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Subject: [WELLINGTON] James Perry family

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An excerpt from the Byerly Book on Fergus

James Perry (pg. 59)

James Perry, one of the earlier settlers of Fergus, was born in Scotland in the year 1802 and came to Canada and the infant settlement of Fergus in 1834. With him were his wife and one child. Mrs. Perry, whose maiden name was Jean Black*, was a daughter of Hugh Black, (there is tons about them too, if you need it) who also came to Fergus in 1834, and became one of its leading men. Mr. and Mrs. Perry were married in 1832 in Scotland.

(Del, to answer your question* both Hugh Templin and James Perry married into the Black family. Hugh Black's son David had a son Hugh, who married Isabelle Gardner, whose daughter Annie married John C. Templin. After Isabelle's death he married Elizabeth Beattie. The Black family has many pages of information.)

Mr. Perry was like many of the other earlier settlers in the Fergus district, a man of liberal education. He studied Civil Engineering at an Academy, in Sterling, Scotland, and followed this with a course in Mechanical Engineering, all of which was a good training for his future life in Canada.

James Perry took part in building the first three houses in Fergus, these log buildings standing at the foot of Provost Lane as has been heretofore described. His building training enabled him to erect the first mill dams at Fergus as well as the first saw mill. This saw mill and a small woodturning shop he conducted for a time, but soon went in for farming. His farm was in the woods, seemingly a considerable distance from the village but now a part of the town. The house was of frame construction, the first of its kind in the place. Names "Woodside" (most of the men of means, named their lands the same as in the old country) it stood up until a few years ago on Garafraxa street when it was torn down and a modern house built nearer the street.

"Woodside" was one of the gathering places of Fergus. It was a happy home, filled with song and music. His son, James Black Perry, now living in Toronto, writes of his father the following:

"He was fond of the saddle, and galloped about a good deal with his boys. And, like many of the other Scots in the place, was very fond of all kinds of sport, shooting, fishing, bowling and curling. Indeed, I often think that the lure of game, and games, mainly accounts for the settlement of our fine forbears along the Grand River in the "Queen's Bush", instead of out on the frontier of the Province, where they would have had greater opportunities of

acquiring wealth in the world.

Music was one of Mr. Perry's greatest enjoyments and "Woodside" a happy rendezvous for the singers of songs. He sang well himself and played the flute and key-bugle. (My Great Great Grandfather, John McPhail used to play the violin in Fergus. It is easy to imagine them, with sleighs driving to Woodside and the merry times to be had there. I wonder what they would think of all their descendants chatting happily over the Internet!) Before Kirk bells in Fergus, Mr. Perry called the "Auld Kirk" congregation to service on Sunday morning with a blast of his key-bugle. And, in the absence of the Precentor, he would lead, at times, the service in song."

The above notes by Mr. Perry appeared in the Fergus News-Record several years ago and a copy was sent to the writer by Mr. Perry.

The winter of 1834-35 found the settlers of Fergus at their old sport of curling, the game being played on the ice of the Grand River at Fergus. The Fergus Club was organized that winter and James Perry was its secretary.

Mr. Perry was an Ensign and Bugler in Captain Wilson's Company which tramped through the woods to Guelph and from there to Niagara to try and capture William Lyon MacKenzie in the Rebellion of 1837. (The pay sheet for the Militia is in Chapter 7 of Hugh Templin's book)

The Perry Family

James Perry and his good wife lived and died at "Woodside". They were much respected by all who knew them. They were the parents of ten children of whom eight lived to manhood and womanhood. Their names were: John, James, Arthur, Alexander, Beattie, Agnes, Elizabeth, Jane and Mary.

(1) John Perry lived in Galt where his family of five daughters and one son were raised. The son, John Campbell, was killed in the South African War.

James Black Perry

(2) James Black Perry, the 2nd son of the pioneer, James Perry, was born in Fergus in 1845 and is so far as known the oldest living native-born "Fergusites". He has taken a great interest in Fergus, and some years ago published a book called "Yon Toon O' Mine", which has its setting in Fergus. He also published in 1925, "Happenings in a Happy Life" and autobiography for private circulation among his relatives. He was kindly sent the writer permission to use from it whatever material will be of help in connection with Fergus history.

James Perry Black was early interested in military matters and took a course of training in 1865 under General Lowry of the British Army, at the military school in Toronto, where he qualified to command a battalion in the field. In 1866, he led the Fergus Rifle Company to the front of the Finian Campaign, and was awarded the Queen's Medal and a grant of land by the government for that service. Mr. Perry was active in business in Orillia, Winnipeg and later years in Toronto where he located in 1884. He was a member of the first Council of the new town of Orillia and also of its first curling club. He was treasurer of the East Simcoe Agricultural Society, and Vice President of the Mechanics' Institute.

For many years, Mr. Perry has been a life member of the Empire Club of Canada, and in 1916-17 served as President of the Club.

Mr. Perry married Phoebe Dickie, the youngest daughter of the late John Dickie of Dundas. Their family consists of Effie, who married Dr. Charles Emerson of Indianapolis; James Roy Perry, B.A., the eldest son, died at the age of 27 years at the beginning of a brilliant career; Mary, married Dr. Allan Canfield of Toronto; Gordon F. Perry, prominent business man of Toronto; Marjorie, married Col. Reginald Pellat of Toronto.

James Black Perry is a staunch Presbyterian, and his favorite recreations are

curling, gardening and an interest in horses.

(3) Arthur Perry, the 3rd child of James Perry and Jean Black his wife, was a well known resident of Fergus when he died in 1931, having lived all his life in the place which he was born. He never married and up to his death was actively at work about his home.

(4) Alexander Beattie Perry is living at Orilla where he is a well known citizen. He had three daughters, Barbara, Mary and Ada, of whom Mary is dead.

(5) Agnes Perry married Mr. C. W. Watson, and their family consisted of George, Mary, Jane and James.

(6) Elizabeth Perryl married Malcolm Smith of British Columbia and their three children are James, David and Perry.

(7) Jane married Lawrence C. Munro of Fergus and their children were Jean, Jeanette, May and Alex. Beattie Munro. Jean married the late Mr. Peter Perry, so long principal of the Fergus High School; Jeanette and May live in Fergus, the latter a teacher there; Alexander Beattie lives in Los Angeles. Mr. Munro came to Fergus, about 1964 and was a well known druggist. He was a teacher in the Sunday School of St. Andrews Church as long as his health permitted. He was a brother of Mrs. Margaret Forster who is living at Fergus, having passed her 90th birthday. This family is noted later.

(8) Mary, the youngest children of James Perry died unmarried.

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