

QUEEN'S COUNTY BIOGRAPHY: Susan Anne Gunhilda Wiggins 1846-1921

This woman was born at "Lakeside", Waterborough, on April 6, 1846, the daughter of Vincent White Wiggins and Charlotte Elizabeth Wiggins (daughter of John Wiggins Esq.). "Lakeside" was the beautiful house on the shores of Grand Lake recently occupied by Victor Vincent Wiggins; it was destroyed by fire in 1981.

Susan Anne Gunhilda, who is remembered in Parliamentary history as "Gunhilda" was called "Susan" or "Susie" by her friends. In fact at the Provincial Archives there is a party invitation from her Ottawa days signed in her own hand "Susie Wiggins". She was educated privately, and on August 2, 1864 (some sources say 1862) she married her cousin, E. Stone Wiggins. Whether Susie received all of her education before marriage is uncertain. An awareness of her husband's strong commitment to learning makes it seem possible that "she completed much of her education after marriage" but there is no record of this. In any case she attained a "mastery of English, as well as becoming an outstanding scholar in Latin and Greek".

Obviously Susie travelled with her well-known husband, and benefited from the diverse opportunities available to them. After 1878 they lived in Ottawa and it was here that to her credit she became involved with political action. In 1883 there was a bill before Parliament to "legalize the marriage of a widower with his deceased wife's sister, i.e., his sister-in-law". This, apparently, was a bill to legalize what in fact was practised, but among the Anglican bishops of the day there was strong opposition to the Bill. The leader of this opposition was one Bishop Lewis, and initially he and Susan Wiggins carried on a spirited debate in the Press. It is recorded that her letters showed "great forcefulness, depth and keenness, and even invective". This, as well as her piquant style prompted one leading journalist of the time to state that nothing comparable has appeared in the Canadian press for years".

As a follow up to the debate in the press, Susie went on to make sure that the Bill was passed by the Senate too. At this time the Senate was more powerful than it is now, and sometimes refused to pass legislation that had passed the Lower House. Reports say that Susan, who was an Anglican herself, "went to the lobby of the Senate and argued and fought a ten-day battle with four Anglican bishops" who were opposed. The Bill was passed, and on the day it received second reading, the speaker of the Senate, Sir David McPherson, invited her to take the seat at his right. This was an honour normally reserved for the wife of the Governor General, and was tendered in recognition of her gallant and successful fight. Thus 100 years ago a Queen's County woman fought for social change, and achieved a legislated end to what she called a "cruel discrimination". This piece of jurisprudence was remembered for a long time as "Gunhilda's Bill".

In these years Professor and Mrs. Wiggins appear to have been active in Ottawa society. They lived at Arbor House, Britannia Bay, and many accounts of their entertainments are extant. Two photographs of Susie Wiggins are stored at the Provincial Archives; one of them shows her ready to attend a costume ball, dressed as one of her seventeenth century ancestors. Their summer home was on Grand Lake between Sypher's Cove and the Key Hole. It was a rustic log house and was situated on land that had been in the Wiggins family for generations. In fact it was Mrs. Wiggins who originated the name "Princess Park".

Sometime after the death of E. Stone Wiggins in 1910, Susan was married to Judge Bice of Denver, Colorado, and continued to spend long summers at Grand Lake often staying until almost freeze-up. A note about her life concludes "This lone, great, cultured, and highly intellectual woman.....died at Ottawa in February 1921".

The Sawmill on the Don Track

In the early 1800's the corner of where the Knight Road, the Cox Road and the Shore Road met was a very busy spot. Here was located a grist mill, a saw mill, a carding mill, a blacksmith shop, and two grocery stores. One store was conducted by Samuel Jacob Farris in the house now owned by Ronald McLaughlin. The other was operated by Richard Knight in the house later owned

by Henry Clause; this was torn down a few years ago. The grist mill had a long and varied career which is closely related to the story of the stream on which it was located. The Knight Road and the Cox Road from Lower Jemseg were well-worn with traffic, for this grist mill served the whole district far and wide, some coming from across the Lake by boat.

The first saw mill in Mill Cove was built on land granted to Joshua Foster at the mouth of the brook and later he built a grist mill on the same site. This mill was burned and was rebuilt in 1828 by Thomas Cox who had acquired the property, and for more than four decades this mill was operated by Mr. Cox. In about 1873 it became the property of Joseph Coy, Upper Gagetown, who promptly sold it to Deacon Benjamin Titus of Jemseg. Deacon Titus and son Charles operated the mill for 35 years. It was then sold to George White, who in turn sold it to Mr. Lee Knight, who operated it until 1922. For more than 100 years the people from points as far removed as Gagetown, Sheffield, Douglas Harbour, Cumberland Bay, the Narrows, and points beyond brought their grain to this busy spot.

There were other mills on the stream. A short distance upstream a Mr. Brittan built a dam and operated a saw mill. About a mile up the brook Mr. William Wiggins constructed a dam and built a grist mill and a carding mill. Many older people will remember the Den Pond. This was created by William Wiggins, who flooded the valley, which at that time was a tamarack swamp. The remains of some of these earthwork dams are still visible near the old mill site. One of the results of Mr. Wiggins' venture was that Mr. Foster dug a trench about two miles long and to a depth of 15 feet in some places to bring water from other watersheds so he might have an independent flow of water. This task was never completed. Later, Abraham Wiggins, William's son, operated the mill and still later John, another of William's sons, operated it. Finally the Titus's bought the Wiggins mill and closed it down. Only faint traces now remain of the Wiggins home and mills.

**G. A. Knight

Recipes: This time we have 2 recipes that can be used in springtime when the ingredients are readily available. These are good recipes for hard economic times, and muskrat makes excellent stew meat, too. The wintergreen berries are a good source of Vitamin C.

Fried Muskquash (Muskrat):

Wild meat has a distinct flavour, and anyone used to the force-fed stuff you get in the supermarkets, who eats nothing else but that, may find it disagreeable to their taste. (I tasted muskrat cooked by an Indian once and I thought it was black duck until told differently.) Ingredients for fried muskrat:

- 4 hindquarters of muskrat
- cooking oil
- salt and seasonings (sage or other)
- ketchup (or barbecue sauce); 1 medium onion

Soak meat overnight in salt and water and drain. Cover bottom of frypan with cooking oil and get it hot. Drop hindquarters in oil and brown both sides (about 10 minutes). Put ketchup on meat, then add cut up onion. Sprinkle with salt and seasoning. Cook until tender. Serve hot.

The low wintergreen plant with its edible red berries is found on most any piece of ground not under cultivation, as the snow goes off. The early settlers in Quebec learned from the Indians that it had a medicinal value and could be used as a substitute for tea. It is sometimes called Tea Berry, Woodman's Tea, or Canada Tea. The oil extracted from the leaves was used to flavour home-made candy. Today the oil is used to flavour toothpaste, mouthwash and liniments.

Wintergreen Tea: 115 ml. ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup) wintergreen leaves, shredded fine with scissors
450 ml. (2 cups) boiling water

Pour water over leaves in a saucepan and simmer for one minute. Remove from heat and let steep for 10 minutes, covered. Add sugar or honey to taste and sip it hot. (Milk is not recommended)

Wintergreen Candy: 225 ml. (1 cup) wintergreen leaves
225 ml. (1 cup) red wintergreen berries
225 ml. (1 cup) cold water
450 ml. (2 cups) sugar
15 ml. (1 Tbsp.) corn syrup; pinch of salt.

Whirl leaves, berries and water in blender. Bring to a boil then remove from heat, cover tightly and let stand for 3 days. Strain through cloth into saucepan and add to sugar, salt and syrup. Boil until it reaches brittle ball in cold water. Do not stir or beat,

cool slightly. Pour into buttered pan and when partly cool score with knife in small squares. When cold break into pieces.

**Jim Hargraves

Memories of the Misses Simpson of Gagetown

For many years there lived in Gagetown 3 sisters who will long be remembered for the impress their lives made upon the community. Old-time virtues, innate refinement, and a love for the better things of life characterized the three, combined with a great deal of ability, which expressed itself in the public duties which they carried out so faithfully for so many years, in their own home village. The youngest, Miss Ida A. Simpson, was a graduate nurse, who for a long period of her professional life was head of the Stillmar Infirmary at Harvard University. On her retirement to the quiet life of Gagetown, she took part in many projects carried on for the betterment of others, including the Red Cross, the Women's Institute, and church societies. Miss Ella A. Simpson served as postmistress at Gagetown for a length of time that won her and her sister, Miss Leora Simpson, the Jubilee Medal of King George V. Perfection was her ideal in all her work, and her beautiful handwriting was expressive of her character. After her retirement, she did not go out much but she said more than once how much she missed seeing all those, not only the personal friends who came to call on her, but all the men, women and children of the locality, whom she had served so faithfully, and into whose lives she had entered in such a personal way. Miss Leora J. Simpson, who lived until well up in the 90's, will long be remembered for her unusual skill as a taxidermist; and Gagetown School is fortunate to possess two cases of her mounted New Brunswick birds.

Farther back than most of us remember, the Simpson family kept a Hotel and Store in the large white building on the Front Street, now being changed into an apartment house. Here, these three ladies learned, in addition to all their other accomplishments, to be excellent cooks. They could make a lemon pie with pastry of fairy-like lightness, and cakes of truly swansdown texture.

In April 1953 in the course of removing the last bits of their possession from the house before renovations began, an old school book was found in which were a few of their cherished recipes. One of these dated August 19, 1893, was called "Gagetown Village Cake". The recipe follows:

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| 1½ C. Sugar | ½ C. butter |
| 1 C. milk | 2½ C. flour |
| Whites of 3 eggs | ½ tsp. soda |
| 1 tsp. cream of tartar | Flavouring |

I replaced the whites of 3 eggs with two eggs, the whites and yolks beaten separately. The cake is good. ***M. G. Otty

School Return: This return is for District Number 3, Parish of Johnston, which was the Long Creek School. The date is 1844, and the teacher is a married woman named Agnus Jane Waters who was first licensed to teach in 1840. The ages of the students are unusual compared to the other return in this series, but the usual branches of knowledge were taught.

James Lewis	27	Jane Broad (June?)	16	Jane Phillips	12
John Lewis	22	Ann Phillips	15	Daniel Lewis	11
John Phillips	21	William Cole	15	William Broad	10
Isaac Broad	19	Elisabeth Broad	14	Susannah Cole	9
Sarah Cole	19	John Cole	14	Lydia Cole	9
Emily Lewis	18	Abigail Allward	13	Richard Cole	8
Thomas Phillips	17	Oliver Cole	13	Elvirah (Elviah?) Phillips	8
James Cole	17	Hannah Broad	12	Emily Cole	7
Rebeckah Densmore	17	George Cole	12	Robert Willson	8
Abigail Cole	17	Lucy Cole	12		

Conclusion of Catalogue of Queen's Co. Built Vessels continued from Vol.3, #1:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rig</u>	<u>Tons</u>	<u>Where Built</u>	<u>When</u>	<u>Owner or Managing Owner & Address</u>
Sea Foam	Wbt.	69	First Range, QC	1876	John R. Lunney, Waterbor.
Sailer	Wbt.	29	Washademoak	1850	Benj.H.Appleby, Hampton
Seraph	Wbt.	46	Wickham	1849	John S. Coes, Cambridge
Silver Wave	Schr.	65	Cambridge	1870	Moses D. Colwell, Cambridge
Spring Bird	Schr.	92	Waterborough	1870	Scammell Bros., St. John
Sultan	Wbt.	60	Canning	1877	Jas.A.Wasson, Canning

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rig</u>	<u>Tons</u>	<u>Where Built</u>	<u>When</u>	<u>Owner or Managing Owner & Address</u>
Sunbeam	Wbt.	78	Grand Lake	1875	John G. Tobin, Millidgeville
Telegraph	Wbt.	57	Canning	1849	Robt. W. W. McKim, Johnston
Templar	Wbt.	59	Grand Lake	1868	W. W. McKiel, Greenwich
Temperance Belle	Schr.	79	Johnston	1870	Chas. P. Tower, Portland
Teneriffe	Schr.	57	Grand Lake	1867	Thomas C. Dykeman, Jemseg
Three Sisters	Wbt.	42	Johnston, Q.C.	1878	James W. Cody, Johnston
True	Wbt.	61	Grand Lake	1864	M. McDonald, St. John
Uranus	Wbt.	68	Scott's Town, Q.C.	1874	David Flowers, Canning
Vanguard	Wbt.	48	Washademoak	1846	Edwd. M. Dickie, Gagetown
Watchman	Wbt.	40	Grand Lake	1865	Jos. A. Belyea, Cambridge
Wildflower	Schr.	33	Washademoak	1866	George McDonald, Cambridge
Wild Hunter	Schr.	87	Canning	1870	John Johnston, Sackville
Xiphias	Stmr.	29	Up. Gagetown	1874	James A. Lyon, Up. Gagetown
Zephyr	Wbt.	61	Grand Lake	1865	John Gibson, Marysville

Also 2 Vessels Registered in St. Andrews:

Dart	Schr.	34	Canning	1842	James O'Brien, St. John
Dauntless	Schr.	76	Waterborough	1867	Robert Ross, St. Andrews

The following is a note on the various school buildings at Cambridge, and a list of the teachers who taught there between 1879 and 1952. The salaries ranged from a low of \$120 per year to the munificent sum of \$1450 in 1951. The number of pupils ranged from 13 in 1929 to highs of 39 in 1880, 1881, 1886, 1906, 1910 and 1911, and never exceeded 30 after 1920.

1879 - 1900

1901 - 1925

1926 - 1952

Rachel J. Robinson	Gordon B. Night	Carey B. Hughes
Judson B. Clark	Jennie P. Alward	Evelyn G. Smith
Lemuel W. Fowler	E. Stanley Knox	Myrtle L. Corcoran
George M. Wetmore	Mary A. Davis	Ethel B. Straight
Charles T. Bailey	Elizabeth Cowan	Pearl Miller
Agnes G. Gray	Flora White	O. Earle McCutcheon
Fannie R.S. Palmer	Annie G. Campbell	J. Egerton Jewett
Selina N. Fowler	M. Addie Woods	Margaret Orchard
Fred S. Ferris	Annie L. Briggs	Edith H. Perry
Annie S. Robinson	Eldon R. Palmer	A. Palmerston Hetherington
Rachael Robinson	Florence I. Black	Marvin Muir
Burnham Barton	Lovella B. Chapman	Elizabeth Orchard
William W. Wright	Cora E. Mabee	Kenneth M. Hughes
Dannie A. Gunter	Elizabeth Wetmore	Lois Elgee
Clotelda Kennedy	Maye Vivian Caples	Marion Slix
Frank D. White	Florence M. DeBow	Lillian M. Pugsley
Charles C. Strong	Janet I. McBeath	Phylis L. MacAlpine
Janet MacDonald	Mildred Craig	Anne McLaughlin
Annie L. Briggs	Dela A. MacKenzie	Barry Murphy
John P. Bulyea	Gladys M. Draper	Evelyn G. Thorne
G. Wetmore Gunter	Mildred E. Mosher	Eleanor Springer
Susie J. Gilchrist	Margaret E. Smith	
	Eulah M. Neal	
	Laura I. Akerley	
	Elsie M. Rankine	
	Elsie P. Gale	
	Norman McL. Patterson	

***Fred Corcoran

Bits and Pieces:

Two obituary notices that fell out of an old book; no date was given:

"McDonald - at Cambridge, on the 30th ult. Susan, the beloved wife of Joseph McDonald, and daughter of the late Lewis MacDonald, eq., aged 52 years, leaving eight children. She was a member of 1st. Cambridge Baptist Church."

"Wetmore - at the Narrows, on the 5th last, Andrew Soloder, aged 3 months and 11 days, infant son of George M. and Emily Wetmore. 'Of such is the kingdom of heaven.'"

The prim old lady was given her first glass of beer. After sipping for a minute, she looked up with a puzzled air. "How odd" she murmured, "This tastes just like the medicine my husband has been taking for the past 30 years."