

Reprinted from an article by Doris M. Fitzgerald in the August 1, 1946 *Marmora Herald* from a clipping provided by George Wilkes, Marmora.

In Ontario, it is the exception rather than the rule to find a farm which has been handed down from one generation to another for more than 130 years.

But this distinction can be claimed for two families in Marmora, and Jim McGrath who operated the Tipperary Hotel on Crowe Lake, and his older sisters and brothers are descendants of both.

Back in the early 1800s, their great grandfather James McGrath of Tipperary, Ireland brought his wife and two children to Canada, by sailing ship. Why they migrated to this part of Ontario no one knows. Perhaps it had been rumored that in the wilds north of Belleville there were lovely little green fringed lakes and a gently rolling countryside reminiscent of the 'hills of home'. At that time, the Crowe Indians roamed the district hunting, fishing and camping in summer in the cedar grove which grew near the site of Tipperary House. Though given to stealing under cover of darkness, they were a friendly tribe and there are many interesting stories about them. It is said that in return for a bobtailed horse they agreed to vacate the islands for the McGraths and move to the other side of the lake.

"Anne's Island" is so called because a squaw of that name was paddled over and marooned there by her jealous husband whenever he went to buy whiskey at the tavern. Then there was the old Indian who brought little bits of silvered rock to show the settlers. No one was ever able to discover where he found them, but there was whispering about a wonderful silver cave near Crowe Lake.

Upon James McGrath's death, the 200-acre grant was divided between his two sons, Michael and Thomas. Due to subdivision and the raising of the lake level by river dams, the original hold-

ing has since been reduced to 45 acres surrounding the old farmhouse. The kitchen wing of this house was built 126 years ago and is of logs now clapboarded over. The first house of the McGraths, also of logs, stood a few hundred yards east of the present one.

In 1914, Mr. and Mrs. James McGrath (Jim's parents) built a large addition to the farmhouse and opened the Tipperary Hotel, which for 32 years has offered hospitality to thousands of Canadian and American summer visitors. Many of them return year after year to fish and swim and play, or simply to rest and enjoy the beautiful scenery with its surprising contrasts of field and forest and vast outcroppings of mineral rock.

Jim's maternal great-grandfather, John Wolfe, a relative of the gallant general who fell at Quebec, was also an Irishman and a pioneer settler in this district. He came from Cork and took up land near what is now Marmora station, where the Wolfe River perpetuates his name. His farm passed to a daughter and is now owned by her son, Edward O'Connor.

To chat with Mrs. James McGrath (Jim's mother) is to touch hands with the past, for she has vivid remembrances of her grandfather John Wolfe who lives to the ripe old age of 103.

She heard from him at first hand about those arduous years when mighty trees had to be felled, the ground cleared of stone, and roads hewn through the bush before they could receive the title of their land. The first grain grown was cut with a sickle and carried on horseback down a blazed trail to the mill in Belleville. Later, it was teamed in by oxen. The first actual profit made by settlers was from potash (obtained by burning the trees). They took it into Belleville (where it was used in soap making) and received household necessities in trade.

Barter was for many years the accepted practice

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The McGraths

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of Marmora

and Mrs. McGrath remembers the tubs of butter which they used to exchange each fall for barrels of white and brown sugar and other winter supplies.

The discovery of iron in the district led to the building of the ironworks by Mr. Hayes.

Houses, shops, churches, a grist mill, a woolen mill, a soap factory and four hotels sprang up around this new industry and so the thriving town of Marmora came into being in 1843.

The mine is now abandoned, "the works" have long since closed, but Mrs. McGrath can remember a stove in her grandfather's house. It had brass legs and a big brass knob on top, and had been made at the foundry in Marmora. She also can remember the iron ore being brought across Crowe Lake on scows from the mine at Blairton. It was landed at the point (then in front of Tipperary Hotel) and drawn by horses into Marmora. The bridge across the river was at that time much farther north than the present one.

Many other local events are impressed upon Mrs. McGrath's memory: the coming of the first telephone, the first motor car in the village, and the first motor boat to stir the silence of the lake. She believes it was her own father, Michael O'Connor, who brought the first binder in the district. He was also responsible for introducing the first electric power when he installed his own, and four or five other families with electric light.

Mrs. James McGrath has probably never considered herself a "career woman" yet her personal record should give modern girls food for thought. While a busy farmer's wife she bore and raised nine children. Eight of them are living and all of them are married. They are Everett McGrath, Mary Callery, Angela Bynes, Elizabeth Forte, Desmond McGrath, Margaret Casey, Michael McGrath and James (Jim McGrath). There are 19 grandchildren.

Besides her proved achievement as wife and mother, Mrs. McGrath helped to plan and run for a number of years the Tipperary Hotel. She must have known lots of hard work, but never a dull or boring moment.

Now at last she has time not to sit with idle hands but to use the palette and brushes laid aside since girlhood. She has a real talent for painting and though entirely self-taught, has many pretty landscapes to her credit.

(Editor's note: Susan Connelly reports the hotel was sold out of the family in the 1960s but has recently been purchased by Karen and Michael Ross of Oakville, McGrath descendants, who will tear down the condemned structure and build a house on the site.)

Guess who's coming for dinner? 214 came from near and far

by Nancy Derrer

Marmora - Susan Connelly of Tipperary Court decided some months ago that it was dreary getting together for family wakes and funerals in 2000.

"We need to celebrate not mourn the death of so many cousins," she decided.

Susan got on the phone and called six people, one from each branch of the McGrath family of Marmora, suggesting a family reunion on the Civic Holiday weekend.

A lot of phones must have rung over the next while, because last weekend 214 direct descendants of James and Mary McGrath of Tipperary, Ireland, gathered for the first time at the family enclave on Tipperary Court to celebrate their common ancestors. Susan explains that this first-ever family reunion was a 'committee' effort.

She turned her garage into a meeting place with its own refrigerator and tables and chairs where kids could get a snack. She had also hung a computer-generated family tree that stretched 28 feet long!

They came from all parts of Ontario, New York State, Massacuttas, New Hampshire and Maine; Susan's sister, came the farthest - she lives in Calgary. The youngest, a three-month-old girl from Napanee, followed by a set of five-month-old triplets from New York State; the oldest Sister Helen McGrath of Willowdale, a sister of the St. Joseph order. Susan is the oldest granddaughter of Margaret McGrath Casey (1906-1995); Margaret was the daughter of the original settlers, James and Mary McGrath.

Each branch of the family wore different coloured

T-shirts, some with the family crest, with the Connellys in dark green. If you hadn't met a cousin from a particular branch, you could identify the branch by the colour of the shirt.

Tipperary Court's homes and cottages were taken over by the extended family; they brought tents, trailers and their own food. The highlight of Day 1 was a campfire after the late-afternoon rain.

On Saturday and Sunday, fishing tournaments were organized for both children and adults; golf tournaments for young and old; tons of kid's games and lots of swimming to cool off. Meals were potluck and no one seemed to go hungry.

During the afternoon, one gal was seen walking around with a huge bowl of watermelon slices for anyone who wanted one; there were vegetable trays; pop was on hand.

Highlight of the weekend

was the Sunday evening meal, catered by Nick and Ann Draganac of Spring Brook. Nick was busy at his portable bar-b-que roasting up 200 pounds of beef, pork and turkey - and getting ready to serve hot dogs to any of the youngsters who wanted them - while Ann, still at home, was preparing potato salad, green salads, vegetable and cheese trays, cakes, tarts and squares. Tables and chairs had been set up under a canopy with long tables awaiting the buffet - perhaps they should have been called 'groaning boards'. Two hundred and fourteen people can tuck away a lot of food!

"No one's mentioned a second reunion," Susan chuckled.

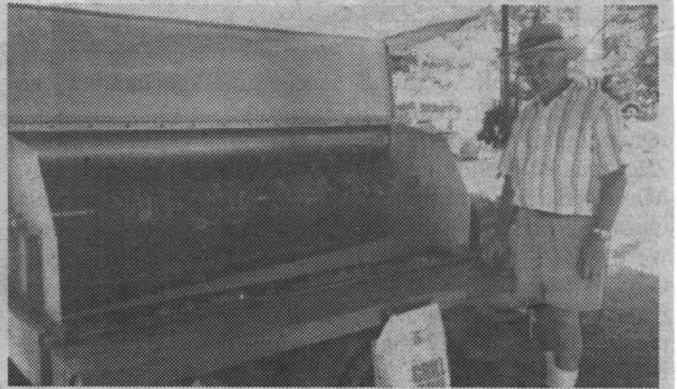
It will be up to the cousins to organize one for their own particular branch of the family.

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It was a weekend of fun! Susan Connelly, in apron top left, was Hostess with the Mostest to 214 relatives! Top right, five-month old triplets from New York State. Kids enjoy swimming, centre. Lower left, some of the cousins hanging out in the shade. Bottom right, Nick Draganac at the bar-b-que.

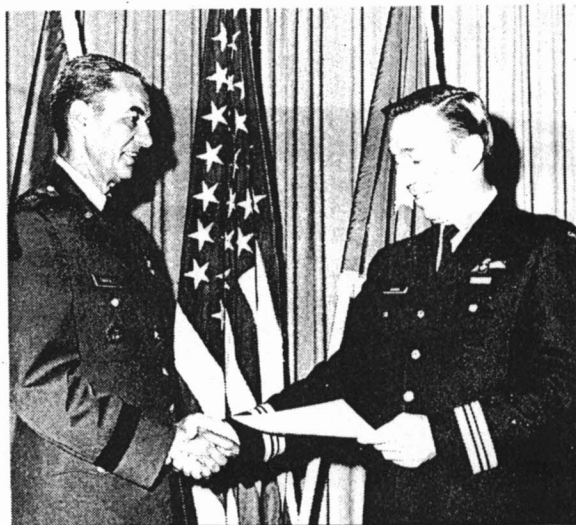
photos/Nancy Derrer



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Receives Certificate

Canadian Forces Major J. Paul McGrath receives the North American Air Defense Command (NORAD) Certificate of Achievement from U.S. Army Major General Thomas H. Barfield, Commander, 23d NORAD Region. Major McGrath received recognition for outstanding performance of duty as Chief, Standardization and Evaluation Division and as Senior Director at the 23d NORAD Region Control Center, Duluth International Airport, Minnesota from July 24, 1970 to July 23, 1973.



MARMORA HERALD

6 SEP 1973

PG 4

James M^cGrath

- born 1867
- died 24 Oct 1925
- buried S.H.C S.3 Panel 6
- erect his upright monument + 4 cornerposts marked S.M^c
- footstone read JAMES McGRATH
- parents Thomas M^cGrath + Ellen Hyland
- expert fishermen, hunter + ⁱⁿ mineral classifying
- farmed + built the Tipperary House, Crose Falls opened in 1914
- married Mary O'Connor in 18 May 1896 S.H.C
- Mary born January, 1867, Marmora
- Mary bapt + confirmed old church across the River
- Mary died 17 June 1960
- Mary's parents Michael O'Connor + Elizabeth Wolfe.
- Mary buried S.H.C S.5 Panel 6
- Mary also excellent fisherman, artist + painter
- Erect their upright monument.
- 9 known children
 - 1) Everard M^cGrath (1897 / 1988) (S.H.C)
 - 2) Ernest ^{James} M^cGrath (1901 / 1910) (S.H.C)
 - 3) Michael M^cGrath
 - 4) James M^cGrath
 - 5) Desmond M^cGrath
 - 6) Margaret M^cGrath - m. T. Casey
 - 7) Elizabeth M^cGrath - m. P. Forte
 - 8) Angela M^cGrath - m. T.J. Byrnes
 - 9) Mary M^cGrath - m. Basil Callery.

Anna McGraff

- born 1877 approx
- died 17 Apr 1971
- buried S.H.C Centre S. G# 110
- parents Thomas McGraff
Ellen Hyland
- married John O'Neil
- on 21 June 1911 at S.H.C
- John born 1878 (a twin brother Robert O'Neil)
- John died 23 Mar 1949 S.H.C
- John's parents John O'Neil
Anne Shannon

Thomas Mcgath & his wife

- Known children - daughter born Anna Mcgath
- Anna married John Neal O'Neil
- on 21 June 1911 at Sacred Heart Church
Mamora
- Agnes Mcgath of Slating

22 June
1911 Mamora
Kerale, Ireland

Mcgath Family Tree

Agnes Mcgath
1876 - 1943 about

married ~~Agnes~~ Crawford
1892 - 1933 25 June
both buried S#C Centre S.
Lot 27

parent Dennis Crawford
Elizabeth Jackson.

parent John O'Neill
1916 Anne Shannon
Thomas Mcgath
Ellen Hyland

Cengela McGrath + Timothy Joseph Byrnes

refers to Chas Byrnes file

- parents; James McGrath + Mary O'Connor

James M'Grath & Mary O'Connor

children

Everard John M'Grath

born 23 Feb 1897

Bapt 21 Mar 1897 S.H.C

Conf 24 May 1908 at S.H.C

deed 25 Nov 1988, Oshawa, Ont

buried S.H.C C.S Lot 122

married Viola O'Leary

Viola born 1889

Viola died 1983

Viola buried S.H.C C.S Lot 123

floral marker & 4 cornerposts

Known children

- 1) Helen M'Grath - Sister Thomas Aquinas of Oshawa
- 2) JEAN (McGRATH) NEAL
- 3) JOHN (JACK) McGRATH
- 4) THOMAS McGRATH

M^cGrath's

James M^cGrath - born 1791 circa

- Tipperary, Ireland
- died 26 Mar 1878
- buried Sacred Heart Cemetery, Mallow
- married Margaret Harnett
- remarried Ellen A. Hyland
- Ellen born 1811 circa
- Ellen died 3 Nov 1885
- Ellen buried Sacred Heart Cemetery
- Only two known children

Thomas & Michael (~~not available~~)
died 18 May 1921

Ellen Hyland

Catherine Hyland

son Thomas - died 11 Oct 1943
~~not available~~

Note

see Susan Connelly
for complete set of
M^cGrath family
tree sheets.

Thomas McGrath - born 1843 circa
- died 19 Nov 1912
- buried at parents gravesite
- married Ellen Holland or Heyland
of Stirling
- Ellen born 1843 circa
- Ellen died 25 Mar 1930 (~~not available~~)
- Ellen buried at Thomas' gravesite
- known children (7) "Anna, ^(~~not available~~) Agnes

2) Frances E. McGrath 5) Dennis (~~not available~~)
born Feb 1885 4) Catherine
died 1 June 1885 7) Margaret
buried with her parents

3) James McGrath
born 1867
died 27 Oct 1925 (~~not available~~)
married Mary O'Connor on 18 May 1896
at Sacred Heart Marmora
- Mary born 20 Jan 1867, Marmora
" died 17 June 1969 (~~not available~~)
Mary's parents Michael O'Connor and
Elizabeth Wolfe.

9 known children

1) ~~Ernest~~ Ernest James McGrath - born 21 Jan 1901
died 15 Apr 1910
(~~not available~~)

Children of James M^cGrath & Mary O'Connor (cont'd)

2) Mary M^cGrath - born 2 May 1898
- died 6 Jun 1987

3) Everard ^{John} M^cGrath - born 23 Feb 1897
- died 25 Nov 1988

4) Angela Ellen M^cGrath - born 16 Nov 1899
died 15 Oct 1980

5) Margaret Ann M^cGrath - born 3 Apr 1906
died 25 Apr 1997

6) Elizabeth Rita M^cGrath - born 3 Sept 1902

- died 13 May 1970 (~~not available~~)

7) Thomas Desmond M^cGrath - born 9 Apr 1905

- died 19 Feb 1966 (~~not available~~)

8) Michael M^cGrath - born circa 9 Dec 1908

died 23 Jan 1979

9) James ^{Patrick} M^cGrath - born 12 Mar 1912

died 1967 27 Aug (~~not available~~)