

The Stephen SECORD and Hannah DeFOREST Family

Stephen SECORD (1757-1808) was born in New Rochelle, Westchester County, New York, USA, son of James Secord and Madelaine BADEAU. The Secord family was living in the Susquehanna Valley of Pennsylvania when the time the American Revolution broke out in 1775. Stephen was serving in the Indian Department and was only 20 years old when he joined up with the volunteer group known as Butler's Rangers, led by Colonel John Butler. By the time the war ended, Stephen had become a Sergeant.

His mother, Madelaine, traveled the 350 miles from Northern Pennsylvania to Montreal, Quebec with a group of other Loyalist women and children to save her own life as well as that of her younger children who were not fighting in the war. One of those children was Stephen's younger brother, James, who would marry an INGERSOLL girl called Laura who became known as Laura Secord. Stephen eventually met up with his family in Montreal when his regiment was disbanded. It was here that he met his wife, Hannah DeFOREST (1767-1841), whose father had also fought, and died, in the Revolutionary War. As families were reunited, settlement began in the new country – the Secords pioneered in the Niagara District of what would become Ontario. Stephen drew Lots 41, 48 and 49 in No. 1 Township. In 1797, he was granted an additional 100 acres to complete his military allotment of land.

In peacetime, Stephen Secord was a miller. His job of grinding the locally grown wheat would help to feed the British fort in the area, Fort George, as well as the rapidly growing settlement. In 1783, he was elected to be an Overseer of Highway and Fence Viewers for Newark Township. Both Stephen and his wife are buried in the Warner Burying Ground, Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON (but only 2 miles from St. David's). If you know where to look, you can see this cemetery on the north side of the QEW as you whiz by.

Stephen Secord and Hannah Deforest had 10 children—Mary (1785), James (1787), David (1790), Elizabeth (1793), Magdalen (1795), William (1797), Richard (1799), Stephen (1801), Ann (1803) and Samuel (1805)--all of who lived and died in the Southern Ontario area. This was quite a common occurrence back then as the roads of the day were not too conducive to long distance travel:

Mary married Richard ROBINSON at Niagara in 1803.
James is buried in Victoria Lawn Cemetery, St. Catharines, ON

David married Nancy CARSCALLEN at Kingston in 1814. They settled in Burford Twp, Brant Co., ON.

Elizabeth died in 1814 and is the young woman who may have accompanied her Aunt Laura on part of her trip to warn the British troops about the pending American invasion in 1813.

Esther Magdalen married George KEEFER, Sr. at Thorold in 1839.

William Edwin married Fanny HOLDEN in Grantham Township about 1831.

Richard Henry married Catherine STULL in Homer in 1840.

Stephen Alexander is buried in Victoria Lawn Cemetery, St. Catharines, ON with his brother, James.

Julia Ann married William STULL in Grantham Township in 1830. They settled in Esquesing Twp, Halton Co., ON

Samuel married Elizabeth WEAVER in Grantham Township in 1829.

This same family and its descendants took up arms twice more in defense of their newfound homeland. The War of 1812 (1812-1815) and the Rebellion of 1837 (1837-1838) both had Secord men fighting to keep Canada Canadian.

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[4g granddaughter of Stephen and Hannah Secord through their descendants Richard Henry Secord (1799), James Richard Robinson Secord (1842), Richard Henry Secord (1866), Eva Alberta Secord (1895) and Shirley Holland Lee (1930)]