

THE

FOUR DRIVE

A Genealogy Newsletter

Volume I No 1

October 22, 1996

Whole No. 1

The FOUR DRIVE, a genealogy newsletter begins with this issue. Descendants of John Henry Fitch, I am sure will recognize the title being named after John Henry Fitch's tractor drive invention that was developed circa 1916 but never got off the ground because of his untimely demise. While we have used the name of his invention, this news letter is by no means limited to the genealogy of the Fitch family, but rather will cover topics of general interest and information related to the ancestors of the editor and their descendants. What we hope to do is to unite the genealogists of our families and other interested persons for the exchange of information, co-ordination of efforts and minimizing duplication efforts. We invite submission of articles and information for inclusion in upcoming issues.

JOHN HENRY FITCH.

An excellent biography of John Henry Fitch has been written by Christopher Dixon. Initially published as a school project in 1981 he has since revised the biography with latest revision scheduled for December 1996. Christopher C. Dixon, *John Henry Fitch*. Contact Chris at 3034 Albacore Circle, Apt E-3, Silverdale WA 98315-9707.

An Introduction to

ALSACE-LORRAINE, FRANCE

John Ficht and Margaret Boncrotz parents of John Henry Fitch were born and married in Alsace-Lorraine where several of their children were born. They emigrated from this area in 1850's. Further research in this area requires an understanding of the geography and political situation during this period.

Alsace and Lorraine (German: **Elsass and Lothringen**) are two historic provinces in eastern France. Alsace was added to France by the Treaty of Ryswick in 1697. Lorraine, was an independent but much-fought-over duchy until 1766 when it too became part of France. In 1871 Alsace and the eastern part of Lorraine were annexed to Germany as a result of France's defeat in the Franco-Prussian War. This area was returned to France in 1918.

Various records listing John Henry Fitch and his brothers as well as death record of John Ficht, and brothers Valentine, and Michael list birthplace as Alsace-Lorraine or in some cases just Alsace and extraction being German. Based upon previous paragraph and review of the maps all of Alsace and a portion of Lorraine are adjacent to Germany and are now apart of the French departments of

Bas-Rhin, Haut-Rhin and Moselle. Genealogical research for the Ficht ancestors should concentrate on these French departments.

Preliminary research at Salt Lake City has determined that Ficht is an uncommon name, though we did find in the IGI several listings from Bas-Rhin and Haut-Rhin. There were none in any of the other areas. We also found that Boncrotz and variant spellings was not commonly found in the IGI. Using the two names together for tracking down the marriage and subsequent births would be a good start. Good Luck!

RESEARCHING AT THE FAMILY HISTORY LIBRARY, SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH.

The ultimate for genealogists would be the facilities of the Family Research Library of the Mormon Church at Salt Lake City. Since it was established in 1894 the Family History Library has become the largest of its kind in the world. The library has collected millions of microfilms, thousands of microfiche and books, and many other records.

Some of the information collected by the library is available on a computer search system called Family Search. The Family History Library is designed to help individuals experienced in family history research who need information from many records to extend their family lines. Most of the records that

advanced researchers need are available at the library.

For those that cannot travel to Salt Lake City Family History centers are located throughout the world. Each has a basic collection of records and research publications. Many of the centers have the Family Search computer files. Most records available on microfilm or microfiche at the Family History Library may be ordered for use at the centers.

Research outlines are available for various countries and all of the states of the United States. These are sold for a nominal charge. All are excellent and should be obtained for the countries and states that you are looking for your family lines.

Who are the BANNISTERS?

Looking for information as to the relationship of the Bannisters. A Robert Bannister attended funeral services for Charles W. Fitch, Sr., in 1962. Notes by Alice Chinnery listed several Bannisters but no information as to relationship. Your assistance appreciated.

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE CHINNERY SISTERS?

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References:

- (1) - Otley Baptist Church Parish register. Salt Lake City film #825408. Various pages. Photocopy available.
- (2) - English Census of 1841, Otley Parish Suffolk Co.. June 1841
- (3) - Federal Population Census 1860 for Van Buren County Michigan. #159 Chesterfield Twp. P.O. Decatur MI 28th Aug 1860.

RESEARCHING

The A.J. HEATH FAMILY

The A.J. Heath family came to Michigan sometime after the 1850 Federal Population census. In this census we found the family living in Livonia, Livingston Co., NY.

We have considerable documentation regarding their residency in Michigan. Further research will require exploring New York records. Unfortunately Federal census prior to 1850 only list the head of the household name. Family members are only enumerated by sex and age group.

Furthering your research in New York you need to be aware of the reorganization of counties. Livingston Co., NY was created in 1821 from Genesee and Ontario Counties. Genesee was created in 1802 from Ontario. Ontario County was created 1789 from Montgomery Co. Reviewing Census Maps the communities of Livonia and Genesee areas were located in the counties as follows:

- 1800 Ontario Co
- 1810 Ontario Co
- 1820 Ontario Co
- 1830 Livingston Co

A.J. Heath's death record provided the names of his parents. Father was Jacob Heath and his mother Abigail Heath - no maiden name provided. There were several Jacob Heaths listed in NY. Reviewing the census data we feel there is a good possibility that the Jacob Heath of Rodham, Jefferson Co., NY is the father of Andrew. And I have reason to believe that A J Heath was born in Jefferson Co, NY. Still to be confirmed. This is a starting place anyway.

PUBLISHERS STATEMENT

The F O U R D R I V E, a genealogy newsletter is published on irregular schedule by Donald Chinnery. Please let your family genealogists know about this newsletter.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

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