

## ANCESTRY And YOUTH

The English ancestors of W. W. Clark settled New England in the same quarter-century highlighted by the King James Bible, the death of William Shakespeare, and the Pilgrims' arrival on the Mayflower.

"Deacon" George Clark moved to Milford, Connecticut, in 1638. He sired Samuel Clark, who was the father of John Clark, who begat John Clark (soldier in the Revolutionary War), who begat Timothy Baldwin Clark. Timothy, after fighting in the War of 1812, left Milford and eventually settled near what came to be known as Chicago, Illinois.

T. B. Clark is credited with the following in Chicago's genesis: He helped lay out its first two streets<sup>1</sup>; he helped build its first church<sup>1</sup> and its first frame house<sup>2</sup>; he started the first stagecoach line (running from Chicago to Ottawa via his hometown of Plainfield)<sup>2</sup>; he fought in the Black Hawk War<sup>3</sup>; and his name later was given to Clark Street<sup>4</sup>.

Timothy Baldwin Clark and (some of) his family joined the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in 1835 and soon moved to Clay County, Missouri, to join other Mormons. Shortly afterward Timothy and three of his sons were taken prisoner by the Missouri State Militia of Governor Boggs. The ransom for the Clarks was their entire farm. Timothy, his wife, Polly Keeler, and their children lived thru the Missouri and Illinois persecutions close to, and inspired by, their Prophet, Joseph Smith. When they died--she in 1839 and he in 1848--their youngest son, Ezra Thompson, survived to carry on the frontieriing vitality of his parents.

Ezra Thompson and Mary Stevenson Clark were first-rate pioneers intent on making "the desert...blossom as the rose"<sup>5</sup> embellished with children's laughter, religious hymns, and the brute force of animal and human strength. Much of their zeal was influenced by their recent memories of Nauvoo's turmoils. They settled the land north of Salt Lake City and were among the first residents of Farmington. With three wives, five daughters, sixteen sons (of whom Wilford was the eighth), three homes and two farms, Ezra Thompson Clark developed what was among the finest and most profitable farming enterprises in the Territory. By the time of Wilford's