

William Russell, Sr.

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Thanks to Beverly Johnson
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for sending this story about the William Russell family.
The typing errors, however, are mine.

Thomas Russell and Mary Monk Russell and seven children lived in Shoreham Parish of County Kent, England. His sixth child William Russell was the only son to come to Canada, then to the United States. A grandson, James came later.

William Russell, Sr. married Hannah Ann Letchford in England, they had nine children. In the spring of 1857 they decided to come with their nine children to Canada, near Brockville, Ontario, on the St. Lawrence River. The trip for the family would have many hardships; the difficult voyage would last six weeks, they had a newborn, born December 1856; but, the

hardest difficulty to bear was the lost of their eight year old son, James, due to an epidemic on ship. He was buried at sea.

William and Hannah Russell had a farm in Canada from 1857 to 1864 when they decided as a family to move to Elk Rapids. By this time some of their children had married; but, with their extended families they started out by boat, along with their farm animals. This journey too would be long; first via Lake Erie, up Lake Huron, then into Lake Michigan to the port of Elk Rapids. In 1864 Elk Rapids was a city but the port had no docks. The animals were pushed off the boat into the water and left to swim to shore.

People arriving in 1864 in Antrim County could well be described as the very early pioneers of the region; the Russell family would be included in that list. When they first arrived, they were sharecroppers south of Elk Rapids. Then, in 1869 William, Sr. took advantage of the 1862 Homestead Act and acquired his homestead of 160 acres in Milton Township.

William Sr.'s sons Charles and John were too young to apply so the Homestead reads William Sr. and as they became older, the property was divided between Charles and John. Henry and William, Jr., now married, also applied and each received their own homestead properties of 144 and 147 acres respectively. Thomas purchased property also. The Russell's land, if not side by side, was all in the same area.

William Russell Sr.'s 160 acre homestead was in what we know today as Torch Lake Township; but, in 1869 that area was Milton Township. The homestead was sold in 1967, just two years shy of having been in the Russell family for 100 years. The first and second generations of William Russell held the flame a long time; but, like so many families of that time, as the older members retired, the younger members left the farm for the city for better jobs.

William Russell, Sr.

The Russell Family Cemetery sets quietly alone along US-31, nestled amongst the overgrown lilac bushes as an ever reminder of the large Russell family of yesterday. Although it is believed about 25 people are buried in the Russell Cemetery, only 4 graves have headstones:

Name	Born	Died
William Russell, Sr.	1811	1875
Anna Russell	1814	1886
Lucy Ann Russell Duffell	1844	1887
Barbara Russell	6-29-1880	10-20-1880

Years ago the family Bible was where all record of births, marriages and deaths were kept. Lucky is the family that has the family Bible present. In 1932 Mrs. John Russell was interviewed and it was reported that the family Bible was lost in a homestead fire. The Russell Cemetery records were lost. A list of 15 names is on record* of unmarked graves, given to Mrs. John Russell that day.

*In 1933, 2 DAR ladies from Kalamazoo came to Antrim County to do some genealogy research. Their research efforts, including this interview, were typed and bound in book form. Copies may be found in the Burton Collection of the Detroit Main Library and in the Library of the State of Michigan in Lansing -- Ed. note.

The family tree as we know it today:

Name	Born	Died
William Russell	1811	11-4-1876
+ Hannah Ann Letchford	1814	12-26-1886
Henry Russell	1-8-1836	5-20-1901
+ Mary Levi	1-7-1846	11-15-1905
Henrietta Russell	1867?	
Phebe Russell	1869?	
Edith F. Russell	9-3-1869	1943
+ Arnold Kaiser	1863	1937
Etta Gertrude Kaier	7-20-1896	
Edith Vivian Kaiser	12-11-1907	
Emma G. Russell	3-1872	
+ Thomas H. Burley	1-1871	
Clare Burley	6-25-1902	
Harvey W. Russell	9-11-1874	
Henry William Russell	9-11-1874	4-28-1875
Herbert C. Russell	1-1877	1947
+ Mary Johnstone		
Leonina Russell	10-3-1900	
+ Sarah Ann Russell	1888	1939
Raymond C. Russell	6-1885	1957
+ Wilhelmina _____	1891	1953
William Russell, Jr.	1838	1920
+ Mary E. Powell	10-1847	1909

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Name	Born	Died
Mary Ann Russell	4-30-1867	
Henrietta Russell	6-25-1867	7-10-1919
+ Isaac C. Gibbard	5-5-1856	1-3-1921
Eliza Rebecca Russell	9-28-1871	
+ Edgar Peckham	5-1867	
Roy C. Peckham	8-14-1891	
Sybil Peckham	10-27-1893	
George Peckham	3-1896	
Beatric Edna Peckham	9-6-1898	
Ida R. Russell	9-28-1872?	1956
+ John Horton Dean	4-26-1862	11-1939
Floyd Dean	1930	
Lulu/Laura Dean		
+ ___ Milks		
Nina Dean	1897	1978
Clyde Dean		
+ Mildred	1898	1947
Frank W. Russell	12-14-1875	12-12-1936
+ Carrie Hockin	2-1878	
William G. Russell	3-4-1900	9-15-1900
Harry Russell	5-17-1902	5-14-1958
+ Lydia Bussa		
Claude Richard Russell	12-29-1904	10-25-1999
+ Josephine Paradis		
Marylin Russell		
+ Charles Thomas		
Beverly Russell		
+ Gene Gonecki		
Richard Dean Russell		
+ Joanne _____		
Billie James Russell		
Joseph Russell		
Thomas Russell		
Caroline Russell		
+ _____ Hubbell		
Willard Russell		
Lewis Russell		
William John Russell	5-14-1878	
George Benjamin Russell	5-13-1880	
+ Mary Powell		
Violet E. Russell		
+Montford E. Harvey	12-1876	
Mildred E. Harvey	5-14-1906	
Mary Ann Russell	1841	
+ _____ Bachi		
+ C. Powell		

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Name	Born	Died
Lucy Anne Russell	1844	12-16-1887
+ William Duffell		
Emma/Emily C. Duffell	9-1865	8-8-1900
+ William J. Frame	1860	1948
Percy Lee Frame	1892	8-4-1895
Charles Edwin Duffell	6-9-1868	3-8-1906
Thomas L. Russell	1845	1938
+ Adeline G. Filer	5-20-1891	
Lewis J. Russell	8-13-1869	
George W. Russell	5-21-1871	
+ Mary Boursaw	9-1875	
Clarence E. Russell	4-1894	
Cloy M. Russell	12-1896	
Clara A. Russell	4-1899	
+ Alfred J. Roberts		
Myrtle I. Russell	4-4-1902	
Livana Russell	3-6-1907	
Guy N. Russell	5-1873	
+ Serena Burns Steadman		
Howard Ernest Russell	4-24-1875	
Alice Rebecca Russell	6-4-1878	
+ Clarence Franklin		
Lulu Belle Russell	9-19-1887	
Thomas E. Russell	5-16-1891	4-10-1917
+ Ellen Jane(Ward)Toms	7-1855	3-7-1927
+ Elizabeth Ward		
James L. Russell	12-1848	1857
Charles H. Russell	1851	1911
+ Mary Petrie	6-1864	1933
Sarah H. Russell	8-1883	
Charles Floyd Russell	5-1886	1953
+ Grace M. Murray	1890	1928
Novella M. Russell	12-1-1912	2-25-2000
+ Morris T. Walker	1905	1-10-1972
Morris Ned Walker		
+ Mary Jo _____		
Allen Walker	9-29-1931	4-4-1989
+ Cecil Murray	4-23-1986	
Duane Russell		
+ Jackie _____		
Dean Russell		
+ _____ McArthur		
Adrian Russell		
Ronald Russell	prior to 7-2001	
Ivan Russell	prior to 7-2001	
Versile Russell	prior to 7-2001	

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Name	Born	Died
Mary Russell		
+ --- McArthur		
Kenneth Russell	1916	1936
Keith Paul Russell	12-10-1922	4-16-2001
Audry Irene Russell	1924	1935
Ernest W. Russell	8-10-1888	11-3-1963
+ Lillie M. _____	10-14-1892	3-7-1959
Dilbert W. Russell	10-1890	
William L. Russell	12-4-1895	
Benha Russell	6-9-1902	
John Russell	4-1854	1929
+ Anna Alice Knapp	1864	1947
Alice Barbory Russell		
+ Simeon White		
Barbara A. Russell	12-1882	
Carrie E. Russell	9-27-1884	1956
+ Robert J. Frame	1875	1956
Robert J. Frame	10-17-1903	8-2-1969
Elmore Russell	3-17-1891	
Emily Eliza Russell	12-18-1858	4-24-1891
+ George Milton Peaslee	1852	1918
Florence Velma Peaslee	3-31-1878	
William Byron Peaslee	6-8-1880	
Arvilla Jane Peaslee	9-11-1883	
Alexander Peaslee	9-1890	
+ G. M.'s 2nd wife, Emma	12-1869	
Emily B. Peaslee	7-9-1893	
Golda L. Peaslee	8-17-1896	
John M. Peaslee	8-12-1901	
Samuel F. Peaslee	6-27-1903	
Edith Peaslee	7-2-1899?	