

# THE CABOOSE



NEWSLETTER OF THE CUMBERLAND TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY (CTHS)

ISSN 1203-147X

Volume XVIII Number 2

November 2006

## Editor's ramblings (by Jeannie Smith)

Few families escaped the effects of WWI, WW II and the Korean War. Let us pay tribute to the men and women of Cumberland Township who experienced life, love and loss during these difficult years. Ordinary citizens became heroes within their families and communities and their sacrifices will never be forgotten. Remembrance Day ceremonies will take place at the cenotaphs in Cumberland, Navan, Vars, Orleans and Ottawa. Take time to remember!



### ***Our Society***

The Cumberland Township Historical Society (CTHS) was founded in 1986. We are a non-profit, volunteer and community-based organization whose goal is to preserve Cumberland Township history.

### ***Our newsletter***

The Caboose is published six times each year by the Cumberland Township Historical Society.

### ***Our Executive***

- Randall Ash, President and newsletter production
- Jeannie Smith, Secretary-Treasurer and Newsletter Editor
- Verna Cotton, Director
- Dan Brazeau, Director
- Jean-François Beaulieu Director
- Dorothy-Jane Smith, Director
- Bob Kendall, Director

### ***Our address and local history room***

Cumberland Branch  
Ottawa Public Library  
Local History Room  
1599 Tenth Line Road  
Ottawa, ON K1E 3E8

***Our World Wide Web address***  
[www.cths.ca](http://www.cths.ca)



## Julia McGonigle and Clarence Smith

Julia (1896-1977) was the youngest daughter of James & Julia (Sauvé) McGonigle (parents of the murdered girls, Mary & Eliza). She received her engagement ring at age 15, when her future husband, Clarence, was 18. James McGonigle asked them to wait 5 years and if the couple still felt the same way, he would give his blessing. Since she was quite close to her Father, she agreed. Julia secretly wore her engagement ring around her neck for the next 5 years. Even though her Father died in 1912, she kept her promise to him, her word was her bond. She turned 20 on November 15th, 1916, and married Clarence on November 28th.



Julia and Clarence Smith standing in front of James McGonigle's picture. 1916

Clarence Henry Smith, (1893-1968) worked as a lineman for the hydro company around Cumberland before WWI. He signed up as a single man in May, 1916, in Edmonton, with the Canadian Expeditionary Force. According to Ken Smith, on Armistice Day, Clarence was behind a tree and saw the glint of a gun end. He repositioned himself to shoot, but instead, was shot by a sniper, and wounded close to his heart. He was 3 months in hospital in England, then some time convalescing in a Canadian hospital. Prior to being shipped overseas, he returned to Cumberland to marry Julia. Their first child, Allan, was born Sept. 18, 1917. Allan died at age 17, in a tragic accident, climbing a telephone pole. Julia and Clarence were the parents of Mavis, Kenneth, Gerald (Eddie), Russell, and Gracie. Ken is the only surviving child and lives in Cumberland. Julia & Clarence are buried in Dale's Cemetery.

*Submitted by Julia's Granddaughter  
Maureen Williams*

## Next meeting of the CTHS

The next General Meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 1<sup>st</sup>, 7:00 pm at the Ottawa Regional Police Station on St. Joseph Blvd & Tenth Line. Guest speaker will be Laurie (Burns) Watson with "Recollections of the lost village of Canaan."

## Society calendar

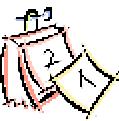
For more information on these and other upcoming 2006 events, please contact a member of the executive committee or visit our website at [www.cths.ca](http://www.cths.ca).

Sat. Nov. 4 <sup>th</sup>	Country Christmas Bazaar, 11:00-1:30 pm, St. Andrew's United Church Cumberland
Thurs. Nov. 9 <sup>th</sup>	Grand Opening of Heritage PS in Navan
Sat. Nov. 11 <sup>th</sup>	St. Mary's Anglican Church Lunch and Bazaar, Navan, 2:00
Sat. Nov. 18 <sup>th</sup>	St. Mark's Anglican Church Lunch and Bazaar, Maple Hall 10:00-4:00 Cumberland Heritage Village Museum, Santa's Workshop: Christmas Ornaments 1:00-3:00pm; participants can make Christmas crafts and ornaments. Pre-registration is required. Fee: \$25. Members: \$20. Includes supplies and materials. Ages 10 and up.
Sun. Nov. 26 <sup>th</sup>	Cumberland Heritage Village Museum, The Vars Christmas Train, 1:00-2:00 pm. Rekindle the spirit of the season with this historical account of the festive Christmas train that ran between Ottawa and Vars! Pre-registration is required. Fee: \$12. Members: \$7
Sat. Dec. 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Bearbrook / Vars Anglican Church Bazaar, Bearbrook Community Centre

## Contact us

If you have questions or suggestions regarding any aspect of the Society including The Caboose, our local history room or anything else of interest to you or to the Society, you may contact any member of the executive by phone or by email:

- Randall Ash, President (833-3207) [randall2620@rogers.com](mailto:randall2620@rogers.com)
- Jean-François Beaulieu, Director (841-0424) [jeanfb@sympatico.ca](mailto:jeanfb@sympatico.ca)
- Jeannie Smith, Secretary-Treasurer and Newsletter Editor (833-2877) [gsmith2877@rogers.com](mailto:gsmith2877@rogers.com)
- Verna Cotton, Director (835-2490)
- Dan Brazeau, Director (834-8336) [danbrazeau@rogers.com](mailto:danbrazeau@rogers.com)
- Dorothy-Jane Smith, Director (225-3554)
- Bob Kendall, Director (830-0015) [bobkendall@sympatico.ca](mailto:bobkendall@sympatico.ca)



## We've got mail!

Letter from Ross Bradley,  
Navan, Ontario



*The old Navan school (1915) was torn down in 1977 to make way for the Agricultural Society's new exhibit building which many of us in Navan refer to as the 'blue building'. There had been some discussion that it might make a good curling club. This didn't happen mainly because the building was too wide for a two sheet rink and too narrow for a three sheet rink. The actual Navan Curling Club was formed in 1984. It rented ice in Ottawa on Sunday evenings for seven years before it built its own curling facility in 1991.*

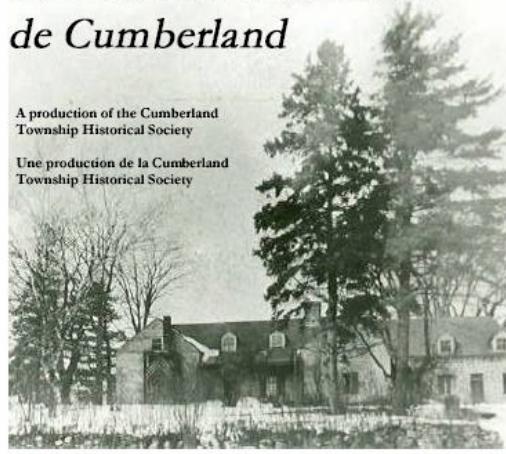
**CTHS 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary books will be available for sale soon!**

## Memories of Cumberland Township

### Des souvenirs du canton de Cumberland

A production of the Cumberland Township Historical Society

Une production de la Cumberland Township Historical Society



Support your Society by purchasing a copy (or two).

## Picture treasures

Joan Lancaster is continuing her mother, Annie (Watson) Barnett's hobby of collecting pictures. Joan has photo albums that include pictures of Cumberland homes and of the following families: Lancaster, Barnett, Watson, Greer. Well done, Joan! You are an inspiration to us all!

## Ada Brennan and Les Thomas

Ada Brennan met Les Thomas at a dance in Navan. Les, eldest of six children from Cardiff, Wales, came to Canada at age 14, in 1927, as a 'home child', under the Barnardo Plan. Les was assigned to the Walsh family in Bearbrook, then to the Lancasters in Navan. He worked at Lancaster's feed mill and was with Edlow Lancaster when John Miki hitched a ride to Navan with them, on June 20, 1940. OPP Constable Hal Dent was killed by Miki at the train station, a short time later.

Les died Jan. 1, 1994 and his friend Peter Harkness eulogized "No manual toil was too hard for Les. Although a slight man, he labored with giants, often piling heavy sacks of grain in trucks and railway boxcars well over his head, beyond the strength of average men. In this way he was able to eke out a few extra dollars to put food on the table for Ada and his son, Kurl. During WW2 he served on active duty in north-west Europe, often in very dangerous battles, but his stoic character would never permit



Ada and Les Thomas with son Kurl, 1942

him to speak boastfully about his experiences. He found humor in the presence of danger, to his dying day."

While Les served overseas, Ada and her young son, Kurl, lived with her father, Tom Brennan, beside Maple Hall in Cumberland. Les never talked about his war duty but you can be sure that there was music somewhere. He was a great story teller and loved to share tales of life in the barracks. For many years, Les sang and played guitar and mandolin with musicians Art Hanson and Lawrence Morrow, entertaining at local dances such at Gib Rivington's Barn or at Redmond Paquette's Meadowlands Hall.

Ada lives in Cumberland and still loves to dance. Their son Kurl, died suddenly from a heart attack in 1999. Les and Kurl are buried in Dale's Cemetery.



Jo Brown and Claire Barnett, 1952

## Claire Barnett and Jo Brown

"When I married Jo Brown, RCN, in April of 1952 in Cumberland, we knew that he would eventually have to do a one-year tour of duty aboard a ship in the Korean theatre. Another victualling stores man (food provisions) kindly agreed to serve for a year on the ship that was leaving Esquimalt, BC, shortly after our wedding. Our first daughter, Cheryl, was born in April of 1953. In December Jo was aboard HMCS Cayuga on his way to the Far East. Cheryl and I were fortunate to be allowed to spend the following year with my family, the Barnetts, in Cumberland. My sister Joan's oldest child, Kathy Lancaster, was just one year older than Cheryl. I should add that our fifth daughter was born on November 6th of 1965, the official date of Jo's retirement after serving twenty-five years in the Navy."

*Claire (Barnett) Brown lives in British Columbia. Jo Brown died in 2004.*



Les Thomas, July 12, 1942

## The Cameron sisters

by Dorothy-Jane Smith

About 1917, Dorothy (age 8) and Mildred Cameron (age 5) were photographed in full military regalia when visiting a family in Montreal whose two officer sons were home on leave from the war. Dorothy Cameron was the mother of David Chamberlin and Mildred Cameron the mother of Dorothy-Jane Smith. Mildred (Cameron) Smith later recalled going with her friend Marjorie McArthur to the Cumberland train station in the days after the war ended. They would beat spoons on pots borrowed from their mothers' kitchens to welcome home as heroes any person alighting at the train station who looked even remotely military.



Mildred and Dorothy Cameron, 1917

## War Babies

by Jeannie Smith

I'm a Boomer, a babe born in 1950. My oldest sister, Suzanne, was born the year before Hitler marched into Poland. Charlotte was born six months before my Uncle Llew was left for dead on the beach of Dieppe and Margaret was born in 1944, when he was repatriated in a prisoners of war exchange. The years after WWII were hard on our mother. Not only were many of her cousins and Hamilton school friends war casualties, but death hit her only sibling Capt. Llewellyn Counsell in 1947, her father Charles in 1948 and her mother, Maude in 1949.

Mother dear always kept Llew's memory alive, telling her daughters stories of how he didn't have to go to war because he was a farmer but he wanted to enlist in the 13th battalion of the Royal Hamilton Light Infantry and fight for England, his mother's birthplace.

My sisters and I would hide inedible foods on the ledge under the dining room table that our family had inherited from the Counsell farm. Mother would remind us that Uncle Llew had kept a jar of peanut butter there after the war. He had been starved in German prison camp and never seemed to have enough to eat. His family was relieved to learn in November 1942, that he was alive, although badly wounded from shrapnel in the hip. Mother said that her brother had nothing but praise for the German doctors. Because his wounds were severe, close to an artery, he was not shackled in leg irons like his pals.

Suzanne recalls that during discussions of war news in the evenings, the three sisters would be hustled off to bed. Our father, Dr. Douglas Ferguson (1904-1965) wanted to join the Dental Corps but was declined. He had contacted scarlet fever in 1925, while he was studying medicine at McGill and was left with a weakened immune system. Father served as an air raid warden in centre town, where my parents lived during the week. My parents and sisters stayed with Grandpa and Grandma Ferguson on weekends and in the summer. During Father's holidays in August, they went to Ancaster to help Grandpa Charlie Counsell with the hay. Father received extra gas rations to travel to Cumberland so that he could work at his dental clinic, set up in Clearview, in the evenings after a busy day at his 222 Elgin Street office.

Remembrance Day was a sacred and solemn ceremony for our family. Mother never let us forget. I loved watching movies depicting the battles. I learned more about war from Mother and Hollywood than I ever did from school!



Ada (Brennan) Thomas and her niece Evelyn (Dunning) Harris, daughter of Pearl Brennan and Vic Dunning kept the worries of war away with music

## Down in the cellar

*an excerpt from "A child's memory of the Second World War"*  
by Mireille 'Miza' Davie

Sometimes my brother Robert, the youngest of the children, would fall asleep as Mummy would sing us a song. Other people were also occupying the "War Abri" shelter. No one would say much, as we were all very scared. Then suddenly a loud scream would echo in the room. A big grey rat had just scurried among our feet and disappeared into a hole in the wall.



To pass the time, we would make shadow puppets on the wall with fingers, but most of the time we had to remain very quiet. We couldn't even go to the washroom facilities because there were none. We were in limbo, waiting for an unknown verdict. Then suddenly, out of the deepest silence, came the sound of an alarm telling us the bombing was over.

One by one, we would climb up the narrow staircase in silence. As we were getting nearer to the exit, a narrow ray of daylight would shine through a crack in the door, bringing some hope again that we were alive. Often, as we gained contact with the outside world, the picture was devastating; people had been killed, their homes demolished, piles of rubble, human lives destroyed.

It was difficult to forget these trips to the "war shelter", as we had to go frequently. I still remember the heavy breathing of scared people, and the horrid smell of humid earth. What had gone wrong that people were killing each other and children

were crying bitter tears not knowing why their dads were gone and mums had lost their smiles?

Miza Davie was born in Paris in 1934. The occupation of France by the Germans during WW2 was very hard on her family. In 1950 Miza emigrated to England to study nursing, then to Canada in 1964 where she spent the next 30 years engaged in research and teaching surgery at the University of Ottawa. In 1992, Miza received the Award of Excellence of the Faculty of Medicine.

Miza and her husband Syd, lived on Quigley Hill Road in Cumberland before moving to Orleans. Before Miza died from cancer in 2004, she was able to finish her memoirs of the war years.



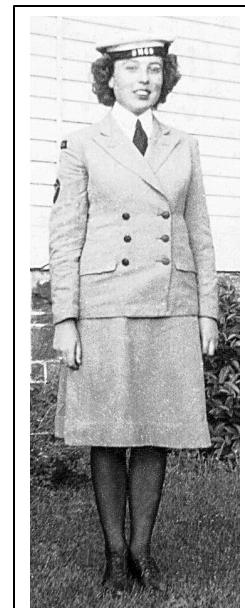
*Angus and Alice Wilson both served during the Second World War although they didn't meet until afterwards while attending agriculture college.*

*Angus Wilson was a communications specialist in the Royal Westminster Regiment that saw action in Italy and Northern Europe while Alice Wilson was*



Angus Wilson

*stationed at HMCS Coverdale in New Brunswick where they kept tabs on enemy U-boat activity off the east coast. Angus and Alice Wilson live in Cumberland on land that has been in the Wilson Family since 1846.*



Alice Wilson





Jim McGonigle and his mother  
Julia Sauve McGonigle, 1914



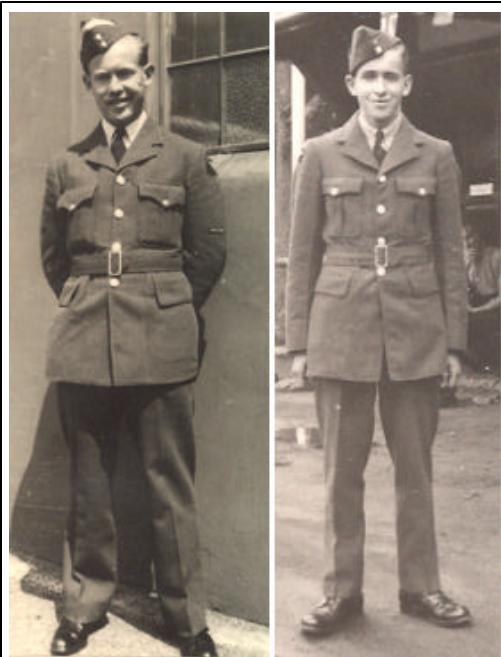
Trooper Cecil McFadden, from Navan, was killed in action Feb. 13, 1945, when he was crossing the Rhine in a tank. This picture was taken in 1943 when Cecil was 21 years old.



Navan brothers, Byron and Wellington Armstrong taken in 1914, were both killed overseas



In a night raid, Flying Officer David L. Irwin, who was with the R.A.F. squadrons in an attack on railway yards at Achines northwest of Paris, was killed June 23, 1944. His father, Dr. David Irwin was killed in a train accident in Navan, Jan. 7, 1944, leaving his wife Stella Farmer, a widow.



Brothers, Garrett and Edwin Rivington, in 1942/43, returned to Navan safely



#### Home In Time For the Games

Cumberland Hockey League welcomed back veterans from Korean service with a party held at the Edgewater Hotel in 1953. Left to right are: Angus Wilson, Doug Lancaster, Vic Bourridge, Richard Arnott, Richard Rochon and Gary Watson

## Welcome Home Speech to the Navan Soldiers in 1945

We, the citizens of Navan, take this opportunity to officially welcome you who served voluntarily in His Majesty's Forces, back amongst us. Especially do we honour tonight, those who served overseas. It is fitting too, that we pay tribute at this time to David Irwin and Cecil McFadden who paid the Supreme Sacrifice. These are two of the large army of youth who gave all they had, in order that we may have the opportunity to build a better world. It is for us, who live to remember in the words of Rupert Brooke that:

These laid the world away, poured out the red sweet wine of youth:

Gave up the years to be of work and joy, and that un hoped serene

That men call age: and those who would have been their sons, they gave.

And also in the words of Sir Owen Seaman to remember

To steel our souls against the lust of ease, to find our welfare in the general good;

To hold together merging all degrees in one wide brotherhood.

To teach that he who saves himself is lost.

To bear in silence though our hearts may bleed.

To spend ourselves and never count the cost for others' greater need.

During the war years we had you constantly in our thoughts and prayers. We endeavored here at home to keep up our morale and if possible to help you by giving of our time, money and blood to the Red Cross; and by assisting any other patriotic cause, as well as keeping in touch with you through correspondence and parcels. Now thank God, we have most of you home. We look to you and the rest of your comrades to direct us along the way that will lead to a lasting peace. May you unite and develop this Canada of ours in the same splendid way in which you bravely fought for it. Will you accept this small gift (blanket) that it may be a remembrance that we are ever indebted to you and as a pledge that we shall endeavor to work with you for the welfare of our Country.

*Janet Rathwell on behalf of the citizens of Navan, Ontario Dec. 27. 1945.*

## The Hodges Family... the final chapter

*by Isobel Hodges*

*(Detailed family history in CTHS room)*

V - CHARLES EDWARD HODGES (May 21, 1887-June 28, 1969) stayed at home and helped clear land and farm with his father. When quite young he caught his left hand in the thrashing mill and lost all his fingers, his thumb was saved. It is said at the time this happened he stayed with someone in the village so he would be near the doctor (James Ferguson). CHARLIE milked cows, raised pigs, always had a team of horses and raised chickens. CHARLIE and AGNES delivered eggs to Orleans, for years. AGNES was from 138 Percy St., Ottawa. Her father, Alec Rivers was a carpenter. CHARLES met her when he delivered firewood. They lived with ISAIAH and RACHEL. AGNES played piano and CHARLIE played

piano and mouth organ. CHARLIE was very nimble on his feet and many the time, when the fiddle was going, he could give you a good step.

V - CHARLES HODGES married on April 8, 1914 to AGNES 'ADDIE' MARY RIVERS (Aug. 13, 1891-Nov. 23, 1976). Children: 1. Eva Isabel (Feb. 28, 1915), 2. Esther Marjorie (Feb. 17, 1916), 3. Velva Rivers (Feb. 10, 1918-Dec. 10, 2003), 4. Erwin Smith (Feb. 26, 1919), 5. Annie Doris (Dec. 24, 1920), 6. Clair Edward (Apr. 6, 1922-Dec. 21, 1995), 7. Hubert Harold (Dec. 21, 1924-Oct. 18, 1998), 8. Wesley Wallace (Jan. 15, 1926-Oct. 21, 1985).

1. Eva was as good with horses as any man. She worked at home putting in crops, clearing land and taking crops off. Eva married on Oct. 7, 1936 to Thomas Bailey (Jan. 29, 1908-July 8, 1967). They farmed at Oxford Mills,

Children i. Donnelda married May 2, 1959 Bruce Cummings.

Children: Rick, Brian, Dale, Earl. Bruce worked at the Experimental Farm Retired in 1993, he and Donna entertain at nursing homes and gatherings. They are very musical with guitar, fiddle, piano and singing. Bruce was President of The Canadian Grand Masters Fiddling Championship (1999-2004).

ii. Isabel married Feb. 25, 1961 Albert Anthony  
Children:

Jeffrey and Lynca. Al has a roofing business with Jeff. Isabel plays piano on New Year's Eve for the Mayor's party, and in senior's homes.

iii. Christine married Aug.18, 1962 Terry Murphy (July 26, 1936-July 6, 2004).

Children: Lorraine and Cheryl.

iv. Christine Murphy (Oct.16, 1941-Aug.27, 1987) is buried at Dales Cemetery

v. Doris married Sept. 5, 1964 David Moore (-Sept. 29, 2006) Children: Deborah, Allen, Steven

v. Dianne married Nov.30, 1963 Darrell Tubman  
Children: Kimberly, Karen, and Tracey

1. Tom and Eva separated in 1956. Eva remarried Sept. 13, 1969 Fred Carriere (July 15, 1909-July 11, 1988). Eva lives in a retirement residence in Kanata

2. Esther married Nov.18, 1939 Cyril Barrett (1912-1960). Cyril served overseas with the army. They farmed near Manotick. Children: Reginald, Garth, Brent

2. Esther remarried Jan. 22, 1964 John Miller (Dec. 10, 1902-May 2, 1981). They farmed near Manotick. She lives in Ottawa.

3. Velva married in 1938 Clifford Smith (Sept. 15, 1913-Jan. 23, 1985). Children: Margo, Edward, Allen. Clifford Smith served in WWII with the Cameron Highlanders. After the war Velva and Clifford bought a sawmill at Cedar Hill. Clifford loved the forest, carpentry, hunting and trapping and telling all the stories related to these activities. They were well known for their many house guests and boarders from Japan, Vietnam and Korea plus many visiting missionaries. Velva was living in Winnipeg when she passed away. Both Velva and Clifford are buried in Cedar Hill Cemetery in Ontario.

4. Erwin married June 27, 1942 Muriel Slack. They adopted Ronald and Nelda.

Erwin served overseas with the air force. They had numerous postings: P.E.I., St. Hubert, Que., Greenwood, N.S., Uplands, Ontario and Germany. Erwin and Muriel lived at Manotick before moving into Ottawa. Erwin didn't play music with his brothers and sisters, but he can call for square dances at parties.

5. Annie married July 27, 1938 Samuel McCausland (Apr. 3, 1907-April 8, 1966). Sam served overseas. When he retired from the army he worked at the Experimental Farm. Children. Bernice, Sandra, Graydon, Graham, Alvin, Elaine

Annie plays piano, organ, accordion and fiddle. She plays at many senior citizen homes and gatherings. She raised a musical family. They all sing beautifully; the boys playing guitars and piano. Annie lives in Ottawa.

6. Clair married June 9, 1945 Mable Frazer (Oct. 29, 1920). They farmed at North Gower, Children Grant, Gordon, Brenda

6. Clair and Mable separated in 1972. He worked at the Experimental Farm. Clair played the fiddle. He had a band called the Maple Ridge Boys.

7. Hubert married Feb. 23, 1946 Betty Amey (Nov. 2, 1926-Dec. 12, 1983).

Children Sharon, Wayne, Debra

7. After spending four decades volunteering countless hours towards local sports, many associations, and musical entertainment, Hubert received "National" recognition for his lifetime of generosity. He received "The Governor General Caring Canadian Award", presented to his daughter Sharon, by Lieutenant-Governor Hilary Weston, six months after his death in 1999. Hubert was a veteran of the Canadian Armed Forces from 1943 to 1974, a member of the Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 140, Life Member of the Western Ontario Athletic Association, Huron Pioneer Threshers Association, and The Huron County Museum. Hubert and Betty are both buried at Clinton Cemetery, Clinton,

8. Wes married Apr.22, 1961 Isobel Cummings.  
Children: Wendy, Gail, Garnet.

8. Wes stayed at home and farmed with his father Charles. Wes bred many heavy horses (mostly Percherons). In the years before his death, he showed a team and Wendy showed the stallion 'Charlie' at many fairs. He raised Holstein cows and had many varieties of fowl. He played the fiddle at many house parties. Wesley (Jan.15, 1926-Oct. 21, 1985) is buried at Dales Cemetery. Isobel moved from the farm to Old Montreal Road, near Frank Kenny Road in November, 1989.

V - CHARLES died in 1969 leaving the farm to AGNES, his wife and Wesley his son. In 1971 AGNES went to a nursing home in Ottawa and signed off the farm. AGNES died in 1976. They are both buried at Dales Cemetery in the same plot as ISAIAH and RACHEL.

