

Benjamin Clark

Pioneer of 1852

compiled by Stephenie Flora
oregonpioneers.com

Benjamin Clark

b. 1819 Kentucky

d. 1852 Idaho

m. 1833

Tabitha Sanders

b. 1820 Kentucky

d. 1852 Idaho

1850: Macon County, Missouri, September 18, 1850; Benjamin Clark, 31, farmer, \$200, KY; Tabitha, 30, KY; William E., 15, MO; Esther A., 13, MO; John J., 10, MO; Reese, 7, MO; Erial, 3, m, MO

"CLAY C. CLARK. One of the most valued and substantial citizens of Portland is Clay C. Clark, whose business activities have been of a character and magnitude that have contributed to the general prosperity of the community and who commands the highest measure of public confidence and respect. Mr. Clark was born in Chariton county, Missouri, on the 24th of June, 1861, and is a son of Ephraim and Mary (Van Tine) Clark. His paternal grandfather, Henry Clark, who was an uncle of Champ Clark, one of Missouri's most noted citizens, settled in that state in 1832 and taught the first school in his part of the state. His wife was a medical doctor and was the first, and for a long time, the only physician in that locality. Ephraim Clark was next to the youngest of a large family of boys and remained with his parents when his brothers came to California and Oregon in 1852. One of his brothers, Ben Clark, started for Oregon in 1852, and died on the way here of cholera, from which disease his wife also died. They left three sons and a daughter, all of whom are deceased. The daughter settled in Oregon, but later moved to Washington, where she acquired large land holdings at American Lake. Another brother, Jesse Clark, went to California in 1852. Ephraim Clark, who was born in Kentucky, remained on the home farm in Missouri until his death, which occurred December 23, 1864. He was a veteran of the Civil war, in which he served as a lieutenant in the Union army. Mary (Van Tine) Clark, who was born in New York state, was a daughter of Abram Van Tine, a native of Scotland, who served an eight-years' apprenticeship at the blacksmith's and machinist's trade, before he came to this country in an early day, settling in New York, where he began his career as a news dealer, and eventually became the owner of ten acres of land in New Jersey, which he sold and then helped to fit out one of the first ships to arrive at San Francisco after the discovery of gold in California. He was a passenger on the ship and brought with him a stock of boots and shoes for sale. After his arrival here he sold his interest in the ship and entered the mines, built a small smelter and smelted some of the first gold in California, in connection with his work as a blacksmith. During the ensuing three years he made considerable money, which he took back to New York and turned over to his brother Thomas to invest for him. Returning to California, he spent three years more in the mines, sending money back to his brother from time to time to invest, but the panic of the '50s wiped out the considerable fortune which he had accumulated. Soon afterwards he went to Missouri, where his death occurred. He was a talented musician and an expert drummer. His daughter Mary was married to Mr. Ephraim Clark in Missouri and sometime after his

death she became the wife of John W. Adams and continued to live in that state until her demise, on April 7, 1895

Clay C. Clark was about three years of age when his father died and when six years old he left his mother and went to live with the Willits family, who were friends of his mother. Their son, Samuel Willits, later moved to Long Beach, California, where he now lives retired. At sixteen years of age, Mr. Clark started to earn his own livelihood. He secured his educational training in the district schools during the winter months, while during the summers he worked on farms. At the early age of seven years he herded cattle in Kansas, later worked on the cattle ranges and in cattle feeding lots in Missouri. At length he turned his face westward and on July 5, 1886, arrived in Portland. For a while he was employed in hauling wood for the steam plant that furnished electricity for Portland and at various other occupations. Later he settled on a homestead near Blalock, Gilliam county, Oregon, proved up on the land, and there engaged in farming and stock raising for many years, retaining that farm until 1926, in which year he established his residence in North Portland. In the meantime, in 1905, he established a meat business in Arlington, and in 1911 engaged in general merchandising, under the firm name of C. C. Clark & Sons. For a number of years he has also been engaged in the commission business in North Portland, under the name of the Clark Commission Company, and likewise is interested in a large modern garage there. At one time he was the owner of large acreages in different parts of Oregon and handled a large number of cattle, hogs and sheep annually.

On March 9, 1884, in Chariton county, Missouri, Mr. Clark was united in marriage to Miss Nancy A. Lambert, who was born in Illinois and is a daughter of Jacob and Sarah E. Lambert. They have five children, namely: Lambert E., who operates the Exchange Garage in North Portland, in which he is associated with his father, is married and has two children; Claude C., who is his father's partner in the Clark Commission Company, is married and lives in East Portland; Francis C., of Arlington, Oregon, is married and has three children; Lulu M. is the wife of Emil Starn, of North Modesto, California, and they have two children; and Edith M. is the wife of Frank Leghorn, of Portland, and the mother of two children.

Politically Mr. Clark has always supported the republican party and has been prominently connected with public affairs, having served as a member of the board of county commissioners, and as a representative from the twenty-eighth district in the state legislature. He is a member of Arlington Lodge, No. 88, A. F. & A. M.; Oregon Consistory, No. 1, A. A. S. R., and Al Kader Temple, A. A. O. N. M. S. He was one of the prime movers in the establishment and construction of the Columbia highway, pronounced to be one of the greatest scenic highways of the world, and he has maintained an active and effective interest in everything concerning the progress and welfare of his section of the state. Sterling integrity in every relation of life, clear headed judgment in practical matters and a progressive and enterprising spirit have characterized his career and high respect is uniformly accorded him by his fellowmen." [History of the Columbia River Valley From The Dalles to the Sea, Vol. III, 1928, p. 723-4]

Children of Benjamin Clark and Tabitha Sanders:

1. William E. Clark
- b. 06 Dec 1834 Missouri
- d. 25 Dec 1912 Rickreall, Polk County, Oregon
- m. 23 Dec 1855 Benton County, Oregon
- Lavina Tatum
- b. 15 Jan 1936 Bond County, Illinois
- d. 11 Sep 1913 Rickreall, Polk County, Oregon

Children of William Clark and Lavina Tatum:

1. Richard W. Clark
- b. 1858 Oregon
- d. 15 Jul 1928 Tacoma, Pierce County, Washington

2. Sarah Clark
 - b. 1860 Oregon
 - d.
3. Hetty Clark
 - b. 1862 Oregon
 - d.
4. William E. Clark
 - b. 1864 Oregon
 - d. 15 Jul 1928 Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon
5. Mary Amanda Clark
 - b. Sep 1866 Polk County, Oregon
 - d. 09 Feb 1932 Lane County, Oregon
6. Jessie Clark
 - b. 1868 Oregon
 - d. 27 Jun 1936 Port Blakely, Kitsap County, Washington
7. Georgia Clark
 - b. 1871 Oregon
 - c. bef 1930
8. James L. Clark
 - b. 1873 Oregon
 - d.
9. Maud Clark
 - b. Sep 1879 Oregon
 - d. 02 Oct 1942 Rickreall, Polk County, Oregon

2. Esther A. Clark
 - b. 01 Jul 1837 Macon County, Missouri
 - d. 05 Dec 1915 Lakewood, Pierce County, Washington
 - m1. 21 Mar 1864 Polk County, Oregon
 - Franklin K. Berry
 - b. c1830 ME
 - d.
 - m2. 13 Feb 1872 Polk County, Oregon
 - Isaiah G. Murray
 - b. 09 Aug 1835 Pennsylvania
 - d. 07 Feb 1911 Lakewood, Pierce County, Washington

Children of Isaiah Murray and Esther Clark:

1. Ida May Murray
b. 1873 Washington
d. 07 Dec 1927 Tacoma, Pierce County, Washington
2. Minnie Irene Murray
b. 01 Apr 1875 Washington
d. 12 Feb 1911 Lakewood, Pierce County, Washington
3. James I. Murray
b. 1877 Washington
d. 08 Feb 1947 Steilacoom, Pierce County, Washington
4. Gorman Murray
b. Oct 1879 Washington
d.
5. Garm Murray
b. Oct 1879 Washington
d.

3. John J. Clark
b. 1840 Missouri
d. 1852 Idaho

4. Reece Clark
b. 19 Nov 1844/47 Missouri
d. 25 May 1921 Calistoga, Napa County, California
buried [Calistoga Pioneer Cemetery](#), Calistoga, Napa County, California

m1. 20 Nov 1867 Polk County, Oregon
Mary E. Richardson
b. c1847 Illinois
d. 17 Feb 1875 Polk County, Oregon

m2. 17 Nov 1876 Yolo County, California
Florence Luella Smith
b. 09 Sep 1858 Iowa
d. 05 Jan 1924 Oakland, Alameda County, California
buried [Calistoga Pioneer Cemetery](#), Calistoga, Napa County, California

1850: Macon County, Missouri, September 18, 1850; Benjamin Clark, 31, farmer, \$200, KY; Tabitha, 30, KY; William E., 15, MO; Esther A., 13, MO; John J., 10, MO; Reese, 7, MO; Erial, 3, m, MO

1860: Gold Pct, Polk County, Oregon, June 20, 1860; W.E. Clark, 25, farmer, \$1550 \$675, MO; Lavina, 24, MO; L., 3, OR; R.B., 2, OR; S.C., 1, OR; Rice Clark, 18, laborer, MO (brother of W.E. Clark who is head of household)

1870: Monmouth, Polk County, Oregon, July 2, 1870; Reece Clark, 23, merchant, \$12 \$700, MO; Mary, 22, keeping house, IL; Henry, 1, OR

1880: Woodland, Yolo County, California, June 2 & 3, 1880; R. Clark, 34, lawyer, OR unk unk; Florence, 21, wife, keeping house, IA PA OH; Henry, 11, son, at home, OR OR OR; Nellie, 9, dau, at home, OR OR OR; Jay, 7, son, OR OR OR; George, 5, son, OR OR OR; Jo, 1 8/12, CA OR OR

1900: Woodland Twp, Yolo County, California, June 14 & 15, 1900; Reese Clark, head, Nov 1844, 55, m-21yrs, MO KY KY, attorney at law; Florence S., wife, Sep 1857, 42, m-21yrs, 8-5 children, IA MI OH; George, Jan 1875, 25, s, OR MO IA, law student; Joseph R., son, Oct 1879, 20, s, CA MO IA, salesman-grocery; Charlie, Mar 1881, 19, s, CA MO IA, farm laborer; Daisy E., dau, Dec 1885, 14, s, CA MO IA, at school; Benjamin H., son, Mar 1889, 11, s, CA MO IA, at school; Reese, son, Jul 1898, 1, CA MO IA; Maggie M. Smith, sister in law, Mar 1877, 23, s, CA MI OH

1910: Hot Springs, Napa County, California, April 18, 1910; Reese Clark, head, 61, m-33yrs, MO KY KY, attorney; Florence L., wife, 52, m-33yrs, 8-5 children, IA PA OH; Reese Jr, 11, s, CA MO IA

1920: Calistoga, Napa County, California, January 7 & 8, 1920; Reece Clark, 75, MO US US, none; Florence, wife, 65, IA IA IA; Benjamin H., son, 32, wd, CA MO IA, mechanic-garage; George E., grandson, 9, s, CA CA CA; Harry B., grandson, 7, s, CA CA CA; Lurline, granddau, 1 3/12, CA CA CA

Reese (Reece) Clark

1844 - 1921

Rank: Bugler

Obituary (*The Weekly Calistogian* newspaper, 27 May 1921):

HON. REESE CLARK HAS PASSED AWAY

Well-Known Attorney and Citizen Died Wednesday

Hon. Reese Clark, well-known attorney and former legislator, died at his home in Calistoga on Wednesday night, death being due to kidney trouble.

Mr. Clark, in his younger days, enjoyed a lucrative law practice in Woodland and later in San Francisco, and was connected with some of the most prominent criminal cases in the State. His entire life has been an eventful one, full of romance and change. He was a self-made man, as the tale of his career will disclose. He was born in Missouri on November 19, 1847, while his parents were emigrating westward in search of a new home, in company with a large party; many of the number were killed by Indians, while others perished from exposure and hardships. Among the number who died on the plains were the father, mother, and brother of Mr. Clark. A relief party rescued the few who survived the horrors of that terrible trip. The relief party brought the rescued into Oregon, and young Clark was placed in charge of a man named Besketh, who, at a very tender age, put the lad to the dangerous labor of riding the horses of the place, which, as a rule, were broken and managed only with extreme difficulty. In 1857 young Clark's master took offense and flogged him severely, whereupon the spirited boy ran away, and going some twenty miles, fell in with a man with a pack mule bound for Yreka. He joined the traveler and reached the California town in safety, where he worked at such odd jobs as he could secure, mainly serving trading parties, until late in the year, 1860. The opportunity offering, he went to Jocksonville [Jacksonville], Ore., and enlisted as a bugler in the First Oregon Cavalry, Company A. Here his training in horsemanship served him well. He served in the command on the frontier for three years, and in 1863 was honorably discharged. He then bought a pony and struck out for the Idaho mines, was successful in his venture, and sold out for a good sum and returned to Oregon. Up to this time Mr. Clark could neither read nor write. But he resolved to remedy these omissions, and attended

the Bethel College for two years studying with untiring diligence and advancing with great rapidity. He then engaged in merchandising in Polk county, Ore., and continued in it until 1875, when he met with reverses and lost all of his little fortune, except about a thousand dollars. With this left he struck out for Winters, Yolo county, in this State, where he engaged in the retail grocery and liquor business. At all possible leisure, he pursued his studies, and took to reading law, and with such diligence and intelligence that he was admitted to the bar by the Superior Court in 1878, and to the bar of the Supreme Court in 1884. In the meantime, he moved to Woodland, the county seat, and entered upon the practice of his profession. By reason of his diligence, natural ability and strong purpose, Mr. Clark soon won an enviable place in the esteem of the people and enjoyed a large and lucrative practice for years.

In 1890 he was a candidate for the Republican nomination for Assemblyman from Yolo county. He was the choice of the people, but not of the bosses, and they turned him down in the convention. Such a strong appeal was made to him to run anyway that he came out as an independent candidate and was triumphantly elected, receiving almost as many votes as the Republican and Democratic nominees combined.

Mr. Clark came here about fifteen years ago to make his home, but for a time kept his law office in San Francisco, where he had extensive business in the courts. His health failing a few years ago caused him to retire from active practice and enjoy the fruits of a useful and well-spent life.

Mr. Clark was twice married, his first wife having passed away many years ago. By that union there were three son[s], viz: Henry, Jay and George Clark; by the second marriage there are five children -- Joseph R., Charles F. Clark, Mrs. Daisy Rathke, Benjamin H. and Robert R. Clark. All the children and the second wife survive.

The funeral was held from his late home today and was strictly private. Interment was made in the Calistoga cemetery.

Notes: He was a native of Missouri, born 19 November 1844. The above obituary paints a clear picture of the amazing life's accomplishments of this man. My notes below draw from the above biographical information, supplementing it with primary source data where available.

Reese appears as "Reese Clark" in the 1850 census in Macon County, Missouri, living in the household of his parents, Benjamin and Tabitha Clark. Reese was listed as age 7, born in Missouri. There were four other Clark children in the household: William E., Esther A., John P., and Erial. Benjamin was listed as age 31, farmer, native of Kentucky. Tabitha was listed as age 30, also native of Kentucky.

According to his obituary, Reese's parents brought him across the plains when he was young, but they died enroute to Oregon, leaving Reese as an orphan. It is not known what ill-fated wagon train they were in, or what trail they were on. The year they crossed the plains is also not known, although it was sometime between 1850 and 1857. A rescue party was able to bring Reese and the other survivors to Oregon, where Reese was placed in the custody of a rancher named "Besketh" (possibly Lemuel D. Beckett, who had been captain of a wagon train to Oregon in 1852). Reese reportedly left Besketh in 1857, after an incident in which the lad was beaten by the latter. Clark then sojourned in the vicinity of Yreka, California, until returning to Oregon in 1860. In the 1860 census for Gold precinct, Polk County, Oregon, "Rice Clark" (Reese?) was enumerated under the household of "W. E. Clark." The former was working as a laborer on the farm, age 18, native of Missouri. The head of household (probably Reese's older brother, William E.) was listed as a native of Missouri, age 25. Reese remained in Oregon into the fall of 1861, when he joined the 1st Oregon Cavalry at Jacksonville.

After his discharge in 1863, Clark explored a variety of pursuits, including mining in Idaho, a mercantile business, and personal education. In Polk County Oregon on 20 November 1867, he married Mary E. Richardson, daughter of William and Sarah Richardson (information courtesy Joni Brown, 2012). To this marriage were born four children: Henry, Nellie, Jay and George.

In 1870, "Reece Clark" was living in Polk County, Oregon (Monmouth post office), where he appeared in the census as a merchant, age 23, born in Missouri. His real estate was valued at \$12, and his personal estate at \$700. His wife was named Mary (age 22, born in Illinois), and their household included a one-year-old son, Henry. Mary died around 1875, at which time Reese moved to Yolo

County, California. He first settled in Winters, later moving to the Yolo County seat at Woodland. On 17 November 1876, at Cottonwood in Yolo County, Clark married Florence Luella Smith, daughter of Daniel W. and Sarah A. Smith of Winters.

The family appears in the 1880 census in Woodland, Yolo County, California, where Reese was listed in the census as "R. Clark," age 34, born in Oregon, occupation lawyer. His wife was Florence (age 21). Children in the household were Henry (age 11), Nellie (age 9), son Jay (age 7), George (age 5), and son Jo (age 1).

The Clark family was still living in Woodland in 1900. In the census for that year, "Reese Clark" is listed as an attorney at law, born November 1844 in Missouri, parents both born in Kentucky. He had been married 21 years to his wife, "Florence S.," born September 1857 in Iowa. Florence was listed as the mother of eight children, five still living. Others living in the household were their sons George Clark (b. Jan. 1875 in Ore.), Joseph R. Clark (b. Oct. 1879 in Calif.), and Charlie Clark (b. March 1881 in Calif.), daughter Daisy E. (b. Dec. 1885 in Calif.), son Benjamin H. (b. March 1889 in Calif.), and son Reese (b. July 1888 in Calif.). Reese Clark's sister-in-law, Maggie M. Smith, was also living in the household.

Around 1906, the Clark family moved to Calistoga. They were enumerated here in the 1910 census, living on Main Street (now Foothill Boulevard) next door to Angus P. Mefford (my granduncle). "Reese Clark" was listed as an attorney, age 64, born in Missouri. His wife, Florence L. (age 52, b. in Iowa) and son "Reese Jr." (age 18), were the other members of his household. Florence was listed as the mother of eight children, five still living. The census indicates that this was the first marriage for both Reese and Florence, noting that he was 33 and she was 23 when they married. This was actually Reese's second marriage. It was also noted that Reese was not a veteran, although it is known that he was one.

Reese and his family were still in Calistoga in the 1920 census. They were living on Main Street (Foothill Boulevard) on their own ranch. Reese was listed as age 75, born in Missouri. The others in his household were his wife, Florence (age 61), son Benjamin H. (age 22) and three grandchildren, George E. (age 9), Harry B. (age 7), and Lurline (age 1 year and 6 months).

Reese Clark continued to practice law in Calistoga and San Francisco until a few years before his death. He died in Calistoga on 25 May 1921, and was buried at Calistoga Pioneer Cemetery in Section 1, Block B, Lot 6a. His age at death was officially recorded as 73, but he was most likely 77 years old. His wife, Florence Luella (a native of Waverly, Bremer County, Iowa, born 9 September 1857/8), relocated to Oakland where she died on 5 January 1924. They are buried together at Calistoga's Pioneer Cemetery.

Fraternally, Reese Clark was a member of the Gov. Morton Post, No. 41, G.A.R., and Capay Lodge, No. 230, I.O.O.F. He probably had other lodge affiliations that I have not discovered.

Military Information: Union. He enlisted at the age of 19 as a Private at Jacksonville, Oregon, on 21 November 1861, and was mustered into Company A of the 1st Oregon Cavalry regiment. He was promoted to Bugler on 11 December 1862. He is named in the roster of the "Baker Guards," which was the first cavalry company raised in southern Oregon at the beginning of the Civil War. According to the *History of Southern Oregon* (published by A. G. Walling, 1883), the Baker Guards were named in honor of Senator Baker of Oregon. The company was raised during a recruiting campaign at Jacksonville, Oregon, in the fall of 1861. Most of the recruits were residents of Jackson County. The company numbered about 80 men, and was garrisoned at Camp Baker, near Phoenix, Oregon. The above history also notes that the "privates received thirteen dollars per month 'and found,' and in case that they provided their own horses and equipments (they were cavalry), they got twelve dollars per month in addition, besides a bounty of \$100." Noteworthy remarks in his service record include the following:

- * Detailed to attend to horses at stables eight miles from Camp Baker in February 1862.
- * Cook in March 1862.
- * Detailed to take charge of horses six miles from Camp Baker in April 1862.
- * Appointed Bugler on 11 December 1862 at Fort Dalles.
- * On detached service per starting 30 July 1863, per Order No. 43 by Col. R. F. Maury.

* From 29 February to 20 June 1864 he was mounted on a government-furnished horse and charged.
* In the field in May 1864. Charged with neglect of duty on 8 May 1864 and relieved 10 May.
* From 20 June to 29 September 1864 he was again mounted on his own horse.
* He was issued a "U.S. sabre complete" in July/August 1864 (charged \$7.50).
* His horse died on 29 September 1864 (value \$125). He was remounted on 30 September 1864 and charged.

* From 29 October to 15 November 1864 he was again mounted on his own horse.

Reese was discharged at Fort Vancouver, Washington Territory, on 23 November 1864 on expiration of his term of service.

"Reece Clark" applied for veteran's disability pension in December 1906: Application no. 1354667, certificate no. 1130545 (California). His widow, "Florence L. Clark," applied for a widow's benefit on 2 January 1922: Application no. 1175999, certificate no. 914697 (California).



Reece Clark
Photo courtesy Joni Brown

[<http://freepages.history.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~enderlin/calistoga/cw/calistoga-cw.htm#clark>]

Children of Reese Clark and Mary Richardson:

1. Henry Clark
b. 01 Jan 1869 Oregon
d. 02 Aug 1943 Yolo County, California
2. Nellie Clark
b. c1871 Oregon
d. 27 Apr 1893 Woodland, California
m. Mr. Reid
3. Jay Clark
b. c1873 Oregon
d. 05 Jul 1938 Lake County, Oregon
4. George Clark
b. 10 Feb 1875 Oregon
d. 13 Oct 1958 Alameda County, California

Children of Reese Clark and Florence Smith:

1. Joseph Reece Clark
 - b. 09 Oct 1878 Winters, Yolo County, California
 - d. 30 Aug 1942 California

2. Charles Franklin Clark
 - b. 17 Mar 1881 California
 - d. 01 Oct 1943 Colusa, California

3. Daisy E. Clark
 - b. 03 Dec 1886 California
 - d. 14 Jun 1955 Oakland, Alameda County, California
 - m. William Ernest Rathke

4. Benjamin Harrison Clark
 - b. 04 Mar 1888 California
 - d. 05 Jan 1943 Napa County, California

- <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GSln=Clark&GSiman=1&GScid=1989886&GRid=93243399&>

5. Flossie Clark
 - b. 1892 California
 - d. 29 May 1899 Woodland, Yolo County, California

6. Reece R. Clark
 - b. 31 Jul 1898 Woodland, Yolo County, California
 - d. 03 Dec 1971 Berkeley, Alameda County, California