

THE McNIVEN FAMILY

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By.

The McNiven forbears were all born in the County of Perth, Scotland, at the dividing line between the Gaelic and the English speaking Scotch. Alexander Ferguson, born in 1787 at Lundie Farm, Doune, Perthshire, died on the same farm in 1880. He spoke no Gaelic. Miss Elizabeth Dewar of Severie Farm married the above Alexander Ferguson. She spoke both Gaelic and English. Their family consisted of John Ferguson and Janet Ferguson.

Several generations of McNivens were born and raised on the farm of "Auchenshellach" in Glen Aetney near Comrie and Crieff. Duncan McNiven rented the farm of Causewayend near Doune and married Agnes Gow. They had five sons and five daughters.

John Burn Murdock McNiven (the second son) married Janet Ferguson and rented the farm of Cardona about 3 miles from Doune village. They had nine children: Eliza (Mrs D. Macfarlane). They had a family of four. Agnes (Mrs J. McNeer). They had a family of four. Duncan-no family. Alexander F.-one son John. John B.M.-two boys, and one girl. Jessie-(Mrs Jas. Kirkland)-no family. Margaret unmarried. Mary (Mrs Peter McCallum)-five sons, and four daughters., and Nellie unmarried.

Jesse, Margaret and Nellie survive.

Cardona adjoins Lanrick and is six miles from Callender and 10 miles from Stirling in the district made famous by Sir Walter Scott in his poem "The Lady of the Lake". To make sure that the distance from Lock Katrine to Stirling could be made in the time specified in the poem, he himself rode the distance on horseback.

Alexander Ferguson McNiven left Scotland at the age of 18 and went with his brother, the late John McNiven, to Montana where they operated a ranch.

He came to Ontario in 1907 purchasing the present McNiven farm from Squire Hunt. As a farmer he was interested in keeping fine stock and imported type horses from the old country.

Alexander McNiven married Ethel Futcher in 1911. They had one son John Futcher McNiven. Alexander McNiven passed away in 1937. John Futcher McNiven married Helen Margaret Lyle. They have <sup>3</sup>two children--Carclyn Ann and John Alexander. *and James.*

Mr. John Jack) married Margaret Blank 1970; Jack is a graduate of O.A.C. University, and now lives in Burlington.

May 27/51.

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HISTORY OF THE BUTLER FAMILY

Patrick Butler was born in Ireland in 1813. Very little is known of his early life, except that he came to Canada with his parents when he was about four, and settled near Preston. In 1837 he married Martha Ellis. Of the latter's family we do have some interesting details.

In the eighteenth century, there lived in Ireland a family by the name of Ellis. They were well educated, and in very good circumstances, the father being a gentleman farmer, and quite a sport. He kept a number of horses and hounds. One of the sons, named William, was born in County Cavan, Ireland, in the year 1776. He fell in love with a true Irish lassie by the name of Martha Elliott. They were married about the year 1799. After a little family of two children, a girl and boy, came to their home, they decided to come to America.

William and Martha said good-bye to their dear ones and set sail on an open sailing vessel for the shores of America. After they had been out some time, the little baby boy took ill and died. Imagine that poor Mother's grief when she wrapped her darling boy in a winding sheet and saw him lowered down in those black waters! Is it any wonder she never cared to cross those waters again?

After many weeks of exposure and hardships, they landed on the American shore. They made their home in Pennsylvania for a time, where two more little girls were born. In 1810 Wm. Ellis and family, originally from Ireland came to Canada and settled in Waterloo township near Hespeler, along the Speed River, on 230 acres of land he bought from the crown when King George IV was reigning. William Ellis and Hone Erb were the first magistrates in that new settlement. At this time Dundas was the nearest Post Office, store and grist mill, etc. and all legal business of recording deeds was done there. They would throw a bag of wheat over the horse's back and ride through the woods to Dundas for their flour, and get the mail.

In those days a cobbler travelled through the woods from house to house and made shoes for the whole family which had to last until he came through again.

in 1812 when war broke out at Niagara, Squire Ellis being a captain left his wife and family and directed his men in that historic battle when Laura Ingersoll Secord risked so much to save the country from the enemy. It is said that before leaving home for Niagara, Squire Ellis planted a staff in the ground and remarked that if it stood he would return from the war. One night while his wife was spinning at midnight, she heard a noise and walked to the door, and there stood her husband just returning from the war. The old musket and bayonet are a valued possession of the family.

In those days the Indians were very much dreaded, and during the war there was only one man left in every ten miles to look after the women and children. While the little children were sitting around the table eating their meals, the Mother would stand and watch for fear the Indians would steal in, and scalp or murder them.

Squire Ellis had a great influence over the Indians, being employed by the government to pay the bounty for wolf pelts. Wolves were very plentiful, often venturing up to the clearing in the daytime. One day when he was returning through the woods on horseback, a little to the west of where Preston now stands, he heard cries of distress. On turning his horse in to an old mill, he found an Indian tied to a tree and two white men whipping him. He jumped off his horse and soon settled those men. Then he untied the Indian, put him on his horse and took him to his home where his wife cared for him until his wounds were healed.

One morning, after the Indian had his breakfast, he went through some signs which they did not understand and left them. A year later a little band of Indians approached the house with two Indian ponies. Not knowing what they wanted, the Squire put his children in the house, took his gun and went out to meet them. The Indian he had rescued the year previous ran up to him and threw his arms around his neck and kissed him, while two more Indians presented him with the span of ponies, which were kept on the farm as long as they lived. In the year 1885, a matched span of these Indian ponies were shown at Harley Fair and took first prize for the fastest walkers.

The old home was built of logs on the side of a hill facing the south with

an everlasting spring, which is still running. The house is a three storey structure with a cellar kitchen, and a huge fireplace, in front of which the Squire joined many hands in holy wedlock.

The bake oven stood between the house and the spring, where all the bread and pies were baked. The old home still stands with its low ceiling and in good repair, having been remodelled. The old attic was often filled with six and seven hundred pounds of maple sugar.

Patrick Butler's wife Martha, was a daughter of this Squire William Ellis and his wife Martha.

One of Patrick and Martha Butler's ten children, James, was born in 1844. In 1866 he married Margaret McKoy. She was born in Middleton Township in Norfolk County of Highland Scotch parents. James and Margaret Butler had a family of five boys and three girls.

When he was a young man, James Butler went to Walsingham in Norfolk County and engaged in the lumbering business at Venison Creek near Langton. This is in the heart of the Walsingham tobacco district at the present time.

It was here that James<sup>3</sup> and Margaret Butler's second son, Charles Stanley was born.

At the age of nineteen Charlie Butler began to work in the Michigan Central Railroad. In 1901, he married Agnes Lyle, daughter of John Lyle. About a year later they went to Montana where Charlie worked on the Northern Pacific Railroad.

In 1907 they returned to Ontario, and settled on the John Lyle farm, in the house now occupied by their son Kenneth and family.

Charles and Agnes Butler have three sons, Lyle Vernon Butler, Harold Nelson Butler, and Kenneth J. Butler.

Lyle Butler married Myrtle Hicks of St. Thomas and they have one son, Donald Charles, who is a student at the Arthur Voaden Vocational School. They live about a mile east of Pinafore Park on Elm Street, just out of St. Thomas, and Lyle works on the New York Central Railroad.

Harold Butler married Lenore Dale, B.A. from near London. She is a graduate of the University of Western Ontario, and the London Normal School. They have one son, Nelson Arthur, aged a year and a half. They live about a mile and a

quarter west of Middlemarch, on the Humphrey place. Harold works on the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway.

Kenneth Butler married Roberta Poole of Toledo, Ohio. They have two sons and one daughter, Richard Charles, aged seven, Robert Kenneth, 5 years old, and Sarah Agnes (Sally) aged a year and a half. They live on the home place, Talbot Road. <sup>Note</sup> *are Charles and Jeannette.*

Since Kenneth's marriage, Mr and Mrs Charlie Butler have lived in the bungalow east of the old home. Mr. Butler's brother David, has made his home with them. Another brother, W. A. Butler, lives in St. Thomas and a sister, Mrs Ida Gorton lives in Murilla, near Fort William.

This coming October 9, 1951, Mr. and Mrs Butler are hoping to celebrate their golden wedding anniversary.

Mrs Harold Butler.

Note

1971-

*Mr. & Mrs Charles Butler died -*

*Robert Butler, son of Kenneth married , and have a son.*

*Richard is an engineer.*

*Charles won a scholarship and is attending Waterloo University.*

*Sally graduates this year as a nurse  
Jeannette is at High School.*

Lot 39 North Talbot Road

Charles S. Butler married Agnes Hay Lyle, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Lyle.

In 1907 Mr. Butler purchased the farm from Mr. Lyle.

Charles and Agnes Butler had three sons: Lyle V., Harold N. and Kenneth J.

Lyle married Myrtle Hicks in 1930. They had one son, Charles Donald.

Lyle was conductor on the Penn Central Railroad until his retirement in 1967. They live in St. Thomas, Ont.

Harold N. married Lenore Dale

Kenneth J. married Roberta Poole in 1940 and they have three sons and two daughters.

Kenneth farmed with his Father until his Father's death in 1960. Ken continued to farm and his son, Robert became a partner in 1970.

Ken's oldest son Richard C. married Lynda Stokes of Mississauga in 1972 and now works as a Consulting Engineer in Vancouver, B.C.

Robert Married Teresa Hepburn in 1968 and they have three sons. Robert farms with his Father

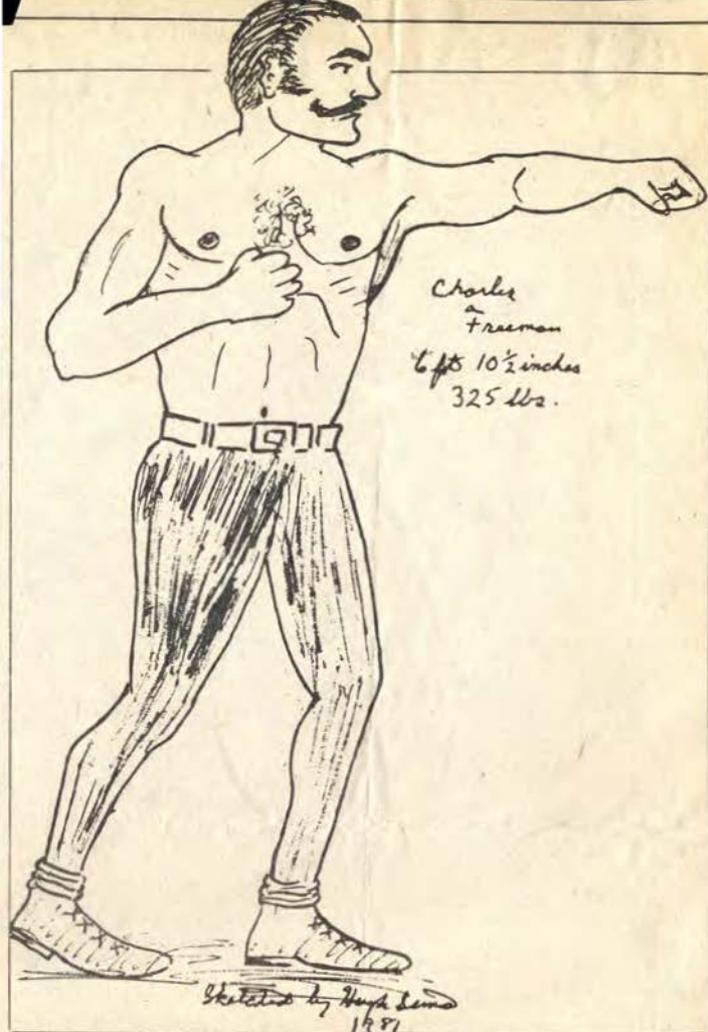
Sally married Rodney G. McNeely in 1972 and lives in Mississauga, Ont. and they have one daughter.

Charles is working with his Father and brother on the farm.

Jeanette is working as an accountant at Websters Manufacturing in London, Ont.

A cottage was built on part of Lot 39 N. Talbot Rd in 1940 at the time Kenneth was married. Mr. and Mrs. Charles Butler lived there until their deaths. Charles in 1960 and Agnes in 1968. Robert and his bride lived in the cottage until 1973 when Ken and Roberta moved to the cottage and Robert and family took over the homestead.

# 1843 boxing champion controversial figure yet



ST. THOMAS (Bureau) — Down in Smokes Hollow in January, 1820, Charles 'Runt' Freeman was born in a log cabin near the site of what's now the St. Thomas' sewage treatment plant.

Few realized 'runt,' as his brothers called him because of his scrawny size, would grow up to be renamed the Middlemarch Giant and become the first true world heavyweight boxing champ by decking Great Britain's Bill (Tipton Slasher) Perry.

Few realize today that Charles Freeman existed, let alone that his Canadian sporting story rivals the best. His short life contained a Cinderella leap from village millworker to world elite and an equally meteoric fall. His heels to this day are dogged by controversy among the few who recognize his name.

Hugh Sims, a local historian more than 50 years, has been researching this pugilist extraordinaire for years and admits one of the mysteries of his life is the whereabouts of the champ's size 14 boots, a pair left with the Lewis family of Elgin before Freeman went to Britain.

Freeman never got the recognition he deserved, says Sims, noting the boxer fought at a time when bare knuckles were the style.

The Freeman-Slasher duel was apparently an epic battle with the Upper Canadian not winning until the third week of their contest. The men fought all one day without a winner, rested a week, fought, rested again for a week and finally ended it on the third day.

Freeman set the sun on the British pugilistic empire in the 78th round. It was 1843 and Freeman was 23 years old.

The young man was a late bloomer, quickly outgrowing 'runt.' As a teenager, he hit six feet tall and 200 pounds at age 17 and a fighting

trim 6' 10½" and 326 pounds when he whipped the Slasher.

Freeman's family moved to Middlemarch, midway between Fingal and St. Thomas, when he was young. Here, he got his new nickname and there are stories all the area children were frightened of his size.

He used to practise boxing on what's now Spohn's Flats where a ring had been set up and the locals came to work out. A British trainer happened by one day and seeing Freeman, persuaded him to go with him to Britain. At the time, Freeman was a millhand.

Freeman was also first cousin to the wife of Ashel Lewis, a sickly man who died tragically when, as editor of *The Liberal* in St. Thomas, he so inflamed local Tories they threw his press and most of his belongings over a hill into the creek. Lewis died suddenly afterwards.

With his British victory, however, Freeman was the toast of many circles and he left the coarse life behind.

Yankee upstarts claimed him as theirs, saying he was a U.S. citizen. Much respected *Ring* magazine has even printed articles claiming Freeman as the first American world champ. Sims said he has had a long and heated battle with *Ring* in attempts to force them to accept the fact that the non-British champ was raised in Ontario. That "feud" continues, said Sims.

All the success, however, was too much for a smalltown Ontario boy used to less extravagant fare. He died in Winchester Hospital Oct. 18, 1845 of consumption. Too much wine, women and song appeared to have done in the champ at the tender age of 25.

Excess finally decked the young Canadian nobody in the world could beat.

Charles Freeman was the first world heavyweight champion after beating the Tipton Slasher in a Great Britain fight in 1843. Freeman looks a bit better here in a sketch by historian Hugh Sims than he did in 1845 when the good life got to him and he died of consumption at the age of 25.

THE BEGGS            LOTS 42 AND 43

Situated on the south side of the old Talbot Road, about one half mile west of the westerly limits of St. Thomas are the farms, Lots 42 and 43 Southwold, now owned by Mr. and Mrs Robert Stanley Lyle and Mr. and Mrs Donald James Begg. The history and background of these two farms are so interlocked that one can hardly be written up without encroaching on the other.

In July 1833, Leonard Freeman received the Crown deed to Lot 42, the Robert Lyle farm, to-day, and it consisted at that time of 170 acres. Here, also lived Leonard Freeman's son, Charles, known as "Canada's giant". This man was 7' 4" tall, and of wonderful strength. He was greatly feared by the neighborhood children, and rather an awesome figure to everyone. He died later in England.

In July 1834 Leonard Freeman sold the south half of the farm to Thomas Rihill, and from records obtained from the registry office in St. Thomas, the following twenty years show the names of various owners, whose stay on the farm was not long. In 1854 the farm was sold by Simon Nicol and wife to James Begg for \$12,000. Mr. Begg was born in Glenbucket, Aberdeenshire, Scotland in March 1812, and came to Southwold in 1846, the only one of his family to come to America. Mr. Begg kept beef cattle, and was prominent in municipal offices in the township, serving as councillor, deputy-reeve and reeve. It has been told that in the early spring, Mr. Begg started with his cattle to market them in Detroit pasturing as they travelled and buying up other cattle on the way, taking two months or more to reach their destination.

Jamed Begg married Margaret Currie, who was born in Argyleshire, Scotland, and came to Canada when six years of age with her parents, Donald and Margaret Currie. The Curries were a large family, and settled in North Yarmouth, in the midst of the virgin forest, and a blazed trail through the woods was the only thoroughfare to St. Thomas. An older sister Of Margaret Currie, named Catherie, married James H. L. Begg, (no relation to the James Begg in this account) who kept a store on West Talbot Street in the growing town of St. Thomas, and their daughter-Margaret Begg, married James Carrie, grandfather of Dr. Douglas Carrie.

James and Margaret Currie Begg had two children, Margaret Elizabeth, born in 1862, and James, born in 1868. In 1874, the family moved into the brick house as it stands to-day. The daughter, Margaret married James Begg, a distant cousin, a native of Inverness<sup>S</sup>hire, Scotland, and they made their home in Galion, Ohio. They had two children, a son, Charles who died when five years of age, and a daughter, Margaret, now Mrs. A. E. Buckingham, who also has one daughter, Catherine Versoy, all living in Elyria, Ohio.

The son, James Begg, in 1892 married Margretta McCormick, daughter of Duncan and Catherine Campbell McCormick, pioneers of West Elgin. They had four children. Bessie-now Mrs W. H. Irwin, St. Thomas, who has one daughter Jean, married to Robert Lyle, Kathleen and Jeanette, Both in Detroit, Mich. and Donald James on the farm immediately east on Lot 43.

Mr. Begg carried on general farming, specializing in registered Ayrshire cattle. In 1898 the octagon shaped silo on this farm was built, one of the first silos in the section. In 1928, when Mr. Begg's health failed, the family moved to the city. Mr. Begg died in 1941 and Mrs. Begg lives at 37 Scott St. St. Thomas.

The farm was later bought by Stanley Lyle and Sons, and to-day is owned by Robert Lyle, son of Mr. and Mrs Stanley Lyle. It is interesting to note that Jean Irwin Lyle, wife of Robert Lyle, came as a bride in 1950 to the same farm to which her great grandmother came as a bride in 1856, and to which her grandmother came, also a bride in 1892.

Of Donald Begg's farm on Lot 43, the records show that as early as 1825, John Ellison received the crown deed, and in 1827 sold it to Lucius Bigelow. Two years later in 1829, the farm was sold to Simon Nicol, who with members of his family continued to make their home there until 1893 when Charles Siple had four children, Ernest, who married Bessie Black, Bessie, now Mrs Alex Patterson, Claude, who was killed in a runaway accident on the Fingal hill, and Hume who married Thurza Parish.

Twenty-two years later, in 1915, Mr. Siple sold the farm to James Begg, and in 1919, it became the property of his son, Donald James Begg. Donald Begg went into the raising of purebred Jersey cattle, and more recently, into the real

estate business. He was president of the Junior Farmers of Elgin County, at the time of their amalgamation with the Junior Institute, and has been president of the Elgin Jersey Breeders and Western Ontario Jersey Breeders Association and was also president of the Ontario Twentieth Century Club.

Donald Begg married Ilene Tisdale, daughter of Lachlin and Sarah Penhale Tisdale, Edgeware Road, North Yarmouth, and they have one son, Donald James Ian Begg

THE LYLES      LOTS 42 AND 43      NORTH TALBOT ROAD

The History of Lots 42 and 43 North Talbot Road as is the case of a great many pioneer families their descendants have moved away or passed to the great beyond. Any information available must come from the Registry Office and that deals only with ownership. However Dr. J. D. Curtis very kindly took the trouble to check the register for the former owners of these lots. With some of the first of these we need not be greatly concerned as their residence was brief and their names would mean little to this generation.

In 1825 Francis Siddall(origin unknown) received from the crown a grant of 200 acres Lot 42. In 1828 he sold the east half to John Murray and Gilbert Dumont. That same year Murray sold the east half to Richard Braden Nicoll who had come from England with his family. Their first home was situated at the southwest corner of Stanley Lyle's road, but it was destroyed by fire in 1854. There was also a log school house on this lot. The following year he built the brick house presently occupied by Alex D. Lyle. In 1829 Francis Siddall bought back the west 100 acres and ten years later his son sold it to Richard Nicoll who thus became owner of the greater part of the lot. During the following years he acquired possession of several small parcels of land or lots that Francis Siddall had sold to several people. One of these was owned by John Hoop or Hope who then bought the north 100 acres of Lot 43 and who sold it in 1874 to David and John Lyle. My Father must have thought it a good name for during his lifetime it was always known as Hope Farm. After his death his son Stanley changed the name to that of his Father's birthplace Stenhousemuir.

The south half of Lot 43 was one of the several farms owned by Richard Nicoll and it was given to his daughter Elizabeth Brimer who sold it to David Lyle in 1886. When Richard Nocoll died in 1879 the east part of Lot 42 was left to his son Edwin Nicoll and the west part to son Albert. Another son Fredrick owned the farm now occupied by Charles S. and Kenneth Butler while a fourth son George lived on the farm now owned by Albert Berdan of Talbotville. Richard's brother Simon lived on the farm now owned by Donald Begg. Richard Nicoll had his son George made sheriff-a position of advantage to certain landowners.

Edwin Nicoll married Margaret Graham of St. Thomas. They had 2 children. Lucille who married George Robertson of Hamilton. She died in 1948, and William who left the farm after his father's death in 1899. For a time Will lived in Munro, Michigan where he engaged in a contracting business. Later he moved to Clearwater, Florida, where he passed away last winter. He is survived by a son and daughter.

After some years-after the death of her husband, Mrs Edwin Nicoll married her brother in law William Mickleborough and lived at 118 Centre St. After his death she made her home with her son in Florida where she died in 1926.

In 1908 the Nicoll farm was sold to David Lyle and sons and in 1917 to Alex D. Lyle who took up residence there in 1920.

The history of the first Lyle family to settle in Canada goes back almost to the beginning of the last century. Alexander Lyle was born in Stirlingshire near Falkirk in 1805 and his wife Ann Dow in 1811. They were married in *Larbert* Larbert Church in 1830 and had 3 sons and 5 daughters. In addition to raising her large family grandmother was an excellent nurse and had trained with Dr. Hatcher in Edinburgh. She treasured the watch presented by friends and neighbors before she left for Canada, as the inscription states-" a small tribute of affection and esteem for her zeal and help in trouble". Grandmother was also a good deal of a matriarch. She held that it was only her due that the first granddaughter in each family should be named for her, and the first boy for his grandfather. Consequently there were 8 cousins Annie. There were only 5 cousins Alex as John Lyle and Elizabeth Lyle Hampton had no sons, and Margaret Lyle Laurence flouted tradition and her Mother and gave her 7 sons unusual names, I believe she was the first to use Lyle as a Christian name. Grandmother preferred David and John as the ~~best~~ first was her Father's name and the latter that of her only brother.

Following is an extract from Grandmothers diary "May 29, 1873, 22 of my family left Glasgow for Canada and arrived in St. Thomas on the 14th of June all in good health. Alex, his wife and 6 children, James Lawrence, his wife and 6 children, Mrs Nisbet, my oldest daughter and her 2 children, David a single man. Father and Myself all came out to my youngest son John"

Concerning their arrival here Mrs Butler has given me permission to read this letter written by her Father.

St. Thomas, Ontario  
October 1, 1931

Dear Aggie;

You wish to know something about the early history of the Old Farm. It would perhaps be best to tell you in as few words as possible how the Lyle's came to this district. I left Scotland early in May 1871, to find a home in America. When I landed in New York, I could find no work. Times then in the States were bad, worse than they are now, I made my way to Canada, I wanted to be under the British flag, and I heard of Railways building in St. Thomas. I got work in a saw mill getting out timber for the Michigan Central Railway bridge. I soon got work on a farm. I was anxious to learn farming. I had worked for 8 yrs. as blacksmith in a large foundry in Scotland, and longed for the country. I next got work on a large dairy farm near Sparta. I enjoyed the work. I kept writing home praising this Canada of ours, and the free healthy life on the farm. My two brothers replied saying that if I could buy a farm they would send me what money they had, as a first payment; and that we would all work to-gether until we each had a farm. I saw a farm 100 acres advertised in the St. Thomas Home Journal, 3 miles from St. Thomas, apply to Henry Payne, Paynes Mills. I bought it paying half down, balance in annual payments, that is now the fine home of John A. Lyle.

That summer my Father, Mother, two brothers and two sisters, and their families arrived from Scotland, 22 altogether. I had plenty, provisions, we were a little crowded, but happy. In a few days we rented a house in St. Thomas, where my sisters and their families soon found good positions and happy homes.

Next spring, we bought the Hope Farm, where Stanley Lyle now lives. Then in 1880 I bought your farm Lot 39, Talbot Rd. 50 acres of this lot was sold to the County for the House of Industry. When I bought your farm it was badly

run down, with a poor little house not fit to live in, log stable and old frame barn. Your Mother felt so bad about me buying the place, the most desolate place between St. Thomas and Fingal, she would not go near it until I had started to build a new house and got out timber for a new barn, the first bank barn in the neighborhood.

I am sorry to say that I was badly advised by some one that at the Raising I must have 4 or 5 gallons of whiskey, which was passed around in a tin pail. The farmers got drunk and did not shore the building properly and a wild storm blew my new barn down. Winter was near, the first snow was on the ground when we got the wreck taken apart, and timber and stone for a new one. However the weather got fine, the neighbours made bees, and the barn was up, and I had shelter for 50 head of stock by Christmas.

We cleared the land, underdrained and planted trees. We were blessed with good health and prospered and none of the Lyle's have ever regretted coming to Canada.

My sincere wish is that Mr. and Mrs Butler and their families, may long enjoy the comforts of their Thistledown Farm Home.

Your loving Father,

John Lyle.

I bought the farm from Mr. Fred Nichol for \$9000.00 paying \$2000 cash and \$7000 in 7 yrs. @ 7 per cent.

Fred had the farm left him at his Father's death.-R. B. Nichol.

(We bought the farm in 1907)

Mrs C. Butler.

In his excellent paper "The Neighbors on Talbot Road" Dr. Curtis gave the history of John and Alex Lyle's families. I would like to add a word concerning the other Lyles who arrived with them.

Jamed Lawrence was a Prebyterian minister and his wife Margaret Lyle was probably the most travelled member of her family. In 1859 they sailed for Capetown. A long voyage in those days. Returning in the late 60's they lived

in Edinburgh before sailing for Canada. They lived in St. Thomas for several years and Uncle James had a parish at Forest and in Adelaide Township. Later they moved to the Canadian West and settled at Stonewall 7 miles from Winnipeg. Their grandchildren are scattered from there to the coast to California and even to Korea.

The other member of the clan was Mrs Isbel Nisbet, left a widow with 2 small children the youngest <sup>6 months</sup> old she returned to her Mother's home and took up the profession of nursing, which she continued after taking up residence in St. Thomas. Her two children were Mrs Annie Sheldon, Mother of Miss Daisy Sheldon, and Alex Lyle Nisbet of the Toronto firm of Nisbet and Auld. He and Father looked so much alike that they were often thought to be brothers. He died very suddenly in Toronto Jan. 3 rd 1917 and Father's death followed 3 days later. Alex Nisbet married Belle Barr of St. Thomas who still resides in Toronto active and alert at 97.

To return to our branch of the family-Father, Uncle John and Grandfather and Grandmother moved to Hope Farm in the winter of 1874. In 1875 John Lyle married Ellen Hay of St. Thomas and for several years they lived in the frame house on the Nicoll farm just west of Dr. Munro's residence. This house was formerly the Agricultural Bank and now stores the farm implements at Stenhouse-muir.

While my Father and his brothers were farmers by adoption, Mother's family was rooted in the soil of Scotland. She was born at Glenhead Cottage on the River Carson near Stirling and her father worked the farm at Glenhead House. Her Mother was Margaret Kirkwood, second daughter of Joseph Kirkwood and Mary Stark. Greatgrandfather Kirkwood was the miller at Little Mill, Linlithgow Bridge on the River Avon. Grandmother Hay died when Mother was 7 years old and the family was scattered. Mother's girlhood was spent with an aunt in Fifeshire and in 1877 she came to Canada to keep house for her two brothers who had bought a farm in Warwick township. She and Father were married in St. Paul's Cathedral, London in 1879. Grandfather Lyle passed away in 1880 after a long illness but Grandmother lived out an active 80 years. Like his father and brother, dad

had 3 sons and 5 daughters but there the similarity ends. The daughters appear to have set some sort of record by remaining single. Also among them is the only set of twins for at least 4 generations on either side of family tree. Anna's professional life as a nurse was spent with Dr. Edward B. Dench in New York. <sup>X</sup>Robina served with the overseas Nursing Unit from 1916 to 1920 and after graduating in Social Service from Toronto University, went to Cleveland and then to Chicago where she supervises Health Services in 23 schools. Verna's business life is spent in the accounting Department of the St. Thomas Times Journal and Edna is in the office of the Superintendent of <sup>Secretary to</sup> Architecture of the Chicago Art <sup>Buildings &</sup> Institute.--This paper was prepared by Margaret Lyle, but I fail to see where she has accounted for herself. I would like to add that Margaret has been the main stay of the family and has devoted her life to her family and her Mother in her declining years. She has, and continues to take an active part in Community affairs having been President of Middlemarch W. I. Pres. West Elgin District W. I. as well as Pres. of Country Circle of Knox Church. Her favorite hobby is her beautiful well kept garden of flowers, and Margaret is the one Member of the family who has kept a contact with the past, making this account possible--Mrs Stanley Lyle.

Of the 3 sons Alex is unmarried, William G. married Rhea Gooding and lives at Middlemarch, J. Stanley married Lena Hill and lives on the homestead. They have 3 sons and 3 daughters. William D. who married Marion Wallis in 1949 and lives on Lot 40 North Talbot Road. They have one daughter Elizabeth. Robert S. who married Jean Irwin in 1950 and lives on Lot 42 South Talbot Road. Mary is the family traveller, after spending 2 years nursing in a Red Cross Outpost Hospital, she is now getting a general view of the British Isles. Douglas and Eleanor are still at school, and Cathryn has just completed her 3rd year in the Degree Course at Mc Donald Institute.

During their early years in Canada the Lyle brothers practised general farming but in time changed to specialized lines. John Lyle turned to Dairying and for many years sold whole milk in the city. Alex Lyle and his sons fed beef cattle, a business that his sons and grandsons still follow. Stanley Lyle and sons carry on dairying on a large scale.

David Lyle liked gardening and made trips twice weekly during the summer and fall to London market. The wagon was loaded the night before so a start could be made about 2 A. M. , an extra horse was taken along and the trip was shortened by crossing Kettlecreek and taking a road between the hills up to the Gravel Road where the horses were changed. This route by-passed one toll-gate though there were three other toll gates between Sandymount and London. Sometimes grandfather went along too. On one occasion seeing some nice early apples in an orchard beside the road and thinking they would make pleasant eating on the long trip, Father stopped the horse and climbed the fence. He returned to see Granddad driving off smartly towards London and followed as best he could. Grand<sup>d</sup>father's only comment as father climbed aboard was "I'll teach you not to steal apples". They believed in discipline in those days!

If Grandmother Lyle could come back to the old Talbot Road I think she would be very pleased to see her grandchildren and great grandchildren in their comfortable homes, taking their part in the life of the community.

Truly none of the Lyles ever regretted coming to Canada and we too can have no regrets.

Margaret Kirkwood Lyle.



X. Robina was given many honors in Chicago. She was nominated Woman of the year (the first ever given to a woman) and a new school in Budgensen was named the Robina Lyle School.

This account is intended to bring the history of the Lyle family up to date. There have been many changes and much sorrow in this segment of the family since the last account was written in 1951. Continuing on from this period:

Alex Lyle, owner of Lot 42, died in August 1955.

William G. Lyle passed away in March 1962. His widow continues to run the farm at Middlemarch with the able help of Tom

Markle. *The farm was sold in '69 and Rhona Lyle built a house at top of Fingel Hill and lives there.*

Miss Verna Lyle, retired from her position at the St. Thomas Times-Journal only two years, died of a sudden heart attack while on a visit to her sisters in Chicago in November 1961. Then in October 1964, Robina, living and working in Chicago, suffered a similar fate.

A year later, in 1965, Miss Edna Lyle left her position with the Art Institute and returned to the home farm and is living there now with Margaret and Anna.

J. Stanley Lyle, the only one to raise a family, is still living on his own farm, Lot 43, but now he is living there alone. His youngest son Douglas, age 19, was killed at the Railroad Crossing on his own side road in December 1952.

In June 1954 Mary married R. Earl Beattie and resides at 19 Hepburn Ave. St. Thomas. They have two children, Kathryn Ann and Donald Robert.

Cathryn, after graduation and receipt of her degree as Dietitian from McDonald College, spent some time interning at hospitals in Boston and Ann Arbor. In October 1959 she married Jack Ireland, and they reside at Talbotville. She continues her duties at Victoria Hospital, London.

*Cathryn Lyle Ireland lives now at Fingel '71 and is head dietitian at Victoria Hospital London.*

Eleanor trained as a nurse and graduated from St. Joseph's Hospital, London. In April 1960 she married an Irishman, William J. Fair and they live in London, with their three daughters, Maureen, Pamela and <sup>Janice</sup> ~~Janis~~. *and son Jamie*  
William D. Lyle had another daughter Susan, and continued in partnership with his father and brother Robert until his tragic death from cancer in April 1961. His wife sold the farm in 1965 to Mr. Peter Vanderwyst and she moved to St. Thomas with her two daughters, Elizabeth and Susan. Robert S. now has three children, James Douglas, Janet Isabel and John Robert, and continues his Stenhouse Muir dairy farming on Lot 42.

The sudden sad death of Mrs. J. Stanley Lyle in October 1966 was a blow to all who knew her. Not only her family, but the entire community was deeply affected by her passing.

This brings our story up to date as of the present time, but we hope the history will be continued at a later date.

January 1978

In 1967 Robert S. Lyle built a new home directly across the road from his old house. When his family moved to their new home Mr. Bert Harmsen and family, who had been living in a small house located on the sideroad and now demolished, moved into the old home. Mr. Harmsen has been employed as Herdsman for Robert Lyle since 1966.

Also, in November 1967 a son, James Lyle (Jamie) was born to Eleanor and William Fair in London.

In 1968 Rhea Lyle sold her farm at Middlemarch to Mr. Arnold Catt and built a new home near the top of the Fingal Hill, next to the home of her sister, Mrs. Neil Munro, and lived there until her death on December 11, 1977.

1969 was the year Cathryn and Jack Ireland purchased an old home in Fingal, which they have completely renovated.

Miss Anna D. Lyle passed away on March 30, 1972, leaving just Misses Margaret and Edna living now on the home farm.

Mr. J. Stanley Lyle resided alone on his farm, lot 43, until his death August 31, 1972, and in March of 1974 all the buildings and the rolling pasture lands (approx. 100 acres) were sold to Mr. and Mrs. Edmond Edwards, with Robert Lyle retaining all the workable land.