

**THE CLAPP FAMILY MEETING AT
NORTHAMPTON, AUGUST 24, 1870.
COMPRISING THE PROCEEDINGS,
THE ADDRESS, HISTORICAL AND
OTHER PAPERS, ETC.**

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The Clapp family meeting at Northampton, August 24, 1870. Comprising the proceedings, the address, historical and other papers, etc. by Anonymous

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5273.

COMPRISING

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AND OTHER PAPERS, ETC.



PUBLISHED BY VOTE OF THE BOSTON COMMITTEE OF ARRANGEMENTS.

BOSTON:
EBENEZER CLAPP, 7 SCHOOL STREET.
OTIS CLAPP, 3 BEACON STREET.

Printed by DAVID CLAPP & SON, 334 Washington Street.

1870.



Boston, September 1, 1870.

THE Boston Committee of Arrangements for the late meeting of the Clapp Family at Northampton, in consequence of the difficulty of convening the general Committee, do hereby, for themselves, and in behalf, as they believe, of all who attended that most pleasant and successful re-union, offer their sincere thanks:—

First, to their Connecticut River kindred, who inaugurated the movement and who so laboriously and prosperously aided in carrying it forward.

Second, to the Rev. Charles A. Humphreys, of Springfield, for his fervent invocation, at the opening of the meeting, of the Divine blessing upon the assembly and the proceedings of the day.

Third, to William D. Clapp, Esq., of Northampton, for his very appropriate and friendly words of welcome.

Fourth, to Hon. Almon M. Clapp, the President of the Day, for his fraternal and animated opening remarks, and for the very acceptable manner in which he performed the duties of presiding officer.

Fifth, to the Rev. Alexander H. Clapp, D.D., for his eloquent, instructive and entertaining Address; and

Sixth, to the other gentlemen who contributed to the interest and importance of the meeting by written papers, and speeches; and the Committee respectfully solicit for the press a copy of each of the productions alluded to.

They also appoint the Chairman of this meeting, with three other gentlemen to be selected by him, as a Committee to transmit a copy of this vote to the gentlemen named, and to attend to the publication, if they shall find sufficient encouragement, of the Proceedings at this the first Family Gathering of the Clapps.

[The Committee thus appointed consisted of EBENEZER CLAPP (Chairman), OTIS CLAPP, DAVID CLAPP and WILLIAM CLAPP.]

TO EBENEZER, OTIS, DAVID AND WILLIAM CLAPP, COMMITTEE.

DEAR KINSMEN:

I gratefully acknowledge your note, conveying the thanks of the Committee of Arrangements for my Address at Northampton, and their request of a copy for the press. Herewith you have the manuscript.

None can be better aware than the writer, of its many imperfections. It was prepared, at your desire, for the entertainment of a passing hour at our late Re-union, and with no thought of further use. I had not before been specially interested in our genealogy; had no time for research; and, excepting the manuscript "annals" of our Historian, no materials not open to all. Nor have I since had leisure to put into presentable shape, matter that answered its purpose tolerably, when spoken in the indulgent hearing of "the family." But, remembering that it is to be printed, not for "the public," but for the same partial kinsfolk, I will not alter even its familiar, colloquial form, nor apologize for its evident incompleteness as an historical document.

Doubtless many of our kindred have lived and died, as worthy of honorable mention as most of those named in the Address—named, because the facts concerning them were more easily found.

The hope that this fragmentary attempt may draw from their obscurity materials for a fuller and juster tribute, in the forthcoming "Family History," makes me willing to give these pages to the printer. And if thus they shall fall under "the critic's eye," let him remember that they were not prepared for his entertainment, but for that of a proverbially indulgent Family.

Ever,

Faithfully yours,

ALEXANDER HUNTINGTON CLAPP.

Bible House, New York, Oct. 1, 1870.

CLAPP FAMILY MEETING.

INTRODUCTORY.

IN the year 1858, several members of the Clapp Family in Boston, impressed with the desirableness of assembling together as many of the name and lineage as could be induced to meet in one place, made an effort to bring about such a gathering in the town of Dorchester, the venerated home of their first American progenitors. At a meeting of these individuals, several of whom were on the Boston Committee for the Family Gathering of 1870, it was unanimously voted to invite the Rev. Theodore Clapp, of New Orleans, to deliver an Address on the occasion proposed. On account of the state of his health, to their great regret he declined, in a very friendly and appropriate letter, dated Oct. 8, 1858. They subsequently invited the Rev. George Putnam, D.D., of Roxbury, Mass., a lineal descendant on the maternal side, who after taking the matter into consideration, declined, in a letter of May 13, 1859. The Rev. Dr. Furness, of Philadelphia, also a member of the family, likewise declined the invitation. Soon after the time last mentioned, several of the aged and more prominent men of the name in Dorchester died, which served to throw discouragement on the efforts for the contemplated meeting.

Another obstacle in the way, was the want of suitable accommodations in the town named, for the numerous progeny whom it was hoped would congregate around their ancestral homestead and near the sepulchres of their fathers. The effort was therefore abandoned for the time-being—but not forgotten.

Early the present year a desire for a similar family gathering sprung up in the minds of some of the Connecticut River kindred. Other families, of different names, but of the same old Puritan stock, had recently met

together, and accounts of their fraternal and joyous greetings had excited in the community generally an increased love of ancestry and kindred, and encouraged the effort for other family re-unions. Mr. Joel T. and Mr. Moses Clapp, of Southampton, Mass., first conferred together with regard to calling a meeting of the Clapp Family somewhere in that neighborhood. A consultation was held with others in the vicinity, several meetings were convened, and a Committee of twelve from various towns was appointed to consider the whole subject. This Committee was afterwards enlarged, and comprised the following persons :

William D. Clapp, William R. Clapp, Charles C. Clapp, Henry S. Gere, *Northampton*; Joel Taylor Clapp, Moses Clapp, Stephen D. Clapp, Jr., *Southampton*; R. Wright Clapp, *Westhampton*; Theodore Clapp, William N. Clapp, Lewis Clapp, A. S. Ludden, *Easthampton*; Dr. H. W. Clapp, E. M. Clapp, *Westfield*; Rev. Lewis F. Clark, *Whitinsville*; Franklin Clapp, Elzathan Graves, *Williamsburg*; Sylvanus Clapp, *Pawtucket, R. I.*; James H. Clapp, *Belchertown*; Robinson Clapp, *Holyoke*; Otis, Ebenezer, David, William, William Warland, and John Codman Clapp, *Boston*; Lewis Clapp, *Lee Centre, Ill.*; Dr. A. B. Clapp, *Aurelius, N. Y.*; Rev. Luther Clapp, *Wauwatosa, Wis.*; Russel Clapp, *Swan Township, Ind.*; Seth C. Clapp, *Princeton, Ill.*; Caleb Clapp, *Hartford, Conn.*; Spencer Clapp, *Windsor, Conn.*; George M. Clapp, *Newburgh, N. Y.*
LAFAYETTE CLAPP, *Secretary.*

At a meeting, March 3d, it was voted expedient to call the proposed family gathering. A correspondence had taken place with some of the name in Boston, who were invited to meet at Easthampton with their western kindred, and confer upon the best method of carrying out the plan; and at an adjourned meeting held on the 18th of April, Messrs. Ebenezer and Otis Clapp, of Boston, were accordingly present. At that meeting, a Sub-Committee on Speakers was appointed, consisting of Ebenezer, Otis and William N. Clapp. Also a Committee on Place of Meeting, consisting of Moses, Charles C., Dr. H. W., Lewis, and Oliver N. Clapp. A Committee of Invitation was also chosen: viz., Theodore and Lafayette Clapp, of Easthampton, and H. W. Clapp, of Westfield, who issued a general circular to the family and its connections. A Committee was afterwards appointed on the Collation, as follows:—Theodore and Lewis Clapp of Easthampton, William D. and William R. Clapp of Northampton, and Joel Taylor Clapp of Southampton. These various Committees made arrangements which resulted in the choice of the Agricultural Grounds in Northampton as the place, and the 24th of August as the time of holding the proposed meeting; and also in securing the services of the Hon. Almon M. Clapp, of

Washington, D. C., as President of the Day, and of the Rev. Alexander H. Clapp, D.D., of New York City, as Orator for the occasion.

On the 20th of July, notice was sent out by the Boston Committee, of a meeting of all interested, to be held at the house of Mr. William Clapp, in Boston, on the 1st of August. At that meeting, the following gentlemen were appointed to make arrangements for railroad conveyance of all who might wish to go from Boston and its vicinity: viz., Otis, William, Eugene H., Lemuel and Charles M. Clapp. This Committee made an agreement on favorable terms with the Boston & Albany and the Connecticut River Railroads to convey the party to and from the place of meeting; also with the proprietors of Haynes's Hotel, in Springfield, for accommodations the first night, and issued a circular, containing the necessary information, dated August 18th.

On the 24th, a party of more than one hundred left Boston in the afternoon, and reached Springfield early in the evening. After tea, a social gathering was held in the spacious parlors of the hotel, at which were present, besides the Boston and Dorchester party, many of the Connecticut River and other members of the family, some of them from distant parts of the country.

Of this meeting, none who were present will consider any terms of praise too extravagant. One of the reporters present speaks of "the cordiality, good fellowship and freedom from formality which marked the assemblage." Another says, "The rooms presented quite a busy scene, filled with the young and old, their faces beaming with smiles as they greeted old acquaintances, and added fraternal links to the chain of friendship." A prominent member of the family who was present, writes, since his return home, "I shall not, during all my earthly pilgrimage, forget the delightful season spent with friends at Springfield and Northampton. It will long be remembered among the most delightful scenes of my life. It was good to be there." Another writes, from his distant residence, "We are highly pleased that we had sense enough to accept the invitation to this most happy and interesting gathering, which gave us so much pleasure, and which will be remembered and alluded to, in coming years, as one of the most agreeable incidents of our lives. I say *we*, for my wife enjoyed the whole affair as much as any one, and has proved herself to have the qualities which, I think, make some of the Clapps clever people. I hope my good Dorchester friends will be willing to admit her into full communion as an una-

bridged, unmitigated Clapp." Another, a lady not so far from the old ancestral home, writes, "Gathered together for the first time under one roof, and meeting various branches from other and distant points, it was a most interesting and delightful occasion. Dear to all our hearts will be the memory of this our first family re-union. The spacious rooms were thronged with young and old—some were acquaintances and friends, but most were strangers to each other. Some were brought together once more whom scores of years had separated, and many a warm and cordial grasp of the hand was exchanged. Some who had known each other by name only, here met face to face. Others, whose homes were perhaps in the same city or town, knew of each other here for the first time. Thus by the strengthening of old acquaintance, and the formation of new and kindlier feelings towards all, both friends and strangers, the bond of brotherhood was made stronger. And then our thoughts almost instinctively went back to the past—to good old Roger Clap and his brethren. What would he say to us here to-night—to us his children even to the eighth generation—thus brought together in the midst of the knowledge, prosperity and cultivation that belong to our age and country? And would he not have found that a feeling of veneration existed beneath the cheerful, social spirit of this family band? It was this spirit of fond remembrance of the Past, and of our fathers who lived in it, that penetrated and pervaded the happy meeting. It was this that brightened the countenance of each towards all, and joined them indeed into one brotherly kindred. At its close there was a solemnity amounting almost to awe, as with one accord the social festival was succeeded by the music and song of Auld Lang Syne; and higher still both thought and feeling were carried up in a hymn of praise to Him who presides over all the families of the earth, and has watched over and blessed our house and lineage for these long generations."

Among the interesting incidents of the evening was the passing around for inspection of several old relics of the family. Deacon Ebenezer Clapp, of Dorchester, showed a watch whose history was told by the following inscription on parchment inside:—

This watch was the property of Rev. Nathaniel Clapp, of Newport, R. I., who was born in 1668, and died in 1745, aged 77 years. At his death it was valued at twenty pounds—\$88.80.

Derastus Clapp also exhibited a copper plate for printing clock dials, which had been the property of his grandfather, Preserved Clapp. It is a fine specimen of engraving, and was probably executed in England.

On the morning of the 24th, the party from Boston, with others resident in Springfield and its vicinity and from more distant places, were conveyed over the Connecticut River Railroad to Northampton, and by means of omnibuses and other conveyances soon reached the grounds of the Hampshire County Agricultural Society. The large hall of the Society had been prepared for the occasion, and by 10 o'clock between five and six hundred people had gathered in it. This number was much increased subsequently, till nearly or quite one thousand had collected within the hall or were standing by the open windows outside. Before the exercises began, a paper prepared for the purpose, designed to contain the names, parentage, &c., of those present, was circulated for signatures.

After the meeting had been called to order by THEODORE CLAPP, Esq., of Easthampton, a fervent and impressive Prayer was offered by Rev. CHARLES A. HUMPHREYS, of Springfield, a native of Dorchester, and a lineal descendant of Nicholas Clapp.

The following Hymn, written by Rev. Dr. James Flint for a public occasion many years since, was now sung to the tune of "Old Hundred" by the large audience, nearly all joining in the inspiring strain:—

In pleasant lands have fallen the lines
That bound our goodly heritage,
And safe beneath our sheltering vines
Our youth is blest, and soothed our age.

What thanks, O God, to Thee are due,
That Thou didst plant our fathers here;
And watch and guard them as they grew,
A vineyard, to the Planter dear.

The toils they bore, our ease have wrought;
They sowed in tears—in joy we reap;
The birthright they so dearly bought
We'll guard, till we with them shall sleep.

Thy kindness to our fathers shown,
In weal and wo, through all the past,
Their grateful sons, O God, shall own,
While here their name and race shall last.

The assembly was then addressed by WILLIAM D. CLAPP, Esq., of Northampton, in the following words of welcome:—

To all here present who bear the honored name of Clapp, or who are either directly or remotely connected with the lineage, we bring, this morning, words of cordial welcome. Pride of birth, of race, of lineage, may be one of the frailties and foibles of human nature, but if so it is at least a pardonable weakness.