

History



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Batty family firmly planted in Brooklin's farming history

Last month we talked about the Brooklin Women's Institute and Charlotte Batty, the woman charged with preserving and writing the history of Brooklin by way of the Institute's Tweedsmuir History.

I would be remiss in mentioning Charlotte Batty (1881-1950) and not following up with a background on the Batty family itself. There are several generations and branches but this month we will focus on the recognizable William Franklin (Frank) Batty, Charlotte's husband.

The son of Kedron farmers William and Elizabeth Batty, Frank (1878-1969) owned and operated Crescent Stock Farm, located on the west side of Baldwin Street, south of Winchester Road.

The farmland has since been taken over for the expansion of Hwy. 407 but the property was once the location of a highly successful farm, breeding premier Clydesdales and Guernsey and Jersey



BROOKLIN -- Frank Batty (1878-1969) owned and operated Crescent Stock Farm, located on the west side of Baldwin Street south of Winchester Road in Brooklin.

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE WHITBY ARCHIVES

sey cattle. Prior to Frank Batty's ownership in 1905, the farm was run by Charles Coakwell, Charlotte's father.

Charlotte and Frank were married in 1903 at Crescent Stock where it was recorded by a local newspaper that "amid tasteful decorations and joyous converse," a "large company assembled

in which Whitby, Oshawa, Toronto and other points were represented."

By all accounts the couple and their three surviving children were well-liked in the Brooklin community and were known throughout the region on account of the recognition granted to Frank for his award-winning animals.

The Daily Times-Gazette wrote in 1953 that "For a half century many of the major awards for the showing of fine Clydesdales at the Canadian National Exhibition and at many Ontario fall fairs have been won by Frank Batty of Brooklin." He apparently only failed to win the one year he acted as a judge.

The Batty cows received similar accolades when in 1954 representatives from the Borden Dairy Company selected one from among his herd to become Elsie the cow, the mascot which appeared on

the company's dairy-based products and travelled to exhibitions in North America representing the brand.

Frank died at the age of 91 and is buried, like so many of Brooklin's pioneering families, in Groveside Cemetery. His interest in breeding and farming was passed down to his son, John and grandson, Bill, both of whom continued the tradition of raising exceptional horses and cows.

Next month I'll share with you an interesting scrapbook donated to the Archives by a member of the Batty family and we'll take some time to examine a different branch of this farming family.

Sarah Ferencz is the archivist at the Whitby Public Library. Contact her at archives@whitbylibrary.on.ca

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