

Oriskany Speech



David Klock

When Terry McMaster's called and asked if I would speak today, I knew I couldn't say no. For it is an honor for me to be able to speak and represent the Klock family here at Oriskany. My name is Dave Klock. The name Klock is well known throughout the Mohawk Valley, but I was born and raised in Michigan; growing up, I never met another Klock outside my own family. I remember my Grandfather, Jacob Klock telling me that our family came from an old farm in up-state New York. I was just a kid and didn't pay much attention at the time. I remember my father wanted me to do some genealogy research to find out about our Klock family; but I was just too busy, working and trying to raising my own family to spend time and money doing research. Then I got bit by this genealogy bug. It must have bit me several times because I felt that strong desire or need to find out where I came from.

About 12 years ago I got a computer and started my genealogy research. I got a subscription to Ancestry. com and was able to I traced my ancestry back to Fort Klock in St. Johnsville, New York.

In my research, I had contacted another Dave Klock who lived in Rochester, New York and he invited me to a Klock Family Reunion that was being held at the fort. I had never seen Fort Klock and wanted to see it. So my wife and I took a trip to upstate New York to attending this Klock Family Reunion. The first time I laid eyes on the old stone farmhouse; I felt like I was home. Like I was gone for a long time and finally make it home after a very long journey. When we attended this reunion; It was just Dave's direct family. I thought to myself; there were lots of Klocks out there, that knew nothing about Fort Klock or about the rich heritage we shared in the Mohawk Valley. So I set out to educate them, I set up a Klock Family Reunion and invited every Klock I could find I sent out over 250 postcards and asked them to spread the word to let everyone know about a Family Reunion that was going to be held at Fort Klock. We had a Hog Roast and over 150 Klocks from all over the country attended. I had never seen so many Klocks in my entire life. One thing lead to another and it wasn't long and I started a newsletter called Klock Connections. I started a web page; <http://www.klockconnections.com>. A few years ago my wife Darla and I were asked if we would like to be the Site Interpreters at Fort Klock. We have been the site interpreters for eight years now.

Like many families, the Klocks have also served in every war this county has been involved, from the French and Indian Wars to the Gulf Wars. My father fought in Germany during WW-II. I am a Viet-Nam Veteran and like a lot of families, our ancestors fought on both sides during the Revolution.

Col. Jacob Klock served in the French and Indian Wars and during the American Revolution. His name is on the monument behind me. Col. Jacob Klock was in charge of the 2nd. Regiment of the Tryon County Militia. The ambush at Oriskany dealt a devastating blow on the militia from the Mohawk Valley. Of the 800 men of the Tryon County Militia who marched into this ravine, some 500 were killed, wounded, or captured.

In a letter to George Washington from Brigadier General Edward Hand on November 10, 1778; "Since the death of Brig. Gen. Nicholas Herkimer in August 1777, Col. Jacob Klock of the 2d Regiment of Tryon County militia had taken de facto command of the militia from that county."

The names Conrad and Adam Klock, brothers of Jacob are also on the monument. Adam lost his life in that bloody ravine. And like most of the soldiers who died here, his body was never recovered. John Klock, my direct ancestor, also fought at the battle of Oriskany. He was one of the lucky ones and returned home to his family. John was the son of Johannes Klock who built Fort Klock in 1750.

The Revolution tore families apart and was more like a Civil War here in the valley, as it pit brother against brother, and father against son. Col. Jacob Klock fought for the American cause of freedom, while his son and son-in-law fought under the British flag. Even one of Herkimer's brothers fought on the side of the British in Barry St. Leger's army.

I do a lot of genealogy research and write articles for my Klock Connections Newsletter. If I have the time, I would tell you about a Manfred Klock who receives my newsletter. Back in August of 2002, I received a call from a Manfred Klock. Manfred lives in Australia. He moved to Australia, with his parents in 1957 after WWII. Manfred father, Dierich Klock was a Germany Soldier in WWII. and fought on the Russian Front. His Grandfather was also a German Soldier and fought for Germany in WW1. and WWII. Manfred told me his Father had to prove his background to the Germans and trace in family back five generations to prove there was no Jewish Blood. My father also fought in WW-II but for the American side.

If I had the time I would tell you about a August Klock. He was born and raised in Fonda, New York. He became a School Teacher and taught Science. He would stay on the Oppenheimer estate in New York City and tutor a young student by the name of Robert Oppenheimer. He is credited with giving Robert Oppenheimer his interest in Physics. We all know about the man who was the Director of the Manhattan Project. His grandson receives my newsletter.

If I had time I would tell Brian Klock. He works for the Park and Recreation Department in California. I contacted him for a story for my newsletter. He asked me how I found him. I told him I was good at finding people. He said if I am so good at finding people, find my brother for me. We lost contact over 20 years ago. I have no idea where he is today. He could be living in China for all I know. Brian told me his brother's name was Randy T. Klock. This sounded like a challenge. It took me about 15 minutes on the computer and I found four Randy Klock. I got the phone number and starting calling. The first Randy Klock I called. was living in Seattle, Washington. I asked if he had a brother by the name of Brian. He said yes, but they had lost contact years ago and he had no idea where he lived. I told him that Brian had been looking for him and asked if I could give Brian his phone number and address. Randy said that would be great. I e-mailed Brian and gave him his brothers phone number and address. I told him that his brother was standing by the phone, expecting a call from him. In less than a week they made face to face contact. My newsletter, webpage and Genealogy has four or five families together over the 10 years I have been writing my newsletter.

If I had time I could tell you about Casper Klock. Over a hundred Klocks and Clocks served in the Civil War. All but one fought for the North. Only one fought for the South. I researched the line of Casper Klock who fought for the South and his family came from Germany about 1840 so there is no way to tell if this Klock was related to the Klocks of the Mohawk.

I hate to say this but this Klock is running out of time. In closing, I would like to thank Terry for inviting me and say it is this newly found pride in my family, that I felt, deep down in my bones, that has brought me here today and brings me back to the Oriskany Monument every year on August 6.

A small correction in my speech I gave at Oriskany on August 6, the number of casualties I used was what the British claimed, the actual number was about 200, which is what the Americans admitted to losing. This was about $\frac{1}{4}$ of their forces. The British lost about 150. Each side in that time exaggerated their enemies losses.