THE CLARK FAMILY 5

JAMES CLARK (BORN 1820)

In 1865 Grandfather James decided he could afford a vacation so he took a trip east going by steamer to Panama, crossing the isthmus on horseback and then taking a steamer from there to New York or some other port on the East coast. He traveled quite extensively and ended up in Bangor, Maine to visit a family named Finson, who were relatives of friends that he knew in Humboldt County. While in Bangor he met a young lady by the name of Lucinda Tyler, and they were married on January 27, 1865 by a Reverend George W. Field. I do not know if James ever knew, and I am sure that my Father didn’t, but Lucinda Tyler’s Great Grandfather was Thomas Finson who fought in the Battle of Bunker Hill during the Revolutionary War. I found this out when I was tracing the family genealogy to determine if I could become a member of the Sons of the American Revolution, which I did.

I believe that James and Lucinda came back to California by way of Chicago, the Mississippi River to New Orleans, by ship to Panama, across the Isthmus and then by ship to San Francisco, as I have a letter written by James in which he says that he gave someone $400 to invest in some Chicago real estate.

My Father, Linwood Lincoln Clark, was born in Eureka, California on September 3, 1867. We finally found an announcement of this event in the Humboldt Times of September 7, 1867, page 2. For some reason Dad always said his birthday was September 4, and we always celebrated it on that date, so much so that our daughter, Elizabeth, set her wedding date on September 4, 1964. Oddly enough my father’s birth is shown in the family bible as September 3, 1867. Grandma Lucinda (Cinda) became ill and Grandfather James took her and son Linwood back to Bangor again going by the Isthmus. My dad says that he rode across the Isthmus in a panniker on a mule’s back. (Clark probably means a pannier which is a large basket. - editor) Grandfather James left them in Bangor where they lived with Lucinda’s Mother Marie Tyler. Grandfather James went back to California buying the first through ticket on the train from Boston.

The 1870 census for Bangor, Maine shows that Cinda and her son Linwood lived with her mother Maria Catherine Tyler. Cinda died May 31, 1870 and is buried in the Mt. Hope Cemetery in Bangor. Dad continued to live with his Grandmother and his Uncle Eugene Nichols who married Cinda’s sister, Augusta Tyler. The last couple of years that Dad lived in Maine he lived on a farm in South Corinth, which is a small town some 15 miles northeasterly from Bangor. This farm belonged to Eugene Nichols brother, Ephraim.

Sometime in the 1870s the three Clark brothers split up their partnership apparently due to disagreement concerning their investments. Grandfather James wanted to buy city property in growing places like Oakland and San Francisco, but the other two had no use for cities or city life. In the division James took the ranch in Ferndale, a lot that he had bought in Oakland, 16 acres in Bucksport which is just south of Eureka, a home he had bought in Eureka in which he expected to live with his wife and son, a third of the livestock, and the money on hand which was supposed to be quite considerable. He loaned out money on notes at good interest and rented the house to the U. S. Land Office. However, the land office burned down and he could not collect on a lot of the money. At one time his property was assessed at $75,000.

On one of Grandfather James’s trips east he traveled by way of Nicaragua, and he often said that he thought it would be the most feasible route for a canal as the route through Panama was terrible, mules would bog down in the mud, and accommodations were something awful. At one time in Washington D.C. he met President U. S. Grant on the street and tipped his hat to him in courtesy, but President Grant was not satisfied as he recognized him from California, so he stopped Grandfather and chatted a bit and asked him to dinner at the White House, but Grandfather thought that that was a bit too much, so excused himself and did not go.

In 1937 my Father (Linwood) wrote quite extensively of his experiences as a young boy. He wrote this on an old Underwood typewriter that I know he had before the 1920s. I gave the typewriter to the Lafayetter Historical Society in about 1972. Dad used the two finger pick and hunt system of typing, but at that I don’t know whether he made as many mistakes as I do trying to use all my fingers. His, i.e. James, story follows with occasional notes by me.