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JASON CLARK, FROM MASSACHUSETTS, TO NEW YORK, TO MICHIGAN

In 1823, 14 years before statehood and before the opening of the Erie Canal, Jason Clark, born in Massachusetts, arrived in Detroit with wife Polly and several children. Having come over Lake Erie from New York, he headed soon to Washtenaw County at a time when Ann Arbor consisted of a half dozen houses. The Chicago Road, near which he built his home, was the route over which native Americans traveled to Detroit for rations and presents, therefore being frequent passersby.

Altho' he had cleared a fine farm on which corn and wheat were grown in the "...virgin soil that needed only to be turned over with the plow after being cleared the seed therein dropped...", in July, 1835, he took up government land in Green Oak Township, Sec. 9, E $\frac{1}{2}$ NW, NWNE, SE NE. In November, the SW NE $\frac{1}{4}$ was added, making a total of 200 acres. Jason was an elder in the Green Oak Presbyterian Church, organized June 15, 1834. Meeting in homes and schools during its 20 year existence in Green Oak, most members transferred when the church was built in Brighton in 1858. Jason, a veteran of the War of 1812, died in 1865. He is buried in the Plains Cemetery on Maltby Road. We will assume Polly, who died in 1856, is also buried there.

Of their eight children, the fourth, L(eonard) N(elson), was born in Washtenaw County in 1827. Because of the lack of schools in the early years, L.N. attended about one term. As soon as he was grown enough to lift the ax he was in the woods, cutting trees to clear land for crops. By 1845 he was farming on shares with his father, later purchasing the 200 acres. At 17, 1844, he began a threshing business. (The removal of wheat from the sheaf.) This he did for 25 years. Patents were obtained for two inventions: a straw carrier (a three section stacker) and a stacker used with the vibrator thresher. (This equipment allowed for the better arranging of the mass of straw.)

Maria Goucher, of New York, became his bride in 1853, at the age of 18. Her parents had come to the area in the 1840s. They had no children of their own but raised nieces and a nephew, Emma and Frank Goucher and Minnie Hatt. Well aware of the need for education, L.N. saw to it the children attended school regularly.

In 1872, L.N. sold his farm and moved to Brighton Village becoming a lender of money. (There were few banks in the area. Many of those in need of cash borrowed from private lenders.) The Clarks made their home on the south side of Grand River, the 4th house east of Church Street. L.N. and Maria donated a rose window to the new Greek Revival, white frame Presbyterian Church. (When the church was moved to North Street, the window was moved also. Where is it now?) L.N. died in 1894 and Maria in 1913. Both are buried in the Village Cemetery. (Compiled by Marieanna Bair from 1891 Biographic and Photo Album; Yesteryears of Green Oak; William Pless' Supplement to the Old Village Cemetery records; Early Landowners and Settlers by Milton Charboneau; and census records. Additions/corrections welcomed. 810/229-5402.)