

"They Traveled the Old Plank Roads"  
 Family letters in the home of (4-c)  
 Lucien H. Stoddard, Kalamazoo  
 (Copies of originals)

May 15, 1958  
 Jane S. Hagle  
 Kalamazoo.

Asa Williams Stoddard Family  
 Tuscola Bounty, Michigan  
 Centennial Farm

(Cameron Crosby Stoddard)

(Note: The son of A.W. Stoddard had married Janette Sanford of Marion, New York, 1856, and about two years later brought her and little son, Willie, to Fairgrove into very new country. His father's family, above, were living near Watrousville. The letters are to Janette's sister, Laura Jane (Sanford), Mrs. Asa Harding Stoddard, of Cooper township, Kalamazoo Co., Michigan. Formerly of Williamson, Wayne County, New York. JSH)

Aug. 20, 1864, Fairgrove. (To Mrs. Laura Jane Stoddard)

Your letter in reply to mine was received last week, your previous one the week before. We have a little boy a little over two days old. Mrs. Smalling has a little girl just six days older. But this, dear sister, is not all the news. Crosby has enlisted into the United States service and is home on furlough only a few days. Sept. 2nd his furlough expires, and then what will become of me with my poor health and with three helpless little ones dependent upon me, for everything. Or of him with poor health, exposed to hardships, danger and death? We all call this a cruel war, but when it takes our loved ones from us, then it comes right home and we begin to feel that it is cruel indeed. He is having to leave affairs very much unsettled which will add much to my cares. Oats and later crops not harvested, wheat in the barn unthreshed, and a good deal of stock to be sold.

But blame him not for enlisting. He did not do it until driven by the heavy draft that is pending. Other towns in better circumstances are buying up our men at a rapid rate so that the draft is likely to take nearly all that remain. One of about ten men who have recently enlisted only one beside Crosby has been credited to this town (Fairgrove) while others are getting 200 to 300 dollars for enlisting for other towns. Crosby for the sake of helping his own town was credited here with the promise of only 100 and now they basely refuse even that and told him to go where he can do the best. He may be able to get his credit changed but it is uncertain. Money is a very small thing in comparison with the risk of life incurred but to those who leave dependent families behind, it is essential.

I do not know what we are to do. I very much wish Orlando (Orlando Sanford, Marion, New York, her brother. JSH) would come up and take charge of things, if he has freed himself of the draft (by hiring a substitute. JSH). But I shall not ask him to for his travelling expenses would be considerable and it would be lonely and unpleasant for him here. I think I shall stay here in the woods with the rest of the women for the winter at least.

(Note: That new baby is now, 1958, Mr. Crosby Eugene Stoddard of Chevy Chase, Maryland, adjoining the city of Washington, where he lived for many years. He is alert and very well informed on world affairs, like sputniks. JSH) (Cont. next page.)

"They Travelled the Old Plank Roads"  
Family letters in the home of (4-c)  
Lupien H. Stoddard, Kalamazoo,  
Copies of the originals.

May 15, 1958  
Jane S. Hagle  
Kalamazoo, Mich.

-2-

Asa Williams Stoddard Family  
Tuscola County, Michigan  
Centennial Farm

Janette to Laura Jane)

(Cont.) When the conscripts, the men enlisted for other places, and the skadoodlers, have all left the neighborhood, I presume there will not be ten men in town. I believe the most of the towns are raising their quota but this is one of the meanest of all mean places. We have been so unfortunate as to get into it and must abide by the consequences. If it were not for the trouble and the expense I should like to have Mr. Stoddard (Asa H. Stoddard of Kalamazoo county) JSH rent some small house of two or three rooms near you but the expense of moving would be considerable and the expense of living there with our wood to buy and everything else, would be much more than it will be here. And I never could get there alone.

Saginaw is the place of rendezvous of the regiment to which Crosby belongs and I suppose they will not go south until after election and Crosby thinks he can get a ten days furlough in the course of a few weeks and get things in better shape than they are now. I am very tired and I fear you cannot read what I have written. I now feel more anxious than ever to have you come up here but I dread the journey for you. From Fentonville to Flint, by stage, from there to Mt. Morris by rail, thence to Vassar by stage, where Crosby will get Poland (his brother) to meet you.

Mr. Smalling and Mr. Strickland have both enlisted. They don't exempt anything hardly that has two legs and two arms.

The baby and I are both doing better than I had any reason to expect for which I do feel grateful. I have been two days, writing a few lines at a time. Write very soon to your lonely sister.  
Janette.

P.S. Carrie (sister of Crosby) is here doing the housework and a widow lady from near Watrousville acts as nurse for the baby and me. You were kind in offering Crosby to money to furnish a substitute but from we can learn of the prices of substitutes now they are beyond our means.

. . . . .

(Note: Sister Jane did go to Fairgrove very soon. Brother Poland, built a little shack in the back yard of the family home near Watrousville, and Jane helped to move Janette and her three little children into it. Poland had a terrible hernia and never served in the army, but he did a tremendous amount of work trying to make up for the men who were in service. And he was kindness itself to Janette, as were the rest of the family. Crosby served at one time in the State Legislature, and later as County Clerk(?), moving to Caro, where he died in office, I think in 1876. Janette lived at Washington with her daughter Lillian (Mrs. Ellory DuPaul), or with Eugene. JSH)