

CLEMENT DAY 2011 INTRODUCTION

TABLE of CONTENTS

- 00-Introduction
- 01-Chart SMC-CJT
- 02-Manlius Farm
- 03-SMC1 Biography
- 04-SMC1 Scrapbook
- 05-AFT Biography
- 06-AFT Scrapbook
- 07-SMC2 Biography
- 08-SMC2 Scrapbook
- 09-SMC2 786 Scrapbook
- 10a-SMC2 East Aurora Part 1
- 10b-SMC2 East Aurora Part 2
- 11-SMC1 Register Report
- 12-AFT Register Report
- 13-Clement Addenda
- 14-Tripp Addenda
- 15-Six Generation Chart

: The Strongbox :

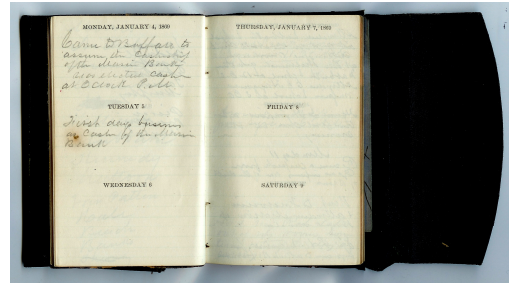
Next to the Harold Clement's cottage in East Aurora was The Studio: a former garage & stable, that smelled alternately of oil &



gasoline, or hay & horses, depending on which side of the building you were in. The stable side was converted into a retreat by

Con Clement, and contained a piano, record player, a wood-burning stove, a TV, etc.

In about 1967, almost one hundred years since the Clement family moved to Buffalo, I found in a wall of storage cupboards a tin strongbox with "S.M. Clement" in gold script on the top. It belonged to Stephen Mallory Clement (1825-1892) and contained



Stephen Mallory Clement's date book from 1869, the year he moved to Buffalo from Fredonia.

memorabilia from the time of his move from Fredonia to Buffalo, in 1869: his appointment book, filled with receipts for apartment rents & furniture purchases, a guide to the city's fire alarm system, a ticket to a talk, etc. Also, leather-bound account books recording the ownership of stock in The Marine Bank, and trust accounts for various widows & orphans, that he supervised, as well as his daily accounting of expenses: "Poor Man 25¢." There was a steel plate, the size of the box, with his image engraved on it for use in a biographical publication.

The box was probably made by Augustus Franklin Tripp's Buffalo Stamping Works. (A 1908 Sidney Shepard catalog indicates that the wholesale cost of the boxes was \$12.50...for a dozen!)

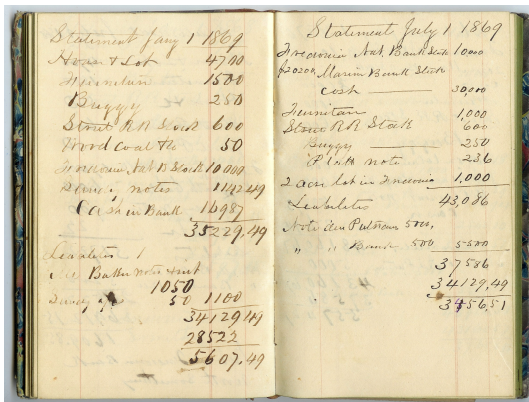
The papers inside referred to people & places I'd never heard of: "Ozias Clement," "Frederick Clement," "Manlius, NY," etc. Who were these people? Where was Manlius? Who lived there? Family mysteries were introduced to me that day, and I have since enjoyed the sleuthing, deductive reasoning, crossword puzzle-solving, etc. that is called

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genealogy, or, I prefer, family history. Why do I enjoy family history? For the stories: putting the extended family into historical time periods.

For the sleuthing. Solving the mystery of: who was Giles Hamlin, Samson Hawkshurst, Zadock Steele, Comfort Starr (an early doctor)? Who was Capt. Augustus Tripp's father? Why don't we know? What happened to Hamlin Johnson? We are descended from Stephen Mallory Clement & A. F. Tripp: what were they like?

For the crossword puzzle-solving: we know this about that branch of the family, what about this branch? How do they fit together?

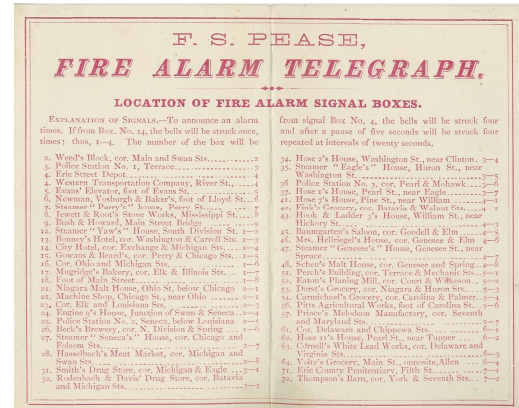


Stephen Mallory Clement's account book for the year he moved to Buffalo.

Searching for royal bloodlines? Absolutely not interested. The DAR, Mayflower Society, etc. are interesting, but the honors they bestow are not the source of my curiosity. (In fact, we are descended from the charmingly portrayed John & Pricilla Alden, but that fact hadn't survived as part of our oral, or written legacy.)

The Clements and the Tripps both descended from working farms, and made the dizzying jump to the Industrial Age. Their children's spouses' families also share this remarkable transition. Further inquiry, back to the 18th & 17th centuries, uncovers family after family that left their native England (or, wherever) and rode a leaky boat to who-knew-what? Theirs was courage worth remembering. Remember, also, that by the time you count

back to the early-to-mid-1600's, when most of our ancestors came to this continent (not yet a country), you are contemplating 2,048 ancestors! It's difficult to know them all, but without ALL of them, you wouldn't be here! Twilight Zone material.



If reading through this material sparks a memory of a story I've left out, please fill me in. If you know about some of the missing, please let me know. I hope that the past will seem less formidable after learning about these people...our people.

Peter W. Clement
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