

Sweetland/Swetland Lore #36

December 2005

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Your President's Message From Roger Swetland

We had a successful reunion this year at Munson, MA. The consensus there was that the next reunion should be held in western New York, near the Brocton area where the first reunion was held. No one has recommended another location. The location is open for suggestion, at least till the first of the year. If anyone would volunteer to head the Reunion Committee, it will be greatly appreciated. Early next year, arrangements for the reunion in 2007 need to get started. Feedback and support will be appreciated. You can reach me at the address under Organization on page 4.

I am sad to report the passing of Robert

Sheffler, husband of Christine A. (Swetland) Sheffler. Christine is the daughter of Stuart and Ernestine Swetland. His brothers are Monsignor Stuart Swetland (Rhodes scholar) and Craig Swetland. Robert and Christine's children are Scott Sheffler, daughter and son-in-law Juan and Sheila Sheffler de la Cruz, grandchildren Max and Isabel (Tiul) Sheffler.

I got on the Internet and into the genealogy of England. If you get to it, you will find a William and Agness Swetland, not the William and Agness that we see in our genealogical line. I wrote down some of the information but most were English lines that never came to the United

States. Most dates were late 1700s through early 1900s. I would give it here but I put it someplace for safekeeping and it may be years before I find it again. I had hoped to get back to it but weather has been warmer than normal and I continue to spend time outside.

We will be heading south after the first of the year as we are expecting a new grandson around the first of December and will spend time with our family during the holidays. We hope to leave the first week or so of January. Friends in Florida are asking when we will come. May everyone have a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. May Health and Joy be with each and everyone of you.

E-mail for S/S Lore

If you are on the Internet, please send a message to mark@genesistems.com giving him your name, email address and the name of the newsletter you want. He distributes several. He will acknowl-

edge your message and you will receive future issues by email only.

As of this issue, some 50 members of the SFA receive S/S Lore by email. In addition, I mail 120 copies by USPS. You

know that mailing the newsletter is drudgery, nothing creative about it. So the more email copies Mark Harrison distributes, the better for your editor. I will figure out how many hours this saves and report to you.

Philetus Sweatland/Swetland

Ancestors of Philetus Sweatland/Sweetland

This story below came from Robert Ruth, a Sweatland/Swetland descendant. His message came via Mark Harrison who sent me the email which he had received.

"Below is a bio that I have for Lafayette Sweatland/Swetland. Lafayette was my 2nd great-grandfather and a very interesting character.

I've hit the proverbial brick wall with my Swetland research and wondered if you could help. I've been able to trace records back to Philetus Sweatland/Swetland, Lafayette's father, but after this it gets kind of fuzzy. The information I have after Philetus has come from the Internet and I don't feel comfortable without documentation. I would love to talk to any of you readers that might be able to shed some light on any of these ancestors of Lafayette.

If any of the readers can help Robert Ruth, please send him an email at ruthgirls.com.

BIO: Source: PORTRAIT AND BIOGRAPHICAL ALBUM OF GRATIOT COUNTY, MICHIGAN published by CHAPMAN BROTHERS, Chicago, 1884.

Lafayette Sweatland, one of the pioneer settlers of North Star Township, Gratiot County, Michigan, resident on section 12, was born in Franklin Co. Vermont, July 25, 1829. He is a son of Philetus and Hannah (Barton) Sweatland, natives of Connecticut and Massachusetts, respectively. They moved to Cuyahoga Co., Ohio in 1831 and Mr. Sweatland remembers Cleveland at that time as no larger than Ithaca, this county, is at present. The family remained there until 1843 when they moved to Huron County, same state.

In 1854 Mr. Sweatland came to this state and entered 320 acres of Government land on the north half of section 12, North Star Township, a portion of which he still owns and on

which he is now living. He brought his family here, consisting of his father, mother, wife and child, in December that year and entered at once upon the arduous task of clearing and improving his land. Mr. Sweatland experienced all the trials of the early pioneer. His customary "log cabin" was erected in the woods and under the most adverse circumstances. He had only one neighbor within a radius of seven miles and incessant individual toil was necessary to accomplish the aim so fondly cherished in his energetic mind. He worked diligently and earnestly, and today can look back upon the past and smile at the difficulty and adversity they offered

Mr. Sweatland enlisted in the late civil war enrolling in Co. D, 26th Mich. Vol. Inf., August 9, 1862, and was discharged June 13, 1865. He was detailed to accompany the ambulance train and had charge of one containing 18 wagons

He was married in Seneca Co., Ohio, April 28, 1853, to Lydia, daughter of Dr. Elias Sower, whose biography we present in this work, and six children have been born to them, namely, Lornea, Josephine (died December 2, 1872, aged 14), Theodore (died June 25, 1871, aged four years and ten months) Arthur E. and Benson D.

Mr. Sweatland is recognized as one of the prominent men of the township, straight-forward and honest in his dealings with his fellow man and one who has never sought political favor. He owns 240 acres on land in the County and devotes his time to the cultivation and improvement of the same.

Mr. Sweatland is a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church and likewise of the Knights of Honor and I.O.O.F."

Isn't the Internet wonderful? Stories such as this make the editor's life easier. Now who will send me the next story?

Robert Ruth listed his thoughts on the ancestors of Philetus who are:

1. Isaac Sweetland, born 1560, Sussex County, England
2. John Sweetland, 1603 - 1685, Providence, Rhode Island
3. William Swetland, 1646 - Abt. 1703
4. Joseph Sweatland, Nov. 5, 1683 - Sept. 05, 1749
5. Caleb Sweatland, born June 21, 1719, Hebron, Tolland Co., Connecticut
6. Lewis Sweatland, born May 23, 1751 Kent, Litchfield Co., Connecticut.
7. Philetus Sweatland, July 18, 1780 - Sept. 08, 1866.

Perhaps, past issues of S/S Lore have suggested to Robert Ruth that the first two names on the list are indeed ancestors of Philetus and that the dates of birth and death are correct for William. If so, today I no longer believe that Isaac and John are my ancestors and I do descend from Joseph's brother, John. And I no longer think that William was born and died on the dates shown.

Today I believe that William was born in England and moved from Salem, MA to Beverly, MA in 1683 when John Lambert and William traded properties in Salem and Beverly. If William was born in England, then he could not be a son of John, the son of Isaac. If William was born in England, then, we have no birth date for him at present. No evidence exists that William died in Salem, CT. Nor do we as yet have a date for his death in Beverly, MA.

Please remember that I have no positive proof of what I believe but these thoughts make good sense and may be close to the facts. If only we had a researcher in England who could find the birth and marriage dates for William. If one of our members would wish to spend six months in England, several of us can point the researcher to where one might look.

Jamie Swetland's Report

Whether you are one that believes all things happen for a reason or events occur because they are meant to be, or karma, or cosmic energy, or chiasmic energy, or whatever your belief may be, sometimes events in life fall into an order that just does not seem to be random. I recently had one of those. Actually, I've had a couple recently but I'll elaborate on one at this time.

For those of you who do not know about my family and me, we are a young family and I travel quite often with my work. My wife and I are in our 30s and we have two young children, Samuel who will be 4 years old at the time of this release, Abigail who just turned 2 years old and another newborn son that will be delivered on December 6, 2005. Well, a few years back when Samuel was about 1 year old, we had a series of heavy snow and ice storms that had us out of power in our neck of the woods, which is fairly remote. The longest outage was nearly 6 days. Of course, there was much concern from our families as to our well-being and that of Samuel. We were fine. In fact, I thought we had it made and it was a somewhat welcome peace in an otherwise technologically noisy world. We had a woodstove for heat and cooking, an 80 gallon water heater for water supply, a plastic crate packed out in the snow outside the back door for an icebox and oil lanterns and candles for light at night along with a battery powered radio for the weather. Fortunately, we always had telephone service until day 5 when a tree fell across our driveway taking that down. The telephone company was quick to respond. They had a field technician at our house within the hour and ran over 1,000 feet of cable from the telephone pole at the end of our driveway up to the house. We were able to maintain contact with the outside world, especially in the event of an emergency.

Due the concern of our wellbeing from the families and the obvious possibility of myself being out of town during another occurrence, we looked into a generator for the house. I was going to impulse buy and purchase the first thing I came across. After doing some research I came up with a nice standby generator system that comes complete, runs off an external fuel supply and starts and runs on its own. No worries if I am out of town and the wife and children lose power. It will be there and ready to kick in when needed. That is, unless there is a mechanical failure. And, of course, there was.

Now at the heart of the story, I have a nice generator with a bad starter. The local engine shops do not carry a starter for this engine. However, I know of a rebuild shop not too far away that handles starters, batteries and alternators. So I stop in. The man behind the counter says he will have his technician take a look at it when he gets a chance and ask for my name and number. So I give him my name and like most of you, I spell my name out for him. But he was ahead of me and had spelled Swetland correctly. And my wife and I comment on how odd it is for someone to spell Swetland correctly. His response was, "Well, I should after having been married into the Swetland family for over 20 years." Our mouths dropped at this point.

Here's the twist of fate. I have a bad starter on the generator and in the process of getting it repaired, I meet up with more Swetlands. It also happens this gentleman's sister-in-law works there too and is a Swetland child. So we talk. Oddly enough, they had made an effort just a month or so prior to find out more about their Swetland heritage and had visited the Swetland Homestead in Forty Fort, PA.. Since

that day I have returned twice. Once was to pick up my new starter to repair our generator and once again to drop off all 35 issues of the Sweetland./Swetland Lore printed out in hardcopy. You wouldn't believe how excited Millie was. So here is what I have learned and remembered so far about their branch of the Swetland family. Millie's father is Dick Swetland, noted around the Athens/Sayre, PA area as the piano tuner. His father was Fred Swetland and his father was also a Fred Swetland. Millie remembers her father, Dick, talking about the Swetland store in Mehoopany. She is going to inquire more about that with her father. She also stated during their research at the Swetland Homestead that she was descended from Luke through his second eldest son, Joseph. So am I. I told her of what I know about Joseph and the farm in Mehoopany he inherited from his father, Luke. We look forward to sharing more stories and getting down more about her branch of the Swetland family. Of note, there are more musicians in the Swetland family along this branch, too. Recall some of the past newsletters and the fife and drum players in the Swetland line.

So the twist here is that I had something bad happen, (failed starter in our generator) but it has led to opening doors to a whole other branch of Swetlands. Although I had known of this branch, there had never been a good connection before. Now there is. And the interest is there. We should look forward to seeing Millie and some of her family members joining us at the 2007 Swetland Family Association Reunion.

Sometimes, things just seem to happen for a reason, even if the reason is unknown at the time. Jamie promises to keep us informed as he learns more about Millie's line.

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GenealogyPortal.com

I found this website on the Internet and decided to try it out. It proved to be easy to enter and best of all what I tried was free. Printing out the home page took four sheets but all came out fine. This website features eight separate search engines to do the looking for you, Archives and Libraries, Guides to Research, Historical Sites, Location-Specific, Names and Personal Sites, Primary Records, Research Supplies and Software and Utilities. Guidance on which of these search engines to use are on the home page.

One can bookmark the website and instructions on how to do this for various Web browsers are on two pages. One of the links shows the Phillips Library of the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, MA, a place where I searched for Swetland information many years ago. A fine description of the library is on two pages. The website also has a listing of genealogy pages that have been placed on the site since December 2001 up to the present.

My curiosity led me to enter my name in the search for people. It found me and my father whose name is the same as mine in the 1930 census and found me on two telephone records in South Carolina. It went on to find my father in the 1910 and 1920 census records. You may even find yourself if you enter your name.



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Reunion Chair—open

Ellis Island Passenger Arrivals

A letter brought me some time ago four pages of Sweetland arrivals at Ellis Island. The dates range from 1892 to 1924. The table of arrivals gives the Name of Passenger, Residence, Arrival, Age on Arrival, Passenger Record, Ship Manifest and Ship Image. The records are listed alphabetically by passenger name and then date.

With this data as background I went to the website, www.ellisland.org/ and entered the name Sweetland as this was the group of names sent to me. I could see a list of 92 Sweetlands but to view the records on the list it was necessary to register. Registration is free so I registered. All it takes is to give your first and last name, e-mail address, user name (whatever you wish) and set up a password. I did so and now I am a registered user with access to all records. With registration I was also invited to join The Statue of Liberty—Ellis Island Foundation at \$45.00. This includes a one-year membership and fifteen pages of an electronic Family History Scrapbook. I have held off on this for now, maybe forever.

At random I chose to look for Ellen Sweetland who arrived on Dec. 11, 1911 on the ship Camaronia which departed from Londonderry. The record said she was a U. S. Citizen, 30 years old, female and married.

It was possible to see the passenger record which listed her but the type is small and hard to read. On the ship manifest Ellen was the 10th name on a list of 30 people. I could also see a photo of the ship Camaronia which came from the Peabody Salem Museum.

Looking through the names showed that Conrad Sweetland came through Ellis Island 16 times between 1918 and 1924. I suspect that he was a crew member but have not yet checked this out.

Of some interest are the residences given. These varied from Chicago, Ill., Great Neck, N. Y., Binghamton, N. Y., Montclair and Summit, N. J. to Portsmouth, Bayswater, Devon, Bristol and London, England, Paris, France, Limerick, Ireland, Port Maria and Kingston, Jamaica, and Bonavista Newfoundland. A number of records do not give the residence but these may be all U. S. Citizens as Ellen Sweetland was.

Next step will be to enter the names Swetland and Sweatland to see what additional information exists. Try it yourself. You may be amazed.