October 20, 2020

A Narrative - The Clemons Family Migration (1630's – 1830's)

Introduction

The westward journey of the Clemons family is typical of so many families that came to the New World seeking religious freedom and economic opportunity. From immigration to New England in the 1600's to the move to Michigan in the 1800's, many historical events provided the opportunity for migration. However, the real reason for a move can only be speculated as written records do not exist. And while clues can be found in linking the genealogical and historical records together, the challenge lies in turning speculation into a believable reason…..a reason strong enough to move a family for its betterment.

That said…… let the speculation begin!!!

1635 - From England to the New World

Augustine Clement made the first major move by taking his family (wife Elizabeth pregnant with Samuel, daughter Elizabeth, and indentured servant Thomas Whealer) from Reading, Berkshire, England to Boston, Massachusetts Bay Colony in June of 1635 on the ship James of London at the time of The Great Migration.

From the article, "The Great Migration" by Jonathan Edwards, (www.landofthebrave.info/great%20migration.htm)

"The Great Migration was the period in American history when twenty thousand English men, women, and children crossed the Atlantic Ocean to settle New England between 1620 and 1640…..England was in religious turmoil. The religious climate was so hostile and threatening that many Puritans were forced to leave the country, many of whom fled to the Netherlands. Religion in England was dictated by the monarchy. King James I (19 June 1566 – 27 March 1625) was a Protestant and during his reign the English colonization of North America began with the foundation of Jamestown, Virginia, in 1607. The Puritans presented him with the Millenary Petition requesting reforms in the Anglican church, particularly the abolition of confirmation, wedding rings, and the term "priest". King James I banned religious petitions starting a sense of persecution among the English Puritans. The situation became far worse when King Charles I (19 November 1600 – 30 January 1649) ascended the throne in 1625. King Charles I had a Catholic wife and leaned towards the Catholic religion. The Puritans were classed as dissenters and persecuted for their beliefs. The scene was set for the Great Migration."

From the article, "New England's Great Migration" by Lynn Betlock, Originally published in New England Ancestors 4 (2003): 2: 22-24. (www.greatmigration.org/new_englands_great_migration.html)

"The Great Migration Study Project uses 1620 — the date of the arrival of the Mayflower — as its starting point. The year 1620 marks the founding of Plymouth Colony by the Separatists – the most extreme Puritan sect. (While more moderate Puritans sought only to purify and reform the Church of England, the Separatists severed all ties to it.) The Separatists left England and in 1609 moved to the city of Leiden in Holland to escape persecution. After ten years in Holland, they were eager to establish a colony of their own. With the support of London merchants they secured a land patent in the New World and formed a joint-stock company. In September 1620, the Mayflower set sail from Plymouth with 101 passengers, including both Separatist

believers and non-believers. With the ship's arrival in December in what became Plymouth, the English settlement of New England began.

The peak years of the Great Migration lasted just over ten years — from 1629 to 1640, years when the Puritan crisis in England reached its height. In 1629, King Charles I dissolved Parliament, thus preventing Puritan leaders from working within the system to effect change and leaving them vulnerable to persecution. The Massachusetts Bay Colony, chartered in the same year by a group of moderate Puritans, represented both a refuge and an opportunity for Puritans to establish a "Zion in the wilderness." During the ten years that followed, over twenty thousand men, women, and children left England to settle permanently in the Massachusetts Bay Colony. In 1640, when Parliament was reconvened, attention was redirected from the New World back to the old and migration to New England dropped sharply.

Seventeenth-century conditions in England caused hundreds of thousands of emigrants to leave England and seek new homes elsewhere: in Ireland, the Caribbean, and the other colonies of North America. For sheer numbers and longevity, these movements to other regions dwarfed New England's "Great" migration. But the term "Great Migration" was coined for a reason: it reflected the greatness of the endeavor's purpose rather than its size. The immigrants who came to New England differed from immigrants to other regions in a variety of ways, all stemming from their fundamental desire to obtain spiritual rather than economic rewards. Unlike colonists to other areas, those who migrated to New England had known relatively prosperous lives in England. In fact, it was a greater economic risk to leave than to stay. From the colonists' perspective, they traded economic advantages and stability in a corrupt England for a more precarious economic situation tempered by the opportunity to live more pious and worthy lives in a Puritan commonwealth.

Motivated primarily by religious concerns, most Great Migration colonists traveled to Massachusetts in family groups. In fact, the proportion of Great Migration immigrants who traveled in family groups is the highest in American immigrant history. Consequently, New England retained a normal, multi-generational structure with relatively equal numbers of men and women. At the time they left England, many husbands and wives were in their thirties and had three or more children, with more yet to be born. This situation contrasts with that of the southern colonies, which were populated primarily by single young men. In the Chesapeake Bay area, even at the end of the seventeenth century, the male-to-female sex ratio was skewed.

Great Migration colonists shared other distinctive characteristics. New Englanders had a high level of literacy, perhaps nearly twice that of England as a whole. New Englanders were highly skilled; more than half of the settlers had been artisans or craftsmen. Only about seventeen percent came as servants, mostly as members of a household. In contrast, seventy-five percent of Virginia's population arrived as servants. And in much greater proportion than the English population as a whole, New England settlers came from urban areas.

Unlike colonists of other regions, the Great Migration colonists were primarily middle class, and few were rich or poor. English emigrants primarily in search of economic betterment were unlikely to settle in the Massachusetts Bay Colony; the potential rewards were not great. Similarly, those already rich saw little opportunity to increase their wealth in a harsh region with no obvious cash crop. Emigrants seeking to realize the greatest economic opportunity would choose to go elsewhere, in effect excluding from New England those who placed material concerns first. The result of this exclusion was a remarkably homogeneous population, with colonists sharing similar backgrounds, outlooks, and perspectives.

An important rite of passage for all Great Migration colonists, and one that further bound them together as a group, was the voyage to Massachusetts. The majority of emigrants lived within a few days travel of a port of departure. Ships left from several points along the English coast, including London, Bristol, Barnstaple, *Weymouth, Plymouth, Southampton, Ipswich, Great Yarmouth, and Gravesend. Most emigrant ships left England in March or April, allowing sufficient time for the journey and the ship's return trip to England before cold weather began again. An average ocean crossing lasted from eight to ten weeks but the time of the voyage could vary greatly, from a trip of just thirty-eight days to one of six months.*

Once in New England, the settlers usually spent a minimum of several weeks — frequently the entire first winter — in the port town at which they arrived or another established town. After gathering information about possible places to settle, they dispersed to towns throughout the colony, sometimes moving several times before finding permanent residences. Most chose to move to a new town, generally one less than two years old. The key to success was arriving early enough after a town's founding to become a proprietor and share in the original land distribution, administered and controlled by the town. Proprietors received the best and largest land grants, as well as rights to share in future divisions. This share in future land divisions was extremely important to the settlers because it ensured viable economic futures for their children.

In order to best secure these rights, towns limited the number of possible proprietors. Once the limit was reached, the town was considered closed. In Dorchester, this process happened quite early — in 1636, just six years after its founding. Twenty-two towns, from Maine to Rhode Island, were closed or entry was drastically restricted within the first ten years of settlement. Fortunately for new arrivals, the frontier continued expanding and many new towns formed during the lifetimes of the original settlers. Settlement expanded from Boston, to both the north and the south, along the coast. The colonists first occupied land cleared by previous Native inhabitants. After these more desirable areas were taken, settlers moved into increasingly difficult terrain. Twenty-three towns in Massachusetts were founded in the 1630s, and these towns, as well as those settled in succeeding decades, provided a stable and secure land distribution system for the immigrants.

Another aspect of life in New England proved noteworthy: the remarkable health and longevity of the population. Many colonists lived to the age of seventy, and a substantial number lived to be eighty. Both male and female settlers in New England lived significantly longer than their English counterparts. This longevity is no doubt due to a variety of factors: dispersed settlement patterns, lack of epidemic disease, the healthful effects of a "little ice age," clean air and water, possibly a better diet, and the original good health of most immigrants. Also, infant and childhood mortality rates were lower in New England, and the settlers produced large and healthy families — most having seven or more children. Accordingly, New England experienced tremendous population growth within the lifetime of first generation settlers.

Overall, Massachusetts Bay Colony settlers were able to attain a comfortable living for themselves and assure some measure of economic success for their children. Most owned houses and land, as well as a sufficient amount of livestock, farm equipment, and household goods. (Interestingly, with their disposable income New Englanders chose to forgo the purchase of silverware, pottery and other household goods in favor of books — principally the religious books that were so key to Puritanism.) If few in New England were wealthy, few lived in poverty either. Most settlers lived in circumstances similar to their neighbors and if one colonist was more prosperous than the rest, this prosperity was likely to manifest itself in a greater amount of land rather than a more ostentatious way of life. Both the community's spiritual outlook and the material conditions experienced by the first generation in New England fostered a uniquely communal and stable way of life. The commitment to life in a Puritan commonwealth on which the Great Migration colonists staked everything when they left England had indeed paid off."

1784 - From Charlton City, MA to Whitehall, NY

At the end of the American Revolution in 1784, Joseph and Jonathan I Clemons move the family northwest from Charlton City, Massachusetts to Whitehall, New York. Jonathan I having served in the revolution, received a land grant for his military service (captain).

From the article, "Revolutionary War Bounty Land Grants" by Lloyd DeWitt Bockstruck, published on www.genealogy.com:

"*A land bounty is a grant of land from a government as a reward to repay citizens for the risks and hardships they endured in the service of their country, usually in a military related capacity.*

In their colonial tradition, the Revolutionary governments patterned their struggle for independence from Great Britain on the principle of bounty lands. They generally offered free lands in exchange for military service, but they strategically did so on the presumption that they would be victorious in their struggle. They would not actually award the lands until the war had been concluded and the British defeated. Such a policy not only imposed no financial constraints on the war effort but also insured a degree of support for the Revolutionary cause. The Revolutionary governments were cognizant that to the victor belonged the spoils and that defeat brought no reward. Bounty lands were an effective propaganda technique for enrolling support for the war among the citizenry and preventing them from lapsing into the British fold when the tide of battle ebbed.

Those colonies with unseated lands used their advantage to enlist support for the cause with the offer of free lands. Unfortunately, some of the Original Thirteen enjoyed no such advantage. There was no bounty land policy in Delaware, New Jersey, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, or Vermont. Those states lacked enough vacant land to support such a policy. Bounty lands were a feature, however, in Connecticut, Georgia, Maryland, Massachusetts, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, and Virginia. Administratively, these nine states selected reserves in their western domains for the location of bounty lands. Such a choice was seemingly quite logical. By placing veterans on the frontier, the states would be able to rely upon a military force which in turn would be able to protect the settlements from Indian incursions. These state governments also realized that they had to encourage the ex-soldiers to occupy their newly awarded bounty lands, so they granted exemptions from taxation ranging from a few years to life to those veterans who would locate on their respective bounty lands. Such a policy also had the effect of retarding the exodus of a state's population.

Since most of the Indian nations had supported the British during the Revolutionary War, the Thirteen States were cautious in approaching their former enemies. Populating the frontier with citizens skilled in defense offered the best prospect in enticing other settlers to join them. Veterans were knowledgeable in the use of firearms and in military strategy. Knowing that they would be defended if the need arose was reassuring to many settlers. The state governments also realized that the revenue derived from the sale of vacant lands in the west was badly needed. The extension of settlements on the frontier would, in time, also increase the tax rolls and contribute to the reduction of their Revolutionary War debts. In the aftermath of the war, the states with transappalachian claims ceded some of those claims to the federal government, but not until they had the assurance of being able to fulfill their bounty land commitments. With the exception of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the other states permitted qualified veterans and/or their dependents to receive bounty lands from both the federal and the respective state governments. While New York made some adjustments, double dipping was the norm in the other states. Following the American victory at Yorktown in 1781, the various governments sought to implement their bounty land programs.

1834 - From Whitehall, NY to Concord, MI

Lake Ontario
Whitehall
New York
Rochester
New Hampshire
Massachusetts
Boston
Providence
Rhode Island
Connecticut
Fishers Island
Block Island

The Clemons family would farm the land near Whitehall, NY for about 50 years (1784 to 1834). At the end of this period, they would move west to Concord, Michigan. Prior to moving, however, preparations had to be made. The western lands had to be made less dangerous, governing legislation put in place, and the migration route made less cumbersome before settlers could be allowed to move into the new territories.

To begin with, the federal government finalized treaties with the Indian tribes (1795 Treaty of Greenville, 1789 Treaty of Fort Harmar, etc.) and pass congressional legislation (Land Ordinance of 1784 1785, 1787, etc.), and roads being constructed in the southern part of the new Territory. These actions would provide safety and structure for the developing western territories.

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia: Northwest Territory

"The Treaty of Greenville, formally titled Treaty with the Wyandots, etc., was a 1795 treaty between the United States and indigenous nations of the Northwest Territory (now Midwestern United States) including the Wyandot and Delaware peoples, which redefined the boundary between indigenous peoples' lands and territory for European American settlement.

It was signed at Fort Greenville,[1] now Greenville, Ohio, on August 3, 1795, following the Native American loss at the Battle of Fallen Timbers a year earlier. It ended the Northwest Indian War in the Ohio Country, limited Indian Country to northwestern Ohio, and began the practice of annual payments following land concessions. The parties to the treaty were a coalition of Native American tribes known as the Western Confederacy, and the United States government represented by General Anthony Wayne and local frontiersmen.

The treaty became synonymous with the end of the frontier in that part of the Northwest Territory that would become the new state of Ohio."

From Wikipedia – History of Michigan

After their defeat in the War of 1812, the tribes were forced to sell all of their land claims to the U.S. federal government by the Treaty of Saginaw and the Treaty of Chicago. After the war, the government built forts in some of the Northwest Territory, such as at Sault Ste. Marie. In the 1820s, the U.S. government assigned Indian agents to work with the tribes, including arranging land cessions and relocation. They forced most of the Native Americans to relocate from Michigan to Indian reservations further west.

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia: Land Ordinances

"The Land Ordinance of 1785 was adopted by the Continental Congress in the United States on May 20, 1785. Under the Articles of Confederation, Congress did not have the power to raise revenue by direct taxation of the inhabitants of the United States. Therefore, the immediate goal of the ordinance was to raise money through the sale of land in the largely unmapped territory west of the original states acquired after the end of the Revolutionary War in the 1783 Treaty of Paris. Over three-fourths of the area of the continental United States ultimately came under the rectangular survey. [1]

The earlier Ordinance of 1784 was a resolution written by Thomas Jefferson (delegate from Virginia) calling for Congress to take action. The land west of the Appalachian Mountains, north of the Ohio River and east of the Mississippi River was to be divided into ten separate states.[2] *However, the 1784 resolution did not define the mechanism by which the land would become states, or how the territories would be governed or settled before they became states. The Ordinance of 1785 put the 1784 resolution in operation by providing a mechanism for selling and settling the land,*[3] *while the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 addressed political needs.*

The 1785 ordinance laid the foundations of land policy until passage of the Homestead Act in 1862. The Land Ordinance established the basis for the Public Land Survey System. The initial surveying was performed by Thomas Hutchins. After he died in 1789, responsibility for surveying was transferred to the Surveyor General. Land was to be systematically surveyed into square townships, six miles (9.656 km) on a side. Each of these townships were sub-divided into thirty-six sections of one square mile (2.59 km²) or 640 acres. These sections could then be further subdivided for re-sale by settlers and land speculators.[4]

The ordinance was also significant for establishing a mechanism for funding public education. Section 16 in each township was reserved for the maintenance of public schools

The Point of Beginning for the 1785 survey was where Ohio (as the easternmost part of the Northwest Territory), Pennsylvania and Virginia (now West Virginia) met, on the north shore of the Ohio River near East Liverpool, Ohio. There is a historical marker just north of the site, at the state line where Ohio State Route 39 becomes Pennsylvania Route 68."

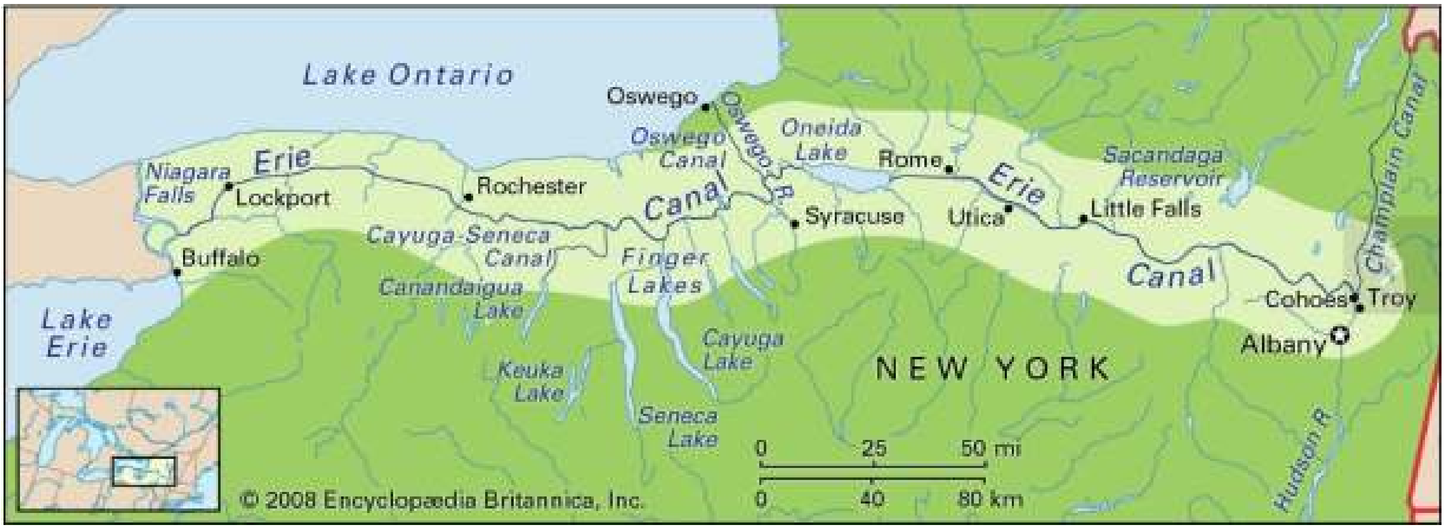
In addition to the land ordinances, the construction of a vast canal system in the early 1800's facilitated the movement of settlers to these new lands. The joint construction of the Erie and Champlain Canals in 1817 provided our Clemons ancestors living in the vicinity of Whitehall, NY, the most opportune way to migrate westward to the Northwest (Michigan) Territory.

From Wikipedia – History of Michigan

In the 1820s and 1830s immigrants from New England began moving to what is now Michigan in large numbers (though there was a trickle of New England settlers who arrived before this date).[23] *These were "Yankee" settlers, that is to say they were descended from the English Puritans who settled New England during the colonial era.*[24] *While most of them came to Michigan directly from New England, there were many who came from upstate New York. These were people whose parents had moved from New England to upstate*

New York in the immediate aftermath of the American Revolution. Due to the prevalence of New Englanders and New England transplants from upstate New York, Michigan was very culturally contiguous with early New England culture for much of its early history. The Yankee migration to Michigan was a result of several factors, one of which was the overpopulation of New England. The old stock Yankee population had large families, often bearing up to ten children in one household. Most people were expected to have their own piece of land to farm, and due to the massive and nonstop population boom, land in New England became scarce as every son claimed his own farmstead. As a result, there was not enough land for every family to have a self-sustaining farm, and Yankee settlers began leaving New England for the Midwestern United States. This resulted in Michigan's population expanding rapidly in the 1820s.[25] *The Erie Canal caused such an upsurge in immigration from New England that by 1837 "it seemed as if all New England were coming" according to one pioneer.*[26] *New England families considered it a route to the "promised land".*[27] *As a result of this heritage, the New England element of Michigan's population would remain culturally and politically dominant for a long time.*[2

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia: The Erie Canal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Champlain Canal
Niagara Falls
Erie
Lockport
Rochester
Canal
Syracuse
Utica
Erie
Little Falls
Buffalo
Cayuga-Seneca Canal
Finger Lakes
Canal
Canandaigua Lake
Cohoes
Troy
Lake Erie
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Keuka Lake
Seneca Lake
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25
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"The Erie Canal is a canal in New York that is part of the east–west, cross-state route of the New York State Canal System (formerly known as the New York State Barge Canal). It originally ran 363 miles (584 km) from the Hudson River in Albany to Lake Erie in Buffalo. It was built to create a navigable water route from New York City and the Atlantic Ocean to the Great Lakes. It was completed in 1825 and was the second longest canal in the world (after the Grand Canal in China), and it greatly enhanced the development and economy of New York, New York City, and the United States.[2]

The canal was first proposed in the 1780s, then re-proposed in 1807. A survey was authorized, funded, and executed in 1808. Proponents of the project gradually wore down opponents; its construction began in 1817, and it opened on October 26, 1825. The canal has 34 numbered locks starting with Black Rock Lock and ending downstream with the Troy Federal Lock. Both are owned by the federal government.[1] *It has an elevation difference of about 565 feet (172 m).*[3]

At the time, bulk goods were limited to pack animals with a 250-pound (113 kg) maximum[4] *and there were no railways, so water was the most cost-effective way to ship bulk goods.*

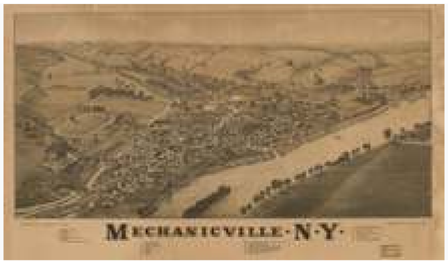
Political opponents to the canal and to New York Governor DeWitt Clinton denigrated it as "Clinton's Folly"[5] *or "Clinton's Big Ditch".*[6][7] *It was the first transportation system between the East Coast of the United States and the western interior that did not require portage.*

It was faster than carts pulled by draft animals and cut transport costs by about 95 percent.[8] *The canal gave New York City's port a strong advantage over all other U.S. port cities and ushered in the state's 19th century* *political and cultural ascendancy.[2] The canal fostered a population surge in western New York and opened regions to settlement farther west. It was enlarged between 1834 and 1862. The canal's peak year was 1855, when 33,000 commercial shipments took place. In 1918, the western part of the canal was enlarged to become part of the New York State Barge Canal, which also extended to the Hudson River running parallel to the eastern half of the Erie Canal."*

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia: Champlain Canal

"The Champlain Canal is a 60-mile (97 km) canal that connects the south end of Lake Champlain to the Hudson River in New York. It was simultaneously constructed with the Erie Canal and is now part of the New York State Canal System and the Lakes to Locks Passage.

An earlier proposal made in the late 1700s by Marc Isambard Brunel for a Hudson River - Lake Champlain canal was not approved. Another proposal for the canal was made in 1812 and construction authorized in 1817. By 1818, 12 miles (19 km) were completed, and in 1819 the canal was opened from Fort Edward to Lake Champlain. The canal was officially opened on September 10, 1823.[2] It was an immediate financial success, and carried substantial commercial traffic until the 1970s."



From The History of Roads in Michigan *- "This article was written by Dorothy G. Pohl, Managing Director for the Ionia County Road Commission, and Norman E. Brown, retired MDOT Act 51 Administrator. It was presented to the Association of Southern Michigan Road Commissions on December 2, 1997 and is reproduced here by permission of its authors*

1. **Indian Trails**

The network of roadways that now serves Michigan began centuries ago as a network of Indian trails. These paths, worn deep by centuries of foot travel by the Indians, were located on high, dry ground along waterbeds and streams. They connected main Indian villages and let to the rich hunting and fishing grounds of the state. They linked the numerous rivers which covered the state, thus providing a continuous transportation system.

Some of the Indian trails which crisscrossed Michigan were segments of well-known trails connecting the Atlantic seaboard and the plains states. Michigan's earliest white men, explorers, missionaries and fur traders used these convenient paths as they traveled westward to penetrate the frontier. Later, they provided a way through the wild country for thousands of settlers who poured into Michigan to carve out homes in the wilderness.

These trails should not be confused, however, with modern highways or even the crude wagon roads built by the early settlers. An Indian trail was merely a narrow path, about 12 to 18 inches wide, permitting only single-file travel. It was not until the coming of the white settlers, laden with supplies, that the trails were improved. The use of the pack horse was the first step in the process of widening these pathways. Branches and bushes were broken off from each side of the trail and soon it was several feet wide. Later, when settlers flocked to Michigan Territory, bringing their possessions in oxen-drawn wagons, there was a need for even wider roads.

Nearly all of the principal highways radiating from Detroit, for example, once were narrow paths through forest and plain marked by blazed trees and campfire ashes. US-24 southward to Toledo originally was the westernmost segment of the Great Trail from Fort Pitt to Fort Detroit, linking up on the east with Braddock's Road from the Atlantic seaboard. On the Upper Peninsula, US-2 from Sault Ste. Marie to Escanaba and M-35 from Escanaba to Menominee follow the Sault and Green Bay Trail. From these and other main thoroughfares, lesser trails branched off. Many of them now are state or county roads.

2. ***Farm to Market Routes—1805***

Shortly after the Territory of Michigan was established in 1805, road districts were set up by the Governor. Roads built within these territorial road districts were local "farm to market" routes designated solely to enable the predominantly farming population to reach their neighboring market centers. Within these market centers, the farmers utilized streets which were, and since the time of the earliest settlements in Michigan have always been, the responsibility of the communities themselves. However, these frontier settlements were so widely scattered that little attempt was made to interconnect them with roads.

3. ***Military Roads—1816***

The combined local road and street network was so limited prior to 1812 that it hindered the Federal military effort in the War of 1812 and also impeded the settlement and development of Michigan's interior. Consequently, the federal government, in 1816, began to build lengthy military roads between Michigan's forts and her undeveloped heartland.

General Lewis Cass, who became Governor of the Michigan Territory in 1813, energetically sought to enlist the support of Congress for road construction—both as a means of speeding up settlement and of bolstering military defenses which had proved inadequate in the War of 1812. As a result of Cass' efforts, the Secretary of War in 1816 ordered that troops should be used to build a road between Fort Meigs (Toledo) and Detroit. The road was not completed, however, until 1829. Before the Detroit-Fort Meigs road was finished, Congress authorized construction of several other roads connecting Detroit with the hinterland. The federal government encouraged settlement of the Michigan Territory in the years immediately following the War of 1812 by aiding the construction of major territorial roads. Thus, roads from Detroit to Monroe and Toledo, Port Huron, Saginaw, Grand Rapids and Chicago, through the southern tier of counties were constructed by the federal government in the 1820s and 1830s. Although some of these thoroughfares were hardly more than rutted, narrow, stump-filled paths through dense forests, they provided some assistance to the thousands of travelers who flocked to Michigan to settle, especially after the completion of the Erie Canal in 1826.

4. ***Early State-Sponsored Transportation Improvements—1835***

The State of Michigan also became involved in highway development and other internal improvement schemes. Caught up in a national mania for improved transportation facilities, the framers of the state's first constitution, which passed in 1835, specifically encouraged internal improvements. The state legislature authorized bond issues of $5 million to finance transportation improvements. The Panic of 1837 and subsequent depression had devastating effects upon Michigan's internal improvement programs. The state defaulted on payment of its bonds and its credit was seriously impaired. Moreover, the financial crisis led to a strong revulsion against internal improvement plans, which was reflected in the Constitution of 1850 which specifically stated the following: "The state shall not be party to, or interested in, any work of internal improvement, nor engage in carrying on any such work..."

5. Township Road Building Begins—1817

In 1817, the territorial government gave the responsibility for building local rural roads to the townships, under the control and direction of the county commissioners. Supervision of township road building proved to be a difficult task for the county commissioners due to the extremely large size of Michigan's early counties (one Upper Peninsula, one that combines sections of the Upper and Lower Peninsulas and three Lower Peninsula). Consequently, in 1827, the townships were given direct responsibility for road building within their boundaries. When Michigan became a state in 1837, the Constitution provided for continuance of the township road system. But the federal government created a void in long-distance road building by ceasing its road operations in the new state. Because the new state had little money to spend for proper maintenance, the roads already built soon fell into disrepair. Before long, Detroit's citizenry became upset about the situation. According to Silas Farmer's "History of Detroit" published in 1884:

> *Several meetings were held in order to devise means for improving the roads, and...the desire was general that the legislature be petitioned to take the Ypsilanti, Pontiac and Grand River roads under its control and management, to put them in a state of repair and to collect tolls. ...All these meetings were barren of result, and the roads grew continually worse. Traffic within the interior was consequently light and as a natural result, a general dullness pervaded the city. Few wagons came in, not many stayed overnight, and hotels built for the accommodation of farmers were unoccupied. Finally some of the business men took the subject into consideration, and it was resolved that the only remedy was to build plank roads across the low lands.*

*6. **Private Turnpike Companies—1844***

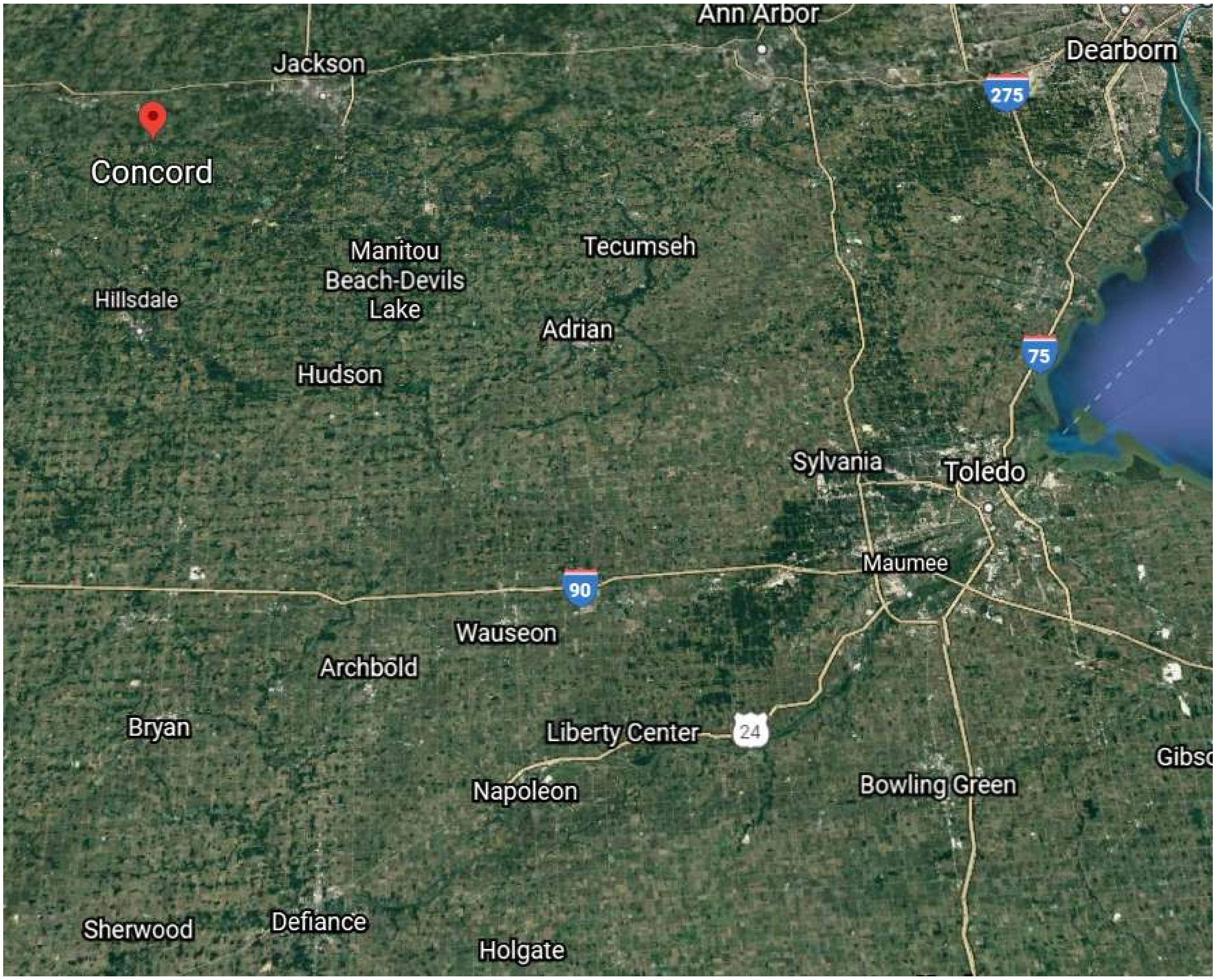
Beginning in 1844, private turnpike companies attempted to fill this void with a network of toll roads, portions of which were constructed of wooden planks. Although these companies had to be chartered by the state and were required to construct and operate their roads according to certain standards, these toll roads were entirely the responsibility of private enterprise. This was significant because it marked the only time that public roads in Michigan were not a direct government responsibility. One of the first plank road companies, the Detroit and Port Huron, was chartered in 1844. Several more of these private toll road companies were established during the next few years, and in 1848 the state legislature passed a General Plank Road Act to regulate their operations.

Plank roads were required to be from two to four rods wide, 16 feet of this to be a "good, smooth, and permanent road". Eight feet of width was to be of three-inch plank. For two-horse wagons and carriages, as well as "for every score of neat cattle", a toll of two cents per mile was permitted. For one-horse vehicles, the maximum rate was one cent per mile. Altogether, more than 202 companies were chartered, although most never began operations. The Detroit and Pontiac Plank Road was opened late in 1849. The Detroit and Howell—50 miles long, with 10 toll gates along Grand River Road was completed in 1851. It was soon discovered, however, that the planks decayed rapidly and that the roads could not be kept up from the tolls received. "Mark Twain, who traveled to Grand Rapids by stage to give a lecture, was asked how he had liked the trip. 'The road could not have been bad,' he replied, 'if some unconscionable scoundrel had not now and then dropped a plank across it.'" Many companies abandoned operations after a few years and few were able to show a profit. However, this situation lasted only about 40 years as the toll roads proved economically impractical. The support by the legislature of private toll companies did not meet the needs of a well-planned road system."

By the early 1830's, with territorial safety secured, land ordinances in place, and transportation options available, the western migration to the Northwest Territory began in earnest. The Clemons clan led by Johnathan II departed Whitehall in about 1834. The route most likely taken would have been along the Champlain Canal to the westbound Erie Canal, onto Lake Erie, and across Lake Erie to Toledo. Along the way, overnight stops were likely made at Buffalo, NY, Erie, PA, Sandusky, OH, Cleveland, OH; stops being made at many smaller towns for shorter breaks.

Arriving in Toledo, a number of transportation routes and options would have been available and it is difficult to know exactly the next step taken. The Miami-Erie Canal moved west for a short distance and then turned gradually south. They could have taken this route, disembarked near Defiance, OH, and heading north to Concord by road; about 64 mi. as the crow flies. Another established route would have been from Toledo to Detroit and then directly west to Concord, a total distance of about 200 miles. And still another route (if the road existed) would have been from Maumee, OH to Ann Arbor, and then west to Concord, about 160 miles.

Which route was chosen is unknown, but I do know they got to Concord!!! How long it took is open to conjecture. Suffice to say the trip took many months and had difficulties we could not have imagined. But then again, from a common viewpoint, the trip was comparable then as to today with the kids constantly asking, "Are we there yet?"


Ann Arbor
Dearborn
Jackson
275
Concord
Tecumseh
Manitou Beach-Devils Lake
Hillsdale
Adrian
75
Hudson
Sylvania
Toledo
Maumee
90
Wauseon
Archbold
Bryan
Liberty Center
24
Gibso
Napoleon
Bowling Green
Sherwood
Defiance
Holgate

The Family Expands to New Regions