecting documents and all the other things that go into "doing" genealogy. For many of us, this is a big investment of our time and ourselves. The question I ask here is: What will happen to our work, when something happens to us?

I know all too many horror stories about how "Aunt Mabel's" family history stuff was tossed out with the trash because no one realized just how important it was to her, or perhaps to others in the family. In the "settling of affairs" mode, genealogical work papers

are not usually viewed as an important asset. At least to those who get the task of “cleaning out” the residence.

But it is important to us. So shouldn't we be doing something to protect our work, to convey it to someone who will find it useful, and who will hopefully continue our work? I think so, and sooner rather than later.

What is needed is some sort of a “Genealogical Executor”: someone similar to the Literary or Artistic Executor appointed to look after the cultural assets of authors, artists, and composers after their demise. This is a practical matter that can be easily arranged, without any additional cost, and it will give you the comfort and peace of mind knowing that your work and efforts will not be for naught.

I tell my tax clients, incessantly it seems, that they should be making arrangements for the eventualities. All of us should have a will, a durable power of attorney (separate ones for health concerns and financial concerns) and a living will, so that our heirs will know our wishes. These are all legal documents that should be drawn up with the help of appropriate legal and accounting/tax counsel.

But there is another document which should be available to your successor(s). That may be your “to be appointed” Executor or Personal Representative. Or it may be someone else to whom you are close and to whom will fall the immediate tasks upon your demise. This is *The Instructions*. Mind you, this document does not replace (or alter the provisions of) the documents previously mentioned. It just provides guidance until such time as your will is indeed probated.

I have a set of *Instructions*. They cover a multitude of items, tasks that need to be handled following my demise, and before anyone gets around to filing the will and all that jazz. There is really nothing in *The Instructions* which would materially affect the probateable estate, but it does answer an awful lot of vital questions.

For example, I have my funeral and burial instruc-

tions all written out (and already known to the appropriate clerical friends who will be called upon). I am determined that my funeral will be done in a more traditional mode (no balloons, thank you!). No one will have to ask or decide what to do; its all set. I've even written my obituary and death notices, and told them what papers it is to be published in. I want those names to be right, and the relationships correct. But more importantly, for the purposes of this article anyway, I have dealt with the issue of my own genealogical work.

In my particular case, I have a double duty. Besides my own genealogical goodies, I have a large amount of Society materials, which *must* get back to the right place. So it was (and is) vitally important that my “instructee” knows just what I am talking about, and to whom the vital phone calls need to be made. (The “callee” is also aware and prepared too!) And it is not only spelled out in *The Instructions*, but I have physically pointed out exactly to what I am referring. I've done everything I can to preserve my work (and that of the Society).

So what about you? Have you thought about what is to happen to your work? Have you made provisions for its proper disposition after you pass on? Please, don't make any assumptions here; you can't necessarily look to your children. To be honest, it seems a bit unusual to find offspring who are as truly interested in the art of genealogy and family history as you might be. Indeed, I have seen and heard of cases where the children are actually opposed to searching the family roots, for fear that they might stumble on something unpleasant.

Do your instructions: make sure someone who you trust, and who is capable of carrying out your wishes (this should imply someone younger than you, and who is physically mobile) knows where your genealogical work is, and to whom it is to go. Physically point out the materials if need be! Both to the heirs (read spouse and/or children if any) and the “instructee.” And make the potential recipient aware, so that he or she can expedite the transfer.

After all, I truly believe that we all hold onto

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Historian's Corner

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genealogical data in trust for future generations. Its not really ours; we are only the researchers and assemblers. And as good trustees of that deposit of knowledge, we need to see that it is not lost.

One final note. As you survey your family and friends, if you can't find anyone who is interested in taking on your work, don't despair quite yet. There are other possibilities and some better than others.

One is a local (or larger) genealogical/historical society. But there are negatives here. For the papers to be useful, they have to be catalogues and indexed something they might not be able or willing, to do without some sort of a monetary gift also. And once transferred, you need to remember that they are *their* property, to do with as they wish.

I would also like to let you know that The Parke Society would be quite willing to receive your genealogical work and papers. We can guarantee that they will be kept intact and available for research and review. While our main concern is, of course, the Park/e/s ancestry, we are always interested in the collateral lines.

The next step is yours. Please, before another day goes by, give consideration to your efforts and accomplishments in genealogy over the years, and make some provisions for their safe keeping. Don't let them become just "so much trash." Your papers may hold the one key or link that others are still striving for. Please do it for yourself and for the avocation of Genealogy.

Query

Susan Parkinson Pearson is looking for information about her great-great-grandfather, **Joseph Parks**, b. c.1800, probably in OH, mar. c.1829 Rebecca Brotherton (dates unknown); son: **Robert Brotherton Parks**, b. 9 Sep., 1831, Franklin Co. OH, d. 13 Mar., 1915; buried in Columbus, OH. If anyone has information, she please contact her by email at perason7909@bellsouth.net.

Dana Parks Jr. Memorial Circulating Library

by Jean Churchill #934, Librarian

As usual I enjoyed our CT Convocation. It was great to have the opportunity to meet with old Parke Society friends and also meet new ones. It was especially nice to meet PS# 914 **Elaine Burney** and her husband. Elaine and I are closely related to Claude and Gertrude (Bensley) Park and she is familiar with River Road, Nichols, New York where I grew up. In fact, her grandmother, Eva (Mrs. Bruce) Park, was my 4-H leader years ago. Elaine had lots of photographs on her laptop and we had fun looking through them, although it did take us awhile to realize that we were speaking of the same house—just under different owners.

Elaine and her husband live in Fanning Springs, Florida which is at the last bridge crossing over the Suwannee River before it flows west into the Gulf of Mexico. In the early 1800s, the Seminole village of Bowlegs Town was located near Fanning Springs, the site of Fort Fannin during the 2nd Seminole War. Elaine's husband, Harvard has Native American ancestry which has led to their interest in taking part in Seminole reenactments. As they take part in these portrayals, they feel closer to their ancestors. They believe that "making the past come alive to honor those who came before us and those yet to come" is important because whether our ancestors were Native Americans or immigrants, we are who we are because of them..

The following are recent additions to our Library collection:

Roger Parke (b.1755 Hunterdon Co, NJ - d. 1813 Quebec, Canada). Newell, Lois Ann (Park), compiler; 2006; (loan fee-\$3.) 000/NEW

Roger Parke enlisted in the War of 1812 while living in Monongalia County, VA/WV and died as a prisoner of war in Canada. DNA results have proven his connection to the Roger Parke (K) lineage but thus far, the connecting ancestry has not been found. Ann has thoroughly researched her lineage and carefully recorded the results in this manuscript. For

more on Roger's military experience see the 1998 Newsletter Vol. 35 pp.26-27 which has an interesting article, *Roger Parks (IV) of Hunterdon County, NJ* by Lee R. Christensen. Lineage Leader Susan Avery PS#1331 will also be writing an article on this branch of the K lineage.

Some descendants of Thomas Parks of Va. Parks, Terry D., PS#511L; compiler; 2005; LK= C; 000/PAR

Terry has provided an excellent manuscript of his branch of the Thomas (C) lineage down to the present day. This material is not available for loan because it contains material referring to living persons. However, I will be glad to look up information for Parke Society members.

PS#511L, PS#349; and PS#1124 have all participated in our DNA project and are a 37/37 match meaning that the likelihood of a common ancestor for them is extremely high, and it is presently accepted that they belong to the Thomas of VA lineage.

It should be noted that there is not complete agreement as to the linkage between Thomas of VA and the descendants of this branch. Our Parke Society Lineage Leader, Phyllis Kumler PS#525, has Charles (1744 VA-1805 GA) as a son of John and Mary (Sharp) Parks. Further research is needed to resolve this question.

The following reference files have been donated to our library:

Parke Bibliography of Loudoun County, Virginia, given by Mrs. Lois Ann Newell. This research was done by a genealogist (loan fee-\$2).

Genealogical Resources Archibald S. Alexander Library, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, donated by Mrs. Cecilia Parke PS# 535L (loan fee-\$2).

The next editorial due date is
February 15, 2007

Missing Link Update (LK = CU)

by Jean Churchill #934, Librarian

Silas Leonard Parks/Peter Glick Parks: material regarding this lineage has been published in the following Parke Society Newsletters: Vol.36, pp.34, 39; Vol. 38, p.14; and Vol.38, p.42. Mrs. Corabelle DeClerg PS# 842, our Archivist, is the contact person for this lineage, which has a number of active researchers, including PS# 1315. It is quite certain that Silas and Peter were brothers and possibly there was a third brother named Loudon.

Silas Leonard Parks (b.1801 in Arlington, VT, d. 12 April, 1876 Burton, Genessee Co, MI). He served in the War of 1812. In September 1822 **Silas L. Parks** of Arlington, County of Bennington, State of Vermont purchased real estate property in the Town of Chenango, Broome County, New York from Stephen Weed. On 19 June, 1824, **Silas L. Parks** and his wife **Lozina**, sold this property to **Loudon and Peter Park** of Chenango. On 21 February, 1829, a land parcel was sold by **Peter G. Parks and his wife Charlotte** of Town of Chenango to **Silas L. Parks** of the same place. On 8 November, 1830, Stephen Weed released claim to **Peter G. Parks**. All of these deeds seem to involve parts of the same real estate property. The deeds were obtained from Broome County Record books: Book 9, p.28; Book 8, p.155; Book 13, p.69; Book 13, p.106.

It is thought that **Silas L. Parks** moved toward Rochester, New York because when a group of 13 families came to Michigan, they called themselves the "Rochester Colony". Even today, there is still a sign near St. Johns, Michigan which says "Rochester Colony 1836". It is also possible that he lived elsewhere, probably in New York, and joined the Rochester group just before they left. What is important is the fact that he is now married to **Elizabeth Betsy Brown** and they have one child, **William James Parks** thought to be born in Monroe County, New York.

A second son, **Peter Parks** was born in 1837 probably in MI and was kidnapped by the Indians at a very young age. Peter was a grown man before he

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discovered that he had been stolen as a child. For the complete account of Peter Parks (Jim Fisher), see Vol. 25 No. 3.

History of Clinton County, Michigan, Bingham Township, p.379 has an account of this episode concluding with the statement that after a search of about ten days for the boy, "they came to the conclusion that Parks had in a fit of anger made away with the child and concealed the body. He stoutly maintained that the Indians must have done it. Of course everybody knew that story to be an improbable one, and that Parks in a moment of impetuous rage had fatally injured another of his children; but no legal investigation followed, and Parks went unscathed, at least by law." Since this book is now available on the Internet, a correction or footnote should be added vindicating Silas Parks.

In 1841, **Silas** and his family moved to Chesaning, MI, where he purchased 160 acres. Their daughter, **Lucinda Parks**, was the first white child born in Chesaning in May, 1842. **Silas** and **Betsy Parks** had a total of twelve children. After **Betsy's** death, Silas married **Philena J. Currier Hill** and moved to Genessee Co, MI. They had one child, **Philena J. Parks**.

According to their family history, **Silas L. Parks** was married first to **Elizabeth Betsy Brown**, thought to be born in Chatham, Canada; and second to **Philena Currier Hills**. There was never any mention of a wife named **Lozina**. However, Corabelle's niece has recently found further deed information from Broome County Land Records 1821-1830 referring to **Lozina**. Perhaps Silas had already left Broome County looking for a new place to live before sending for Lozina who might have died while he was gone.

Liber Book 12, p.338: **Peter G. Park** to **Lozina Park**. This indenture made 10 May 1830 between **Peter G. Park** and **Charlotte Park** his wife of Chenango, Broome Co, NY of the first part and **Lozina Park** of town of Vestal, Broome Co of the

second part withueforth that the said parities of the first part and in consideration of the sum of \$200.00 paid by the party of the second part do release unto the said party of the second part all that certain parcel of land lying in the town of Chenango, Broome County and is part of lot 116 in the Land Division of the Boston Purchase so called. This deed refers to 25 acres from the earlier deed of 1822 conveyed to Silas L. Park by Stephen Weed and his wife Julia.

A search has been made of the entire Broome County census for 1835 but there was no mention found of Silas, Lozina, Peter, or Loudon Parks. There were a couple places on the microfilm that were not legible but it seems fairly certain that by 1835 these people had moved elsewhere. Unfortunately, although Monroe County was formed in 1821, there is no census data for 1835 for this county.

Census data 1860 Image Heritage Quest Series M653 Roll 552 pp.302-303 - Michigan, Livingston County, Iosco:

Silas L. Parks, 58, farmer, 2000, 300, born Vermont; **Philena Parks**, 34; **John Parks**, 18; **Lucinda Parks**, 16; **Mary Parks**, 13; **Anson Parks**, 11 (see additional new information below); **Elone Parks**, 9; **Albert Parks**, 5; Horace Hill, 10; Lucy Hill, 5; Francis 11/16 (m)

Anson Parks (b.16 Mar.,1847, d. 26 Mar., 1925). On 26 Oct., 1869 Anson married **Mary Ann (Anna) Fowler** (b.17 July, 1846, d.14 July, 1927). Two known children:

1. **Walter C. Parks** (b.15 June,1874, d.17 May, 1954) mar. (1) 2 Nov., 1898 **Mertie Bell Graham** (b. 22 Sep.,1879, d.29 Apr.1919). **Walter** mar.(2) 30 Apr.,1921 **Lulu May Cook** (b.13 July,1881, d. 4 Nov.,1963). All are buried at Bristol Cemetery, Flint, Michigan

2. **Mary A. Parks**

The search is for the parents of Silas Leonard Parks and Peter Glick Parks and earlier ancestry. The speculation has been that they belonged with the Robert (MA 1630) lineage, but one member from this line who recently participated in the DNA testing does

not presently match anyone else in our Volunteer Data Base. Although Robert Parke and Richard Parks are well known New England emigrant lines, there are also other Park/e/s who emigrated to the New England area, one of whom is probably the ancestor of Silas and Peter. I strongly believe that the combination of DNA and the paper trail will provide an answer for this missing link, as well as for other fragment lines. However, this points out our need for as many volunteers as possible, including those Park/e/s who have established lines because they provide a benchmark for our DNA Administrator.

PS# 197, PS# 279, and PS# 1371 are direct descendants of **Peter Glick Parks** who is thought to be the brother of Silas. (Vol. 16, p. 22 and Vol. 25, pp.33, 47) However, this lineage fragment is presently classified as **LK = IX** until further confirmation is provided..

Peter Glick Parks (b. 23 Dec., 1807 Arlington, Vermont, d. 5 Nov., 1891 Lamar, MO). He married in 1825 **Charlotte Lamb**, daughter of Isaac Lamb/Lydia Peaslie. Charlotte (b. 29 July 1805 Binghamton, Broome Co, NY, d.1887 Morengo, McHenry Co, IL). **Peter and Charlotte Parks** were the parents of thirteen children.

Their first five children were born in New York. Their eighth child, **Oscar Orem Parks**, was born in 1840 in Naperville, Dupage, IL. Their ninth child, **Morris J. Parks**, was born in 1842 in Shawnee, OK, and their tenth child, **Aurilla Ann Parks**, was born in 1843 in Illinois. Birthplaces of the other children are not given.

Other Broome County, NY land records referring to **Peter G. Park** have also been found: Dimmick, Levi from **Peter G. Park** 15 Sep., 1842 by sheriff.

Parks, Peter from Samuel Ingham 6 Sep., 1844 #61 Boston Purchase.

Rutherford, William J. from **Peter Parks** 2 Mar., 1850 #61 Boston Purchase.

These transactions were after Peter and his family had left Broome County but perhaps they returned to

visit his wife's family who remained in the area?

For more information on this Missing Link, please contact Mrs. Corabelle DeClerg, 873 Kent Street, Portland, MI 48875-1741 or email Jean Churchill, Librarian at sdtjs2001@yahoo.com.

Whither the Convocations; or just what good are they?

by (Fr.) Michael (Tad) Parks+, PS #425H

A few years ago I have a somewhat strong debate with a member of The Society about the need to have genealogical societies with their attendant meetings, dues and all the rest. He pointed out that in this modern age of the Internet and more particularly, the World Wide Web (www), such things were really anachronisms, and would soon disappear, just as it was being predicted that libraries as we have known them would soon be closing their doors.

Well, the latter has yet to happen. And I think we can make a very good argument for the needed continual existence of genealogical societies and everything that goes with such organizations.

In an earlier article ("Why should I be affiliated with a Society," *Newsletter*, Vol. 41, No. 3), I made the point that what a genealogical society does is to provide permanence for the records and work of researchers. And if it is well organized and run such an organization can be of long term importance to the genealogical research community.

Being well run does not come without some effort. And this brings us to the first point I want to make. A well-run society needs to meet in order to discuss its status, its goals and mission, and to give direction to what it is to accomplish. And if the organization is a not-for-profit corporation, it also needs to meet periodically in order to fulfill the legal requirements. (Frankly, it would be foolish for a society not to be chartered as a not-for-profit corporation; being simply an association, without formal organization does not lend itself to permanence and can create a number of tax issues for its associates.)

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Whither the Convocations?

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The Parke Society from its very beginning determined that we needed to get together at least annually to discuss the work of The Society and to determine our future needs and how we were going to accomplish them. We have found it extremely useful to be able to sit across from one another to hash out the affairs of the organization. It's the give and take among the core staff that has made us what we are today.

But isn't there modern technology that could eliminate the need to travel for meetings? Well, yes, but it is modern technology, and it needs a lot of technological savvy to make sure it will work, and work consistently. Nor does it come cheap and without a lot of grief. Large corporations can afford these technologies. Small genealogical societies generally can not. Having regular meetings also has a benefit for The Society's general membership.

First it gives them a chance to see how we really operate, to know that the dues they are paying is going for something that has permanence, and lasting value; that the materials they submit becomes part of our permanent collection; and that the responsible officers and trustees are concerned with the overall benefits that the society can give to members. It lets them be part of the on going action of being an organization.

Secondly, it gives The Society a chance to show off its collections. Each year I travel to the Convocation with a pickup truck load of materials from the Historian's office in Milwaukee. Binders, books, files, together with a Society owned copier so that members can dependably make copies of anything that is in our collection.

Additionally, the Librarian brings several boxes of books from the Circulating Library, based upon the area we are in, the emphasis that is being highlighted, and the members who have registered for the Convocation.

Together, these materials and books take up several tables in the Research Room set up at each Convocation. Only once did we decide *not* to bring the mate-

rials and we were sorry from the moment we arrived at the site. Members are free to peruse the collections to their heart's content. But that is not all we offer. In the research room there is usually at least one knowledgeable member of the Society Staff that can point out resources that might be useful to the member researcher, to discuss their own lineage situation with them.

It is not unusual for us to have walk-ins: people who are unable to attend the complete Convocation, but who want to visit with us, see our collection, and perhaps talk with us about their particular line. Over the years we have gained not a few new members on this account, and even surprised some guests with how much we have on their line, right down to them. (There is one favor that we do ask, though. If you as a member even remotely think that you might drop in to visit us at Convocation, we would really appreciate knowing in advance—7 to 10 day before the opening of Convocation—so that we can pack your file and other pertinent materials.)

There is a final reason for The Society to have its annual meetings, which is the social interaction among members and with the core staff. I look forward each year to seeing other Officers and Trustees, to seeing members who keep coming back to Convocations year after year. I enjoy meeting other members who venture out to our Convocations for the first time. I am sure that this feeling is shared by all who are in attendance.

In the early years of The Society our meetings were called Reunions. You might ask, why did we change to "Convocations?" Back then, most of the meetings took place in the Connecticut area, and were mostly attended by descendants of Robert Parke. Those who joined us at those meetings who weren't sure of their ancestry were just assumed to be Robert descendants through branches yet to be found.

There was a lot of socialization among the attendees as it was assumed that we were all "family" and so the term Reunion came easily to mind. As The Society grew and broadened its scope to include all Park/e/s who came across the pond to North America, the reason for being, and the reason for coming to these annual get togethers changed. No longer

were we all the same “family,” but rather Park/e/s-surnamed heirs searching for connections or more information on our individual lines.

Not to long after I came into The Society (in 1980) I convinced the Board of Trustees that our meetings were less family reunions, and more a research gathering. And therefore it would be logical to start calling our annual gatherings a “Convocation.” And so it has been ever since.

Over the years there has been a debate about meeting annually. Inasmuch as it takes so much work to put together a Convocation, wouldn't it be easier just to meet, say, every two years? After all our Corporate Charter really only requires us to meet biennially, so would that not work as well?

I for one have been a real stickler on this issue. While it would be easier, it is also easier to just skip another year, and pretty soon, you stop holding meetings. I know this from experience in the secular working world. There were two committees that I was involved with at the County of Milwaukee. One met weekly, 8 a.m. every Monday morning. The other met every third Tuesday at 2 p.m. The first continues to this day. The latter? Well, it sort of evaporated. Other commitments got in the way, committee members forgot, etc. A meeting would be canceled, then another, then another. The lesson? The organization that had the more consistent meeting schedule was the one that survived.

There is another reason for us to meet annually. Let's face it, our general demographics does not show us to be an organization of young people. The average age of our members is somewhere about 67 years old. It is indeed rare that we get new members under the age of 50. So if we want to keep in touch with one another, and to keep on top of what's going in one another's lives we need to meet regularly.

How do we decide on where to meet? This has been a struggle for us over the years. For the first few years The Society always met in or about the Stonington area of Connecticut. About 1980, we decided that since our membership was far from concentrated in the New England area, that we should start moving the Convocations around the country to give

people in all parts of the country an opportunity to meet with the Society officers and to see our collections without having to travel great distances. This did require greater travel on the part of core staff, but that has been accepted for the most part as our responsibility to The Society. That was one of those good ideas that did not work out as well as we had hoped. Despite our efforts, the local attendance at Convocations was still low and most of the attendees still came from afar anyway. So we have been rethinking our siting decisions.

The most important issue for the “where” is that there has to be some sort of a genealogical reason to go there, whether it's a very active Park/e/s site (like the Stonington and Wethersfield area, or when we went to North Carolina for the Noah Parks of the Roger Parke burial grounds), or have an excellent genealogical library (like Salt Lake City, or Fort Wayne, IN).

Another consideration is the facility itself. By experience we have found that our members like to have all their arrangements under one roof. This means that we can not consider the “economy” hotel, as they rarely if ever have eating facilities or meeting rooms within their facility. So we have to look to full-service hotels; and there's the rub. Full service hotels are generally not cheap. Although I will admit that we have had pretty good luck in recent years keeping the lodging rates under \$100 per night. Another consideration is having access to the Internet. As more and more of our members are becoming Internet savvy, and carry notebook computers with them to the Convocations, so is it expected that they will be able to connect to the Internet, and at better than dial-up speeds at that. When I stay at a hotel, it has broadband access or I don't stay there.

Additionally, the total Convocation cost has to be affordable. Probably most of our members are on fixed incomes, and so the overall cost of attending a Convocation can be a real deciding factor. And this is where the rub sets in. It would be great to meet in New York City or Boston, but it would be impossible to find hotel room rates that are within our reach, and still be decent. We have found that the Registra-

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Whither the Convocations?

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tion fee can also be a real hindrance to attending. We have been successful in keeping that, on a per-person basis under \$100, but only by cutting out the number of meals and receptions provided. Hotels that include some sort of continental breakfast with the lodging have been a real blessing here, but that is not always the case.

Transportation to and from can also be a problem. If you are flying in, or taking the train or bus (as a couple of our members do) travel can be expensive if it is not to a major city or transportation hub—and that's again where the hotels tend to be out of our reach.

It's sometimes a real challenge to find a location of the interest, reasonably priced hotels with adequate facilities, and half-way decent transportation access, all keeping within a fairly narrow price range. We hope to continue to do that as the years go on.

Perhaps our biggest issue, beyond choosing a place is to figure out how we can make arrangements without numerous trips (another convocation expense). This is where it is so important to have someone "on the ground," who can help us in negotiating with facilities, in gathering information about attractions that might be noteworthy to members, and in general just getting the lay of the land. Over the years, we have had many dedicated members help us in this regard.

We are always looking for suggestions as to where to hold our Convocations. If you have a possible choice, let us know, by writing the Vice President Curtis Parks, PS#1166 (his address can be found on the inside front page of this Newsletter), with a brief description of the site, and what it might have to offer. We will then put that into the hopper for further consideration by the Board of Trustees.

In any event, I look forward to see any and all of you at future Convocations. In my twenty-six years with The Society, I have only missed one, and that unfortunately was totally unavoidable.

Ethel Sloan Park: a brief biography

by Karen Christian, PS #1454

Editor's Note: Karen and your editor are first cousins, descended from Roger of New Jersey 1682 (lineage key K): Roger¹, John², John³, Moses⁴, James⁵, John Esten⁶, Lunsford Yandell⁷, Ethel⁸. Karen compiled the following biography of our grandmother as a coherent record of her life.

Ethel Sloan Park, born in Decherd, Tennessee, on December 13, 1883, was one of eleven children born to **Lunsford Yandell Park** and Isabella Ann Eliza Barron. Ethel spent the first ten years of her life in Decherd, where she first taught herself Morse code and then taught herself to read, there being no school in Decherd at that time. Her formal education began when the family moved to Chattanooga in the early 1890s, and she graduated from Chattanooga High School in 1904 at age 20 as class valedictorian.

Ethel began writing at an early age. Her first published poetry appeared in the Chattanooga Times when she was still a young child. Because her father, also a poet, had great faith in her ability to become a professional writer, Ethel vowed never to sign a manuscript without the Park surname.

In 1903, Ethel met classmate Paul Jordan Smith (b. April 19, 1885, Wytheville, VA), the only child of Methodist minister John Wesley Smith and Lucy Crockett Jordan. Ethel and Paul exchanged letters and views on literature, fell in love, and were secretly married on September 25, 1904. The young groom was just 19 years of age. His father, infuriated by this unanticipated development, refused further financial support for his son's education. (Ethel's pious mother's main concern was that the secret marriage had been performed in a lawful manner.)

On June 5, 1905, Ethel's adored father Lunsford passed away. Just two months later Ethel gave birth to her first child, my mother, Lucille Isabella Smith, named for both grandmothers. Although she loved her grandmothers very much, the little girl disliked the name she'd been given, and very soon had it changed to Isabel Jordan Smith.

A second child, son Wilbur Jordan Smith (your editor's father), arrived in October, 1906. Unfortunately, tragedy soon followed with the death of Ethel's

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Ethel Sloan Park

mother Isabella in 1907, and it was not long after her death that the young family moved from Chattanooga to Galesburg, Illinois, where Paul attended Knox College in preparation for the ministry. Their third child, Ralph Wendell Smith, was born in Galesburg in 1908.

From there they moved to Kansas City, and then Chicago, where Paul became a Universalist minister. Handsome, charismatic, and an electrifying public speaker, Paul was constantly surrounded by admirers, including many attractive young women. One in particular, Cornelia, caught his eye, and by 1912 he had fled Chicago, and abandoned his wife and three toddlers, who were then left to fend for themselves. (Cornelia, wanting no part of this mess, raced back to her elderly, boring, but very wealthy husband.)

Ethel supported the children by baking, sewing, and ghost-writing poetry for a prominent syndicated poet. She was befriended by lawyer Clarence Darrow, who attended to the divorce proceedings for

her (making sure the scandal hit the front page of the Chicago newspapers!), and by a kindly deacon in Paul's church, Dr. James Perkins Richardson. Dr. Richardson hired Ethel to assist in running his Proso Preparatory School in Anderson, Missouri, and for a time they lived on his farm near there.

On September 13, 1914, "Miss Ethel" and "Mr. Jim" were married in Houston, Texas, where he built a new Proso school. Ethel taught classes in the school, and her three children were among its graduates. Mr. Jim, many years her senior (he had three nearly-grown children from a previous marriage), was a doting husband to Ethel. He sponsored her frequent summer journeys to New York, where she studied playwriting. Sadly, he became terminally ill and died on April 8, 1922. As he had requested, his ashes were scattered beneath a favorite tree on the grounds of his beloved school.

Ethel ran the school for the next three years with the assistance of Mr. Jim's eldest son, but eventually sold it. At the urging of her aunt, May Barron and folksong scholar Sigmund Spaeth, she signed a contract to assemble a book of American mountain folk songs. She traveled throughout Appalachia collecting songs, and her collection, *American Mountain Songs* was published in 1927. She settled again in Chattanooga, where she began broadcasting songs and folklore on radio station WDOD. Her popularity there led her to New York City. She arrived in 1927 and within a few days had her own NBC radio series.

Ethel created, wrote, directed, and acted in numerous network radio series, including *The Wayside Cottage*, *Hillbilly Heart-Throbs*, *Dreams of Long Ago*, *The Passerby*, and *Uncle Natchel*. Among the many actors who worked on her programs were Agnes Moorehead, Bud Collyer, Brian Donleavy, Ray Collins, Frank Luther, and Tex Ritter. Her son Wilbur also occasionally sang on the shows.

World War II interrupted and ended her radio career. Ever inventive and resourceful, she designed and had constructed her own house-trailer, which she then pulled across the continent at least five times with her 1939 Ford, and with her cat and dog in tow.

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Ethel Sloan Park: a biography

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In 1943, she finally settled in Fresno, California, on the farm belonging to daughter Isabel and my father, Kirby Hansen, and their two small children: myself and my brother Kirby, Jr.

After a couple of years on the Fresno farm, where she helped Isabel raise 5,000 white leghorn chickens, Ethel moved to Santa Monica, California, and parked her little trailer-home under a morning-glory arbor in the back garden of some friends, and there she lived for the next two decades. Her first husband, Paul, lived in the nearby Brentwood area of Los Angeles with his third wife, Dorothy Wysor Smith. Both Paul and Dorothy remained friends with Ethel, as had Paul's second wife, Sarah Hathaway Bixby Smith. (Sarah passed away in the mid-1930s, a few years after Paul divorced her.)

In 1954, Ethel appeared as a guest contestant on the radio quiz program, *Walk A Mile*. In 1955, she was a contestant on NBC television's quiz show, *The Big Surprise*. Her category was American folklore, and she became the first person to win the top prize of \$100,000. For one episode, Tennessee Senator Albert Gore accompanied her singing on his violin. As a result of the publicity from the show, Ethel's book, *American Mountain Songs*, first published in 1927, was reissued in 1956. Her story was carried in newspapers throughout the world, and she was again in demand for everything from television commercials to personal appearances.*

In declining health, Ethel moved back to Fresno to her daughter and son-in-law's farm in Fresno in 1962, and in 1963, at age 80, she entered a rest home, passing away on April 11, 1968, aged 84.

* Recently, the country singer **Laura Cantrell** discovered *American Mountain Songs* and incorporated some of the songs into her repertoire. She found out only later that she and Ethel were related (Lunsford Yandell⁷, Robert Willie⁸, Wert St. John, Sr.⁹, Wert, Jr.¹⁰, Rose¹¹). Your editor and I met cousin Laura at the 2005 Park family reunion in Chattanooga, where she sang one of the mountain ballads at a contra dance hosted by another cousin, caller **Fred Park**.

WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS!

1471 Roger Frederick Scherger

Bakersfield, CA

Spouse of Lineal Descendent, Ruth Ann (Dalton) Scherger. Fragment Line, "OP" starting with a Nancy Ann¹ Parks, (1820 NY–1895 MI) who married Peter K. Bowen, c1850 (1821 NY–1902 MI) to Lovell Eugene² Bowen, Milton Eugene³ Bowen, Ruth Irene⁴ Bowen, who married Harry Anthony Dalton to member's spouse. Circumstantial evidence (and information found on the internet) would possibly connect this Nancy Ann to the Robert–Thomas line, as perhaps a child of Moses (08T6967) and Maria Nelson. At this time that FGS shows only one child Joel F. (09T20896), born 1814 in Scipio, Cayuga County, NY, the same as the subject Nancy Ann Parks.

1472 Mrs. Patricia Susan Benson

Kirksville, MO

Daughter of PS#348 Lawrence Wayne Parks (deceased) Fragment Line, Lineage Key "NY," William¹ Parks, (1813 KY–?) married to Pauline or Perlina circa 1830 (1819 KY–?) To William Thomas² Parks, (c.1840 or 1841–1920) m. Mary Robinson, To Willis Isom³ Parks (1872–1913) thence to Lawrence Wayne (PS#348D) Parks (1908–1994) then to member Patricia Susan (Parks) Benson.

The next editorial due date is

February 15, 2007