1984 Crabb Reunion

Chris Summers of Lafayette, In., and Audrey George of Fallbrook, Ca., are planning a Crabb family reunion for the weekend of June 18-19 in Lafayette, In. Please fill in the enclosed blank registration form if you are at all interested in attending and mail it to Chris. They need a tentative attendance count as soon as possible to make plans for next June. If you would like to attend the June reunion but are presently not sure about your 1984 summer plans, get on Chris’ mailing list to be sure to receive the latest reunion information. Since Chris and Audrey are willing to go to all the work and trouble to plan a Crabb family gathering, let’s all join in. Chris wrote recently that she already has 53 people interested in the reunion.

All Crabbs Welcome

Any and all Crabb descendants of the USA. and Canada are invited to attend this reunion in Middle America. Although Chris and Audrey are descendants of the Virginia Crabb line of Pickaway County, Oh., all Crabbs of any line who would like to get together to visit and share Crabb stories are welcome.

Lafayette is southeast of Chicago and northwest of Indianapolis, and the second-largest genealogical library in the US., Fort Wayne, In., is only two hours away according to Chris. Chris and Audrey are making plans for the week following the reunion for those interested in spending a few more days in the Lafayette area. The winter and spring Crabb newsletter will contain more details on the reunion schedule, lists of motels, and other local sights to see.

If the blank form has been removed from this copy of the newsletter, send your count of adults and children to: Chris Summers, 30 Blackberry Court, Lafayette, In. 47905; phone- 317-447-6096.

See You in Lafayette

Rhoda and I hope to attend the Lafayette reunion if at all possible. Dig out your old family photographs, mementos, heirlooms, keepsakes, scrapbooks, Bibles, family group sheets, and stories to share with your Crabb cousins. If you know of Crabb descendants who do not receive this newsletter and might be interested in attending the June reunion, please let them know and include Chris Summer’s address. Christmas cards and letters are a good time to share family and reunion news.

A Relative in Every County in the USA.

A Prall cousin, 87 year old Nelson Prall of Bedford, In., has traveled in every county of the lower 48 states, for a total of over 3,000 counties. I doubt if most of us have been in all the counties of our home state. Rhoda and I have traveled a great deal in New Mexico for 35 years, and we still haven’t visited one of the 33 New Mexico counties, Harding County.

This summer Rhoda and I took Dad, Dwight E. Prall of Newton, Ia., to Rochester, Mn., for a heart operation (see story in this newsletter), and we spent some hours in the Rochester city library and the Olmstead County Historical Library. Until this July, I had no idea that Crabbs had lived in Olmstead Co., and I was even more surprised to learn that a James Crabb was one of the earliest settlers of Olmstead Co. Nelson Prall may have the right idea of visiting every county in the country, and one might be surprised in many of the 3,000 plus counties to discover distant relatives or at least those with the same family names. Modern telephone books across the USA. list quite a few Crabbs, and of course, others who no longer carry the Crabb name because of marriage.

James Crabb 1803-1864, of Cascade T., Olmstead Co., Mn., was a pioneer settler of the county, and the first Methodist Episcopal church service in the county was held in his cabin in late Sept. 1855 in Rochester, Mn. Son John C. Crabb was Clerk of Court of Olmstead Co. and postmaster of Rochester, Mn.

   d. 1864 Olmstead Co., Mn.
   m. Hannah Saxton

   children-1. Francis A. b. c1836 Oh.
   2. Flavius J. b. c1839 Oh.
   3. Bursis (Burroughs M.) b. c1841 In.
   4. Mary J. b. c1847,m. 1895, David W. Bradley
   5. James T. b. c1849
   6. Burns A. b. c1851, m. 1880, Mary A. Wirt
   7. Edwin P. b. c1856
   8. Emma A. b. c1858
   9. John C. b. 1860,m. 1890, Alice M. Hannon

If you know more about this Crabb family, please let the editor know. Just before the newsletter was to go to the printer, Ellen Wilfley of Mulino, Or., whose husband is an Olmstead Co. Smith descendant, sent a letter and package of family material. The wife of John C. Crabb, Alice (cont. page C22)
C22 A Relative in Every County of the USA.? (cont. from front page)

M. Hannon, was the daughter of Leander G. Hannon and Sarah E. Smith. Sarah E. Smith was the daughter of Daniel Smith.

American Novelist Hamlin Garland

The obituary of the famous American novelist, Hamlin Garland 1860-1940, in the Olmstead Co. historical library stated that Garland "was a relative of Elizabeth Smith of Olmstead Co., who was the grandmother of Miss Bertha Wilcox and Dr. F. D. Smith of Rochester." The mother-in-law of John C. Crabb was Sarah E. Smith, the daughter of Daniel Smith. Elizabeth Smith was the mother of Sarah E. Smith, and Dr. Frank D. Smith was a nephew of Sarah E. Smith. Does a reader have more information on the possible relationship of Hamlin Garland of the Smith, Hannon, and Crabb families of Olmstead Co., Mn.?

In addition while in the libraries, I learned in Rochester that I am related to the Olmstead Co. Prall family. While touring the Olmstead Co. Museum next to the library, I discovered a Carroll Prall on a WWII memorial. With some digging in the public and museum library, I learned that Carroll was killed in a Navy training diving exercise at Ft. Pierce, Fl., on 1-12-1945. Carroll was the son of Kenneth Bert Prall & Gladys Brownlee of Cass Co., Ia. The Cass Co. Pralls are closely related to my Warren Co., Ia., Pralls.

Who knows, there may be a living Crabb descendant or records of a Crabb descendant in every county in the USA.

Update on 1857 Crabb Murder

Henry Alexander Crabb

Last spring's Crabb newsletter had a front-page story on the 1857 Henry Alexander Crabb filibustering expedition into Mexico and the brutal murder of Henry and his men. Recently, my parents in Newton, Ia., sent the October 1993 issue of the magazine Wild West which contained a story of the 1857 expedition entitled "Sonora Invaded" by Charles S. Park. Supposedly, the magazine is available at newsstands until Oct. 28.

Although the seven-page Wild West story was similar to the one in the spring Crabb newsletter, author Charles S. Park had additional details and information on Henry A. Crabb and his invasion of Mexico. The magazine story was well written and more fully described the actions and motives of Henry A. Crabb. No descendants of Henry A. Crabb were mentioned in the article. Charles S. Park suggested for further reading, Crabb's Filibustering Expedition Into Mexico in 1857 by R. H. Forbes, Henry A Crabb, Filibuster by Diana Lindsay, Filibusters and Financiers by William O. Scroggs, Bench and Bar of the South and Southwest by Henry S. Foote, and The Liberators by Joseph Allen Stout. Charles S. Park served 22 years as a US. Custom officer on the Arizona-Mexico border.

Henry A. Crabb Novel

Charles S. Park has written a novel based on the 1857 Crabb expedition and is now seeking a publisher. Park sent additional information on Henry A. Crabb. Henry had two sons by Filomena Ainsa, Augustine C. Crabb and Henry A. Crabb Jr., but Park has been unable to locate descendants in Ca. Park sent data from old San Francisco city directories which listed Henry A. Crabb Jr. in the city in 1877 and 1878, Augustine C. in 1878, 1879, and 1904, and Mrs. (Philomena) Crabb, widow, in 1877, 1880-81, 1882-83, 1884-85, 1885-95, and 1897-1902.

"Gray-Eyed Man of Destiny"

An editorial in the front of the October issue of Wild West discussed another filibusterer of the 19th century, William Walker. Both Walker 1824-1860, and Crabb 1823-1857, were contemporaries and natives of Nashville, Tn., and Park wrote that they were schoolmates. Park noted that when Walker was prevented from sailing from San Francisco on one of his filibustering trips, Crabb intervened and got his ship released. On another occasion, when Walker was run out of Mexico and placed on trial in Ca., Crabb was one of the principal character witnesses whose testimony helped Walker be acquitted.

In April of 1857 while Crabb was being shot by a firing squad in the village of Caborca, Sonora, Mexico, William Walker was desperately trying to maintain power in Nicaragua as the self-proclaimed president of that small Central America country. The magazine editorial said that Walker was called the "gray-eyed man of destiny."

With a band of 58 followers called the "Immortals," Walker invaded the politically unstable Nicaragua in 1856-1857, and set himself up as president but was chased out of the country. In 1860 when he was attempting to invade Nicaragua, Walker was captured and executed by a firing squad. Walker was called a hero by many and supposedly ousted from power by Vanderbilt interests and captured by the British when attempting to regain Nicaragua. Before the Civil War, some Southern interests hoped to expand the slave territories in the Americas since Congress and the abolitionists were placing more restrictions on slave territories and slave states in the United States.

Lone wolves like Henry A. Crabb and William Walker set the prototype for the hated yanqui (Yankee) invader. According to the New American Desk Encyclopedia, Walker tried to create a republic out of Lower California and Sonora, Mexico, in 1853-1854. This would indicate that Henry A. Crabb must have been greatly influenced by William Walker. The American doctrine of Manifest Destiny was in vogue in the 19th century. President James Polk, backed by the doctrine, invaded Mexico in the late 1840's and added to the United States the enormous areas of Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and Southern California.

William Walker in Fiction

William Walker was a character in the first scene of the 1942 historical novel Dinner at Belmont, A
Novel of Captured Nashville by Dr. Alfred Leland Crabb 1833-1979. This Crabb novel was reviewed on the front page of the summer 1992 Crabb newsletter. In the first pages of the book, a timberman elected not to ride in a stagecoach because of two passengers called "strange galoots," and thus he mounted and rode beside the coach driver who described the two galoots "Pizen, plain pizen" (poison). One of the two galoots was soon identified as William Walker.

In the Nashville novel on Sept. 30, 1858, an elaborate banquet at the Belmont Mansion was given by Adelicai and Joseph Acklen in honor of "Nashville's most colorful son, William Walker, now returned from a brief visit to Nicaraguan fields of enterprise." Walker had been in Washington charged with violating the neutrality laws and had returned to Nashville by stagecoach. It is clear from the first of the novel that Adelicai Acklen once greatly admired Walker and was still interested in him although now married. Of course Adelicai and her banquet are used by novelist Dr. Crabb to bring his characters together and tell his story.

Walker was described in the novel as a general who was small, clean-shaven, with high cheekbones like an Indian, with burning gray eyes one could never forget, and an individual who had been in the paper a lot and "shoots a man every time somebody winks an eye." Dr. Crabb stated that Walker's parents lived in Nashville, and Dr. Crabb also called Walker the "Gray-Eyed Man of Destiny." The novel noted that Adelicai Acklen was the first to call Walker the "Gray-Eyed Man of Destiny" when they were still youths. The novel describes in some detail the strange William Walker of Nashville who couldn't seem to decide whether to be a scholar, lawyer, doctor, or adventurer in New Orleans, California, and Central America. He supposedly attended Edinburgh University in Scotland at one time.

The other "galoot" in the stage was a foreigner named Major Fayssoux whom Walker had picked up as a bodyguard in some "foreign war." In the first part of the novel, assassins tried to kill Walker on two occasions to keep him from returning to Nicaragua, but the ever-present "driver," who was never named in the entire novel and was the main unifying character, saved Walker's life with the help of Major Fayssoux. Part one of the novel foreshadows the death of William Walker and the coming tragedy of the Civil War. By the fall of 1858, Walker had been ousted from Nicaragua and was returning home to Nashville to seek aid to regain power in Central America.

In the first pages of part two, the driver joined Walker and Fayssoux on their journey to New Orleans. Fayssoux became ill and stayed in New Orleans while Walker and the driver eventually boarded a ship and sailed to recapture Nicaragua. As in history, the British Navy captured and executed William Walker with a firing squad. In the novel the driver was released to return to Nashville and to continue his involvement in Civil War Era Nashville. William Walker appeared on many pages of the first two parts of the novel.

Dr. Crabb must have known about the historic Henry A. Crabb of Nashville and his tragic death in Mexico, but he did not use Crabb as a character in this novel. It is curious that Crabb and Walker were involved in land and power grabs in Mexico and Central America in the 1850s, and novelist Dr. Alfred Leland Crabb included only Walker as a character in his historic 1942 novel about the aristocracy of Nashville. Dr. Crabb choose not to use Henry Alexander Crabb as a character in his novel possibly because of his Crabb name. Alfred Leland Crabb Jr. of Lexington, Ky., the son of Dr. Crabb, loaned me his copy of the novel, Dinner at Belmont.

Cave Hill Cem., Louisville, Ky.
Ruth C. Harrison of Fairfield, Ill., sent 11-1992, the names of Crabbs buried in the Cave Hill Cemetery, Louisville, Ky. On 8-1993, she even sent snapshots of the Crabb tombstones.

The 1848 cemetery is located in the Crescent Hill area in the eastern part of the city at 701 Baxter Ave. Over 5,000 Union soldiers are buried at the Cave Hill Cemetery along with about 200 Confederate dead.

Ruth is a daughter of the late Edward C. Crabb 1903-1976, and Katharine Surgeon Crabb of West Point, Ky. Katharine has also sent Crabb data to the editor. Ruth Harrison understood that John Adams Crabb purchased the 16 grave plot in section A at the time his granddaughter Emma Dorinda Crabb died in 1879. Section A is the first section on the right as one enters from Baxter Ave. Behind the tall Crabb obelisk are the following tombstones:

Cave Hill Cemetery
John Adams Crabb b. 9-16-1801, d. 7-21-1889 (line of Charles Crabb of Jackson Co., In.)
and his 3rd wife, Sarah Ann Taylor b. 12-25-1816, d. 1-1888
Smith Crabb b. 9-28-1829, d. 11-27-1903 [son of John Adams]
and his wife] Mary Elliott b. 10-13-1834, d. 7-6-1914
Smith's dau. Emma Dorinda Crabb b. 3-28-1861, d. 5-24-1879
Stanley Crabb b. 8-27-1895, d. 11-12-1970 (son of Harry Webster Crabb and grandson of Smith Crabb)
and his wife] Ruth Alice Lampe b. 12-11-1903, d. 2-17-1987
Edward Coleman Crabb b. 6-26-1903, d. 11-14-1976 (father of Ruth C. Harrison)

The words in brackets are those of the editor. If you have a listing of Crabbs buried in a cemetery in your area, send the details to the editor. Please include the exact location of the cemetery.

Quiltmaker Nannie Crabb
Bill Crabb of Columbia, Mo., sent 7-1993, a copy of an article on early Arizona quiltmakers from the Oct. 1993 issue of Quilting Today. The article was based on the book Grand Endeavors: Vintage Arizona Quilts and Their Makers by Helen Young Frost and Pam Knight Stevenson.

There was a photograph of Nannie Catherine...
behind the newer house in what is now the barnyard. Nannie made her quilt from scraps of material and had to depend on her sewing ability to live and take care of her four children after the death of her husband in 1917. She was even forced to give up her spacious home. She made dozens of quilts, even doll quilts for her great-granddaughters. The magazine article said that Nannie was a prolific seamstress, quiltmaker, and amateur photographer. Does a reader know into which Crabb line Nannie married? Bill Crabb wondered about the photographs taken by Nannie and whether the book Grand Endeavors contained information on her Crabb family and the living relatives. I doubt if the book Grand Endeavors is available out of the state of Arizona.

Update on Crabb School

Merle L. Crabb of Springfield, Va., wrote 7-1993, that he too remembers attending the Crabb School in Macomb T., McDonough Co., Il. Karen E. Martin of Tempe, Az., a cousin of Merle, sent information on the Crabb school for the spring newsletter, page C5.

The Crabb School was located on the southwest corner of the 80A John Middleton Crabb 1792-1865, gave to his unmarried daughter, Francis Crabb 1815-1893. This area is just north of Macomb, Il., near the town of Good Hope. The editor’s great-grandfather, Thomas William Crabb 1834-1917, and family lived in Warren Co. near the village of Swan Creek north just across the county line. One wonders if the two Crabb families, one line from Va. and the other from Md., knew of each other in the late 1800’s and on into the 20th century since they lived only a few miles apart.

Merle L. Crabb believed that John Middleton Crabb donated the land for the school in the late 1850’s although there are no records in the courthouse to prove it. The school was in use up until the late 1940’s or nearly 100 years. The school plot was originally the John Middleton Crabb family cemetery. Before the parcel of land became a school, all the graves were disinterred and moved to the Good Hope Cemetery in nearby Good Hope, Il.

After the death of Francis Crabb in 1893, the 80A tract was purchased by John Richard Crabb 1863-1922, the son of John Atwill Crabb. John Atwill Crabb was a son of the first settler, John Middleton Crabb. The land owned by Francis Crabb included the original house of John M. Crabb. John Richard Crabb subsequently built a larger house fronting on the county road. According to Merle, the original John Middleton Crabb house, later torn down, was located southwest behind the newer house in what is now the barnyard.

Upon the death of Mary Lodema Spangler Crabb, wife of John Richard Crabb, in 1934, the 80A was divided between sons Carle Ray and Merle Lloyd Crabb. After the land was divided, Merle Lloyd Crabb lived in his parent’s house, and Carle Ray Crabb built a house next door. Both houses were standing in 1993, but both have been greatly altered over the years. Neither the houses nor the land remain in the Crabb family.

Today, Merle’s mother, Martha L. Crabb, still lives in Macomb, Il., and his brother David lives in nearby Colchester. Merle recalls attending the country school along with his six brothers and sisters. Even his father, Carle Ray Crabb Jr., and his brother and sister attended the Crabb School in the early 1920’s. Merle suspected that his grandfather Carle Ray Crabb Sr. and his brothers attended the school before the turn of the century. Carle Ray Crabb Jr. told about taking his turn to bring in coal for the school stove. All of Merle’s generation who grew up in the 1950’s and 1960’s remember going across the field to play at the Crabb school. The road in front of the Crabb school led south to Crabb Bridge which crossed the Lamoine River before it reached Macomb, Il.

Neither Merle L. Crabb or Karen E. Martin mentioned whether the school is still standing today. According to Karen, this area of section 16, Macomb T., was once called Crabb Town or Crabb Settlement some time after John Middleton Crabb settled in the township in 1836. Do you have information on another Crabb place name in the USA?

Another Pseudo Family History

Bill Crabb of Columbia, Mo., sent 7-1993, a letter from the Scottsdale Family Treasures of Phoenix, Az., which was seeking Crabbs to include in a book called Who’s Who of the Crabbs in America. It was obvious from the letter that as soon as you sent a listing of your spouse, children, parents, occupation, etc., they would then want you to purchase a copy of this book. Supposedly, the same letter was sent to Crabbs in all 50 states based on Crabb addresses culled from 5,000 phone books.

The book Who’s Who of the Crabbs in America will probably consist of a handful of pages on the few Crabbs who returned the questionnaire and many computer pages on all the Crabbs listed in phone books in the 50 states. The book does not appear to be an organized history of the Crabb family. I wonder if enough Crabbs will complete and return the questionnaire to even make a book? Let the editor know if you later receive a letter selling this book.

A Crabb Song

Harry Crabb of Moundridge, Ks., wrote 7-1993, that western singer Chet Atkins wrote a song about his father, the late Paul C. Crabb of McPherson, Ks. Harry, if you have a copy of the song, please send it to the editor for inclusion in a future issue of the newsletter. (Editor’s note- The McPherson Clan held their annual reunion in McPherson, Ks., the weekend of Sept. 25-26. Both Rhoda and I are McPherson descendants but were unable to attend.)
Crabb Place Name- A Wagon Trip 100 Years Ago

G. David Crabb of Rogers, Ar., sent 7-1993, a 1983 obituary of Ruth Crabb Edens which contained information about a Crabbtown and a 37-day wagon trip in October a century ago. According to the obituary, Ruth was the last of the Crabb's of old Crabbtown, Jackson Co., Ia., who left in wagons on 8-20-1893, and arrived on 10-17-1893, at Avoca, Benton Co., Ar. I have written to the Jackson Sentinel newspaper in Maquoketa, Ia., Ronald Crabb of Garfield, Ar., and to Elsie Crabb Miller of Wyoming, Ia., for more information on this Crabb family and Crabbtown, Jackson Co., Ia. Jackson County is in Eastern Iowa along the Mississippi R. Crabbtown must have been near Maquoketa, Ia., the county seat. Please send any information on this family and Crabbtown to the editor.

Making the 1893 trip to Ar. were the young family of Ezra Isaiah Crabb, gr grandparents Washington and Phila Crabb, and gr.dau. May. Much later, Ruth wrote verses about the trip in her scrapbook since she was only one year old in 1893. Ruth was survived by three sons, five gr.daughters, five gr.grandchildren, and a niece, Mrs. Ted Miller of Wyoming, Ia. The sample of her poetry included with the obituary is as follows:

At Booneville we cross Missouri's tide, on Stephen's new steam ferry.
We were landed safe on the other side, by his crew so kind and merry.
Sometimes it rains a day or two, which makes us all feel blue;  
We pitch our tent and build a fire, 'tis the best that we can do.
The jolly ones are quiet now, all attempts to fun are vain.
As we see the cars go by, we wish we were on that train.
But we have left Missouri's line and found the land of springs.
We're in Northwest Arkansas, with praise the valley rings.
Ending timelessly with Ezra Isaiah's proclamation:
    I think I'll stay and buy some land, plant peach and apple trees.
    I would rather live on the Ozark's top than stay up north and freeze.

1840 Crabb Letter

Thanks to Julia F. Dean of Tulsa, Ok., who sent a copy of an 1840 Joseph B. Crabb letter in July in response to the story entitled “Unknown Crabbs” on page C20 of the summer Crabb newsletter. I had numerous pages of this Crabb family line already typed in the coming Crabb book but failed to connect the unknown Crabb of the 1849 overland wagon trip to Joseph B. Crabb of Va., Tn., and Ii. The summer issue contained the following lines discovered by Joyce AuBuchon of Palo Alto, Ca., in the 1930 book Wagons West by Elizabeth Page:

Crabb? He went overland to Ca. in the 1849 Green and Jersey Counties (Illinois) Company. He may have been a friend of Chapman's since they joined the same day. Crabb and Chapman left the company, but stayed close to the trail.

Julia F. Dean wrote that the unknown Crabb was Joseph B. Crabb who migrated overland to Ca. in 1849, had sisters who married into the Chapman family, and that Joseph died in Clackamas Co., Or., in 1853. Joseph B. Crabb was born in 1795 in Grainger Co., Tn., to John Crabb of Frederick Co., Va., and Ellen Reynolds of Ireland. John Crabb was the son of a Joseph and Mary Crabb of Va. Joseph B. married in 1818 in Knox Co., Tn., Margaret “Peggy” Crawford. Joseph and Margaret settled in Greene Co., Ii., before crossing the plains and mountains to Ca. and Or. about the time of the 1849 California Gold Rush. One would love to be able to talk to this family about their long, covered-wagon trip west or even find a diary of their arduous journey, but no diary is known to exist.

In addition to identifying Joseph B. Crabb 1795-1853, as the one traveling west in 1849, Julia F. Dean sent an excerpt from an 1832 letter about Joseph Crabb. Gov. John Reynolds of Belleville, Ii., wrote a letter 2-6-1832, to his cousin Robert Bannon Reynolds, attorney, of Knoxville, Ii., which included the following:

My mother, Belsha, and his son are in good health. The Scotts, Black, Crabb, and all in Greene (county) are now well . . . Jos. Crabb is doing well, and is pleased with the free State. He as entered 80 acres of land including his improvement. The Chapmans are settled on Congress land and doing well. My Uncle Crabb (John) is sick, mostly from imprudent conduct.

Joseph B. Crabb’s mother was a Reynolds which explains the reference to Joseph Crabb as uncle. John Reynolds was once a governor of Ii. from 1830 to 1834. Two sisters of Joseph married Chapmans. The 1840 letter sent by Julia F. Dean was written by Joseph to the same Robert Bannon Reynolds mentioned in the above excerpt. The 1840 letter contains the original
Michigan Canal commenced in 1836 was not completed until 12 years later. Joseph Crabb and the years, but today we usually pay more than $20. The 1840 citizens opposition to taxes haven't changed that much in 150 years. They go for old Tip to a man. We have a tolerable prospect of wheat crops though not so good as last year. The corn crops is late and we cannot make much calculation as the spring was very wet and late. Our markets is lower with every thing than I have since I came to the state. Wheat is 45 cents per bushel corn 25 to 31 1/4 bacon 5 cents hog round ___. at this time. There is a great press for want of money in Illinois. Speculation over the Internal Improvement Sistem have almost ruined the state of Illinois. There is a debt hanging over the state of near eleven millions of dollars which is now at interst at 6 per cent. The state has laid a levy tax on us to pay the interst. In some of the counties they have nullified last year and would not pay purportion our county for our grain ___. I was appointed accessor to take on the list of taxable property in our end of the county. I would not serve and no person would in the county although the court appointed the third time and so we paid no tax last year. Four counties paid none. The legislature had a call session last winter and we have been overlooked in that respect. Jersey County was taken off Green and this year we have yielded to the yoke. My taxes this year will be near $20.

The last legislature has suspended the sistem at present. There has been a great deal of money lent out already and there has not been a rail road or the canall completed and I presume the rail road sistem will go down next session of legislature. In some counties there is candidates out for and against the sistem. If the people sustain it it will continue. If not it must go down. We cannot tell until next August election. As far as I can learn nine tenths of the people is opposed to it in the state. Though I think the canall will go on, at present they have been compelled to stop work for want of mony.

Great is the excitement at present as it respect our presidential election in this state and from the great noise the Feds make here you would think our state would be lost but I hope and trust she will go Democratic again. The movements of the Wigs here is most damdable disgustful! There howling about the canoe and the log cabin. I feel a greater warmth in the presidential election than I ever did. If they should get into power this time wo unto our Constitution. Death and Desolation will be among the states. We have a great many Abolitionists in our state. They go fo old Tip to a man.

I am gratified to hear of Tenn. coming over to Republican faith again though I think it somewhat doubtful yet. Judge White is dead still his influence I fear is not ded. I have been more astoneshed at the acts of that man than any other in all of my life. I once had confidence in him. He is no more so I will stop on that subject.

I was informed by John Cooper of Alton some 3 or 4 weeks ago that there was some mony in your hands for me. He said he got the information from Ault or some other person so I sold him a draft on your fifty dollars. If it be correct pleas honor the same for me. If not I will revoke it. I should have informed you before this time but concluded to do by Jos Moore. So I conclude by giving you my sincere thanks for all past favors and in winding up my concerns hi Tenn. You will please pay your self for the service.

Give my best respects to your Mother and family. I long much to see you all.

Robert I would like verry much if you would come out and see our country. You would be well pleased with it. This country is becoming good for an attorney at law more so than was some years ago. So I will stop as I can scarcely see. I could write to you on politics untill tomorrow. Yours respectfully Joseph Crabb

In paragraph two of the above letter, Joseph Crabb mentions the "great press for want of money in II." and "the Internal Improvement Sistem have almost ruined the state of II." According to Colliers Encyclopedia, Illinois had joined the national hysteria for internal improvements in the 1830's and by 1837 the state was staggering on the edge of bankruptcy with a debt of $14,000,000. All that they had to show for the debt was one short railroad line, the Northern Cross, the first steam railway west of the Alleghenies and north of the Ohio R. The Illinois Michigan Canal commenced in 1836 was not completed until 12 years later. Joseph Crabb and the tax payers of Green-Jersey Co. didn't want to pay a part of this state debt. Note that Joseph's tax for 1840 was all of $20. The 1840 citizens opposition to taxes haven't changed that much in 150 years, but today we usually pay more than $20.
In paragraph four, Joseph discusses the 1840 presidential election hoping the Democrats will win over the “most damnable disgustful” Whigs. “If they (Whigs) should get into power this time Wo unto our Constitution. We have a great many Abolitionists in our state. They go for old Tip to a man.” Sorry Joseph, but “Old Tip” William Henry Harrison 1773-1841, and vice president John Tyler of the Whig party won the presidential election, but President Harrison caught pneumonia at his inauguration and died a month later. Harrison got the name “Old Tip” from his leading the attack of US. troops on a Shawnee Indian village along the Tippecanoe River, Northwest Territory, now in the state of Indiana, on 11-7-1811. His 1840 election slogan was “Tippecanoe and Tyler Too.” Because the country was caught in a serious economic depression, and Harrison was known as an Indian fighter and War of 1812 hero, and a son of the people with simple tastes, he was promoted as a common man candidate along with with the slogan of “log cabin and hard cider.” He was known as the author of the “Log Cabin” land bill which passed while he was in Congress in 1800. The bill provided for the sale of smaller tracts of government land and for granting four-year credit terms to the poorer purchasers. He also helped pass the act that divided the Northwest Territory into Ohio and Indiana Territories. Note that Joseph Crabb wrote in his letter, “There howling about the canoe and the log cabin.” By 1840 the Abolitionists were becoming a political force even as far west as Ill., and the Civil War was fast approaching.

Are there other readers who have old Crabb letter or documents which need to be included in the Crabb book or the newsletter? Many Crabb descendants have already sent letters and documents. An 1840 letter is an unusual find.

Another View on the Mother of Thomas Sprigg Jr.

In August Mariam Cheshire of Phoenix, Az., sent a copy of a letter written by David Armstrong of Elkins, WV., concerning the maternal line of Col. Thomas Sprigg Jr. David gave permission to print his letter. There is still controversy about the mother of Col. Thomas Sprigg Jr. of Prince George’s Co., Md. Thomas Jr. was the father of Priscilla Sprigg who married Ralph Crabb in 1716. Some researchers claim that the first wife of Col. Thomas Sprigg Sr., Katherine Graves, was the mother of Thomas Jr., and others like David Armstrong suggest that Eleanor Nuthall, the second wife of Thomas Sr., was the mother of Thomas Jr. Those who descend from Ralph Crabb and Priscilla Sprigg of Maryland may never know which was the mother. The coming Crabb book will discuss both wives as possible mothers of Thomas Jr. The letter is as follows:

Dear Mrs. Cheshire: Elkins, WV., 10 Jul 1993

Thank you for your letter of 6 July. I have been doing more or less intensive research on Thomas Sprigg Sr. since about 1988, and I have collected a mountain of material. I also descend from Thomas Sprigg Jr. and Margaret Mariarte, and in answer to your question I will say that I think the evidence is inconclusive as to the mother of Thomas Jr., but I have decided at least to my own satisfaction that Thomas Jr. was a son of Thomas Sr. by his second wife, Eleanor Nuthall. I will attempt to explain the reasons behind my conclusion.

Jester & Hiden’s Adventures of Purse and Person Virginia 1607-1625 gives sufficient evidence to show that Katherine Roper Sprigg, and Verlinda Stone, wife of Governor Stone of Maryland were sisters, and daughters of Captain Thomas Graves of Dublin, London, and Virginia. Adventures also cites a document in Prince George’s County, Maryland in which Charles Calvert, grandson of Verlinda Stone, calls Thomas Sprigg Jr. his “cousin.”

Many researchers cite that evidence as proof of the mutual Graves ancestry of Sprigg Jr. and Calvert. I am not so sure.

I thought along those lines myself for a long time, until last year when I presented my Sprigg problems to a friend who is an authority on British families and genealogy of the period. He told me that in over 50 years of research he has never found a case in old British material in which the term “cousin” actually meant a blood relative. It more often meant someone on the same level in life economically and socially. Needless to say this upset my thinking on Sprigg.

Left with doubts, I began to start looking for some other way of deciding where Thomas Jr. might fit among the Sprigg children. The answer for me came in establishing a relative birth order.

Evidence cited under “Hilleary” in Bowie’s Across the Years in Prince Georges County would show that Eleanor, daughter of Thomas Sprigg Sr. married Thomas Hilleary no later than 1684. This would place her birth at about 1665 or 1666, and that date along with her name of Eleanor would make her a child of the second marriage to Nuthall. Since Thomas Sprigg Jr. did not marry until about 1690, circumstantial evidence suggests that he was born circa 1666 to 1670. This would make him younger than his sister Eleanor, and therefore a child of the second marriage.

Other evidence would seem to suggest that Thomas Jr. was a son of the second marriage. Sometime previous to February of 1664 one Thomas Belcher of Maryland died, and his orphan was given to John Bateman who
C.28 was to become her guardian. John Bateman died and so did his widow Mary by February of 1667. At the time Thomas Sprigg (Sr.) was sheriff of Calvert County (Maryland) and was involved in both estate settlements. Thomas Sprigg (Sr.) took the Belcher girl as a servant, he and his wife then wife beat and kicked and ultimately killed her (according to court testimony), and the deposition in connection with this incident might tend to throw light on the parentage of Thomas Jr.

"The deposition of Thomas Carleton taken the 23rd day of January, 1670. This deponent saith that Sarah Belcher was generally imployed in tending the sonne of Thomas Sprigg and upon all occasions carrying the sonne in her arms and if the son when he played up and down happened to fall or any other ways to cry then Mistris Sprigg wife to the said Thomas would beat and kick her as if she had been her slave and when he saw Sarah Belcher so abused he told Sprigg that he did more than they could justify and their answer was that this deponent should mind his own business and the said Sarah Belcher often days gasped from being kicked and beaten on the head by Sprigg's wife in so much that this deponent hath often seen her bloody and this the said Thomas Sprigg's wife could do on any frivolous occasion."

The deposition above will prove that between February of 1664 and January of 1670 Thomas Sprigg (Sr.) had an infant son small enough to be carried around by the servant girl. Since Katherine (Graves) would have been about 40 at the time and since this is about the time of the second marriage, I think we can say with some certainty that Thomas and Eleanor had a son shortly after their marriage. I think, with this evidence and the circumstantial evidence cited above, we can safely assume that this child was Thomas Jr., although until we find a solid birth date for Elias there is a possibility it could have been him.

Until conclusive evidence can be presented I am following the Nuthall ancestry as my line, although I admit the evidence is inconclusive. The document in which Charles Calvert calls Sprigg Jr. a cousin is not sufficient proof in my mind that they both had Graves ancestry. They were at the very least cousins by marriage. Also, I do not have the evidence in Wilsons and Burchells. Would you mind sending me that?

I hope I have answered your question. As I said I have a mountain of material on these families and if you will let me know what you lack I will be happy to fill in the blanks if I can. Thanks again for writing.

Sincerely,
David Armstrong

I tend to agree with David Armstrong and have always wondered if Katherine Graves were the mother of Thomas Sprigg Jr., why weren't any of the grandchildren or great grandchildren of Thomas Sprigg Sr. named Katherine. Colonial families almost religiously named their children after parents and grandparents. But a number of grandchildren were named Eleanor. Mary Sprigg Stockett, a sister of Thomas Sprigg Jr., and probably the daughter of Katherine Graves, named a daughter Eleanor Stockett. Eleanor Sprigg Hillery, another sister of Thomas Sprigg Jr., named a daughter Eleanor Hillery. Thomas Sprigg Jr. named a daughter Eleanor. Martha Sprigg Prather, another sister of Thomas Sprigg Jr., named a daughter Eleanor, and finally Elizabeth Sprigg Wade, the youngest sister of Thomas Sprigg Jr., named a daughter Eleanor Wade. Not one known child nor grandchild of Thomas Sprigg Sr. or Jr. was named Katherine which would be very unusual if Katherine Graves were really the mother of Thomas Sprigg Jr.

Sprigg Dates

I. Thomas Sprigg Sr. 1630-1704
  m. 1650 Va., Katherine Graves b. c1624, d. bef. 9-1-1668
  2nd m. 9-1-1668 Md., Eleanor Nuthall b. c1648, d. bef. 1700
children- Eleanor Sprigg b. c1665-1666 (according to Armstrong)
  Thomas Sprigg Jr. b. c1666-1670 (according to Armstrong)
II. Thomas Sprigg Jr. b. c1666-1670 (according to Armstrong), d. 1736-39
  m. 1690 Md., Margaret Mariarte b. c1672, d. 1739

Sarah Belcher must have become a servant of Thomas Sprigg Sr. after the 1667 death of her guardian and before her own death in 1670. Sarah was killed by Mrs. Sprigg according to the court testimony. This servant girl carried a son of Thomas Sprigg Sr. around according to the 1670 deposition of Thomas Carleton. Thus, Armstrong concluded that Thomas Sprigg Jr. was the son carried around by the servant girl Sarah Belcher between 1667-1670. The 1668 second marriage of Thomas Sprigg Sr. to Eleanor Nuthall leaves one guessing whether the son carried by Sarah Belcher were from Eleanor or the first wife Katherine Graves. Armstrong did note that in 1668 Katherine Graves would have been in her forties, and of course women in their forties do bear children. Howard's argument does make one lean toward Eleanor Nuthall as being the mother of Thomas Sprigg Jr. As noted above, I am more convinced by the number of grandchildren named Eleanor and none named Katherine.

On problem of the above argument is that Thomas Sprigg Sr. and Eleanor Nuthall supposedly had two other sons who might have been the son in the arms of Sarah Belcher. Son John Sprigg died in 1705, unmarried, and son Elias Sprigg died between 1696-1704, also
Genealogy is an imperfect endeavor; because of lost documents and others which are never recorded, educated guess work is sometimes required. Most family histories have missing links and points of controversy. Other controversies have been reported in this newsletter.

Contemporary Crabb News

Please send the news of Crabb and allied family births, marriages, anniversaries, graduations, deaths, reunions, awards, and other current news to editor Richard D. Prall, 14104 Piedras Rd. NE., Albuquerque, NM. 87123, phone- 505-299-8386. Remember to read your local newspapers for Crabb stories and news. Back issues of the newsletter are $3 per issue. Subscribers may submit free queries to the newsletter.

New Descendant-

Maggie Elizabeth Crabb was born 8-4-1993, in Dallas, Tx., to Rupert McIver Crabb III & Nancy Pummill according to aunt Elizabeth “Beth” Crabb of Alamo, Tx. The grandparents are the late Rupert McIver Crabb Jr. 1920-1980, & Elizabeth Ann Gray.

In Memory of-

Philip William Crabb 48 years of age, died 5-7-1993, in Chippewa Falls, Wi., the son of Robert Merritt Crabb and Dorothy Lee Baker of Australia. Robert and Dorothy’s experiences in a Japanese prison camp during WWII were featured in the summer Crabb newsletter. Robert’s sister Nancy C. Bach sent the family chart with the death notice. Surviving are his parents; brothers, James Lloyd Crabb and Terrance K. Albert Crabb; and sister Janice Lee Marian Kemp.

Chris Summers wrote in August that Donna Adamson’s husband, James R. Adamson died in 1993. I do not have the date of death nor a list of survivors. Donna of Grand Island, Ne., was one of the first Crabb descendants to send Crabb family sheets and many pages of data after I started the Crabb newsletter in early 1991. Donna has helped fill in many blanks and missing links in the Crabb ancestry, especially on her Virginia Crabb line.

Vesta E. Holeman Hollenberg, 97, died 12-23-1992, in Roseville, Il., according to the obituary in the Holeman Newsletter Vol. X, #4. Vesta was the daughter of Albert Smith Holeman 1867-1928, and Delilah Anna Jones of Roseville, Warren Co., Il., and the granddaughter of Reuben Holeman 1817-1903, and Susannah Crabb of the same county. Susannah was the granddaughter of Charles Crabb 1762-1827 of Md. and In. Surviving are three sons, Loren Hollenberg, Arnold Hollenberg, and Cecil Hollenberg, all of Roseville, nine grandchildren, nine great-grandchildren, and four great-great-grandchildren. Burial was at the Roseville Cem.

1993 Reunions-

William Vincent Crabb Reunion- On Sat. 8-14-1993, in the Collins Legion Hall at Collins, IA., the descendants of William Vincent Crabb 1878-1923, and Barbara Link 1884-1976, of Story County, IA., held their annual reunion and potluck supper with 66 attending. W. V. Crabb is a descendant of the Virginia Crabb line. Collins is only a few miles northeast of Des Moines.

Karol L. Atwood of Collins, IA., sent the report and noted that those attending from out-of-state were Jerry, Linda, and Christine Crabb of Port Orchard, WA., and Glenn and Carol Head of Madison, NJ. June Crabb Borgerson will be in charge of the 1994 William Vincent Crabb reunion. Perhaps we can get Karol or June to send a more complete report on the 1994 gathering and a little history of the W. V. Crabb reunion. Karol and cousin Kay Burke of Marshalltown, IA., have sent a great deal on their Crabb line for the Crabb book.

Jeremiah Edward Crabb III Reunion- On July 3, 4, & 5, John and Maxine Smith Kessler hosted a cousins’ reunion in Edmond, Ok., for the descendants of Jeremiah E. Crabb III of the Maryland Crabb line. The Kessler’s daughter, Chrissy Chenoweth and daughter-in-law, Jenonne Kessler helped with the reunion. The three-day event included watching the local 4th of July parade and rodeo, photos and newspaper stories of the Crabb Bros. Trading Co. of the 1920’s in Casa Grande, Az., Sunday church service, Oklahoma City symphony orchestra, the local fireworks show, and numerous meals at the Kessler home.

Six of the eight living first cousins (grandchildren of Jeremiah E. Crabb III & Bettie A. Lindsay) attended- Betty Crabb Withoff, Maxine Smith Kessler, and all four surviving children of Jerry and Grace Crabb, Ed (and wife Cap), Hugh, Bill Crabb (and wife Carol), and Arlie Crabb Riggs. Also attending all or part of the 4th of July weekend were Ned Kessler and children Lindsay, Zane, and Hayley; Paul and Susan Kessler and Sarah; Derald and Gayle Riggs and Dan and Matthew; Steve Crabb and friend Linda Schoeneman; and Dorothy Crabb. States represented
James Madison Crabb 1836-1906 Reunion - In June about 30 descendants of James Madison Crabb 1836-1906, of McPherson, Ks., met at the clubhouse of Mrs. Edna Crabb’s mobile home park in Long Beach, Ca. Five generations were present with Mrs. Edna Crabb of 85 years the eldest, Edna’s son Eugene, Eugene’s son John, John’s daughter Jessica, and Jessica’s three-month-old daughter Skye. Present were Edna’s daughter Louise Quick and her son Michael plus Michael’s two small girls; Edna’s other daughter Linda Eason, Linda’s daughter Robin, husband, and two children, and Linda’s son Mark; Eugene (son of Edna) and Janet Crabb’s daughter Terri and Terri’s three small daughters; Edna’s brother-in-law, Leon Crabb and wife Pauline, their daughter Mary and husband and small daughter. A family cookbook is planned.

Open-Heart Surgery -
On July 15th Dwight E. Prall of Newton, Ia., had open-heart surgery in Rochester, Mn., to replace one heart valve, perform one by-pass, and install a pacemaker. In nine days he was back home in Newton. Dwight is the father of the editor. At 81 years of age, Dwight is making a strong recovery. Rhoda and I spent three weeks in Iowa and Minnesota helping Dwight and Pauline (Crabb) Prall until son Dan Prall of Santa Fe, NM., drove up to assist for two weeks.

Welcome New Subscribers -
3. John Crabb, 2558 Spindle Hill Dr. A8, Cincinnati, Oh. 45230. Line- James Madison Crabb of Ks.

Query - Karen Horine Martin, 211 West Knox Rd., Tempe, Az. 85284, would like documentation that would prove that Daniel Crabb who married Frances Middleton in 1789 is the son of John Crabb and Elizabeth Rust.

From the Editor’s Desk -
While in Iowa in July, I talked to Crabb cousins about a possible gathering of the Warren Co., Ia., Crabb cousins. There is a tentative plan to meet around noon on Sunday, June 12th in the Milo, Ia., park for a potluck dinner. More details on the Iowa gathering will be available in the winter issue of the newsletter. This reunion would be for any descendant of Thomas William Crabb 1834-1917, and Susan Coons of Warren Co., Ia., plus any Crabb descendant who can not attend the weekend Lafayette, I.n., reunion.