



# Sealey Genealogical Society Newsletter

Established 1965

Issue No. 2005-03

History Family Research

August 2005

## Robert and Obadiah Seeley's New England SGS Begins Planning for Another Trip

Story by Kathie Olsen, SGS Vice-President

In 2004, 24 members of SGS visited sites related to the life and times of Robert Seeley in England. We learned a lot and had a wonderful time together. Robert Seeley left England in 1630 with the Winthrop Fleet and participated in the settlement of several communities in New England before his death in New York City in 1667. Some of these communities include Salem and Watertown (now Boston), Mass.; Wethersfield, New Haven, Saybrook Fort and Stratford, Conn.; Elizabeth, N.J.; and Huntington, and Easton's Neck, Long Island, and Manning's Island, N.Y. Robert's son, Nathaniel lived in Fairfield, Connecticut and died at the Great Swamp Fight in Narragansett, Rhode Island. Obadiah appears as a property owner in Stamford, Conn. in 1647 and died there in 1657. SGS is exploring options for another adventure. Robert and Obadiah Seeley's New England. Would you like to participate?

When should we go? What should we see? We'll be holding a session at the upcoming reunion in Kansas to discuss possible plans. Plan to attend. If you are not coming to Kansas but would like to be involved or have ideas to contribute, please send me an email (see address on pg. 15).



U.S. Navy Photo by Photographer's Mate 3rd Class David G. Schmidt



<http://www.ci.stamford.ct.us/HistoryOfCity/CitySeal.htm>

Left: The seal of the city of Stamford, Conn. Right: Boston's USS Constitution the oldest commissioned warship afloat. Below Left: Webb House, part of the Webb Deane Stevens Museum in Wethersfield, Conn.



<http://www.webb-deane-stevens.org/webbhouse.html>

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Member: Federation of Genealogical Societies and National Genealogical Society



### The Seeley Genealogical Society Newsletter

is published quarterly by the Seeley  
Genealogical Society

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#### Announcements:

The SGS Newsletter is published every February, May, August, and November. Announcements are published for free and are due to the editor by the 15th of the month preceding publication.

#### Membership

Membership is open to anyone interested in genealogy, history or biography; amateur or professional. Although the name Seeley refers to one family surname, SGS counts among its family those with surnames spelled a variety of ways such as: Seeley, Seelye, Sealy, Sealey, Seley, Selye, Seale, Seelee, Seela, Cielely, Cealy, Cilley, etc.

#### Membership Dues

\$8 per year, \$15 two years, \$21 three years, or \$30 five years. Lifetime memberships are \$100. (Dues are in U.S. dollars and the membership year runs from Sept. 1 to Aug. 31)

Pay all dues to:

SGS Membership Chairman  
Ramon E. Hall  
155 Bear Drive  
Evergreen, CO 80439-4323  
(303) 679-0384  
ramonhall@prodigy.net

#### Seelye National Research Center

is co-located with the Seelye Mansion in Abilene, KS. For more information, contact:

Seelye Research Center, Director  
Terry Tietjens  
P.O. Box 337, 1105 N. Buckeye  
Abilene, KS 67410-0337  
Phone: (785) 263-1084  
email: terryt@access-one.com

#### SGS International Reunions

are held every two years. The next one is scheduled for September 2005 in Abilene, KS. Please advise the editor if your branch or family have plans for a sectional or local reunion in the interim. Others might like to know about it.

The editorial opinions expressed in this newsletter are the opinions of the writer and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Society or the editors, nor are the Society or its editors responsible for errors of fact or opinion. Proved errors will be corrected.

## The President's Report

Arrangements for the SGS 2005 International Reunion in Abilene, Kan., from Sept. 14 to 18, 2005, are proceeding well.

?? A meeting location has been reserved at the Civic Center.

?? Caterers for lunches on Friday and Saturday in the Civic Center have been arranged.

?? Restaurants with after dinner speaker facilities have been arranged for Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evenings.

?? The SGS Board will host a FREE picnic on Wednesday, on the Seelye Mansion grounds at 6:00 p.m.

?? Presenters and their topics have been selected and scheduled.

?? A Guest Speaker has been arranged for Friday afternoon and for after dinner on Friday evening.

?? A filing system has been set up for the Seelye Research Center on Buckeye Street to help visitors find documents by name, or to find an interesting document. (A copy will be in each attendee's registration folder.)

?? And the SGS Board will host a FREE brunch on the Seelye Mansion grounds on Sunday after church (brunch will start at about 12:00 noon).

What can YOU do to help? COME! Registration forms are in this newsletter and on line at [www.seeley-society.net](http://www.seeley-society.net). Registering and paying for your meals and the Abilene Trolley Tour ahead of time helps us tell food preparers and drivers how many to expect.

However, don't let pre-registering stop you from coming. The registrars, Ruthetta Hansen and her assistants, will be on hand as early as Wednesday afternoon at the Seelye Research Center to register people who haven't already done so and to give registration folders to those who have. In addition to your registration fee, tote bags with the special reunion seal, a special Reunion Souvenir Book, and other items will be for sale by the registrars to help defray reunion expenses.

I am still hoping to add a presenter/speaker to our 3-day agenda from among our Canadian cousins. If you are interested, please contact me.

The theme for this year's reunion is **Seeleys as Pioneers**. We will also be celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the construction of the Seelye Mansion, and the 375<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Seeleys in North America. Not to mention the 40th anniversary of this organization. The reunion seal, presenters, and speakers will all help us develop that theme. Please see the 2005 February and May newsletters for other SGS 2005 International Reunion details.

We will be voting to approve changes to the SGS constitution and by-laws on Saturday, Sept. 17 during the business meeting at the Abilene Civic Center. Please review the proposed changes published in the February 2005 SGS Newsletter in preparation for that vote. If you cannot attend, please let Kathie Olsen know of any comments you have. Her U.S. mail and e-mail addresses are on page 15.

I have changed my e-mail address to [jseeley@adelphia.net](mailto:jseeley@adelphia.net).

I want to thank each and every one of our members for your support during my two terms as SGS president. I have been blessed with the assistance of an excellent board of directors. Their advice has been sound and of great importance to me.

I also want to thank each of the volunteers who have shared in the society's work. If members are the "body" of SGS, then our volunteers have been the "soul." I encourage each member to support the new board of directors that will be elected at the SGS Reunion this September.

Jim Seeley  
SGS President



## 2005 SGS International Reunion: What to Bring With You to Abilene



We plan to have a display table at the Abilene Civic Center for reunion attendees to display items of interest to their cousins. Please consider bringing:

?? Your lineage back as far back as you know it, preferably to the 8<sup>th</sup> generation listed in the SGS Seventh Generation Families publication. Please identify the SGS # if you know it.

?? A copy of your family's compilation if different from the item above.

[Note, there are many, many compilations in the Seelye Research Center (SRC) labeled "Descendants of Robert Seeley" or "Descendants of Obadiah Seeley." The first 7 or 8 generations of these two men are listed in the three SGS publications. Please consider making your title read something like "*The Descendants of James Seeley, SGS # 3686*" if you have tied your ancestors into either the Robert or Obadiah lines.]

?? Armed services information (full name, branch, rank, dates, major campaigns, etc.), books about or written by a Seeley (or a variant spelling thereof), census data, cemetery records, death records, your family history, photographs (identified with names and dates – unidentified photos have little value, right?), passenger lists, marriage certificates, research notes, research reports, wills and estate inventories of your ancestors.

?? Your copy of the February 2005 SGS Newsletter to vote on recommended changes to the constitution and by-laws.

?? Items of interest produced by your ancestors or other Seeleys. Interesting items at the last reunion included music records by Jeannie Seeley, books by authors named Seeley, and food labels from companies bearing the Seeley name.

?? Ideas! What can we do to make our organization better? How can we attract new members? What research would you like to see SGS sponsor? Where should we have the next reunion? Maybe during your drive or flight to Abilene you can jot down three or more ideas that you can share during the reunion that will help make SGS stronger!

Plan to leave a copy of what you bring at the Seelye Research Center (SRC). It will be added to the filing system there. The document should be left in the "to be filed" box. Each document will be given a document identification number in the SRC filing system before it is shelved or placed in a file drawer. So please do not file it yourself.

## Reunion to Feature Presentation on the Personal Ancestral File

*By Ramon Hall, SGS Second Vice-President*

During the September reunion, there will be presentations on the personal ancestral file (lovingly called PAF). Because of the capability of PAF to handle very large data files of individual families, it has become a favorite of many. For those who are not versed in its capabilities, or perhaps do not as yet use it, there will be sessions to familiarize attendees with the program and its flexibility. Instructions will be provided for its free download from the Family Search website; procedures for starting data input of individual families will be demonstrated; capabilities of the program will be explored; and the interrelationship with PAF Companion will be demonstrated. Additionally, the use of GEDCOM data transfer will be discussed. There are no prerequisites for the informational sessions, but attendees are encouraged to bring questions they might have regarding conversion of their existing data files to the PAF file. Individuals who already use PAF are encouraged to attend the sessions to add their experience to that of the presenter.

## Meet Mary Jane McIntire, Reunion Guest Speaker

*Mary Jane McIntire is the guest speaker for the SGS 2005 International Reunion in Abilene. She will give a presentation on Friday afternoon at the Abilene Civic Center "Can You Teach an Old Dog New Tricks?" She will also give an after dinner presentation at the Brookville Hotel Restaurant in Abilene Friday evening "A Rhyme and a Reason." Here is a short bio on Mary Jane.*

Mary Jane McIntire is a native of Smith County, Kansas. She has been active in genealogical research for 30 years. She is currently researching material for a fourth collaboration with author, Armond Fields, a California-based author who writes about vaudeville stars. She also assisted in the research for a book on the Meagher brothers, early Kansas lawmen.

Mary Jane is currently serving her twelfth year as president of Smoky Valley Genealogical Society in Salina, Kan. She also volunteers at the Salina Family History Center. Mary has been a genealogical instructor for 15 years and is a frequent speaker for hereditary societies and civic clubs. She brings a sense of "fun" and "enjoyment" to the field of genealogy. Mary has completed all of the genealogical course work offered through Brigham Young University. She has only to make a trip to Utah and pass the oral and written exam to become an accredited genealogist.

Mary belongs to several hereditary societies including: Kansas Society of Mayflower Descendants, U.S. Daughters of Founders and Patriots, and U.S. Daughters of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company of Massachusetts. She also established lineages for DAR, U.S. Daughters of 1812, and Daughters of the American Colonists.

## Final Thoughts for SGS Reunion Attendees

*By Jim Seeley, SGS President*

We have not repeated all the details we have previously published in the February and May 2005 Newsletters with respect to the 2005 SGS International Reunion that will be held Sept. 14 to 18, 2005 in Abilene, Kan. So, I encourage you to review those two issues. Here are some final, important reminders:

?? I will be departing for Abilene (by car) on Saturday, Sept. 10. So, unless you are sure your registration form will reach me no later than Friday, Sept. 9, it is best that you register with our registrar, Ruthetta Hansen, when you arrive.

?? Lunches, dinners, and the Abilene Trolley tour must be paid ahead of time (at least 24 hours). See the registration form below. Again, see Ruthetta Hansen or one of her assistant registrars for details.

?? Bring items you would like to display.

?? Plan to purchase an SGS 2005 International Reunion souvenir book for \$25. The book's format will be similar to the 2003 reunion souvenir book. It will be designed to tell what happened during the reunion for those who are unable to attend and serve as a wonderful souvenir for those who do attend.

?? Tote bags with a special SGS 2005 International

Reunion seal will be available for sale at the reunion to help defray reunion expenses.

?? The Thursday afternoon and Friday morning sessions are two-tracked, meaning you can take tours, etc. and still not miss scheduled presentations.

?? Pick up your registration folder when you arrive. It will contain your nametag, daily agenda, a list of churches in the area with directions, a Seelye Research Center filing system pamphlet, and other last minute information.

?? Chris Havnar, webmistress of our Seeley website, plans to have a meeting of all those who have suggestions for the website at a time to be announced at the reunion. Please support her in this initiative and visit her website at [www.seeley-society.net](http://www.seeley-society.net).

?? Copies of the three SGS publications and the SGS CD-ROM will be available for sale. I encourage all members to have a copy of these items to pass on to your descendants. Taking them home with you will save mailing costs.

?? Bring your copy of the February 2005 newsletter with you. It contains recommended changes to the SGS constitution and by-laws. We'll be voting on these changes on Saturday, Sept. 17.

2005 SGS Reunion Registration Form			
NAME (FIRST, MIDDLE INITIAL, LAST):		LINE (e.g. NATHANIEL, OBADIAH, OTHER):	
ADDRESS (NUMBER, STREET):		TELEPHONE NO.:	
ADDRESS (CITY, STATE, ZIP):		E-MAIL ADDRESS:	
ADDITIONAL GUEST NAME (FIRST, MIDDLE INITIAL LAST)		RELATIONSHIP (i.e. SPOUSE, SON, DAUGHTER, ETC.)	
ADDITIONAL GUEST NAME (FIRST, MIDDLE INITIAL LAST)		RELATIONSHIP (i.e. SPOUSE, SON, DAUGHTER, ETC.)	
ADDITIONAL GUEST NAME (FIRST, MIDDLE INITIAL LAST)		RELATIONSHIP (i.e. SPOUSE, SON, DAUGHTER, ETC.)	
Reunion Expenses			
Registration Fee	# of guests:	@\$12.00 ea.	Subtotal:
Lunch Friday, Catered by Kirby House	# of guests:	@ \$7.50 ea.	Subtotal:
Lunch Saturday Catered by Barb' s Deli	# of guests:	@ \$7.00 ea.	Subtotal:
Dinner Thursday @ Mr. K' s Farm House	# of guests:	@\$12.00 ea.	Subtotal:
Dinner Friday @ Brookville Hotel (Chicken Family Style)	# of guests:	@\$17.00 ea.	Subtotal:
Dinner Saturday @ Country Club (Buffet)	# of guests:	@\$18.00 ea.	Subtotal:
Abilene Trolley Tour	#of guests:	@\$3.00 ea.	Subtotal:
			<b>TOTAL:</b>
<p><b>Make checks payable to SGS and mail to: Jim Seeley, SGS President</b>            108 Westridge Drive            Churchville, VA 24421</p> <p>Contact Jim for more information at <a href="mailto:jrseeley@adelphia.net">jrseeley@adelphia.net</a> or via telephone at (540) 337-8633</p>			
<p><b>Sites to Visit: Seelye Mansion, Eisenhower Center, Candy Factory, Lebold Mansion, Dickenson County Historical Society, Greyhound Hall of Fame, and Old Abilene Town.</b></p>			

## Seeley Military Note

**Lance Cpl. Steven R. Seeley, USMC**



AR RAMADI Iraq – Lance Cpl. Steven R. Seeley, a machine gunner with 3rd Squad, 4th Platoon, Company B, 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, patrols down a street in the city here with his comrades June 28. The 21-year-old from Beaverton, Ore., and his fellow Marines conducted a patrol through a portion of their company's area of operations to locate enemy sniper positions. Company B's observation post has been taking sporadic sniper fire from the area around it. (U.S. Marine Corps Photo by Cpl. Tom Sloan)

## Dues are Due

Please look at the label on your copy of this Newsletter. If the second line of the label says "Paid to: 08/05" your membership is due for renewal. To save the Society the expense of sending individual renewal notices, please remit to SGS Membership Chairman Ramon Hall using the address and form on page 16.

## DNA Test Subject Sought

I am seeking a male with the Seeley surname who descends from either Bartlett Seeley (SGS#1693) or Nathaniel Seeley (SGS#1695). We are still trying to solve the "Two William Problem" and there is a possibility we can do that by comparing the DNA results of descendants of these two men and comparing them with DNA results we already have. Please contact Dr. Ken McCrea or Jim Seeley if you are willing. Ken and Jim's contact info is on page 15.

## New SGS Members

Deborah Farley  
5360 Blue Astor Cir  
Centerville, VA 20120

Betty C. Seely Wilson  
1501 S Avery Ave  
Midwest City, OK 73130

Maureen Seeley Moore  
12 Orchard St  
Keene, NH 03431-2134

## New SGS LIFE Members

Robert L. &  
Sharon L Seeley  
2334 S Balsam Ln  
Lakewood, CO 80227

Ward E. Seeley, Jr., &  
Roberta L. Seeley  
1735 State Road 29  
Little Falls, NY 13365

Karen Talley  
618 Westover Ave  
Norfolk, VA 23507

Robert S Taylor  
5085 Skyline Dr  
Syracuse, NY 13215

Audrey (Seeley) White  
2 Howe Cres  
Oromocto, NB E2V 4M6  
CANADA

## Evelyn Seelye, 1928 - 2005

Evelyn (Washburn) Seelye, 77, of Vaughn Rd. went into the arms of her Lord, on Thursday, June 2, 2005 at the Glens Falls Hospital, after a long battle with cancer.

Born on August 1, 1928 in Clemons, she was the daughter of the late Arthur G. and Evelina (Granger) Washburn of Hudson Falls. She graduated from Hudson Falls High School in 1946.

On June 21, 1947, she married Marshall B. Seelye of Kingsbury at the Gospel Lighthouse Assembly of God Church in Hudson Falls.

Evelyn retired in 1976 from Seelye's Auction House in Queensbury, a business she and her husband began in 1963. She was the firm's bookkeeper and was involved with her husband as a full partner in all of their business ventures.

Until 1993, the Seelyes spent seventeen winters in Englewood, Florida.

She was a member of The Oneida Community Church in Queensbury as well as the Queen Anne Seniors in Fort Ann and the Seelye Genealogical Society.

She enjoyed sewing, needlework and traveling. She

had visited all fifty states as well as seven providences of Canada, the Caribbean and Mexico. Along with her husband, Evelyn drove an 18 wheeler through 48 states in one and one half years. She enjoyed every minute spent with her grandchildren.

Survivors in addition to her husband of 57 years, Marshall B. Seelye of Kingsbury include one son, Martin A. Seelye and his wife, Arlene of Hudson Falls; one daughter Judith L. Shaw and her husband, William of Sunrise, FL; three grandchildren, Kimberly Lane and her husband, Chris of Glens Falls, Cory Seelye-Dixon and her husband, Robert of Glens Falls and Chad Seelye of Hudson Falls; one brother, Albert Washburn and his wife, Ruth of South Glens Falls; and several nieces and nephews.

Evelyn's family wishes to thank the wonderful staff at the Charles R. Wood, Cancer Center, especially Dr. Sponzo, Jean VanAuken, Donna Boss, Rose Trainor and Mary LaFrance.



## SGS News 20 Years Ago: The Story of a Party Of Michigan Men as They Traveled Towards the Land of Promise

*Editor's Note: The SGS Newsletters of Nov. '84, Feb. '85, May '85, and Aug. '85 contain an account of one Seeley's 1850 journey from Mich. to Calif. in search of gold and adventure. It is reprinted here in its entirety. This diary was written by Mary Phelps, daughter of Edwin Phelps, until they sold their claim. Then Mrs. J.V. Seeley wrote the remainder from memories of what her husband used to tell her. This account was sent to the editors of Henry Ford (Senior's) Dearborn Independent and published Sept. 25, 1926.*

Set down from the Diary and Reminiscences of John V. Seeley and Edwin Phelps. Our fathers set out on the great adventure -- finding their fortunes in the newly discovered gold fields of California. The question of ways and means occupied the prospective pilgrims for months before the final start was made, as to whether to go by land or sea. This party of Michigan men in whom we are interested chose the more difficult route. Trained to courage and endurance by pioneer fathers, the sons started forth to seek a new land.

In the spring of 1850 this party of Oakland Co. boys who had been straining at the leash for 12 months, drove away from their father's homes. They were Marcus Stout, Edmund Hadsell, John Ayres, John V. Seeley & Edwin Phelps. This recital is written around the story of the last two mentioned, making them prominent as leaders of the group—as unquestionably they were.

When the fathers saw that their sons wills were set upon the adventure, every means was exercised towards the proper equipment for the journey, but not without serious misgivings that they would live to return to their home. The dangers were great--dangers from mountains and floods, heat and cold, disease, wild animals, and especially from the Indians. As it proved out, the last was the least of the elements to fear. In high, good spirits they set out on a journey ignorant of the trail, like going to sea without a compass.

The daily experiences were not lacking in dramatic material. From the diary of John V. Seeley, "Uncle John" as we like to call him, we learn that the outfit consisted of six horses and a wagon; harness for four horses and saddles for two. The rest of the equipment consisted of blankets and food -- a limited amount. They had learned from reports of overland travel to go light. Moreover, the stock of provisions could readily be obtained at St. Jo or other concentration points where the party would be made up. The travel was easy from Walled Lake Mich. to Hannibal, Mo., which they reached about April 1st. Then began the tiresome, often monotonous journey through Missouri. One experience at this stage of the trip is interesting as showing the character and way of living of the poor whites of that state.

April 14th. We had been traveling over prairie all afternoon, racing a northwest snow storm. Seeing an opening in the woods, we drove in to camp, and found the cabin of Columbus Miller. Although the names of father and son (Columbus & Thos. Jefferson) suggest sympathy with

suspicious of strange young men on high adventure bound. We naturally expected to be entertained that night but we camped out. The next morning, wishing to write letters home, E.P. & J.V.S. begged the privilege of using the kitchen table. This gave us the opportunity of getting acquainted with the family -- father, son and daughter. After returning to our comrades in the woods, Miller called upon us and invited us to bring our horses to the barn and urged us to come to the house to sleep, remarking that he could make us more comfortable there. We accepted the invitation with alacrity. We had not as yet become accustomed to sleeping on the ground and welcomed the thought of a bed,

Seeley rose early one morning and stood  
looking in the distance over the prairie, when  
he was startled by what appeared to be a  
ghost rising suddenly from the ground.

even though we might have to sleep together -- all five of us (which was our fate). We found the Millers to be friendly people and hospitable so far as they had anything to offer. But they were too lazy to take advantage of the wild game

that came to their very door. Plenty of wild turkeys feeding at their corncrib furnished us with a good living for the nine days we remained, waiting for the snow to disappear and the grass to sprout sufficiently to promise fodder for our horses. We furnished our host and his family a change of diet, which ordinarily consisted of commeal mush, molasses, bacon and coffee. This was one case of the guests supplying the commissary department. We killed several bears, and nine or ten deer. The meat we disposed of in various ways. We "jerked" some, ate some, and gave away more. We had provided ourselves with wheat and flour and Mrs. Miller made bread which proved that she was a good cook, if she had anything to try out her skill with. Miller said he had lent his gun, and put up scarecrows to keep off the wild turkeys. The feasts that we had of roast turkey and whole wheat bread furnished us with the subject for many a reminiscing talk during the months of hard tack and jerked meat rations to come.

April 23rd. We bade our friends goodbye much to their regret, for we had been working guests as well as "paying guests." When we asked for our bill, Miller hesitated, declaring that we had been a great help to him as we had helped plant corn on his 400 acres, only a small part of which was tillable. When we insisted that we wanted to pay him for our board and keep he drawled, "Wal, gimme a dollar. That'll buy me chawing tobacco for a year."

We traveled south from the main road to avoid paying the higher prices for feed, because corn and feed were now scarce. Travelers were many, and for our economy we found rough roads. On April 25th, the axle of our wagon broke and we were forced to stop and repair it. Found a piece of hickory and made another. That night we built a fire beside a log from which three rattlesnakes crawled out. They were quickly killed.

May 25. In camp outside of St. Jo, Mo. waiting for the grass to start a little more. The morning of May 1st, a white frost. On the 5th. we made up our company of 25 men. Drove to St. Jo. and got supplies, flour, coffee, sugar, rice, salt,

*Please See California Journey Page 7*

## Michigan Men Journey to California *(continued from page 6)*

bacon (10 cents a lb.). Drove to river, but had to cut our way along.

May 8. Crossed to Missouri by ferry 9 a.m. Found bad road through six miles of undergrowth. Emigrants are crossing all day. Camped in bottom lands in the woods. It snowed in the night. The woods were full of people bound westward. Most of us were young and could sleep in spite of hard ground and cold. Seeley rose early one morning and stood looking in the distance over the prairie, when he was startled by what appeared to be a ghost rising suddenly from the ground. It proved to be an old, gray-haired man belonging to the company. The other boys joked about the incident for some days. Subjects of humor were not too numerous and we were all secretly homesick, although not a one would admit it. The prairie was destitute of timber. We cooked with grass and weeds for fuel. Nights were cold and water froze.

May 10. Broke camp at 7 a.m. The emigrant train of fifty wagons with 200 men fell into the procession. The "wagon express" was a light wagon drawn by four mules or horses, carrying four persons besides the driver. The sun shone brightly and everybody was happy. Overflowing high spirits that fortunately held out well into Death Valley. We could snatch joy with trifles. All sorts of conditions of men. No place for the refined and sensitive unless backed up by iron or character. The man with strong back and persistent spirit was superior to one with education and weak muscles. Disease stalked forth from the camps. Death filled his graves, and with every day, more and more victims.

Note: At the height of the overland emigration (Spring of '49) 50,000 trains followed on one another's heels; all pursued by the specter of cholera which followed man like a wild beast to be shaken off only by the mountains.

We passed out of the river bottom lands and found good roads and water. We usually struck camp at 4 p.m. The nights were cold and blustery, freezing ice in the water pails.

May 11. Started out at 7:30 a.m. Traveled over high, rolling prairie. Crossed two creeks by fording. The current swift. At 4 p.m. we stopped for the night by the side of the road. Wood was plentiful and we cooked a good supper. John Seeley stood guard that night -- the first time. We had left civilization at the Missouri River. We must now watch out for the Indians. They were our chief fear although they proved to be somewhat of a bogie-fed up by our home folks who declared that we would never reach California as we would be scalped by the Indians on the way.

May 12. 8 a.m. Started on another day's travel over level prairies. Grass short. Found water several times during the day. Camped at 4 p.m. on the flats of the Big Blue.

May 15. 7:30 a.m. Crossed the river. One half mile further we found good water. About noon crossed another slough. The prairie grass short. Camped at 4 p.m. on left side of road. Found wood and water.

May 14. Started out at 8 a.m. Traveled over good roads; found water in the ravines and crossed a running stream.

May 16. Crossed the Little Blue at noon and followed up its bank until 4 p.m. Camped the night.

Note: A "Leader" was generally elected. Strict obedience was accorded, him. No matter how independent and hot-headed the men were, they had to obey. Strict discipline. But the pioneer sons were brought up on the

was preferable to a "plains guide" that charged out of all reason for his services and practiced "graft" as well. We have now traveled 660 miles without sight of a house.

May 17. While traveling up the Blue, we saw four buffalo, two of which we killed. Tonight a feast of potpie. (Crust light and tender!) Indians seen more & more. Ottawas or Pottawatamies.

May 18. On up the Blue until 10 a.m. when we left the river and went out over the high prairie! At 4 p.m. struck the Platte R. & camped in the river bottom for the night. The "bottoms" are about 3 miles wide. The axle broke just before reaching the camping place. Got a piece of elm from Grand Island and made a new axle next day, but it was so crooked it set one wheel under so that it didn't track.

May 19. (Sunday) Started at 8 A.M. (No church for us these days). Up the Platte till noon, when we camped one mile from Fort Kearney, which consisted of three wooden buildings and several mud ones. Saw two tame buffalo cows -- little beauties.

May 20. Still following the Platte between the river and bluff on the finest of roads. Rains tonight. Wind high -- hardest I've ever experienced. E.P.'s hat blew off.

May 22. Went to look for game and found E.P.'s hat, three miles from where it had blown off, lodged against a rock.

May 25. Traveled from 7 a.m. until noon. Wood scarce—very little cottonwood or willow. Gathered buffalo chips for fuel. After refreshing ourselves with cold coffee & hard bread, Hadsell and Seeley took a stroll over the bluffs.

Found a number of high picturesque hills overlooking the valley of the Platte. The cattle, horses and mules of the emigrants were grazing. After walking for two hours, we came back to the road & found we were two or three miles from where we had left the train, and waited for them to come up. Water, wood and grass plentiful.

May 24. Traveled on up So. Platte R. Passed several graves of emigrants who died of cholera last year.

May 26. (Sunday) Laid in camp all day. Washed clothes, put on clean shirts, and shaved. Felt respectable again. Rain and very high wind.

May 27. Reached the ford of the So. Platte and crossed safely in spite of quicksands. Continued up No. Platte. Weather cold.

May 28. Passed a number of Indian villages inhabited by the Sioux. They are the noblest looking Indians of any we have seen. They are tall, well-proportioned, and active. They appear very friendly and some speak English, but are adverse to doing so. They are great beggars and love to trade. If you swap ponies with them they will try to steal back their own. Camped at mouth of canyon. We always hunted for a place to move our horses to after dark. Took our horses up a very narrow canyon. Here was a valley surrounded by very high mountains, forming a regular basin. JVS stayed with the horses -- stood guard all night. Horses are apt to lie down for about 4 hours, then get up and wander. When they showed inclination to lie down, I got them together, and found one was gone. Discovered it was the "Nitchie" pony that was missing. Started to search for him at the head of the valley. Not finding him, I climbed up the side hill to go back. A large rock from above started

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## Michigan Men Journey to California *(continued from page 7)*

right away -- the only time I was frightened on the plains. I stood as still and straight as possible for fear I might be seen. Then I heard the pony step. I laid down and looked up. It was starlight without any moon. I could see the little rascal who had started the rock and soon had him back with the rest of the horses.

May 29. The river bottoms are wide and we pitched camp in sight of the rock known as the "Courthouse" or "Church", so called because of its resemblance to a building. It is six miles from the road and is said to be a mile around the base. This is an elevated point like a tall column, so perfect and regular on all sides that it seemed to be the work of stonecutters. Many of the '49ers inscribed their names at its base. As we looked at it from the road, it appeared to be no more than a half mile distant. In reality it was six to eight miles! Three of our company went up to the "Courthouse." The next morning they told of the curiosity. One man, Raymond, a little tailor, became so excited he declared he would not go a step farther until he had seen the rock for himself. The men who had made the trip declared that R. would not soon be back. The second day thereafter a terribly mad Raymond overtook us, declaring that the men had lied to him about the distance. However, he had seen the rock up close. Objects a day's walk away seemed close by. Clear lakes that appeared a little distant, we might never find.

May 30. Broke camp 8 a.m. After traveling some four miles, Hadsell & I (JVS) left the road and started for the bluffs which appeared to be but a short distance away. We then commenced to climb the "Chimney." This Rock is composed of soft sandstone; is about 300 ft. high and looks to be 15 ft. square. We clamb-ered up the side of the steep and rocky bluff until we reached the summit overlooking the surrounding country. Killed a rattle-snake. Began descending the opposite side to the bottom of the ravine and followed the trail to its outlet. On the flat east of the bluff we found an alkali spring.

May 31. Started at 6 a.m. Reached a blacksmith shop and spring by 9 a.m. An emigrant had set up a temporary smithy. From the top of the nearby bluff we could see the Rocky Mts., the day being clear. But many days of rough travel would pass before we could cross the Great Divide. But for now, on to Fort Laramie, the Black Hills and westward.

June 1. Passed a trading post. Rain and wind. Camped three miles from Fort Laramie.

June 2. (Sunday) Remained in camp today. Fed the horses well. We were obliged to camp about three miles from the Fort as the gov't retained grazing rights inside for horses and cattle. This morning we went to Laramie Fork to bathe in the Platte. As we were returning, we saw a large prairie schooner drawn by four yoke of oxen. Riding alongside was a Frenchman on a fine horse, and beside him, a middle-aged squaw on another horse. On reaching our camp, he stopped to visit. After dismounting, he threw a bar of gold the size of a stock leg into the back of the schooner.

young squaw of about age 20 threw up the flap. The company proceeded leaving him to continue his visit. He said he had lived in Detroit where he went to trade with the Indians. He bought furs, blankets and other merchandise. He had remained there for seven years. By the end of that time he had become like the red men in tastes and habits. He had married two squaws. Seven years had seemed to change him into a savage. However, he had not lost the innate politeness of the Frenchman, nor his love of conversation.

June 3. At Fort Laramie we found a blacksmith shop, a bakery and eight or ten buildings. A few were of wood but many more were of mud. Commenced traveling into the Black Hills. Endured a heavy rain storm that lasted for two hours.

June 4. Traveled up a small creek part of the morning. To the left we saw the mountains covered with snow. Reached Neger Spring and Labout River at 4 p.m. There was little danger from the Indians here.

At night had a celebration. Many emigrants had stopped here in this fertile valley to recruit new forces. Each man fired off a gun in honor of the day. Program required time as there were in all about 500 men.

Their chief temptation was stealing, and we learned to our sorrow that it was not safe, even in daylight to let the horses feed without someone watching. A party camping 150-200 miles east of Fort Laramie discovered 21 horses stolen -- all the

company had. The method was clever. One Indian would take the lead with a horse and the others would naturally follow. The leader would run like mad while a company of Indians would surround and drive the rest of the pack. It was useless to hunt for the lost animals. This company bought a horse and sent to Fort Laramie for a company of soldiers. They recovered the horses, all except one which the chief declared had died, but he was forced to give up a pony to replace the missing horse.

Note: It was customary after supper to take the horses to good feed. One evening we (J.V.S. & E.P.) started out with our horses, and went about a mile. I stood guard while Uncle John went to sleep. I succumbed to fatigue also. When he awoke me, we found that the horses had disappeared. We concluded they had started back to camp after eating enough. We started back but I thought, in the wrong direction, so asked John where he was going? His reply "to camp." Me: "No, you're not. You're going in exactly the wrong direction." "No, I'm not," John retorted. "Look at the North Star." I did, saw I was wrong and he was right.

June 5 & 6. Country very rough, but with fine streams of clear water. Arrived at the No. Platte again at 10 a.m. and at Deer Creek by 2 p.m. Roads good. JVS has fever and ague.

June 7. Reached Upper Platte ferry, crossed at 3 p.m. Resumed line of march for 6-7 miles until we reached the mineral springs and the lake, the waters of which were reported to be poisonous. Lake was high and the water clear. We drank of it and felt no ill effects. Feeling sure that the Indians would not look for emigrants to stop in this ravine, we turned the horses out, and they grazed peacefully

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## Michigan Men Journey to California *(continued from page 8)*

June 8. Passed an alkali stream and through an alkali marsh. Camped 6 p.m. in a place with no grass. Had to lead the horses two miles from the road to find pasture.

June 9. (Sunday) Decided to move on to a better spot for bathing and laundry purposes. Soon reached the saleratus lakes. Pitched camp on the Sweetwater river in the Wind River Mts. of Wyo., 175 mi. from the No. Platte R. Snow on the Rockies. Winter coming.

June 10. Passed Independence Rock. Inscribed our names. Five miles beyond came to "Devil's Gate" through which the Sweetwater, a clear cold mountain stream rushes. The wagons had to go around to the south due to the narrowness of the channel. Phelps, Ayres and Everett, with two or three others swam the stream and walked up the other side to the place where the caravan again forded the

stream. We crossed the Sweetwater five times that day! The last time we lost our grease pot. This precious pot contained the tar and grease used for oiling the wagons. The tar had been gathered from the resinous gum of pine trees. We melted it in our little box stove, tilted so as to allow the melted tar to run out. Ayres, already wet was asked to jump in and rescue the pre-cious pail. He swore he would not go into that ice cold water again. Phelps did his best to find it by running down stream, but it was gone. This incident brought the wrath of the entire party down on Ayres. He was already in disgrace for laziness and failure to pay bills. That night he made himself unusually helpful, but the next morning he was gone. He was not seen again until we reached Calif. We all were glad to be rid of him.

June 15: Started 8 A.M., crossing numerous creeks. Snow plentiful in spots. Reached Pacific Spring Creek in a severe rain and wind storm. Now at the Summit of the Rocky Mts. Water now runs west. While snowballing, a man came along who told us that Ayres had begged a dinner of them, and told them that we had gone on and left him, but he swore he would be in Sacramento by the 4th of July. We did see him in Hangtown and he had arrived a week ahead of us.

June 13. Good water scarce. Reached Jct. of the Calif. & Salt Lake Roads. This was the crossing of the way for emigrants. Two routes to the gold fields. We chose the Calif. or northern route.

June 16. (Sunday) Crossed Big Sandy River. Found fuel near Haystack Rock. Prairie covered with sage grass. Traveled until midnight. Suddenly we were surprised by finding ourselves going down a very rough, steep canyon. It seemed that the wagon would go end-over-end on to the horses. When we reached at last a fairly level place, some of the boys declared they would go no farther that night. So we turned the horses out without guard. No one cared to risk freezing to death to watch them. It soon commenced snowing at a terrific rate. We rolled ourselves in our blankets and lay down either in the wagon or under it. Being tired from the long day's travel over the mountains, we all fell asleep immediately. We were suddenly awakened by a terrible hollering and groaning. Looking out, we saw two

man leading him. A company followed with four or five wagons and teams of oxen. These uncertain brutes got frightened and stampeded down the gully, some in one direction and some in another. As soon as they had passed, we laid down again and went back to sleep.

June 17. Ground white with snow. Reached Green River at 4 p.m. River eight rods wide, deep enough to swim a horse. Current swift. Price for ferrying, seven dollars per wagon.

Note: Manley speaks of his party deciding upon the water route, Thinking it easier to float down the river, which was said to flow to the Pacific, rather than follow the hot trail thru deep ravines. They found, however, that the floating was not without its perils. His party spent twelve months crossing wild prairies, lofty mountains and through sunken deserts of the Death Valley.

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We knew what clearing a farm in the  
Middle West was -- felling trees, burning  
stumps, picking up stones and plowing  
through roots -- but we discovered that  
digging gold was quite as difficult.

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June 25. Arrived at Bear Spring at 9 a.m. Snake Indians numerous. Crossed Fort Hall Road. Sunday - Camped all day.

July 1. Beyond the junction of Fort Hall Road and the extension-cut-off five and a half miles. Passed Salt Lake Road.

July 2. Reached Goose Creek at noon.

July 5. Didn't find water until 5 p.m. Camped at 6:30 p.m. on a spring brook.

July 4. Fine morning. Traveled along Thousand Spring Valley, full of springs of both cold and warm water. At night had a celebration. Many emigrants had stopped here in this fertile valley to recruit new forces. Each man fired off a gun in honor of the day. Program required time as there were in all about 500 men. Our company divided, part to Salt Lake but we went to the Sublette cut-off. This proved to be a wise choice. We arrived in California before those who chose the Salt Lake Road. We now had 5 or 6 wagons and 12-16 men.

July 5. Several horses are sick... poisoned from eating "crazy grass."

July 7. Reached the Humboldt River. Our course is now down the river (308 miles long) in Nevada where it flows into Humboldt Lake. No food for our horses. Swam across the river, cut grass, tied it in bundles, then tied it on our backs and swam back. Essential we keep our horses well fed for we are so dependent upon them.

July 22. (Sunday) Reached grass and water which we drank gratefully although it was brackish. Cut red clover from the Big Meadow all day to take across the desert. It grew knee deep in the River bottom. Reached Carson River July 23rd.

Note: The men are now facing the most trying part of the journey thru Death Valley. Jayhawkers gave the name Death Valley to this sunken valley. The accounts of suffering are too pathetic to dwell on. Men, women too, with their children (many had ignorantly traveled with their families) died by the way; horses and oxen sickened and their bones were left to whiten in the sands.

July 24. Tired horses and downcast men! The desert of 45

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## Michigan Men Journey to California *(continued from page 9)*

horses from heat and thirst. The road was fine for 30 miles and as hard as a graveled road. After that the horses and wagons mired. As for the men we all managed to keep walking except Hadsell who went to sleep. Shook him into consciousness but he begged to be allowed to lie down if only for a half hour. The answer was "No." After all other methods failed to put determination into his exhausted spirits, we applied a vigorous shaking with a big dose of whiskey and he was persuaded to go on. Hundreds-yes, thousands of wagons were abandoned on the desert.

Note: At the end of the season (1850) it was said that the deserted wagons would have built a high board fence

along one side of the track or trail, and that the dead animals would have made a wall of the same height on the other side. We passed skeletons of six yoke of oxen found still in the bows. Again we saw where men had left oxen the year before -- four yokes chained together. This

shows how wild men can become in crossing the desert. If the yokes had been removed there would have been some chance for the poor beasts to live by finding water. A horse can smell it three miles away. We traveled up the Carson River several days. It runs from the Sierra Nevada Mts. in Calif. to Carson Lake, Nevada. Saw several camps of Chinese miners on the east side of the Sierra Madre. Found good feed of wild oats and wheat, and good water, as a rule, although there were stretches without water. Our horses were so poor that after lying down they could not get up alone. We would help them to stand, then they could walk slowly and draw the wagon. The next day after crossing the Carson we had to abandon our wagon. We used parts of it to make pack saddles and packed our horses. Our party now consisted of 8 or 10 men. A very steep climb brought us to the summit of the Sierra Nevadas. This was a dangerous, perilous trail. To see a man go down the precipice was not unusual. We saw a man in the distance go down, horse and all. We now had a thousand miles to make on foot. Of all our party our group got the most horses through. We started with six and arrived with five. The abandonment of the wagon was a wise move, for men with them found it hard work to get down the steep declivities. They often hitched oxen behind and used them as brakes to hold back. Sometimes a log would be attached to slow or brake the descent.

Hurrah! We are in Hangtown Placerville, Calif. in Eldorado County.

Evidently the calendar was forgotten during the terrible desert experience. At any rate the dating of the diary from that point has been given up.

It was a rough looking party that rode into Hangtown, Placerville, Eldorado Co., Calif. that hot day in August 1850 - - very different from that which, freshly fitted out, had left our homes in Michigan the 18th of March. Looking down into the river beds between the ravines, we got our first glimpse of the "diggings." The distant camps on the hillsides or little open flats were comprised of tents or rough log and bark

the trail of the covered wagon.

Taking a narrow trail over which a wagon could not go, we had arrived some days earlier than others of our company. We had made the journey in less than the average time. One hundred days from the Missouri River was our record. But we were to be congratulated still more upon the fact that we had not fallen victims to disease. One man had deserted coming across the plains. One horse had died from eating "crazy grass." Before crossing the steep Sierras, we had abandoned our wagon, using parts of it to make pack saddles for horses too poor to drag a vehicle. We had managed to hold on to the bulk of our outfit -- even

the little box-stove and the frying pan which had served us so well.

We were unshaven and dirty. But our appearance troubled us little; we found plenty more of the "Great Unwashed." What did give us some worry was the problem of food. The thought of bacon

and jerked beef was repellent. Nature demanded fresh fruits and vegetables.

Having had a square meal, we turned our attention to our starved animals and found pasture for the four of them. (One had been stolen the night we unpacked. He returned to us three weeks later with stake attached and branded by a white man, as we could see.) The first week, after providing the necessary implements, a rocker, picks and spades, we began to prospect around the immediate region. The pan we used had been brought from Michigan. When a spot seemed rich, we would stake out our claims of sixteen feet square up and down the stream and reaching back to the ridge, with the restriction that holdings should not be made within fifteen feet of one another. Each camp, however, had its own laws. No person could hold more than one claim at a time.

The work at first was hard and disappointing. Wielding the pick and shovel in gravel and boulder streams, standing sometimes to the waist in the cold mountain water with the southern sun beating on the head was none too easy, even for men like ourselves inured to physical labor on pioneer farms. Small wonder that those unaccustomed to hand labor early threw up the job in disgust, and went into business in the towns or returned home. The hardiest remained to mine and universally they over-worked.

We worked up our strength slowly. We knew what clearing a farm in the Middle West was -- felling trees, burning stumps, picking up stones and plowing through roots -- but we discovered that digging gold was quite as difficult. Conditions were trying and returns small at first. Working on an average of half a day, we made about five dollars a day each.

On Weaver's Creek there were perhaps a dozen log houses plastered with mud. The majority of the miners lived in rough huts thrown together for temporary residence. The usual dress of a miner consisted of a red flannel shirt and deerskin-trousers, with rubber boots. Early each morning we would start hopefully ~~off up the creek shouldering pick~~

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A man would produce an old deerskin pouch,  
untie a string and pour dust into our scales. If  
we reminded him he was spilling it, he  
invariably refused to take it back saying,  
"Plenty more where that came from."

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## Michigan Men Journey to California *(continued from page 10)*

plastered with mud, carrying perhaps a third of an ounce of gold, (an ounce of gold dust was worth sixteen dollars). Ten days after we got to Hangtown, one of our party was sent to Sacramento for the mail and provisions. On the way, he picked up the horses we had put out to pasture. I've never seen horses gain so much in such a short time as they did! He sold his mare for eighty dollars and brought back two loads of miner's supplies and food. We set up a trading post and made big profits. Business was so good that we did a regular job of trucking which netted us about \$100 a week. With the extra tips for mailing letters (25 cents) and delivering (\$1.00) we were well satisfied with our enterprise.

Prices were on a war-time scale. Life was happy-go-lucky. Every fellow for himself and the devil the hindmost. California became a state a few days after we arrived, but there was little change in the wild and lawless regime of the Spanish rule. Public opinion was the great controlling force that kept a semblance of law and order. Infringement of the ethical standard brought quick punishment. The name of "Hangtown" was fastened to this section of the gold fields by the fact that two men had been strung up to the same tree. The story of their trial gives a good illustration of the exercise of California justice in the middle of the 19th Century. Lopez, a gambler, after retiring at night with his winnings, left, as was customary, the door unlocked. About midnight, five men rushed in. One put a pistol to Lopez' head, the others barred the door and rifled the trunk. There was a sudden alarm. The citizens rushed to the spot and arrested the robbers. A jury was quickly impaneled. The judge or alcalde, as he was called was summoned. As the mob became more incensed, other charges were brought against the prisoners. The jury demanded that thirty-nine lashes be given each offender. Finally, the judge put the question whether they should be found guilty. The answer was a unanimous 'Aye'. "What punishment?" he asked. "Hang them" came the reply. Thereupon, the two men found to be the ringleaders of the gang were taken in a wagon to a nearby tree, nooses put about their necks and they were left to hang. Such was the swift process of law in '49. With the influx of the Anglo-Saxon with his ideals of law and order, a new legal code was evolved from men's consciences. The 'court' occasionally presented a comedy piece. On one occasion, the honorable judge assumed an unconventional attitude in his swivel chair, feet on desk. For relaxation, he whittled a stick and now and then tested his skill in sending tobacco juice across the room. A lawyer in the case, evidently with some knowledge of Roman history, referred to the august alcalde as an "oscillating Tarquin." This unfamiliar but libelous-sounding accusation brought down the judge's chair with a thump. "A what?" And without waiting for explanation he proceeded to pronounce anathema upon the head of the offending attorney. "If this honorable court knows herself -- and she thinks she do -- that remark is an insult to this honorable court and you are fined two ounces." To the expostulation against such extreme penalty, the judge replied, "Silence, sir! This honorable court won't tolerate cussings, and she never goes back on her decisions." The sentence was executed without appeal.

Whenever a company heard of a ravine being opened up, they all swarmed to it and in a few days it was dug dry. We decided to go into winter quarters on Dry Creek, and struck camp below Middle Town. Rainy weather would set in by mid-December causing the streams to rise and preventing any successful mining. Many of the men moved to town, for amusement or to find employment. This was harvest time for the towns. Sacramento presented a lively scene. Sports occupied the attention of the people. Drunken men staggered along. Fortune tellers and hawkers jostled one another. The "lightning" artist sketched your portrait provided he could buy a piece of paper. The fiddler drew his bow for those who wished to dance. Sunday evenings were given up wholly to dancing, which was accompanied by 44-caliber whiskey. If ladies were lacking, the men with patched pants took their place in the dance. The crowd was noisy and good-natured. All sorts of people were there, from the dandy who never had handled any instrument heavier than a whalebone walking stick, to the roughest laborer. All had come to make their fortunes in one way or another. Sometimes, in our shack we would talk about the folks back home and wonder what they would think of the way we kept the Sabbath, or rather broke it.

But back to the practical. The first thing that had to be attended to was the building of a shack. On account of the heavy rainstorms of the winter, we had to have good material. We decided to use slabs or "shakes" as we called them. Plenty of trees could be utilized for this purpose. We built our cabin 42' x 16' to make it serve also as a trading post. When we finished it within a week from beginning the work, we set out our supplies and were ready to receive customers.

While we were putting up our cabin, a party of nine miners came along and camped near us. They lost their mules the first night out and stayed on to find them. We became good friends. They thought "shakes" a queer name for our cabin lumber and we were the "Shakes Boys" after that. Finally they went on, and we didn't see anything of them until some weeks later. Then one day a couple of them came to our cabin and took dinner with us. They told us they were camping seven miles up Dry Creek and invited us to visit them, promising us some venison. So the next Sunday we got on our horses and went over. They had a small shack without a window. Nine men slept on the floor. Outside the door hung four deer which they had shot. We had a good dinner of venison and carried some back with us.

Except for slight attacks of ague on our travel west, we had escaped sickness. Now two of our company were stricken with typhoid fever. The sameness of diet -- meat and bread without fruit or vegetables -- brought on scurvy. We sent for a doctor in Fiddle Town and he came every day for six weeks. His regular charge was an ounce of gold a visit. He cut his price in half for us, but even at that the sickness was an expensive experience. One of us had to watch the sick men all the time.

By Feb. of 1851 prices were near normal, after 24 months of profiteering. We had managed to hold our reputations as good fellows, although there was plenty of

Gold was hard digging on Weaver's Creek. The borders

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## Michigan Men Journey to California *(continued from page 11)*

inclined. White men and red were almost equally ignorant of the value of gold. A white man would produce from the folds of his sash or handkerchief an old deerskin pouch, untie a course string and pour dust into our scales. If we reminded him he was spilling it, he invariably refused to take it back saying, "Plenty more where that came from."

The Indians learned slowly to be prudently suspicious of the white men at the post. At first they had no conception of the value of gold and would exchange handfuls of the precious dust for any article of food or gaudy ornament that took their fancy. While our relations with the Indians were as a rule friendly, we always kept our guns handy when they came around. We took a number of short prospecting trips. In April we went to Mocolomne Hill, a village with rich mines, the center of the "deep diggings." One day we started for Independence Flat, 18 miles upriver. Here we found a trading post and pitched our tent a mile or so away and began to prospect on a little creek. We found a good mine and worked it for some time. The dry diggings were a lottery. If we struck it rich we would make our fortunes. So day after day we kept digging. We had now gone down fifty-six feet.

One morning in May we suddenly noticed that the soil had changed in appearance. We were satisfied that here was gold. Two of us went down where we had hollowed out a small place in the quartz rock. They sent up some loose dirt which I took to the river a half mile away and washed. I found two or three dollars' worth of gold in this small sample of soil. Repeated the process and this time I found six or

seven dollars' worth. It was just before noon when I got back with the second bucket. We went to dinner, but kept our success to ourselves. When we all went to the claim together, two of us were lowered down the shaft, the other fellow took an old crevice knife and began digging in the flinty rock. Soon he struck a fine nugget of gold. He rubbed it on his pants, held it up and then handed it to me. We staked out two claims apiece, double what the miner's law allowed us. All through the summer we mined our claims on the Mocolomne. As autumn approached, we discussed plans for the future. Should we go home, or should we stay? Love of gold was considerable, but love of home was stronger and won out. One man was drawn back by a sweetheart; another by a mother who was ill.

We sailed for home around the Horn to New York. We had been in the gold fields 13 months and carried back with us what in that day was a big fortune, seven thousand dollars apiece, which being minted in Philadelphia was rolled out before the wondering eyes of our families back home.

NOTES from Mrs. J.V. Seeley: John Seeley bought a farm in Farmington, Edwin Phelps bought his father's farm in Pontiac, Marcus Sloat bought a flouring mill on Clinton River in Pontiac and John Nowland bought a farm near Ann Arbor, Mich. All were firm friends to the last. John Seeley out-lived the others, although many predicted when the boys left for the West that he would never return, for he had a bad bronchial cough then, and it remained with him all through his life.

## SGS Queries

(Data as of April 10, 2005)

Query number is 2 digit year, 2 digit month of newsletter, query sequence number.

Please send your queries to Query Editor Linda Crocker at [lc100@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:lc100@hotmail.co.uk) or mail to Linda at home. Queries are assigned a query number by the Query Editor and are then sent to the Query Team and Area Coordinators. Linda summarizes each query and any responses for inclusion in the newsletter.

***If you have any information on the queries below contact the submitter but remember to also send a copy of the information to Linda so the query can be updated in the next newsletter.***

### QUERY UPDATES

**Update to Query 0411-8** Re: Martin Seeley

Donna Cole ([thecoales44@netzero.net](mailto:thecoales44@netzero.net)) was trying to identify Martin Seeley and his wife Liddy. Terry Tietjens was able to identify Martin as SGS# 2363, son of David Damon Seelye (SGS #854) and his 1st wife Isabel Worley. Donna has been sent information taking the line back to Robert Seeley. Martin's wife is identified as Lydia Perkins, b. 1816 in Dutchess Co. NY. Donna wonders if anyone has information on Lydia Perkins. Please remember to send me a copy of any information you send to Donna.

**Update to Query 0505-4** Re: Laura Seeley

Judy Laslo ([Juteshouse@comcast.net](mailto:Juteshouse@comcast.net)) is still trying to locate the parents of Laura Seeley b ca 1803 in

Fairfield County Connecticut and married Zalmon Coley ca 1828 in Fairfield County CT. Judy is wondering if Laura could be another daughter of Abner Seeley (SGS#652). Abner's son Nathan and family are the only other Seeleys buried in the Stepney, CT cemetery where Laura and her family are buried.

Judy has been doing some research in CT. She found out that Seth Seelye (SGS#2056) donated the family home to the town of Bethel – it is now the town library. At the Newtown library she's found a small book written by a Miss Seeley and a copy of a letter written by a lawyer, John T. Seeley of New York in 1841 concerning his ill wife Mary being cared for by a David Baldwin. John T. doesn't appear in the SGS database – who is he?

Judy and I would be pleased to receive any further information on Laura Seeley's origins.

### NEW QUERIES

**Query 0508-1** Submitted by Peggy Sandell ([pisplace@sutv.com](mailto:pisplace@sutv.com))

**Subject:** William Silly/Silla

Peggy sent a query about the ancestry of William Silly/Silla, b. 1737 in NH, who married Anne Clark in 1754 and resided Buckfield, ME, Gorham, ME and Brooks, ME. They were parents to 12 children including Fanny, a direct ancestor of Peggy. Peggy also had information that William was a son of Benjamin Selly and Judith Darling.

*Please See SGS Queries Page 13*

## SGS Queries (continued from page 12)

**SGS Response:** John Seeley, the SGS Database coordinator was able to place William in the Isle of Shoals Cilley family in the line Richard, Andrew, Thomas, Benoni, Benjamin, William who m. Anna Clark. This is based on an article by William Goodwin Davis "The Sealy Brothers of the Isles of Shoals" published in the 1931 issue of "Genealogical Research in Germany and England". He also referred her to Annie Cilley's 1996 book "The Cilley Family Roots in New England". The data Peggy sent on William, Fanny and descendants has been filed at the SGS Research Center.

**Query 0508-2** Submitted by Carolyn Sheridan (Cgenhosheridan@aol.com)

**Subject:** Various Seeleys in OH

Carolyn has been attempting to determine the parentage of her husband's ancestor James Seeley b. 13 Jan 1828 in OH. James was married 3 times, served in the Civil War and was a prisoner at Andersonville. He died 11 Mar 1906 and is buried in Brecksville Highland Drive Cemetery, Ohio. In various records James' father is listed as b. PA or NY and his mother as b. NY or OH. Looking for possible fathers for James, Carolyn identified Eli L., Nehemiah and Levi Seeley as possibilities and asked if we had further information on these men and their families.

**SGS Interim Response:** Jim Seeley, SGS President, was able to identify Eli L. Seeley as SGS #1133 and he is not the father of James, nor does he have siblings or children named Nehemiah or Levi.

Carolyn is still interested in learning more about Nehemiah Seeley who married Rebecca Hawk 11 Mar 1827 in Geauga Co. OH and Levi Seeley who m. (1) Anna Meeker 6 Dec 1767 in Redding, Fairfield, CT and (2) Almira Calket, Dec 1820 Geauga Co. OH.

It is interesting that there are 3 Seeley marriages in Redding, CT in a short space of time: the above-mentioned marriage of Levi, the marriage of Nehemiah Seeley (SGS #239A) and Sarah Dibble on 26 Sept. 1769 and the marriage of Daniel Seeley and Lydia Comstock (dau. of SGS #435a Mary Beardsley) on 28 Mar 1775. If anyone has done further research on these Seeleys, please share your information with Carolyn and copy to me.

**Query 0508-3** Submitted by Phyllis Miller (PhyllisM19@aol.com)

**Subject:** Thomas Seeley

Thomas Seeley was b. ca 1700. He married Sarah Campbell before 1730 in New Castle Co. DE. He was still alive according to a land record in 1754 but his wife remarried shortly thereafter. Phyllis has found a few tidbits but nothing that ties directly to her Thomas: The name Thomas appears in the Isle of Shoals family. Also, she found a Thomas SELY on a Baltimore County, MD 1704 tax list along with 2 slaves. No further information. In *Virginia Settlers & English Adventurers* there was a Mr. Thomas CEELY who sold land to an Edmond Sweny who died in 1697 and bequeathed that land.

Probably the same person is found in *Henings*

*Statutes* pp. 140, 154 & 169. A Thomas SEELY was present in Warwicke River in 1629 and was a Burgess from that area. He signed his name with the notation "gent."

**SGS Interim Response:** Jim Seeley suggested the Isle of Shoals book mentioned in the response to Query 0508-1 above as well as a document by Elizabeth White on file at the Research Center. We have received no other information to date.

**Query 0508-4** Submitted by Thomas Saunders (t.c.saunders@worldnet.att.net)

**Subject:** Aletha Seely Carson

Tom sent the following information on his ggg-grandmother Aletha and her parents and grandparents.

Generation 1: John Seely's father came to America from England with his French wife to flee religious persecution and entered the mercantile business in Philadelphia. John came to Missouri when it was under French and Spanish government, and owned a large tract of land. He was highly educated, a physician, and an alcoholic. Generation 2: Jacob Seely (son of John) married Mary -----

Jacob and Mary Seely were first cousins. They settled on a farm near his father's, but when Mary and the rest of the family died of "milk sickness", he moved to Ralls County and became a grocer. Jacob died on a trip to St. Louis, and is buried in Louisiana, Missouri. Generation 3: Aletha Seely (sometimes "Alethia" or "Altha") Seely was born October 2, 1807 in St. Louis, Missouri, and died November 2, 1880 in Palmyra, Missouri. She married Capt. William Carson on October 2, 1823 (her 16th birthday) in St. Louis. He was born March 11, 1798 in near Winchester, Virginia, and died November 13, 1873 in Palmyra. She is listed in the 1880 census as Aletha Carson, age 79, born in Missouri, father born in Pennsylvania, living with her daughter Lena (Ellen) Carson Mallory and son-in-law, William Mallory, in Nickerson, Kansas.

**SGS Interim Response:** This John wouldn't tie into the Robert or Obadiah lines unless it's before they came to America. Anyone with information should contact Tom and send a copy to me.

**Query 0508-5** Submitted by Robert Edsall (rledsall@saber.net)

**Subject:** Samuel Barton Edsall

Robert contacted us via the website to ask about a Seeley connection to the Edsall family, particularly Samuel Barton Edsall.

**SGS Response:** Several members of the Query Team identified Samuel Barton Edsall as the husband of Sarah Seely (SGS #1705). She was his second wife. Samuel's brother Richard Edsall was married to Sarah's aunt, Jemima Seely (SGS #505). Information on these families is available in the SGS publications or on the website.

**Query 0508-6** Submitted by Sharlee LaBrecque (sharlee.labrecque@deca.mil)

## Queries (continued from page 13)

**Subject:** Jarvis Seeley

Sharlee's 12 year-old son, Harry Lane Seeley IV, has caught the genealogy bug and is interested in learning about his family history. His great-grandfather was the original Harry Lane Seeley, a son of Harry Miller Seeley and Susan Lane. Harry Miller Seeley was the son of Jarvis Seeley and Ann Miller. Most of these ancestors lived in the area of Elizabeth City, N.C.

**SGS Interim Response:** John Seely shared data from the database showing Jarvis to be descended from Jeremiah Seeley b. ca 1745 in RI who m. ca 1771 in Pasquotank Co. NC Rebecca Davis, a daughter of Arthur Davis and widow Bathsheba Sanford. There is no further data on Jeremiah after his son Philip is born in 1797 but John was able to send Sharlee data on the ancestry of Rebecca Davis. Please let us know if you can identify Jeremiah Seeley.

**Query 0508-7** Submitted by Jack ([Stetson@cin.net](mailto:Stetson@cin.net))

**Subject:** Oscar A. Seely and David Seely

Jack's 2<sup>nd</sup> great-grandfather Oscar A. Seely was b. 29 Sept. 1842 in NY State. He is listed in the 1850 census of Irondequoit, Monroe Co. NY with his parents David (age 38) and Laura (age 28) Seely, both b. NY. There is also a David R. Seeley listed in Ward 4, Rochester, Monroe Co., NY in 1840, age 20-30 with a female 20-30. By 1860 Oscar is age 17 in Whiteside Co. IL with David age 45, no wife. In Sept. 1860 (after the census was taken) there is a marriage license for David R. Seely and Mrs. Ellen Childs. In later censuses David's parents are listed as b. CT. Who are David's parents and who is his wife Laura?

**SGS Interim Response:** The SGS database has entries for David Ross Seely married to Ellen A. Bannister Childs. Ellen A. Bannister and her future husband Joseph Childs are in the 1850 census for Madrid, St Lawrence Co. NY. There is no information on the ancestry of David. If you can connect David to a NY or CT Seely family let us know.

**Query 0508-8** Submitted by Harriet Dumar ([Mompoo@aol.com](mailto:Mompoo@aol.com))

**Subject:** Wellington Seeley

Harriet's great-grandmother was Awilda Seeley, b. in Fulton co. NY in October 1868. She asked for information about Awilda's father, Wellington Seeley.

**SGS Response:** Wellington is SGS #2937e as listed in *The Seventh Generation Families* published by SGS in 2000. He is a son of Stephen J. Seeley who is in the 7<sup>th</sup> generation from Robert Seeley. Harriet was encouraged to share her data on later generations with John Seely our database coordinator.

**Query 0508-9** Submitted by Betty Carolyn Seely Wilson ([cnwilson@flash.net](mailto:cnwilson@flash.net))

**Subject:** Obadiah Seeley

Betty's ancestor Walter Seeley is the son of Obadiah Seeley and his wife Betsey Ferguson. Obadiah was b. ca 1794. He can be found in the 1820 and 1830 US census for Orangeville, Genesee Co. NY (now in Wyoming Co.), the 1840 census for Greenfield, Erie Co. PA and the

1850 census for North East, Erie Co. PA. In 1850 his children still at home are Boyd, age 16, David, age 14, Rachel, age 12 and Reuben age 10. Obadiah and Betsey are both listed as b. in NY State. Walter (also b. NY) is in the next house with his wife Alma and 3 young children. Where does Obadiah fit into the Seeley lineage?

**SGS Interim Response:** Obadiah's marriage to Betsey Ferguson and names of their children are listed in the SGS database but there is no information as to his parents. Please contact us if you can identify this Obadiah.

**Query 0508-10** Submitted by Stephanie Seely ([SBeach5050@aol.com](mailto:SBeach5050@aol.com))

**Subject:** William H. Seely

William Herman Seely is Stephanie's husband's 2<sup>nd</sup> great-grandfather. According to various census and military records William was b. 1840-44 in CT. After discharge from the military in 1863 he went to Philadelphia where he married Mary Jennie Munday on 11 June 1871. In the 1880 census his occupation is as a shoemaker. William and Mary Jennie had 4 children – Arthur b. 1870, Mattie b. 1874, Sara J. b. 1875 and Corson Herman b. 1880. Both girls died young. Stephanie wants to find William's parents.

**SGS Interim Response:** I believe I found William's family in the 1850 and 1860 censuses for New Canaan, Fairfield, CT. where the men of the family are also working as shoemakers. There are some discrepancies in the names of children and ages but enough similarities (esp. considering the quality of some of the census takers). According to the census William's father is Joseph Fitch Seely, our SGS# 3150 who married Anna Bell and resided in New Canaan. It would be helpful if someone could find another record verifying the relationship between William Herman and Joseph Fitch Seely.

### HOW TO SUBMIT A QUERY

If you would like to submit a query please follow a few guidelines.

**Be specific and detailed:** Give us as much information as you have about the person or family in question, **especially dates and locations.**

**What resources have you already consulted?** The SGS Publications? The census? Cemetery records? Ancestry.com? Others? (specify).

**What exactly do you want to know?** Parent's names and details? Information on siblings? Information on a family marrying into the Seeley family?

**After your query is printed** please keep us informed about any information you receive or any further progress you make on your own. Other members may also be interested or related to your line.

One more name, date or place may be the key to connecting your line to another. Your query will also be posted on our website. Make sure we have your current email and normal address – sometimes we get information several months after publication.

## SGS Publications Available for Order

### All Checks should be made payable to SGS.

There are three major SGS publications available for order from the Seelye Research Center.

1. ***The Descendants of Robert Seeley (1602-1667) and Obadiah Seeley (1614-1657): Generations One Through Five, 1997 Edition (U.S. \$17)***
2. ***The Sixth Generation Families, 1995 Edition (U.S. \$17)***
3. ***The Seventh Generation Families: Descendants of Robert Seeley (1601-1667) and Obadiah Seeley (1614-1657), 2000 Edition (U.S. \$25)***

You can order your copy by sending a check or money order made out to the Seeley Genealogical Society to the Seelye Research Center Director Terry Tietjens. For more information on how to obtain your copies of these invaluable publications you can contact Terry using the contact information below..

Prior issues of the **SGS Newsletter** are also available through the Seelye Research Center and can be purchased for \$2 each.

Finally, the **SGS CD-ROM** includes numerous files in both MS Word and Adobe Acrobat formats, both of which are very user friendly and easily searchable. The **SGS CD-ROM** (U.S.\$15) is available from Bob Seeley (see contact data below). It includes:

#### Folder A - SGS Publications

(By Madeline Mills and Katherine Olsen)

1. Generations One Through Five Robert & Obadiah
2. Sixth Generation Robert
3. Sixth Generation Obadiah

4. Seventh Generation Robert
5. Seventh Generation Obadiah  
*Folder B - SGS Ancestral File Index*  
(Database Index by John R. Seely)

1. John Seely Seeley List
2. Seeley Children, Alphabetical List
3. Seeley Children, List by Mother
4. Non-Seeley Children, Alphabetical List
5. Non-Seeley Children, List by Seeley Mother
6. Submitters SGS  
*Folder C - Fred C. Hart, Jr., CG Research Reports*  
*on Obadiah Seeley (with attachments)*

1. Origin of Obadiah Seeley
    - a. Chronological Listing of Obadiah Seeley's Stamford, CT Records
    - b. Stamford, CT Records (Introduction)
  2. Obadiah's Relationship with John Lawre(n)son and Family of John Miller
    - a. Lawre(n)son/Seeley Events
    - b. Miller - Seeley Events
  3. Origin of Early Stamford Settlers
    - a. Register of St Martin
    - b. The Family of William Seeley
    - c. Stamford Settlers Before 1700
  4. Mary, Wife of Obadiah
    - a. Doubtful Angel
  5. Probate Record for William Seeley
- Folder D - Report from Alan Phipps, MA, AG,**
1. The English Ancestry of Robert Seeley

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**DESCENDANT OF:**     Robert     Obadiah     Other (Attached)     Unknown

I/we have submitted our Seeley line back as far as known  
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