

# 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*

## Genealogy Through Songs by Joanne Rodgers PS#1523

It's been said that women sigh to keep from screaming. Whether or not that is true, I believe my grandmother sang to keep from screaming.

Zola Parks was born in 1903 on a farm in rural Clearfield County, PA. She was number 14 of 17 children. She married Richard Shimmel at 18 years of age and had five children over the next ten years. Her life was so hard before the Great Depression that she remarked that that crisis in the world didn't make much difference to them.

My mother remembers how her mother sang. She sang as she worked in the garden, as she cooked and did laundry. She sang while rocking the babies to sleep. She sang loudest at night, walking the country roads, to keep the panthers and bears away. And she taught her children to sing with her.

Last December I spent some time visiting my mother. She was having a hard time shaking pneumonia and the long days of watching TV and doing puzzles were becoming tiresome. I dug through her vinyl records and found a four-album collection of folk songs from England, Scotland, Ireland, and the United States. As the records played, I read the notes on the sleeves. Each song was given a country of origin and sometimes a composer.

The songs we knew, we sang along. This prompted my mom's memory of her childhood. "My mum used to sing this one." After the third time she made this remark, I started paying attention. As it turned out, there were nine songs that "Mum used to sing." Four were rooted in Scotland. Four were popular tunes around the turn of the century in America. And one was from Ireland.

Now this is where I began to get excited. In the course of doing research on the Parks family, I found Zola's father, Thomas Parks, in Biographies from Clearfield County, PA. These are also called "vanity" biographies, since a person had to pay to have his/her name included. And whatever information the family gave was the information that was published, without much verification. So,

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## THE PARKE SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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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
Annual Dues	\$ 30
Life Membership	\$265
(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.

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

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Make dues payments payable to The Parke Society, Inc. (Note: please do not send these questions to the Treasurer.) **VERY IMPORTANT: BE SURE TO INCLUDE YOUR MEMBERSHIP NUMBER ON YOUR CHECK!**

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

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**LIBRARY:** Send all questions relating to the Library, including library loans, to **Ken M. Parks** PS#1406 at parksken49@gmail.com.

**MEMBERSHIP:** Send questions concerning Parke Society membership, requests for membership packets, and all application materials to our Registrar, **Mr. Ronald Neal Parks** PS#1458, at registrar@parke.org.

**NEWSLETTER:** Send article submissions and comments to our Editor, **Paul Jordan-Smith** PS#1451 at parkenews@parke.org. If you don't have email, send all *typed* materials to

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*Please note: handwritten submissions cannot be accepted.*

**WEBSITE:** Send all suggestions and comments to the webmaster, **Paul Jordan-Smith** PS#1451 at webmaster@parke.org.

## Genealogy Through Songs

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like all pieces of information, we weigh them against other facts and documentation.

In Thomas Parks's biography, it said that he was born "of Scottish ancestry." I can trace back only to his grandfather, who we think was the immigrant, but when he was born and where he came from is very sketchy, as there are so many with the same name living in the same area at the same time.

Naturally I assumed his family came from Scotland. I had a family member test for Y-DNA through Family Tree DNA. Ken Parks, our Parke Society DNA administrator, gave me the results, and I was thrilled to see my Parks family matches another family in the Parke Society! This is always good news when you are a "fragment." It's nice to know you connect. The troubling part of this was that the other family traced their immigrant ancestor to Ireland, not Scotland. That opened up new avenues of research for me, as I learned about the Ulster-Scots, who, as many of you readers probably already know, were the many Scots who went to Ireland throughout history. The Scots were Protestants, mostly Presbyterians, as were my Parks family going back to the early 1800s in Huntingdon County, PA. And as Ken explained to me, a Scot can live in Ireland, but will not consider himself anything other than Scottish, which confused some of the immigration officers when the immigrants came to America.

And now back to my singing Grandmother. How does one learn songs when living in rural mountains, with no radio and scarce access to live musical performances? There are the songs we learn at church, at school, and at home. I'll never know if Grandma had a Scottish teacher in her one room school house. But I do know her father had a violin and there was music in their home. Some of the songs were those that came over the sea and were passed down father and mother to children, our family's heirlooms. These songs

connected my family to Scotland, even when living in Ireland, even when living in America.

"Barbara Allen," "Coming through the Rye," "My Bonnie Lies over the Ocean," and "Loch Lomond" were the Scottish tunes from the record collection. And "The Butcher Boy" is the Irish tune we heard on "Upstairs Downstairs" that my mom recalls hearing her mother sing.

As you do your family research, listen to the elderly member of your family. Ask them questions and let them ramble. Listen to their stories. Listen to their music.☺

## From the President's Desk

by Ken Parks PS#1406

Though it was beginning to look as though Old Man Winter was going to miss us completely here in our neck of the woods, as I write this we're now experiencing bitter cold temps and actually have snow on the ground! That makes our mid-winter getaway to Curacao next week all the more welcome. I know many of our members also head for warmer climes this time of year, so let me take this opportunity to remind everyone that the Parke Society newsletter is available in an electronic version, sent to you as a pdf file. You may opt to receive the e-version along with the paper copy, or elect to receive the e-version only, thus saving the Society some printing costs. Whichever option you choose, having the e-version sent to your email account ensures that you won't miss an issue while away from home, whatever time of year. To sign up for the e-version, simply contact our editor, Dr. Paul Jordan-Smith at: [parkenews@parke.org](mailto:parkenews@parke.org). One additional note about the e-version: some of the photos we print in the newsletter are actually in color, though they appear as black and white in the print version. We're able to include those photos in color in the e-version, so that's just one more reason to sign up!

With some major renovation work set to begin on our house in the spring, I'll be stick-

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## From the President's Desk

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ing close to home most of the year. However, I couldn't pass up the opportunity to attend the Ontario Genealogical Conference in Toronto next June. They have a lineup of many wonderful speakers on a variety of topics, including DNA, and it's another chance to visit with my Canadian genetic cousin, Don Parkes! I hope many of you will take advantage of any family reunions or genealogy events near you as well. They can be a great source of inspiration or rejuvenation when your family research has fallen into a slump.

It's encouraging to see the steady stream of new members entering the Society, but we hope that all of our current members will continue to renew their membership as well. Revenue from member dues are really the only source of income we have, so your continuing support enables the Society to continue its operations, including maintaining our website and publishing the newsletter. Fr. Michael (Tad) Parks, our Executive Director and Historian, will write about the Society's digitization project here in this issue, and there are costs involved in that necessary conversion from paper to electronic records as we move into the 21st century. Your support will ensure that we have the means to accomplish this conversion in the coming months and years.

Finally, a continuing reminder from all Society staff: please remember to include your PS number in all correspondence and remember to advise us of any change in your postal address and, even more importantly, your email address!☺

Got something to tell?  
Write it up and send it to  
[parkenews@parke.org](mailto:parkenews@parke.org)

## 53rd Annual Parke Society Corporate Meeting in Harrisburg, PA

by Ken Parks, PS #1406

For the Society's 2016 business meeting we will meet at the Country Inns & Suites Hotel just outside Harrisburg, Pennsylvania on Friday and Saturday, September 9 – 10, 2016. This was the site of our 2015 meeting and was chosen again for its convenient location for most of the officers and trustees likely to attend. As always, we stress that all Parke Society members are both welcomed and encouraged to attend!

Details of the hotel's location, room rates, and reservation information will appear in the next newsletter issue as well as on the Parke Society website.

Though the primary purpose of our meeting is to conduct the required corporate business of the Society, it is also an opportunity for all who attend to join in lively face-to-face discussions about the state of the Society, its future, as well as talk about research developments in various individual Park/e/s lineages. To that end, any member considering attending the corporate meeting on Saturday, September 10th is encouraged to contact the Society Historian well in advance, so he can bring along the pertinent files on the member's lineage for an in-depth discussion at the meeting.

For anyone considering attending, there are plenty of research venues in the Harrisburg area for the genealogist with Pennsylvania roots, as well as other sites to visit of a historical nature. Both the Pennsylvania State Library and the State Archives are located in Harrisburg, along with the Historical Society of Dauphin County. Even closer to our hotel is the National Civil War Museum. The excellent Lancaster County Historical Society is a short drive away and is located on the same grounds as Wheatland, the home of President James Buchanan. Of course, don't forget nearby Hershey and Hershey Park for fun of a completely different kind!☺

## Historian's Corner: Notes from all around

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

### Going paperless:

Over the years we have discussed the issue of space to maintain the holdings of the Parke Society, accumulated over the fifty years. And what do we do about that for the future?

Needless to say, the holdings of the Parke Society are quite substantial. When I came into the Society in 1980, I went to Reading, Pennsylvania to pick up from David Parke, PS#13, all the files I would need to begin work as the Historian. Then they filled the trunk of my compact car; now it would take a fair size U-Haul truck to move them all. The packing and labeling would in itself be quite a task.

The Society has been lucky that I have the room to maintain all of the Society Records in a basement room of about 240 square feet containing book shelves, six file cabinets, counter work space, a desk and a number of storage boxes. The problem is: will a future Society Historian have the luxury of that much space to dedicate? I rather doubt it, and am quite worried about that, as are the trustees.

### What do we do about this issue?

There's no easy solution. It has been suggested several times over the years to just scan everything into digitized files and become a paperless organization. This sounds great, but when you start getting down to the details (where the devil is always hiding) it becomes less so. Without going into the messy and complicated details, let's just say that such a solution brings along a whole host of additional problems such as formats, convenience of working with the documents and files, electronic storage, back-up and recovery, and the technical expertise to organize, maintain, and utilize what would be a huge amount of digital material. I'm somewhat technically savvy, but will future office holders be? People may use the Internet and email, but that doesn't necessarily mean

they have the skills to maintain large digital libraries.

As the result of lengthy discussions at the 2015 Annual Trustee's meeting in Harrisburg, we agreed to take some first steps in moving toward digitized records going forward. It is clearly a modest beginning, but a beginning nevertheless.

Starting with the membership file for PS#1644 and going forward, all new member materials are going to go through an additional step, before they come to me for the genealogical processing. Gary Alexander Parks, PS#1528, has agreed to take on the task of digitizing the new member files and becoming an intermediate stop between the Registrar and the Historian. The digitized file is then forwarded to interested parties within the Society including myself. The hard file is then sent to me for my usual genealogical processing. Gary is now our Assistant Registrar.

Gary had hoped (against hope) that I might decline hard copy, but unfortunately I am a paper-bound person, and I find it a lot easier to work with hard copy than deal with an electronic version, especially if further annotation or comment is required that would necessitate printing out, annotating, re-scanning, and re-distributing the revised document. I want to thank Gary for taking on this task, and helping us to move forward. However, I still find the presence of a hard copy file folder on my desk to be a good reminder of something that needs to be done or accomplished.

In the past, the biggest complaint that core staff members might have had was that all of the documentation was here in Milwaukee, and not somewhere that they can actually look at it and review it for themselves. This eliminates that issue in the initial processing. This will be especially useful for the Lineage Leaders.

A small downside to digitization affects the Milwaukee office. Anything further sent in, or changes made to documents already received (and digitized) will need to be distributed to

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## Historian's Corner

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the core staff to synchronize with the Milwaukee versions. This means being careful to not let something get into the file that others do not have (especially important to the Lineage Leaders; they can't do their job, if they don't have all of the information).

That said, scanning documents is a lot easier than standing over a hot copier all day long, and then having to prepare the copies for mailing via the USPS. My thirteen year old copier may start to get lonely with this change.

### **The next steps:**

So where do we go from here? Over the years I've looked at various records and files, but have always found there to be issues which did not allow us to move ahead. One might think that the obvious next step would be to start scanning in all membership folders prior to PS#1644. That's unlikely to happen anytime soon, because member files have been receptacles of any and all items that have come in from and for each member: Christmas cards, friendly notes, address changes or corrections, bounced mail or emails. None of that is of importance to the genealogical side of the Society, so why scan them? What we want in the electronic version of the files is just that stuff which is of use to our work as the Society.

Over the past couple of years we've been working at purging the files of deceased members, but that hasn't been a high priority task; not a lot of time has been put into it. But maybe those files might be the next step, since they are generally pretty stable. Not much, if anything is getting added to those files once the member is deceased.

We've looked at the sixty or so Lineage Binders (where we keep the hard copy family group sheets, in Lineage Key order), but concluded that they're too active a source, being constantly pulled, reviewed, corrected or added to. (Also, having the Binder laying on the desk is a wonderful reminder of there being something to do!)

## **Form B Lineage Applications:**

When we started looking at the eighteen Form B Lineage Application binders, we realized that here is something that could be scanned, would be useful to the core staff, and would eliminate one set of abstracts that, while having once been useful, have been hard for the holders to maintain.

A little background. When joining the Society, members are supposed to fill out a Form B Lineage Application which shows their claimed Park/e/s line as far back as they currently know it. This is the primary source document from which I do my review and use to work with the member. It is not filed in the member's file, but rather kept in these Form B binders in PS# order. They are of course reviewed and modified as new information becomes available or corrections are found. Why are they not in the member folder? Because sometimes that is all I need to look at, and they are a lot easier to deal with in their own binders. I don't have to go to the file cabinets.

Because this was such an important document for our work as a society, we started some years ago abstracting Form B by copying out the two inside pages (which contains the claimed lineage proper) and creating the Form B Abstracts. Whenever there were changes or additions to a Form B, it would be re-abstracted and the new copy forwarded to the Abstract Binder holders. There were three of them. The Abstract binders grew to be six in number, a lot less than the Form B binders themselves, but still a hefty collection. Especially if the holder changed and the Abstract binders had to be shipped to a new individual. While a good idea in and of itself, they were not always easy to maintain; pulling and inserting changed forms or remembering to add the new members when they came in. The schedule for sending out changes was not fixed, and that probably didn't help matters either.

A few weeks ago we started to scan in the Form B Lineage Applications to see how that would go. Presently we have about 200 scanned, about half reviewed for quality is-

sues; we certainly wouldn't want to discard the originals if one of them didn't scan well, or at all.

It has been in this process that we have had to come to face issues of incomplete Form Bs or the absence of the Lineage Application form altogether. I will comment on just one of those cases later on in this article.

### **The LDS Family Group Sheet collection:**

Another set of documents that are currently being scanned are the LDS Family Group Sheet collection. Back in 1982, at the XIXth Annual Convocation at Salt Lake City, Stuart Nye Park, PS#19, being close friends with the then President of the LDS body, was able to obtain for the Society, about 3,000 (or so) Family Group Sheets from the LDS archives which pertained to Park/e/s families. These have been indexed into our GIVENAME Index database, but the sheets themselves are not readily accessible due to their size and not being bound (they required a special custom made binder that's no longer available, and was pretty expensive in the first place).

While the quality is sometimes suspect, it is another source which may give further clues for answers to genealogical questions. We've scanned twenty-five sheets for core staff to evaluate as an experiment. (As a break in what can be a boring routine, we occasionally switched from time to time between the Form Bs and the LDS sheets.) We'll be making available to the core staff materials that could previously only be examined by coming to Milwaukee.

### **Other materials:**

There is a whole raft of other materials, almost too diverse even to classify: binders for allied lines, procedures, and various collections of documents that have come our way, including a four drawer vertical file. We even have a couple of collections of materials from members who have either passed away, or had no one to hand their materials to and sent them to us for safekeeping. All of these materials will be very problematic, just figuring out how to index them so we can find things in the future is going to take a lot of hard thinking. And we haven't even made

reference to the Books and magazines that we hold for reference purposes.

By the way, there is also a set of Lineage Binder Abstracts, which have copies of the family group sheets of the first three generations of each Lineage Key. Currently, that makes up another six binders. And we have the same issues with keeping those abstract binders up to date.

### **The other side of space considerations:**

As the digitization process continues to mount, we are going to come face to face with another issue: how to maintain all of these digital files. My thinking is that eventually we are going to have to establish a server with enough disk storage space to hold all of the files that we are creating, and to be able to generate indexes to aid us in finding things now that they are in digital form. We will also have to establish procedures to back up and recovery, to protect the digital files from corruption and loss. This will take money and technical skills that we may not have within our own membership. But it will have to be dealt with. A couple of bad key strokes or a computer virus or malware, even a ransomware attack, could fatally cripple the Society and destroy decades of hard work.

### **An odyssey of identification:**

Above, I alluded to the issue of incomplete or missing Form B Lineage Applications. In the first 200 members we have come across about twenty such cases: a name, a number, and a big question mark. Technically this should never had happened, but in the earlier days of the Society somethings just didn't get attended to; today we draw a blank on what their line is.

Years ago, before the Internet and on-line availability of genealogical information, if a member didn't provide the appropriate information, there was little we could do, unless we were very very lucky and just happened to run across something in our own records which clued us in. All that has changed now, and we're working at filling in the gaps in the Form B Applications. Sometimes we hit pay dirt, sometimes we don't, but at least it can be done using online sources.

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## Historian's Corner

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One example of one mystery that was solved using on line source, our GIVENAME Index, a little personal knowledge and perhaps a little luck (I must admit that sometimes I even amaze myself!) was a file from PS#124, Mrs. Marvin Olnes, of Albion, Boone County, Nebraska. And that was it. No dates, no other names, just a big question mark. She had been inactive since 1979, not renewing for 1980. Previously I had done nothing on trying to determine her ancestry.

The amount of information on line in various places is astounding. I searched first for an obit on a Marvin Olnes, Nebraska. Found! Born 1925, died 2015. It gave me his parent's names, plus her full name (Betty Lou Carver) and the fact that she had predeceased him in 2010. The search for her obit turned up one born in 1930, died in 2010, and named Marvin as surviving her. From that I found out her parent's names as Robert Ira Carver, and Mildred Louise Beyer. Because the membership was in her (Mrs.) name, I assumed she had the Park/e/s line. But I could have been wrong. Further digging gave me Robert Ira's parent's as Orland William Carver and Annis Loiza Hubbard. Betty's mother's parents were Frederick Beyer and Helena Willems. I focused on the Hubbard name—they're legion in Nebraska, and many have connections to Park/e/s lines, especially Robert of MA.

Working the Ancestry site, I went after the parents of Annis Hubbard, and bingo! I came up with Edmund Wilmont Hubbard and Cynthia Jane Park. Going to our GIVENAME Index, I found Cynthia Jane Park as FGS 09T6990, 1834, VT-1897, NE, married in 1863 in Vermont. The group sheet showed their daughter Annis Loiza as married to a Charles Eugene Sholes, but back on Ancestry, I found that she had two marriages, Sholes first before 1890 in Nebraska, and then to Carver in 1897, also in Nebraska. From there the line traces back to Robert though Thomas, Thomas, Eleazer, Simeon, Elijah, Elijah, Robert (08T2328) who married

Lucy Brookins, and had child, Cynthia Jane Park.

It would be nice to find other confirming data, and perhaps to sort out the two marriages of Annis Loiza (Sholes and Carver), but I feel that I probably have the right connection. This makes Betty Lou (Carver) Olnes, PS#124, a 12th generation descendant of Robert Parke through his son Thomas Parke, and a member of Chart 7, moniker 7(T)-12.

At least this is another one of those mysteries that now has a solution. There are probably another dozen or so that we have run into up to this point. I think I was lucky on this one, the others may not be so easy. We shall see.

So there we are. An update on issues relating to Society records and how we are working to prepare ourselves for the future. Someday, the Parke Society will have to face the prospect of leaving this Milwaukee base, and it is pretty obvious that something must be done about the space requirements. We hope that we are making some progress in this matter. Your comments and suggestions are always welcome. ☺

## Eddie Parkes: Song and Dance Man

by Ken Parks PS#1406

As I mentioned in my article on Homer Hill Parks, tallest soldier in the US Army in World War I, while researching Homer's vaudeville career after the war I stumbled upon another Parkes who performed in that unique area of show business, one Eddie Parkes. The more I read about him, I knew he had to be the subject of my next article. I hope you enjoy reading about him as much as I've enjoyed learning about his fascinating life and career.

### Early years

Edward Dominic Parkes was born in Hell's Kitchen, a neighborhood on the west side of Manhattan, on 1 August 1892, the third child of Francis Xavier Parkes and Anna Connors, both Irish immigrants. His mother died when he was young, and his father mar-

ried Rose Quinn about 1897 in New York City. His father had been an actor in Dublin, but had no luck finding work in the theatre after arriving in America and is listed in census records and city directories as a laborer. In Eddie's own words: "He was a student, too. They used to call him the Irish Jew in the Kitchen, because he could read, write, and speak Hebrew." Referring to his father's lack of luck as an actor, "I think the final blow was when he had to take a job playing the rear end of a horse." His father took other jobs, painting smokestacks, and as a mason, working on the new Times building. He eventually got a job driving a horse-drawn streetcar on 28th and 29th streets.

In a 1981 interview by Robert Dwan in the Los Angeles Times Calendar, Eddie explains the circumstances behind the beginning of his performing career:

My mother died and left him with three kids. I guess that's when he started to drink. He married again, a lovely lady named Rose Quinn, and they had three kids. Eventually they were both on the bottle, and she died, and that's when I had to take over.

He was a wonderful man, and taught me a lot about being a performer, about diction and voice projection. When I was 5, he got me up for a performance at Saint Patrick's Cathedral School Hall—checked trousers, swallowtail coat, Irish slugger whiskers down my cheeks. I walked out in the wooden-sole shoes he made for me, with a top hat and blackthorn stick, and delivered a monologue he taught me that begins, "It's a funny thing the people you meet when you haven't got a gun..." Then I sang the song I learned from him, "Mike, Mike, Mike...Arra get up, me darling, don't you hear the baby bawlin'..." with a little Gaelic thrown in at the end, and closed with some heel-and-toe dancing on the little pedestal he built for me.

Ten years later, I was 15 and making \$300 a week at Hammerstein's Victoria. I had just opened my mouth to sing when a voice came from the gallery, "Sing it, Eddie

boy, sing it!" It was my father, and they threw him out, drunk. He sneaked back into the lobby and stole our pictures, and I had to go get them back. I couldn't be angry. He died the next year.

### **Family history**

As mentioned earlier, the father of Eddie Parkes was Francis Xavier Parkes who, according to online family tree information, was born in Dublin, Ireland, on 1 August. The year of his birth is listed in various trees as 1858, 1866, and the 1900 census gives March 1869 as his date of birth. His parents are listed as James George Parkes, born in Ireland in 1832, and Anne Dougherty, born in Ireland in 1836. Francis Xavier Parkes died in New York City on 7 July 1908.

Eddie Parkes married Grace Garnella in Manhattan, New York on 10 July 1914, according to New York City marriage records found online. However, there are newspaper notices as early as December 1912 identifying them as man and wife, appearing together on the stage as an act. Other than the 1900 and 1930 censuses, I have not located Eddie Parks in any other census years, probably due to the amount of time he spent "on the road" during his career. The 1930 census finds Grace and Eddie owning a house in Freeport, Long Island, New York and listed as actor and actress. From a newspaper notice in 1930, it appears Grace Parkes retired from the stage about that time, as Eddie took on a new partnership with a veteran vaudevillian, Tom Smith. Grace Parkes died in Los Angeles, California on 30 November 1948. It does not appear the couple had any children.

I have attempted to make contact online with a descendant of Eddie's older brother, Francis Xavier Parkes Jr. but have not heard from him to date. The descendant appears to be a direct male descendant, so a Y-DNA test could offer some insight into the genetic history of this Parkes lineage.

### **Career**

From that early performance at the age of five, Eddie Parkes began a career that would span many decades and find him performing

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## **Eddie Parkes: Song and Dance Man**

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on the stage, in film from its earliest days, as well as television. A man named John Gallagher was in the audience at that performance at St. Patrick's and took over as personal manager for Eddie, booking the five year old into private parties in homes and hotels around Manhattan. From there, he went into vaudeville, appearing in blackface with the Jenny Eddy Trio in 1901 as they toured the vaudeville circuit.

After leaving the Jenny Eddy Trio, Eddie spent a year performing with one of the early Gus Edwards children's shows, "Rube Kids." Gus Edwards, composer of such songs as "School Days," "By the Light of the Silvery Moon," and "In My Merry Oldsmobile" had himself started as a "balcony singer" at the age of fourteen. A balcony singer was a song plugger, often a young boy who would sit in the balcony and after a performer on stage had finished a new song, would stand and appear to spontaneously repeat the song to increase its popularity. Gus Edwards's children's troupes gave a start to many young performers who would go on to have successful careers in show business, including Groucho Marx, Eddie Cantor, and George Jessel.

I was on the bill with Will Rogers in 1902 at Keith's Union Square Theatre on 14th Street. I was 10 years old and was singing and dancing in blackface. Rogers and his partner, Buck, had a roping act with two horses. It was a great roping act, but he never said a word. We were good friends and he used to take me around the corner on 13th Street to the stable where he kept his horses. Years later at a Friar's Club banquet he told us, "I don't think little Bub Parkes knew it then, but I lived in that stable. We weren't making enough money for a boarding house, so me and Buck were sleeping with the horses." A few years later, around 1904, he started talking to the audience, and after that he didn't have to sleep with the horses.

By 1904 Eddie was making the rounds at various saloons around Manhattan and the boroughs, singing and dancing for tips. This was a custom of the day, and he was in good company on these money-making ventures. One of his companions was a young lad named Jimmy Durante, and they often sang in a bar on the lower east side where they always waited for a slightly older boy to sing first. That young man's name was Israel "Izzy" Baline, who would later change his name to Irving Berlin. In addition to the saloons, he sang between rounds at prize-fights at the Longacre Athletic Club and to accompany magic-lantern slides on the riverboat up the Hudson to Albany. "I'd work anywhere—undertaking parlors, restrooms, anywhere I could pick up a buck. I had to support my family."

Eddie met a harpist, Dominic Martoccio, in the Gus Edwards show, and persuaded him to change his name to George Lyons. The new team of Lyons and Parkes went to audition for Willie Hammerstein, who ran his father's Victoria Theatre as a vaudeville house on Times Square. Eddie stood on the empty stage and sang "That's What the Rose Said to Me." When he finished, a voice came from the back of the balcony, "Willie, who is that singing?" "It's a little boy from the West Side." "Keep him there, I want to talk to him."

That voice belonged to Willie Hammerstein's father, Oscar Hammerstein (grandfather of Oscar Hammerstein II), who lived in an apartment behind the top row of the balcony. Impressed by Eddie's big voice, he offered to send him to Italy to study opera, a special interest of Oscar Hammerstein's. Eddie said he was sorry, but he couldn't do it. "I have my family to raise—my brothers and sister." Nevertheless, they booked the boys into the Victoria, where they played twelve weeks and returned many times during the next few years.

There is a photograph of George Lyons at his harp, with Eddie Parkes standing beside him, in *The New York Clipper* on 11 April 1908. Here is the caption below the photograph:

George Lyons and Eddie Parkes, whose pictures appear above, next week play Hammerstein's Victoria Theatre, in their unique, characteristic, musical, singing and dancing act. George Lyons, a youngster of about eighteen years of age, is without doubt one of the greatest harp-ists in vaudeville, and his partner, Eddie Parkes, is an exceedingly good singer and dancer. While Eddie Parkes sings and dances he is accompanied by George Lyons, who plays the harp all through the act, in which the orchestra is not used with the exception of the introduction for the opening of their act. They have been booked for forty-five consecutive weeks by the United Booking Offices. These boys were featured with Gus Edwards' "Rube Kids," a big vaudeville act, and when this act closed they decided to go it alone. One of the boys called to see Aaron Kessler, connected with Hammerstein's Victoria, and explained the act he and his partner had. Mr. Kessler asked him to come to the theatre some morning and show their act, which they did. They were put on by Mr. Hammerstein one Sunday last November, were one of the hits of the show, and have been playing ever since.

Sometime in 1909 Eddie Parkes and his harp-playing partner, George Lyons, split up and Eddie then teamed with John Coogan, who in 1914 would become the father of Jackie Coogan (Charlie Chaplin's "The Kid" and Uncle Fester in TV's "The Addams Family".) Eddie and Jack Coogan were involved in the early years of an attempt to unionize vaudeville performers. The union, formed in 1900, was called the White Rats. It received a charter from the American Federation of Labor in 1910, and staged an unsuccessful strike in 1916, with vaudeville managers creating a blacklist, which Coogan and Parkes were subject to for two years before the strike collapsed and the union disbanded.

During this time period the fledgling movie industry, still based largely on the east coast, found Eddie Parkes, like so many actors and performers, looking for work in the new medium. Eddie Parkes appeared in his first film,

a Vitagraph comedy, around 1902 and would make his last film appearance in 1980, playing an old man tap dancing his way across America in "In God We Tru\$t" starring Marty Feldman. Along the way he would appear in films such as the 1937 comedy short "Will You Stop!" starring Tim and Irene (Granny on "The Beverly Hillbillies") Ryan, the 1949 musical "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" starring Gene Kelly and Frank Sinatra, as well as television programs such as "The Abbott and Costello Show," "The Jack Benny Program," and "The People's Choice."

The earliest notice mentioning Eddie performing with his wife Grace appears in the New York Clipper in December of 1912: "Coogan and Parks have split up. Jack Coogan has joined hands with Violinsky, and will write songs. Eddie Parks and his wife, Grace Garnella, will do an act."

Here's another from the 18 April 1913 edition of The Player:

Grace and Eddie Parks opened at the Academy theatre last week for a tour of the Western Vaudeville Managers' Association time. They have a splendid singing and dancing act.

It appears that Eddie Parkes would also, from time to time, appear without his wife, as this 1914 review in The Fort Wayne Journal-Gazette attests:

The Empress management is delighted to announce that it will present for the first time in this city the first part of the week those famous little stars, Johnny Morris and Eddie Parks, the big and little casino. The entertainment which these diminutive little actors put on is in a class of its own. They extract more laughs from the audience than do many of the vaudeville actors who are of complete and customary size and their act is the envy of all other little stars who have tried and failed in vaudeville.

Another notice from The New York Clipper on 11 December 1915 finds Eddie performing with two others on the Keith vaudeville circuit in Providence, Rhode Island:

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## **Eddie Parkes: Song and Dance Man**

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Conlin, Steele and Parks, who have a screamingly funny act, for Jimmy Conlin is as funny as they're made, ably assisted by dapper little Eddie Parks, who used to be a boy soprano for the pubs some years ago.

Apparently, Eddie would perform with Jimmy Conlin, and on some occasions wife Grace would join in the act. *New York Clipper*, 6 December 1916:

James Conlin, assisted by Grace and Eddie Parks, furnished twenty minutes of music, song and frivolous comedy. The trio tell several old timers in the line of gags, but from the way the audience accepted the ancient ones, are apparently fully justified in not securing more original material. They were an unqualified hit. So, what's the difference!

There is also a notice in the *New York Clipper* on 5 September 1917 advertising "Betting Bettys – Racy, Pacy Musical Comedy – Eight People with Johnny Morris and Eddie Parks" so it seems clear that Grace and Eddie performed as a couple or with others all through the early years of their marriage. Most notices about the two of them as an exclusive team appear in the 1920s. Here is a breakdown of their act as found on the vaudeville page "New Acts and Reappearances" of the *New York Clipper* on 4 June 1919:

### **Grace and Eddie Parks**

**Theatre**—Fifty-Eighth Street

**Style**—Singing and Dancing

**Time**—Twelve Minutes

**Setting**—In One

Clean-looking couple, of society type, in riding togs, with a neat though not novel turn. They sing fairly well and dance nicely. Their line of patter is good and both have their share of personality, without which a two-act is lost, unless the pair happen to be acrobats or elephants. Grace and Eddie can fill an early spot on better small time.

There is also this troubling notice in *Vaudeville News* from 5 August 1921: "Grace Parks,

of Grace & Eddie Parks, suffered a nervous breakdown at Long Beach, Cal., recently, forcing the team to cancel future bookings. Miss Parks is resting at Cumberland County, Pa."

There are numerous newspaper notices throughout the performing years for Eddie Parkes and his wife Grace. Reviews for their act indicate they were often the headliners and received uniformly favorable notices. Here is a review from the *New York Clipper* on 1 March 1922:

Grace and Eddie Parks came next, with an act that should be playing the big time. Both are clever and their material and method of delivery is just different enough to make it worth while. The young man has two or three bits of business that are sure fire, and what makes it better is the fact that he does not overdo them. Three bows.

We even note this incident of illness Eddie suffered which appeared in *Vaudeville News* on 6 October 1922:

Eddie Parks Operated On: Eddie Parks, of Grace & Eddie Parks, was operated on for appendicitis Wednesday, September 27, at the Harrisburg Hospital at Harrisburg, Pa. His wife returned to her home at Camp Hill, near Cumberland, Pa., which is near Harrisburg. When Parks recovers the team will open for the Pantages Circuit.

As mentioned earlier, Grace Parkes appears to have retired from performing about 1930, and the couple probably traveled to and from California in the 1930s and 1940s as Eddie began doing film work out there, though his World War II draft registration in 1941 lists his address as 235 W. 75th Street in Manhattan. Grace Parkes died on 30 November 1948 in Los Angeles, California.

Even though vaudeville was essentially over by the early 1930s, Eddie continued to find work in a variety of show business venues. A search of the *New York Times* archives reveals a few of his activities during the 1940s, such as appearing in an act at the Brown Derby nightclub in 1940, a patriotic revue entitled "Marching Again" in New York

City in 1942, along with numerous appearances in films through the 1940s and 1950s, along with television as that medium took off. He is credited in biographies as appearing in the last Ziegfeld Follies in 1943, which starred Milton Berle, though he must have been a replacement, as he isn't listed in the opening night cast on the internet Broadway database nor in the New York Times opening night review.

His last years were spent living in California, where he performed with his last partner, Patrick Sullivan Burke, at the Hollywood Comedy Club in June of 1985, just one month before his death at the age of ninety-two on 24 July. He is buried next to his wife Grace in Forest Lawn Memorial Park in Glendale.

After finishing my research on Eddie Parkes, I can truly say he is someone I would have dearly loved to have known, and could have listened for hours to the many stories he must have been able to tell about his long career in one of the most fascinating periods of show business. He should have written a book!☺

## In Memoriam:

The Parke Society membership is located all over the United States and Canada, and as such it is not always easy to keep track of our members. Unfortunately, members just sort of drop away: they don't renew. We might hear that there are health or finance issues, or that they have just lost interest in genealogy altogether. At other times, our correspondence goes unanswered until, one way or another, maybe some years later, we learn of the member's death. Nevertheless, we still think it is good for the Society membership to know of these passages, and so we list those here as they come to our attention.

The Society has been notified of the death of **Patricia (Wilson) Rice, PS#226**, at the age of 87 years of Youngstown, New York, on Monday October 5, 2015 in Niagara Hospice House in Lockport, New York, after a lengthy illness.

Patricia was born May 17, 1928 in Niagara Falls, NY, the daughter of the late Orson Floyd and Daisy Frances (Sherman) Wilson, graduated from SUNY Geneseo, and received Master's Degrees from Buffalo State and the University of Buffalo. Patricia was an Elementary School Teacher with the Lewiston-Porter School District for 36 years.

On July 19, 1958 she married Donald Munson Rice, who predeceased her in 1986. Patricia is survived by two daughters, Donna (the late William) Parrish; and Nancy (Monty) Waggoner; two grandchildren and eight great grandchildren. She was predeceased by a grandson, Donovan Parrish.

Funeral Services and Burial in North Ridge Cemetery, Town of Cambria were private. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the Old Fort Niagara Association, Youngstown, NY, or to the Niagara Hospice, Lockport, NY.

Patricia Rice was a member of the Society since 1977, and as is often the case with early New England Park/e/s families had more than one line of descent. Her main line is from Immigrant Robert Parke through his son William (LK=W), we two of the spouses having lines from Robert through his son Thomas (LK=T).

Robert (I) Parke to William (02W1) Parke to Martha Park who married Isaac Williams, to John Williams who married Martha Wheeler (from the Robert-Thomas line), to Col. John Williams, to William Williams who married Martha Wheeler (from the Robert-Thomas line), to John Williams, Esther Williams, Charles Brown, Frances Elenor Brown, Ella Frances Sweet, Daisy Frances Sherman to Patricia (Wilson) Rice. Thirteen generations from Robert-William, and twelve generations from Robert-Thomas.

Society member CDR. **David Paul Parks, PS#305**, passed away on April 16, 2015. His wife, Virginia T. Parks, died March 31, 2015.

He was born January 10, 1922 in Kewanee, Missouri, the son of David Alexander and Mary Jane (Martin) Parks. After graduating

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**In memoriam**  
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from Southeast Missouri State, he taught high school, until he joined the Navy during WW II. He flew combat missions in the Pacific theater against the Japanese Imperial Navy and Army as a pilot flying PBY Flying Boats. His final tour of duty with the ROTC unit at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, where earned his MBA at night. The degree served him well in his second career as an insurance salesman and real estate broker in Pensacola.

He was predeceased by his parents David and Mary Parks, his first wife Doris Mai (Wilder) Parks, and his second wife, Virginia Grace (Tague) Parks. He is survived by his son, Dr. David P. (Angie) Parks, Jr.; a daughter, Linda P. Reinhardt; a step-son, Dr. David C. (Jen) Wylie, Jr.; and a step-daughter, Katherine W. (Michael) Drews. Funeral services were held at St. Christopher's Episcopal Church, Pensacola, FL and he was buried at the Barrancas National Cemetery also in Pensacola, Florida.

David Paul Parks was a descendant in one of our fragment lineages, LK=EY: William Parks of Kentucky (1837-1880) who married an Atha Ann (Unknown) in Caldwell, KY. The line continues to Isaac R to David Alexander, to David Paul Parks.

It is with deep regrets that the Society has learned of the death of **Thomas Joe Parks, Ed.D., PS#349**. Known variously as Tucker, Thomas Joe, Joe, and just plain old Dr. Parks, to the various family, friends and associates throughout his 87 years, passed away peacefully on Friday, June 12, 2015. A longtime Austin, Texas resident, he succumbed to complications from Parkinson's disease.

Joe was born on the family farm, just outside Barry, Texas on March 14, 1928 to Katie Mae (Bell) and James Bedford Parks. The fourth of six children, he cherished his siblings and remained close to them throughout his life returning to his home often during his life. His love for the tiny community led him to

author, *Who Brought the Johnson Grass? A History of the Barry Community*.

After high school, Joe joined the Army and, upon discharge, enrolled in Sam Houston State Teachers College, where he graduated in 1952. He later earned his masters and in the 1970s, his doctorate. He began his career in public education as a junior high school teacher in Corsicana, Texas in 1952, and then moved into school administration. He was quite taken during the interview of a prospective first grade teacher, and ended up marrying Bettye Grace Cammack on June 27, 1958.

In 1967 Joe became the founding executive director of Region XIII Regional Education Service Center where he remained until his retirement in 1992. He aimed at excellence in staffing and services during his tenure. The center celebrated his vision and service by naming the administration building in his honor in 2012.

Following his retirement, Joe remained active in a seasonal vegetable business and flexed his creative talents in building collectable furniture. Long before it became popular, Joe immersed himself in genealogy, tracing Parks family lineage back to Virginia in the mid-1700s.

He is survived by his wife of 57 years, Bettye Grace; daughter Holly (Ben) Jones; son Scott (Leigh) Parks; two grandchildren; a sister, Judy Holloway; brothers Don Parks and Lyndon Parks; as well as many other relatives and friends. Joe was preceded in death by his parents, Jim and Katie Parks; a brother James Harris Parks and a sister Leona Janes. A memorial service was held at Hope Presbyterian Church in Austin on the 25th of June.

A longtime Parke Society member, Joe Parks did considerable research into the Thomas Parks, Sr. line, LK=C, that came out of Spotsylvania and Albemarle Counties of Virginia, publishing *The Parke Family* (1979), and *Aaron Parks: His Ancestors and Descendants* (1983). Joe Parks was an eighth generation descendant of Thomas of Virginia, through his son Thomas Parks, Jr., to Aaron, John

Nash, Bedford, Bedford Forrest, James Bedford, to Thomas Joe Parks.

News has been recently received that Jean **Elizabeth (Adams) Bradley, PS#404**, late of Peace Dale, Rhode Island, passed away on February 16, 2011, at the age of 89 years. She was the wife of the late Edward Eugene Bradley, II, PS#174, who passed away in March 1981.

She was born on July 5, 1921, daughter of Joseph Benjamin and Jean Reid (Finlay) Adams at Kingston, Rhode Island. A 1939 graduate of Stonington High School, she worked in the payroll department for the American Velvet Company in Stonington and also as a medical transcriptionist for various physicians' offices in Warwick and Providence, Rhode Island. She was a US Navy veteran of World War II having served as a hospital corpsman, achieving the rank of Petty Officer First Class.

An avid genealogist, Mrs. Bradley was a long time member of the Parke Society, the Rhode Island Genealogical Society, and the Pettaquamscutt Historical Society.

She is survived by a sister, Lucille A. Richmond; four sons, David A. Bradley, Peter E. Bradley, Jay Benjamin Bradley, and Edward C. Bradley; a daughter, Linda Adaline Bradley; eight grandchildren; and eight great-grandchildren.

A memorial service was held at the Curtis Corner Baptist Church, Wakefield, Rhode Island with interment at the Evergreen Cemetery, Stonington In lieu of flowers, memorial donations were requested to be made to the Pettaquamscutt Historical Society, Kingston RI 02881.

Jean (Adams) Bradley was a 10th generation descendant of Robert Parke (MA, 1630), LK=T, through his son, Thomas Parke, and thence to William Parke, Deborah Parke, John Fanning, Sarah (Fanning) Noyes, Nathan Fanning Adams, Joseph Reynolds Adams, Joseph Benjamin Adams to Jean Elizabeth (Adams) Bradley.

**John Charles Park, PhD, PS#893**, of Hewitt, Texas, passed away on June 28, 2015 at the young age of 59 years.

Born September 7, 1955, son of James Kenneth and Clorinda Jean (Miller) Parke, and was raised in Logan County, Ohio, he received his bachelor's degree in Chemistry and Physics from Anderson College, Anderson, Indiana, and his master's and Ph.D. in education from The Ohio State University. He was Distinguished Professor at North Carolina State University where he taught for more than 25 years (1985-2011). He retired as Professor Emeritus.

Dr. Park joined the Baylor faculty in January 2012, as Professor, Curriculum and Instruction. He was involved in several professional organizations and received a number of national awards.

He remained active in the his church community, while also enjoying college sports, especially the NC State football and the Baylor athletic teams. He loved movies, especially movies with "bad science."

He is survived by his wife, Loretta Jane (Brunner) Park; his sisters, Miriam (Jarry) Persinger, Ruth (the late Bob) Everman, Beverly (Glen) Parmer and Kit Seeley; his brother, Alfred (Diane) Park, his daughters, Katie Joy (Justin) Taylor, Sarah Elizabeth (Phillip) Echols, a son, Nathaniel James (Daria Polichetti) Park, and one grandchild, and dozens of nieces and nephews.

A Celebration of Life service was held on July 9, 2015, at the Bellefontaine First Church of God. He was laid to rest at Huntsville Cemetery, Logan County, Ohio.

Dr. Park was a ninth generation descendent of the Alexander Park line, LK=KY, through his son John Park, and thence to John, Robert, John, William Elderton, Alfred H, James Kenneth to John Charles Park.☞

<p>The next editorial due date is <b>June 1, 2016</b></p>
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## WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS!

### 1645 Frederick Gordon Parkes

Los Altos, CA

Lineage is a new Fragment Line, LK=VN, commencing with a Samuel Parks (ca. 1846, Ireland — unknown, perhaps Ontario) who married Mary (Unknown), born in Dundee, Scotland, and died 18 August 1885 in Toronto, Ontario; thence to William James<sup>2</sup> (ca. 1869, ONT – 1932, ONT), who married in 1913, Toronto, ONT, Mary Ada Durnan (1872, ONT – 1921, ONT) to Gordon (NMI)<sup>3</sup>, to member<sup>4</sup>.

### 1646 Leslie Duane Parks II

Pinehurst, NC

Lineage is Robert of Massachusetts. LK=T, Chart 6. Line is Robert<sup>1</sup>, Thomas<sup>2</sup>, Thomas<sup>3</sup>, Thomas<sup>4</sup>, Josiah<sup>5</sup>, Josiah (Bos'n)<sup>6</sup>, Moses<sup>7</sup>, Silas Thomas<sup>8</sup>, David Warren<sup>9</sup>, Clark Lemuel<sup>10</sup>, Leslie Duane (Sr.)<sup>11</sup>, to member<sup>12</sup>.

Member is nephew of PS#243, Larry Clark Parks, MD

### 1647 Suzanne P. Christen

Princeton, NJ

Lineage is Roger of NJ, LK=K. Line is Roger<sup>1</sup>, John<sup>2</sup>, John<sup>3</sup>, Noah (Sr.)<sup>4</sup>, Jesse<sup>5</sup>, Spruce McCoy<sup>6</sup>, Ivy Newton<sup>7</sup>, James Clark<sup>8</sup>, Ivan Clinton (Sr.)<sup>9</sup>, Ivan Clinton (Jr.)<sup>10</sup>, to spouse of member<sup>11</sup>.

Member is a cousin of PS#140 Percival David Parke

### 1648 Thomas E. D. Park

Atlanta, GA

Lineage is Roger of NJ, LK=K. Line is Roger<sup>1</sup>, John<sup>2</sup>, John<sup>3</sup>, Moses<sup>4</sup>, John<sup>5</sup>, Isaac<sup>6</sup>, John Sloan<sup>7</sup>, John Edgar<sup>8</sup>, Dock Edward<sup>9</sup>, Melvin William<sup>10</sup>, to member<sup>11</sup>.

Member is the son of PS#1595 Melvin William Park.

### 1649 Nancy Jane Barnes

Callahan, CA

*Descendant has two Park/e/s lines as follows:*

The first Lineage is Robert of MA, LK=T, Chart 3. Line is Robert<sup>1T</sup>, Thomas<sup>2T</sup>, Dorothy<sup>3T</sup> who married Joseph Morgan, Martha<sup>4T</sup> Morgan, who married Deacon Joseph Perkins, to Matthew<sup>5T</sup> Perkins, to Susannah<sup>6T</sup> who married Rev'd. Johnson Staples, to Job<sup>7T</sup> Staples to Maria<sup>8T</sup> Staples who married John MacMillan, to Mary Bell<sup>9T</sup> MacMillan who married William Barnes, to George Harold<sup>10T</sup> Barnes, to Glenn Charles<sup>11T</sup> Barnes, to spouse of member<sup>12T</sup>.

The second Lineage is Richard of MA, LK=R. Line is Richard<sup>1R</sup>, Isabel<sup>2R</sup> who married Francis Whitmore (Sr.), to Francis<sup>3R</sup> Whitmore (Jr.), to Elizabeth<sup>4R</sup> Whitmore who married Daniel Clark, to Hanah<sup>5R</sup> Clark who married William Sumner, to Ebenezer<sup>6R</sup> Sumner (Sr.), to Ebenezer<sup>7R</sup> Sumner (Jr.), to Samuel Hall<sup>8R</sup> Sumner, to Saloma<sup>9R</sup> Sumner who married Asseryl Flint, to Saloma<sup>10R</sup> Flint, who married Hiram Jerome Corwin, to Mary Elizabeth<sup>11R</sup> Corwin who married Charles Zenas Bates, to Florence Edith<sup>12R</sup> Bates who married George Harold<sup>10T</sup> Barnes, and thence Glen Charles<sup>11T(=13R)</sup> Barnes, to spouse of member<sup>12T(=14R)</sup>. 

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