

## BRYAN HOLMES

Bryan Holmes was born in 1834, the first child of John and Eliza Holmes (nee Crafts). Along with his five younger brothers and four younger sisters, he grew up on his father's farm on Lot 4 Con 8 near Dawn Mills in Camden Gore, Kent County, Ontario. He would most probably have attended school up until the age of 16, learning reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic and geography.

Around 1857, Bryan married Alice Farrell, the third child and second daughter of Robert and Hannah Farrell (nee Lee). Alice was born February 12, 1839, in Camden Township, and grew up on her father's farm on Lot 10 Con 13. Her father Robert was born around 1812 in Ireland, and her mother Hannah was born around 1816 in Upper Canada. The family's religion was Church of England. Alice had one older brother, Thomas, and an older sister Dorothea, and in order of birth her younger brothers and sisters were Mary Ann, Joseph, Winnifred, Edward, Sarah, John, Hannah, Robert, (who died at the age of six months from "Hooping cough") and Eleanor. It is not known when Robert Farrell died, but a copy of Hannah's will follows on the next few pages.

Bryan and Alice supposedly had thirteen children, but at this time I am only sure of ten of them. In order of birth, their children were John (1858). Hannah (1859). twins Robert and Edward (1861) Eliza A. (1862). twins William James and Mary Ellen (1866). Gilbert (1869-approx. 1871). another Gilbert (1872-1876). and Harvey (1876). There were probably two children who were born and died between Eliza and the twins, and probably one either between the second Gilbert and Harvey, or after Harvey.

One interesting thing to note is that Bryan and Alice named their first two boys and first two girls after their parents.

Bryan followed his father John in becoming a farmer. In fact, all the land he owned, the 50 acres (N/2) of the N/2 of Lot 27 Con 1 and the 50 acres (W/2) of the S/2 of Lot 27 Con 2 both near Tupperville in the Township of Chatham Gore, Kent Co. were sold to him by his father in 1871. However, the 1866-7 Kent County Directory lists Bryan as already living on Lot 27 Con 2, so at this time he must have just been running it for his father.

By looking at assessment rolls from 1887-1899, we can see how the size and worth of the farm varied in the 12 years. In 1887, Bryan and his two sons William and Robert worked on the farm six days a week, resting on the Sunday. Bryan now had 62 1/2 acres on Lot 27 Con 2, all cleared, and 100 acres on Lot 27 Con 1, with 20 acres cleared and the rest woodland. He had one dog, 18 cattle, 2 sheep, 3 hogs, and 3 horses. He had two acres of orchard and garden, and 20 acres of land planted with fall wheat. The total value of all his property was \$3700. Two years later he increased his livestock, having 38 cattle, 22 sheep, 14 hogs and 4 horses. In 1890 though, all the sheep were sold and it was the hogs that he concentrated on. Jumping **to 1899, only his son Harvey is helping on the farm, but after these 12 years its value is**

still the same. He has 2.5 cattle, 20 sheep, 40 hogs, and 5 horses.

Bryan's religion was Methodist Episcopal, and it is probable that he attended the church of this denomination which was located on Lot 26 Con 1. In fact, Bryan was trustee of this church in 1892. Since the church was built around 1878, the parish register should list the births, marriages, and deaths of his children.

Bryan's family was a very close-knit one, his children working together and helping each other out even after they married. Every year they gathered at their parent's farm to visit, and there is a picture of the 1907 family reunion, although I don't have a copy of it right now. The Sutor and Davis families are present, as well as Bryan's son John, his wife, and daughter. Bryan and Alice, of course, sit side by side in the middle of the front row.

Bryan Holmes died on December 23, 1914 at Chatham Township, Kent Co. He was 80 years of age, and was buried in the Blackburn Cemetery. His will named wife Alice, son John T., son Harvey. daughter Hannah Sutor daughter Mary Ellen Smith, and Alexander Smith -

His wife Alice died on March 5, 1921 at Chatham Township also, at the age of 82 years. She is buried beside her husband.