Clark Cemetery, Mesopotamia

Enclosed by a stone wall atop a small shaded hillock just behind the End of the Commons General Store, the Clark Cemetery was established as a family burying ground shortly after settlement by Isaac Clark, a native of Southington, Hartford County, Connecticut who first made Mesopotamia his home in 1804. An empty lot for the first twenty-six years of its existence, it wouldn't be until 1832 that the Clark Cemetery would be utilized for its intended purpose with the death of Ephriam Clark, Isaac's father, at the age of 81. Subsequently, through the following years and decades, more burials would follow, until the last took place in 1882, that of Delna Bower Clark, the wife of Almon Clark, Isaac's son. Long abandoned and overgrown, at present, the cemetery has been restored through the efforts of local volunteers.



Right: Established by Isaac Clark shortly after settlement in Mespotamia in 1804, the Clark Cemetery initially sat empty until 1832, following the death of Ephriam Clark, Isaac's father. Presently upon the grounds of the End of the Commons General Store, the cemetery sat abandoned and overgrown; however, it was recently restored through the efforts of local volunteers. (Photo by the author).

Isaac Clark

One of five children born to Ephriam and Desrie (Blakesee) Clark, Isaac Clark entered this world on May 7th, 1774 in Southington, Hartford County, Connecticut. Little is known of his life in New England, other than the fact that while living there, on December 8th, 1796 he married Susan Gates in Westfield, Hampden County, Massachusetts. On Saturday, June 8th, 1799, after an arduous journey from Massachusetts, Isaac and Susan, plus their two-year-old son, Isaac Jr., arrived in Burton, Geauga County where they'd remain for the next five years. Shortly after settlement, Clark, along with the help of some hired hands, erected Burton's first mills, a grist mill and saw mill, respectively. In 1804, the family, now numbering four, removed to Mesopotamia, where they settled on the southwest corner of the Commons, where Isaac engaged in farming. Here, he erected the first frame house in the township, which in 1957 was still in existence as part of a chicken coop upon the property of W. B. Kilpatrick Sr. As nearby Fairview Cemetery wasn't established until 1818, it was wholly on Isaac himself to set aside land for a burying ground for him and his family, doing so in about 1806. An empty field for the first twenty-six years of its existence, it wasn't until 1832 that the Clark Cemetery saw its first burial, that of Ephriam Clark, Isaac's 81-year-old father. During the War of 1812, Isaac enlisted with Capt. Ebenezer Benedict's Company, serving from August 24th until September 20th, 1812. On May 9th, 1837, by orders of the United States Postmaster General Amos Kendell, Isaac Clark was appointed the postmaster of Mespotamia Township, though it is unknown how long this term lasted for. In about 1840, Isaac erected a two-story, balconied, Greek Revival storefront with Federal influences, fondly known as the "End of the Commons." How long the store stayed in Clark's hands is anyone's guess; however, throughout the 19th century, proprietors included E. H. Breadsley, Williams & Squibb, and C. F. Peck. At present, the store is best known for being the oldest operating general store in Ohio, with its wide selection of classic candy, pop, novelties, and delicious Amish-made fry pies. On March 22nd, 1859, at the age of eighty-six, Isaac Clark departed from this earthly realm, with the *Western Reserve Chronicle* noting, "He was one of the pioneers of this county and one of its best and most respected citizens." Naturally, internment took place in the cemetery he established decades earlier, beneath a simple marble stone shared with his wife, Susan.



Above: The namesake of the cemetery where he now takes his earthly repose, Isaac Clark came to Mesopotamia from nearby Burton in 1804. A leading citizen of the community, perhaps Clark is best known for constructing the End of the Commons General Store, Ohio's oldest general store, in 1840. (Photo by the author).



Left: Established in 1840 by Isaac Clark, the End of the Commons has been a staple of Mespostamia for over 180 years. Presently Ohio's oldest operating general store, it is known for its selection of classic candy, pop, novelties, and delicious Amish-made fry pies. (Photo by the author

Ruben Clark

A lifelong native of Mesopotamia, Ruben Clark was born there c. 1811, the sixth of seven children of Isaac and Susan (Gates) Clark. As a young man at the age of 24, he wed Harriet Bower on July 24th, 1836, and the two made their home in Mesopotamia, with Ruben engaging in farming. On September 25th, 1850, while returning from cutting wood, he was struck by lightning and killed. It was supposed that the axe he was carrying over his shoulder drew the fatal bolt. Ruben left his wife of fourteen years as well as five children, Lurissa, Phebe, Addie, Ruben, and James, to mourn his loss.



Above: A son of Isaac Clark, Ruben Clark died September 25th, 1850, when returning from cutting wood following a lightning strike. It was supposed that the axe slung over his shoulder drew the fatal bolt. He left behind a wife and five children to mourn his loss. (Photo by the author).

Isaac C. Clark

*N*amed for his grandfather, the patriarch of the Clark family in Mesopotamia Township, Isaac C. Clark was born in 1822, the first of six children born to Isaac and Polly (Bundy) Clark. Little is known regarding Isaac's early life; however, on November 19th, 1844, he met an untimely fate "by the explosion of a cannon" in Mesopotamia Township. The incident occurred while at a political celebration for the short-lived Locofoco faction of the Democratic Party, a radical sect opposed to almost all forms of currency. The group, having procured a cannon from nearby Chardon, brought it to Mesopotamia, where they fired it off "some dozen times" without incident, until at once, the breech of the gun was torn to "atoms" and carriage "destoyed." Isaac, who was standing nearby, was struck on the head by a piece of the gun weighing 40 pounds and tossed some "three rods" (49 feet) from where he stood, killing him instantly. Another bystander, Isaac Huff, was killed in a similar manner when debris struck him in his neck, back, and arm, breaking the latter. The *Cleveland Herald* noted the incident was "another sad accident from the foolish practice of resorting to cannon fire to make loud demonstrations of exultations."



Above: grandson of Isaac Clark, Isaac C. Clark met an untimely fate on November 19th, 1844 "by an explosion of a cannon" during a political celebration in Mesopotamia. The Cleveland Herald noted the incident was "another sad accident from the foolish practice of resorting to cannon fire to make loud demonstrations of exultations. (Photo by the author).

Sources Cited

Introduction

Clark, Hazel V. Mesopotamia: “Between Two Rivers” 1798-1900. Trumbull County Historical Society, 1967.

“Public Member Trees,” database, Ancestry.com (accessed Oct. 14, 2026), “Alan and Jean Gates Family Tree” by alandgates, profile for Isaac Clark (1774-1859) d. Mespotamia, Ohio https://www.ancestry.com/family-tree/person/tree/39459753/person/432315126187/facts

Isaac Clark

Cilo.com. “End of the Commons General Store.” January 28, 2026. https://theclio.com/entry/200331.

Clark, Hazel V. Mesopotamia: “Between Two Rivers” 1798-1900. Trumbull County Historical Society, 1967.

Cleveland Memory. “Timeline of Burton History, 1798-1819.” Burton Memory Project. Accessed October 14, 2026. https://www.clevelandmemory.org/burton/timeline.html.

Fold3. “Clark, Isaac—Page 3—US, Ohio, Soldiers Grave Registration Cards, 1804-1958.” Fold3, 2026. https://www.fold3.com/image/615817880/clark-isaac-page-3-us-ohio-soldiers-grave-registration-cards-1804-1958.

Ohio History Connection . “Mesopotamia Village District.” Remarkable Ohio. Accessed October 14, 2026. https://remarkableohio.org/marker/40-78-mesopotamia-village-district/.

“Public Member Trees,” database, Ancestry.com (accessed Oct. 14, 2026), “Alan and Jean Gates Family Tree” by alandgates, profile for Isaac Clark (1774-1859) d. Mespotamia, Ohio https://www.ancestry.com/family-tree/person/tree/39459753/person/432315126187/facts

Ruben Clark

The Cleveland Herald . October 9, 1850.
https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/140017789/ruben-clark#view-photo=306096832.

Clark, Hazel V. Mesopotamia: “Between Two Rivers” 1798-1900. Trumbull County Historical Society, 1967.

“Public Member Trees,” database, Ancestry.com (accessed Oct. 22, 2026), “Alan and Jean Gates Family Tree” by alandgates, profile for Ruben Clark (1811-1850) d. Mespotamia, Ohio https://www.ancestry.com/family-tree/person/tree/39459753/person/432593088129/gallery?galleryPage=1&tab=gallery

Isaac C. Clark

The Cleveland Herald. “Shocking Accident." November 27, 1844.
https://www.genealogybank.com/doc/newspapers/image/v2%3A147CA4476B9AB300%40GB3NEWS-1644287D9D27CEC0%402394898-16432E006CB97121%401-16432E006CB97121%40?h=17&fname=Isaac&lname=Clark&fullname=&kwinc=cannon&kwexc=&sort=old&rgfromDate=&rgtoDate=&formDate=&formDateFlex=exact&dateType=range&processingtime=&addedFrom=&addedTo=&page=1&sid=mwxekhcvwexjmmqmsucavlzemtdrkxbh_ip-10-166-46-123_1792516146056.

“Public Member Trees,” database, Ancestry.com (accessed Oct. 20 2026), “Alan and Jean Gates Family Tree” by alandgates, profile for Isaac C. Clark (1822-1844) d. Mespotamia, Ohio https://www.ancestry.com/family-tree/person/tree/39459753/person/432593094778/facts