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Subject: Article on New Parks House (LRFHS Journal, March 2015)

Date: Mon, 3 Aug 2015 21:54:52 +1000

From: Renn Wortley <rennew47@gmail.com>

To: Vern Smith <vern@falkor.gen.nz>

Hello Vern,

I hope you are well.

How is your mighty work going on the diaries of your ancestor, Charles Septimus Clarke?

Attached is my scan of an article I noticed recently, by Brian Johnson, on "New Parks House". It was published in the March 2015 edition of the quarterly journal of the Leicestershire & Rutland family History Society ("LRFHS").

I have been a member of that Society for about ten years.

Brian Johnson is the Society's Vice-Chairman and Publicity Officer.

Email: vicechairman@lrfhs.org.uk <<mailto:vicechairman@lrfhs.org.uk>>

Have you done a lot of research on the Clarke family and its landholdings in Leicestershire?

Curiosity led me to find out that a sharp financial crisis in 1843 precipitated the massive failure of the Leicester bankers Clarke, Philips, Mitchell & Smith, with total debts said to be 540,000 pounds, an almost unimaginably large amount in today's values.

John Clarke (?1780-1858) was one of the partners in that banking firm, and he is clearly part of your Clarke family. He served as High Sheriff of Leicestershire in 1820. He died in April 1858, at Bruntingthorpe, described in the /Gentleman's Magazine/ of May 1858, page 568, as "late of Peatling-hall, formerly of the firm of Clarke, Philips, Mitchell & Smith, Bankers, of Leicester".

The family's New Parks estate, where CSC's father John Clarke (?1791-1846) farmed until 1845, was eventually sold for the benefit of the bank's creditors. That John Clarke's farming goods and chattels were sold by public auction on 2 April 1845. He and his wife, the former Sarah Coltman (?1801-1846), whom he married at All Saints Church, Leicester in November 1824, moved with their children from New Parks to a house in Highcross-street, Leicester. John Clarke "late of the New Parks" died there in September 1846, aged 54, and his widow Sarah Clarke died in October 1846, aged 45.

You may know that their 3rd son, George Sanders Clarke, died on 1

January 1846, aged 13, of severe injury and infection caused when a couple of dozen squibs (fire crackers) exploded in his pockets while he and fellow students at the Collegiate School celebrated Guy Fawkes Night on 5 November 1845. The Coroner's inquest on young George was reported in the /Leicester Chronicle/ on 6 January 1846.

In July 1846, only a few months before the Clarke parents died, their eldest daughter, Sarah Dorothy Clarke, married Charles Henry Parkes, Esq., of Upper Berkeley-street, Portman-square, London at All Saints, Leicester. Her father was described as "John Clarke, Esq., of Leicester, and the Manor House, Tur Langton" [near Market Harborough, Leicestershire].

And on 10 December 1848, John and Sarah Clarke's 2nd son, Robert Clarke, died "after a short but severe illness, of inflammation of the bowels", aged 19. (/Leicester Journal/, Friday, 22 December 1848)

Before the Clarkes left New Parks, on 21 September 1844, the following paragraph appeared in the /Leicester Chronicle/:-

"THE LATE BANK PROPERTY - We hear that the remainder of the New Parks Estate, formerly the property of John Clarke, Esq, comprising about 350 acres, has at length been disposed of to gentlemen who own land adjoining it."

From the Victoria History of the County of Leicester it appears a good deal of the land in the northern part of New Parks was acquired at that time by Thomas Stokes, a Leicestershire hosiery manufacturer, and most of the rest went to another hosier, J.O. Harris.

As Brian Johnson's article describes, Stokes built his New Parks House in 1845-46, after your family had left the estate. The county history makes clear that the Clarkes owned New Parks from at least 1781 to the bank crash of 1843.

In March 1820 the will of Robert Clarke, gentleman, of New Parks, near Leicester, was admitted to probate in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury.

If you want a brief biographical note about my relative Edward Wortley (1820-1878) of Ridlington, Rutland, to whom CSC was attached as a farming pupil in 1860-1862, just let me know.

All good wishes,

Renn

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Renn Edward Wortley

Melbourne, Australia