

His Life Has Changed

DeWitt Youth's Research Lauded

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DEWITT — Stanley Becker's life has changed considerably.

At least, since a story about him and his genealogy research last April appeared in The State Journal, and later was released by The Associated Press.

Becker, 15, has been swamped by letters from all over the nation and many foreign countries as a result of the published story.

A junior at DeWitt High School, Becker began tracing his family tree four years ago, and went back many centuries.

His studies took him to cemeteries in New York state, court houses, libraries, an 1804 Bible, and family papers in his bid for facts. He turned up some impressive ancestors, including 62 confirmations that he is a descendant of Charlemagne, and a seventh cousin of President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Becker has received letters from long-moved area residents asking for information about their ancestors in this neighboring village. Among his correspondence have been congratulations from genealogists around the country, a genealogy magazine, the Republican State Central Committee, and even a serviceman in Germany who read the story in the famed "Stars and Stripes" newspaper.

A common question asked the young researcher is: How does one get started in genealogy? DeWitt High School mimeographed a paper Becker authored, entitled, "The Love of Genealogy," sent to all interested writers.

A Mr. Griggs of Altamont, N.Y., wrote Becker and offered to pay him to search for his family ancestry, while other letters came from people who

wanted to link their name with a royal name.

Of all letters received, only three have come from fellow teen-agers. Philip Horne, of Valhalla, N.Y., sent one. Both correspond regularly now.

Fan mail comes, one supposes, when an enthusiastic boy like Becker looks up kinfolk in Connecticut in 1790, and traces his family through ancient Irish and Gaelic kings.

It's all in the family tree.



Stanley Becker: He Gets Mail from All Over

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SELECTING BEEF FOR OX-ROAST—What appear to be meat inspectors checking a locker of beef actually are DeWitt ox-roast workers picking out meat for the annual festival. Left to right are Ed Tudor, Olin Hilts and Dale Farhat selecting some of the beef that will be served at the Saturday event. The DeWitt Ox-Roast will start at 10 a.m. with a parade and will include a clown band, pony pulling contest, an art show and rides. (State Journal Photo)