

The Watson Family

The "Watson" Family has roots extending far back into the history of Clearview Township - in fact, on old area maps, there is a place west of Clearview sideroad called "Watson Settlement"!

The patriarch of the families, Thomas Watson, came to Canada from the Orkney Islands. Together with his wife, Jane (from Holland), they had a son, Joseph, born 1820, who married Margaret Schell October 22, 1840. They moved to Clearview November 2, 1864.

Joseph and Margaret had 16 children; Joseph's second wife, Miss McTaggart bore him five more children and lived to be 100 years old. They moved to North Dakota from where they corresponded with Effie Spicher.

The 11th son of this large family, William, will be the subject of this story. Hopefully, at a later time, we will be able to profile other members of the Watson family.

William, (1845-1928) married Martha Grogan, 1846-1931. They farmed at Sunnidale Corners (the farm later owned by John Weel). He loved to hunt and fish, and spent time at Jack's Lake (or the Klondike). He had a log house and a small barn. They retired to Stayner, living on Scott Street and Weir Street. They had seven children. The family all farmed in Sunnidale on adjacent farms.

Interestingly, most of these seven stayed in Stayner! And more interesting, many of them lived on Weir Street.

Jane, (1871-1937) married William Cauthers and had one son, Clarence. He was the druggist at the IDA store (now Nifty's), and with his wife, Bertha, and chosen daughter, Lorraine, lived above the store. Highly regarded as prominent citizens, they contributed much to Stayner, and were also well known for the Pickwick Inn at Wasaga. Following Clarence's untimely death, Bertha remarried Bill Cody and later retired to Wasaga with Lorraine.

Agnes (b.1872), married Angus Buie. Their son, Albert, a bachelor, was Principal of Jarvis Collegiate in Toronto. Bert maintained a home near Stayner - a lovely field stone house just east of town. He was known for his love for cats and housed many of them. One of the daughters, Mary Catherine, married Clarence Wood - and that's another Stayner story for the future. Sons John and Bob still reside in Stayner. Both Mary and Clarence (Pete) are recently deceased.

Benjamin, (1874-1920) a bachelor, made a name for himself in the fledgling automotive industry. He is reported to have brought the first automobile to Stayner - it was called the LeRoy and was steered by a handle. In 1913, he was a maker and agent for the "Overland" car.

Archie Watson, (1876-1945), married to Jennie McCague (1878-1942), lived initially on Weir Street and had a hardware (now Home Hardware). Of the five offspring, two sons, Frank and George, remained in Stayner. Mary, Margaret and Fredrick were the other members of the family. Frank took over the hardware and operated it with his sons Doug and Peter. (Fred, and twins, Jane and Judy, are the rest of his and Pauline's family).

George, a dentist, with his wife, Edith, also lived for a time on Weir Street. Their family were Marny and Bobbie.

While Archie was building the new house at 311 Main St. E. in 1941, he and Jennie boarded with Hattie and Gov Plowright, (at that time on the north side of Main where later Clarence Martins' lived). Three other familiar names in Stayner - Jack Hughes, Jim Cauthers and Jack Thompson - built the house for him.

Annie Watson,(1882-1956), married James Cauthers and lived beside her sister, Jane and Will Cauthers (Jim's brother) on Weir Street.(It should have been called Watson Street!) They had a grocery store in

Stayner.

Clinton and Marie, the Cauthers twins, were born in 1914. Clinton married Mary Partridge, whose sister, Cora, lives in Will's house now!! Confused yet? William, Lloyd and Norman were James and Annie's other children.

Marie's son, Bill, and daughter, Kathy, and Clint's family - Garry, Carolyn, and Connie still have close ties with Stayner. (Jackie died tragically several years ago).

John Watson (1885-1962) married Nellie Rogers(1884-1974). They farmed at Sunnidale Corners until Jack bought a car dealership in Stayner about 1925. They moved to - you guessed it? - Weir Street! Their two children, Roger and Irene, also remained close to Stayner - Roger throughout his life and Irene after retirement. Roger and Elsie also contributed greatly to the enrichment of Stayner and area - their two daughters, Bev and Laurel, continue to do so.

As do Irene and George McNabb's two sons, Robert and Wayne, who follow their careers partly in Stayner.

The final member of William Watson's family, Ella Victoria, (1892-1980) married John Hood (1885-1962) (another well-known Stayner name!) Two of their daughters, Adeline and Floreen, live in Stayner. {ed. note-both now deceased} Floreen raised her family of Robert, Glenn, John, Lynda, and Norman in Feversham. Adeline followed a teaching career before retiring to Stayner. Clara, the third daughter, is deceased.

Thanks to Adeline Verner, the Watson historian.

Update: February 28, 2012

We have received the following information from Lynda Kitamura, daughter of Floreen (Hood) Hawton:

"I read with delight your two newsletters on the Watson family. My grandmother was Ella Victoria Watson who married John Hood and she was a wonderful grandmother. Sadly Aunt Adeline (nee Hood) and Aunt Clara (nee Hood) are deceased, however my mother Floreen (Hood) Hawton is still living and in a nursing home in Bolton, Ontario where I live.

Floreen Hood married Mervyn Hawton from Feversham in 1955.

Lynda Hawton married Tom Kitamura from Toronto in 1990."

The Watson Family, continued!

by Jim Paul

In the [Fall Newsletter](#), you will remember that we told you about Joseph Watson who had 16 children with his first wife. We concentrated upon William because so many of his descendants still have connections with Stayner. However, we have learned that at least FIVE of Joseph's other children have offspring still living in this community! We couldn't resist another installment.

1. Richard, the eldest, born in Whitchurch Township (1841-1925) later moved to Sunnidale, where a string of Watson farms extended along Sunnidale Road. He married Catherine McTaggart (1840-1930). Of their 4 children, we look at Malcolm (or Mike) who married Mary Shaw.

Their daughter, Mary married Tasker Grant, champion sheep breeder. Daughter, Marie, and husband, Allen, still live in Stayner. Sons Chris and Brian have carried on in Grandfather Tasker's footsteps having over 500 purebred sheep at present.

Malcolm's daughter, Velma, married R.O.Dickey, local feed mill operator and trucker. Of this family, Oscar and Shirley are still in the area. Eric, Mary and Marjorie are deceased.

Another daughter of Malcolm's, Florence, married Clyde Newton, lived on William Street and had daughter, Audrey.

Malcolm's son, Ken, married Dorothy Robertson of Stayner, and they had a daughter, Marilyn.

2. We next arrive at John (1844-1933) whose wife was Mary Ann Scott (1836-1903). Two of their 6 children still have connections in Stayner.

Daughter, Carrie married Robert Allen, a well-known housepainter. Their son, Ken (recently deceased) and wife, Maureen, long-time residents on Main Street, had family - Robert, Richard, Catherine and Peter.

John's son, druggist/grocer Thomas John (TJ) married Ada Clark (3 in their family - Clark, Floreen, Thomas) They died tragically in 1922. Their son, Tom (also TJ) married Dorothy McCandlish of Stayner (family Mary Jane, Martha and Rick). He was a champion golfer, and presently resides at Creedan Valley Nursing Home in Creemore.

As was often the case in large families, two sisters would marry two brothers. Hannah Watson (1856-1929) married George Hughes (1848-1890). Sister, Sarah Ann (1843-1928) married Thomas Hughes (1847-1932).

3. In Sunnidale Township, Hannah and George raised 9 children. Two of them, John Henry and Archie, fit into our Stayner story. George tragically drowned in the Nottawasaga River at age 42.

Their son, John Henry (1880-1944) married Levina Hollingshead. John was the builder of many of Stayner's fine homes. Their family was Gladys, Dorothy, and Glenn. Daughter, Gladys Cameron, and her daughter, Brenda Giffen, still live here. Brenda and Gerald have a son, Derek.

Archie Hughes (1884-1920) married Minnie Grainger. Their son, Walter, was a lifelong resident of Stayner, as was daughter, Ida. Both resided on Sunnidale Street. Walter remained a bachelor. Most of Ida (1911-1971), and husband, John Paul's four children remained in town - J.D (married to Phyllis Knox - family Jim, Judy and Marjorie), Ruth married Johnnie Miller (8 of her 11 children still here: Bob, Pat, Terry, Jack, David, Glen, Carol Ann, and Nancy) Dorothy (married Ken Barker - family Audrey, Shirley, Tom and Paul), and Lois, deceased.

4. Sarah Ann and Thomas Hughes farmed in Sunnidale and had 7 children. Daughter Louisa is of interest to

us because her granddaughter is Betty Patterson! Several of Betty and Bill's family still live in the area - Dave, Donna, Ron, Ted, Martha, and Mike.

5. The final member of Joseph Watson's family that we wish to introduce to you is Ephemina (1850-1916). She married Ira Spicher (1841-1918). Of their family of 7 children, we are interested in son, Joseph, who married Isabella Shaw. Their daughter, Ottylene, married Alex Culham (family David, Marilyn and Judith).

Joseph Spicher, as a young man, traveled into Northern Ontario in winter to sharpen saws used in the lumber industry - he learned this trade from his Spicher grandfather! En route, he would visit Watson grandparents (Joseph Watson and his second wife, Jannet were living in Michigan State near Sault Ste Marie by this time).

Ottylene and Adeline (Verner) have given us an anecdote which illustrates life in Stayner over half a century ago. It seems that as teenagers, Adeline and Ottylene were living with Grandma and Grandpa Watson on Weir Street during the winter while they attended Continuation School. Ottylene's after school task was to milk the cow (as part of the agreement to stay there). After Grandma supervised the separating of the cream, Otty's job was to take a pail of milk to each of the three aunts' houses on Weir Street - all Watson aunts and all living side-by-side.

When you consider the connections that occurred through the marriages mentioned above and in the previous newsletter, you realize the huge impact that Joseph Watson had on this community - think of all the families connected - the Culhams, the Pauls, the Spichers, the Pattersons, and many more. No wonder, people say that everyone is related!

This story originally published in the Spring, 2001 issue of our newsletter

Update: February 28, 2012

We have received the following information from Lynda Kitamura, daughter of Floreen (Hood) Hawton:

"...letter by Jim recounts the story of Aunt Adeline boarding with her Grandmother on Weir Street, and I, too recall Aunt Adeline telling me stories of that time.

The newsletter mentions Otty milking the cow which is correct, and actually it was Aunt Adeline's task to deliver the milk to the aunts rather than Otty. (Everyone had their jobs!)"