

The Ross Family

By Erin Brubacher for Heritage Mississauga

Another stop on our tour is Cedar Park Farm, formerly near the intersection of Cawthra and Burnhamthorpe. Perhaps one of the most economically successful farms in the area, Cedar Park Farm was home to George Woodford Ross and his wife Didamia (nee Paul) Ross. The origins of George W. Ross are unclear. He came from Virginia some time in the early nineteenth century.¹ There is no record of his family or his past, however during his life time, he did quite well as a farmer. He also had skill as a carpenter and used this skill after his retirement. It is unclear whether George W. Ross was in fact black or not. After the 1861 census, there is very little proof that any of the family was indeed black. Our definite link to the black community lies with his wife, Didamia Ross. Didamia was the daughter of a prominent member of the Wilberforce Settlement in Southwestern Ontario. Wilberforce was an early black community which fell apart in the mid 1830's due to poor management. Benjamin and Nathaniel Paul, brothers, and their families came up from Cincinnati, Ohio in 1830 to contribute to this new blooming community.² Benjamin, and his brother Nathaniel were ministers, and were also the sons of a minister and black revolutionary war veteran.³ Didamia's father, Benjamin Paul, was a minister in the community from 1831 until his untimely death in 1836. During his short time in Wilberforce, he became entangled in the politics of the colony and allied himself with some questionable characters. He has been portrayed as a proud but stubborn man. In the memoirs of Austin Steward, one of Paul's rivals for power, he claims that in his last hours, Paul could be seen "wreathing in agony on his death bed... his sunken eyes gleaming wildly...continually lamenting his misspent time...and wicked life"⁴. Whether there is truth in this or not, the intrigue is almost too much to bear. Unfortunately like so much of history, the truth of these matters has been lost in time. Benjamin Paul had ten children, Didamia being the fifth child.

¹ J.H. Pope, Illustrated Historical Atlas: The County of Peel, Ont (Toronto: Walker and Miles, 1877) 71.

² From: "The Liberator" 17 September 1831. Reprinted in C. Peter Ripley, et al., "The Black Abolitionist Papers vol. 2, Canada, 1830-1865" (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1986) 47-56. <<http://docsouth.unc.edu/steward/support1.html>>

³ C. Peter Ripley "The Black Abolitionist Papers vol. 2, Canada, 1830-1865" (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1986) reference #9. <<http://docsouth.unc.edu/steward/support1.html>>

⁴ Austin Steward, "Twenty-Two Years a Slave, and Forty Years a Freeman; Embracing a Correspondence of Several Years, While President of Wilberforce Colony, London, Canada West" (Rochester, N.Y.: William Alling, 1857) 259. <<http://docsouth.unc.edu/steward/steward.html>>

George and Didamia were married in 1834 and moved to the Cooksville area between 1834 and 1836, buying land in 1836.⁵ They raised 10 children, some of whom continued to live at the farm until their deaths in the early 20th century. It is not known with certainty if George W. Ross was black. This being said, on the 1861 census both he and Didamia were listed as mixed or “mulatto”.⁶ However after this census, it is difficult to find record of them being black at all. Subsequent records have the whole family claiming “Scottish” heritage with no mention of being black. It is difficult to tell whether the Ross family was indeed “passing” as white, as the term went. It does, however, seem likely that at some point someone decided not to disclose their heritage. It is also interesting to note that living descendants of the Ross family knew nothing of their black heritage. This seems to say a lot about the racial climate of the time as it appears that it was easier to feign whiteness than it was to be part white and part black. It is also possible that the lack of black settlers in the area, and their success at farming simply helped them to fit in well with white settlers, indeed George W. Ross seemed to have some very well-to-do friends in the area. George W. Ross died in 1878 and Didamia died shortly after. Below is George W.’s death registration.

- George Woodford Ross
 - o Died Feb. 18th 1878
 - o 82 yrs
 - o born in Virginia
 - o died from Chronic Bronchitis (8days) and genied debility
 - o attended by Dr. M.H. Aikens
 - o registered on Feb. 25th by John Hardy (undertaker)
 - o est. birth year 1796⁷

Some of their descendants still live in this area, not far from where their ancestor made his living through working the land.

The children of George and Didamia Ross are difficult to differentiate, simply because of their wealth of names. The females especially seem to go by three or more names at different points. The data shows that there were 10 children, Benjamin Woodford, Elizabeth Adelaide, Corbin Levi, Charles Warburton, James Woodford, Alexander Campbell, Mityluu Eliza (Also known as Kate, Catherine),

⁵ “Abstract Index of Concession 2, Lot 12, NDS”, Toronto Township, Ontario: 10 October 1836, registration # 13254. Documents referenced at the Region of Peel Land Registry, Brampton, Ontario.

⁶ Government of Upper Canada, 1861 census, Peel Region: Toronto Township, District 3, pg. 53. Records obtained at The Region of Peel Archives, Brampton, Ontario.

⁷ Ontario Death Registrations, County of Peel, Division of Toronto Township, source <www.ancestry.com> Accessed at the Mississauga Library, Central Branch.

Didamia Anne, Sarah Celestine (Also known as Lessa or Cessa), Rebecca Evangeline (also known as Eva) and one daughter from his first wife, Lucie Anne Preston. On the different records, different names are used. The most accurate and complete list of the family is in the Will of George W. Ross. Below is a summary of the findings in his will:

His friends Charles Wilcox(Toronto Townships, farmer) and James Mensies (York, Gentleman) are appointed executors.

Benjamin Paul Ross is granted the position of head of the family, basically the power to distribute and look after the remaining family members. (Notably Didamie his "beloved wife" and any of his daughters who do not marry)

Benjamin- 100 acres
Corbin Levi- 100 acres
Charles- \$200
James Woodford- \$600
Alexander Campbell- \$600
Elizabeth Adelaide- \$200
Mityluu Eliza- \$300
Didamia Anne- \$300
Sarah Celestine- \$300
Rebecca Evangeline- \$300
Lucie Ann Preston (daughter of first wife)- \$1.00

From Benjamin and Corbin, Didamie is to be given \$100 cash per year and a home in the house they always lived in.

Benjamin and Corbin are taking over the mortgage, Benjamin is to provide for Corbin:
- the horses harnesses, sleigh, 2 cows, 6 sheep, seed grain for 1st year.

His daughters can take whatever furnishings they want from the house.

He seems to be illiterate, or unable to write at the time, as since he signs with an X instead of signature. ⁸

⁸ Last Will and Testament of George Woodford Ross, presented in 1879, executors Charles Wilcox and James Mensies, under concession 2, lot 12, NDS, Reg # 3025. Microfilm consulted at the Region of Peel Land Registry, Brampton, Ontario.

It is interesting to note that his first child, Lucie Anne Preston, received \$1.00, even for the time, a laughable amount. This is the only known record of his first marriage and it appears he wasn't overly fond of his eldest daughter! Lucie Anne is not noted on any of the census records as living with the family; her existence continues to be a mystery. This depiction of his thoughts and wishes after death gives us a closer look at his personality, and what he held dear. He speaks with great tenderness of his "beloved wife", and provides for each of his children (except poor Lucie Anne). He also speaks with kindness of his friends, who he names executors; Charles Wilcox and James Mensies. These men were prominent members of their respective communities, with James Mensies being listed as a "gentleman", and Charles Wilcox a notably wealthy member of our early community. This says something of his social status upon death.

The family farm was located at concession 2, lot 12 NDS. George W. Ross bought the property from James Young and John S. Young in 1836 and 1837 respectively.⁹ As the census data shows us, (appendix one) Ross did well during his life time, building up a respectable farm, and considerable cash flow. The earliest census which the Ross family appears on is the 1861/2 census.¹⁰ While there were technically censuses recorded prior to this, in 1842 and 1851, they are either incomplete, or difficult to decipher. In 1861, the family was living in a frame house, built in 1855. The entire family is listed as "mulatto" under the race column, and there are 11 children mentioned. The youngest, Georgia E.S. Ross, aged 4, does not appear on any subsequent censuses. It appears that between 1861 and 1871, the Ross family lost a child. All the children, except for the two oldest, are listed as attending school. It is difficult to know which school they attended, there are two likely candidates; Cooksville School SS #2, or Burnhamthorpe School SS #8. It seems probable that they attended the Burnhamthorpe School, since it was older and more established when the Ross children were of age.

The agricultural census shows them as owning 200 acres, with 140 under cultivation. The Ross family grew wheat, barley, peas, oats, Indian corn, potatoes, carrots, turnips and hay on their farm, fairly common crops for the time. They had cows, bulls, sheep and pigs. Their farm is appraised as being worth \$16 000, one of the wealthiest in the area. The trend continues on the 1871 census, however apparently at 75 years old, George W. decided to retire. He is

⁹ "Abstract Index of Concession 2, Lot 12, NDS", Toronto Township, Ontario: 10 Oct 1836 and 28 Oct 1837, Registration # 13254 and 14597. Microfilm consulted at the Region of Peel Land Registry, Brampton, Ontario.

¹⁰ Although the census is technically marked as an 1861 collection, there were many delays, and the information wasn't collected until 1862. This leads to some confusion and discrepancies with ages and dates. See Appendix One for transcription of black people living in Peel on the 1851, 1861, 1871, 1881 censuses.

listed as a Carpenter, while his sons Benjamin, Charles, Corbin, James and Alexander are listed as the farmers in the family. The family now have 8 barns, 160 acres under cultivation, and are growing many of the same crops, along with orchards of apples and plums. The noticeable difference between these censuses, is that the family now claims Scottish heritage, and are no longer listed as black or "mulatto". The family has continued to prosper to this point.

However it seems that after the death of Ross in 1878, his family encounter some financial difficulties. As the land registry records show, both Benjamin and Corbin mortgaged their properties out.¹¹ In Benjamin's case, it was likely to finance another farm in the Trafalgar area, which he is shown living at in the 1901 census and beyond. Corbin was apparently not as thrifty with his money, as on March 3rd, 1894, Corbin defaulted on his mortgage, and the land was sold by his financier, John Taggert to Alexander Brody.¹² Luckily for the family, only the East half of the land was lost, and the family could continue to live and farm on the West half. They did so until on Feb. 7th 1911 Elizabeth A Wright (Widow) and Kate M.E. Ross (Spinster) sold the land to cattle dealers for \$5500.

Each child of George W. Ross has an interesting story to tell. Through birth, death and marriage records, a clearer picture emerges. With these records, we can begin to piece together a small portion of the puzzle. Below are some of the only recorded documents which each individual left behind.

1. Benjamin Paul Ross

Marriage:¹³

- Benjamin P. Ross and Sarah Amelia Leach
 - Benjamin 47yrs old, living in Cooksville
 - Sarah 25 yrs. Old living in Trafalgar
 - Parents Ransom and Mary Leach
 - Married 21 Nov 1883
 - Married by John D. Leek

Birth: ¹⁴

- Ardna Elma Ross
 - Born 22nd Sept. 1884
 - In Peel, Toronto Townships

¹¹ "Abstract Index of Concession 2, Lot 12, NDS", Toronto Township, Ontario: 6 March 1886 and 24 Jan 1889 and 12 April 1889 and 16 Jul 1891, Registration # 5539 and 6723 and 6804 and 7631. Microfilm consulted at the Region of Peel Land Registry, Brampton, Ontario.

¹² Abstract Index of Concession 2, Lot 12, NDS", Toronto Township, Ontario: 3 Mar 1894, Registration # 8388. Microfilm consulted at the Region of Peel Land Registry, Brampton, Ontario.

¹³ Ontario Marriage Registration, County of Peel, Division of Toronto Township, source <www.ancestry.com> Accessed at the Mississauga Library, Central Branch.

¹⁴ Ontario Birth Registrations, County of Peel, Division of Toronto Township, source <www.ancestry.com> Accessed at the Mississauga Library, Central Branch.

- Mother: Sarah Amelia Ross
- Father: Benjamin P. Ross
- Georgia Anna Elizabeth Ross
 - Born 26th January 1888
 - Father: Benjamin P. Ross
 - Mother: Sarah Amelia Ross
 - Born in Peel, Toronto Townships
- Woodford Ross
 - Born 31st October 1894
 - In Peel, Toronto Townships
 - Father: Benjamin P. Ross
 - Mother: Sarah Amelia Ross

Children's Marriage:¹⁵

- Ray Woodford Ross
 - Father: Benjamin P. Ross
 - Mother: Sarah Amelia Leach
 - On March 5th 1919
 - Took place in Oakville
 - Occupation: Fruit Grover
 - Methodist
 - Living in Oakville
 - Born in Cooksville
 - 24 yrs old
 - Spouse: Clennis Leora Dicker
 - 23 years old
 - living in Oakville
 - born Harbour Beach Michigan, U.S.A
 - Church of England
 - Father: Charles Andrew Dicker
 - Mother: Kate Carkriff
 - Witness: Albert William Taylor, Lorne Park
 - Witness: Florance Whitlock, Oakville
 - Minister HSD Woodard, Oakville, Church of England
 - Affidavit sworn in Toronto Before Harry Thomas Babb, 131 Young Street, on February 26th 1919
- Florance Amanda Ross

¹⁵ Ontario Marriage Registrations, County of Peel, Division of Toronto Township, source <www.ancestry.com> Accessed at the Mississauga Library, Central Branch

- Born in Ontario est. 1897
- Aged 25 yrs.
- Occupation: bookkeeper
- Lived at 294 Jarvis Street
- Father: Benjamin P. Ross
- Mother: Sarah Amelia Leach
- Spouse: Frank George Colwell
 - 29 yrs.
 - Born in Ontario
 - Father: George Colwell
 - Mother: Annie Barrett
 - Living in York
 - Occupation: Conductor
 - Methodist
 - Lived at 125 Margueretta Street
- Married Feb. 1922 in York
- Married by Geo. Grant in Presbyterian Denomination
- Cert. # 2526

Benjamin Ross moved to Trafalgar, Halton County sometime in the late nineteenth century. His family as it was in 1901, and 1911 can be seen on the respective censuses for the Halton area.

1901 census

- Benjamin P. Ross
 - Married
 - Born Aug. 8th 1836
 - Methodist
 - Farmer
 - In Halton, sub.dist Trafalgar
 - 64yrs old
 - pg.13
- Sarah Ross
 - Married
 - 42 yrs.
 - Born Oct. 1st, 1858
 - English origins
 - Methodist
- Edna Ross
 - Born Sept. 23 1884
- Flora

- Born March 22 1886
- George
 - Born Feb. 26 1888
- Woodford
 - Born Oct.31 1894¹⁶

1911 Census

- Benjamin Ross
 - Living at SF2 2SDS
 - Born Aug. 1836
 - 74 yrs.
 - Baptist
 - Farmer
 - Can read/write
 - English Origins
 - Pg. 9, Halton, Trafalgar, sub. 18
- Sarah Ross
 - Born Oct. 1858
 - 52 yrs.
 - Methodist
 - Pg. 9 Halton
- Edna Ross
 - Born Sept. 1884
 - 26 yrs
 - Methodist
- Flora Ross
 - Born Sept. 1886
 - 24 yrs
 - Methodist
- Georgia Ross
 - June 1888
 - 23 yrs
 - Methodist
- Woodford Ross

¹⁶ Government of Canada, 1901 census, Peel Region: Toronto Township. Records obtained online at < <http://automatedgenealogy.com/index.html> >

- Born Oct. 1894
- 16 yrs.
- Methodist

- Ernest Gulliver
 - Living with them
 - Born in England 1892
 - Anglican
 - Labourer¹⁷

In the Toronto Township Meeting Minutes Benjamin Ross' name can be found as the "pathmaster" of the area. The pathmaster was a position given to an established member of the community to supervise and look after the building of roads in their area. The minutes read as follows:

- March 31st 1888: B.P. Ross is sighted as "pathmaster", paid \$1.08¹⁸

- June 30th 1888: Benjamin P. Ross for 8 cedar posts @ 20c each \$1.60¹⁹

The grave of Benjamin Ross can be found at Spring Creek Cemetery in Mississauga. He, his wife, and two of his children are buried here along with several of their children. This is the only known grave stone of a Ross family member, although according to the newspaper obituaries, both Elizabeth Wright and Corbin Ross are buried in the Cosmopolitan Cemetery at St. Peter's Anglican. In the Perkins Bull family files, there is also mention of the Ross family being "coloured people", buried on their own farm. This is assumedly George W. Ross, and his wife Didamia.²⁰

¹⁷ Government of Canada, 1911 census, Peel Region: Toronto Township. Records obtained online at <<http://automatedgenealogy.com/index.html> >

¹⁸ Toronto Township Council, Meeting Minutes, 31 March 1888. Records were obtained at the Mississauga Central Library.

¹⁹ Toronto Township Council, Meeting Minutes, 30 June 1888. Records were obtained at the Mississauga Central Library.

²⁰ William Perkins Bull, "William Perkins Bull Historical Series" research notes, Family Files: Ross Family, c1930's, R62.



2. Elizabeth Adelaide Ross

Marriage:²¹

- Elizabeth A. Ross
 - Born Toronto Township
 - Living in Toronto Township
 - Spinster
 - Father: George W. Ross
 - Mother: Didamyd Ross
 - 35 years old
 - Religion: Disciple of Christ
 - wedding took place on April 3rd, 1876
 - married by Rev. Andrew Cunningham
 - reg. # 008474
 - spouse: Alfred Wright
 - 34 years old
 - born in Gosport, England
 - bachelor
 - occupation: Gentleman
 - Father: Arthur Wright
 - Mother Sarah Wright
 - Religion: Episcopalian

Death:²²

²¹ Ontario Marriage Registration, County of Peel, Division of Toronto Township, source <www.ancestry.com> Accessed at the Mississauga Library, Central Branch.

- Alfred Wright
 - Died April 28th 1876
 - Born in England
 - 33 years old
 - attended by Dr. M.H. Aikens
 - lived in Toronto Township
 - died of Consumption- 18 months
 - Religion: Church of England
 - Farmer
 - Reg. # 010309

It was difficult to prove with all certainty that this was the same Alfred Wright whom Elizabeth Ross married just 25 short days before. This is simply because of the lack of information provided in the death certificate. It does however seem likely that this is the same man, since there are no records beyond this date of Elizabeth being married, only as a widow. It is hard not to label it as a tragic love story, since apparently he knew he was dying, and yet they still married.

3. Charles Warburton Ross

Births:²³

- Charles A.S.R. Ross
 - Born July 27th 1880
 - F: Charles Woodford Ross
 - M: Matilda S. Peach
 - Father farmer in Toronto Twp.
 - Attended by Dr. Dixie

Finding record of Charles became a very difficult task. This was the only birth, death, marriage registration I could find for him. However, upon reading the records at the land registry, his path became a little clearer. On April 12th 1889, Charles Ross filed a Quit Claim against the East half of the family land in the Toronto Township. Charles Warburton Ross of *Manitoba* was paid \$1.00 to relinquish all claims he had on the land to Corbin L. Ross. Included were a list of all his brother and sisters, (missing were Alexander and Benjamin for unknown reasons) also negating their claim on the land to Corbin. Notably present was James Woodford Ross of Essex Centre, Ontario, machinist. James and Charles had left the family nest. The final mention of Charles is in 1911, when Elizabeth and Kate sold off the last of their land. Charles (Woodford?) Ross, of Sinta Luta, Saskatchewan signs off his final rights. There is other evidence that Charles and his

²² Ontario Death Registration, County of Peel, Division of Toronto Township, source <www.ancestry.com> Accessed at the Mississauga Library, Central Branch.

²³ Ontario Birth Registrations, County of Peel, Division of Toronto Township, source <www.ancestry.com> Accessed at the Mississauga Library, Central Branch.

wife Matilda Peach had six other children, seven in total after their first son born in Cooksville.²⁴ On the 1911 census Charles is listed with his wife Matilda and four of his children. They are living in Sinta Luta, Saskatchewan.

4. Kate Mityluu Eliza (Elma?) Ross

According to existing records, Kate Ross was an avid member of her church. She never married or had children, and lived with her sisters and brother until her death sometime after 1913. For at least the latter part of her life, Kate attended Dixie Baptist church, according to old records, it appears that some of her brothers and sisters also attended this church. Here is some history on Dixie Union Baptist Church.

- Dixie Baptist Church
 - o Used by Ministers coming from Northern Peel
 - o More regular services from 1860 onward from Minister at Ebenezer Church in Etobicoke
 - o Today Ebenezer Church is known as Renforth Baptist Church
 - o F Tracy was first independent Preacher (1889-1891)
 - The building was also used by Presbyterians at this time
 - o They had difficulties supporting a minister financially
 - 1914 the congregation discontinues
 - o my have used Dixie Union Cemetery
 - o 1937 a group tried to hold services again at Dixie Union Church
 - it was short lived
 - o Surviving Records: A minute book with short history and Sunday School service Attendance book
 - Can be found at the Canadian Baptist Archives²⁵

Below is further information taken from the William Perkins Bull research files for his book, Spadunk or From Paganism to Davenport United. Within these notes, you can see the name Kate, M.E. Ross, as a main contributor to the church life.

William Perkins Bull: Notes on Baptists box 1

- File 17
 - o Dixie Baptist Church Located at lot 10, concession 1
NDS (East side of Cawthra, North of Dundas
- File 12

²⁴ Glen Brunskill, "Descendants of Thomas Paul", family tree.

²⁵ Trudy Mann, "Early Churches of Toronto Township in Peel County (Mississauga)" Resource and Record Locations, compiled by Trudy Mann, rev. 2nd Print (Mississauga: T. Mann, May 1999).

- 1860's probably Reverend James Brooks
- 1870's Reverend Mr. Thompson (working from Ebenezer Church in Etobicoke)
- 1880's est. as a regular mission by preacher from Ebenezer- Rev. George Stokes
 - Remained so until 1900
- After which they tried to support their own preacher
- Eventually failed, closed in 1914
- 1900 K. Ross is recorded as being active Clerk
- Oct. 1901 Miss Kate Ross was a delegate to the Branford Baptist Convention
- 1907 Miss Ross and Brother H. Mallowney appointed Delegates to Baptist Council
- 1907 Miss Ross appointed (with two others) to overlook and rectify mistakes in past reports
- March 1910 new pastor Rutledge took charge, this is a letter from Kate Ross
 - " In As much as the acting clerk, Kate M.E. Ross, being unable to attend properly to the business of the church during the former Pastor MCLeod's pastorate, the minutes of the church have not been noted. However for the future I trust with the help of Divine Providence and a more decided unity of the members, matters may in the future be more amicably adjusted.

Yours in Xian Love
Kate M.E. Ross
C.C"

- File 2
 - Dixie Cemetery is located at lot 10, concession 2nd line E on Dundas Highway, not used now
- File 19
 - Has page which says Baptist See Ross Family, coloured people, lot 12, con 2 NDS²⁶

5. Corbin Levi Ross Marriage:²⁷

²⁶ William Perkins Bull, "Spadunk, From Paganism to Davenport United" Research notes from the William Perkins Bull Historical Series, circa 1935. Consulted at The Region of Peel Archives, Brampton, Ontario.

²⁷ Ontario Marriage Registration, County of Peel, Division of Toronto Township, source <www.ancestry.com> Accessed at the Mississauga Library, Central Branch.

- Corbin L. Ross
 - Married on the 28th February 1881 in Brampton
 - 35 yrs old
 - Living in Toronto Townships
 - Farmer
 - F: George W. Ross
 - M: Deidamia Ross
 - Disciples of Christ
 - Spouse: Emma A.M. Cox
 - 25 yrs.
 - Living in Toronto Townships
 - F: William Cox
 - M: Matilda Cox
 - Methodist
 - Witnesses: R.J. Stillwell (Brampton), Mary Ann Reed (Brampton)
 - Married by Walter Reed

Birth Registrations:²⁸

- Emma A.M. Ross
 - Born Jan. 7th, 1888
 - Father Corbin L. Ross, Mother Emma A.M. Cox

- Ida Emma Woodford Ross
 - Born January 16th 1882
 - Born in Peel
 - Corbin L. Ross and Emma A.M. Ross

- Marion D.C. Ross
 - Born April 30th 1884
 - In Peel
 - Father: Corbin L., mother: Emma A.M.

Death Registration:²⁹

- Corbin L. Ross
 - Died July 30th 1909
 - 63 yrs.
 - Place of death lot 12, con. 2
 - Farmer

²⁸ Ontario Birth Registrations, County of Peel, Division of Toronto Township, source <www.ancestry.com> Accessed at the Mississauga Library, Central Branch.

²⁹ Ontario Death Registration, County of Peel, Division of Toronto Township, source <www.ancestry.com> Accessed at the Mississauga Library, Central Branch.

- Father: George W. Ross, Virginia, U.S.A
- Mother: Diadema Paul, New Hampshire U.S.A.
- Certified by Dr. Aikins
- Registered by Kate M.E. Ross
- Cause of death: arteries sclerosis, valoular disease of the heart, brights disease
- Ill 7-8 weeks

The headstone of Emma A.M. Cox can be found at St. Peters Anglican Church in the Cosmopolitan Cemetery. Emma A.M. Cox died young, probably in child birth. Emma was buried in her parent's family plot, along with her sister, and eventually her parents. Below you will find the information from the gravestone.

plot 137. Wm COX March 12, 1824- Jan 8 1902
 his wife Matilda DUDLEY, Dec 23 1822- May 26 1899
 daughters of Wm & Matilda COX:
 Emma A M died Jan 20 1886 aged 31 yrs. 8 months wife of C ROSS
 Mary Hannah died Feb 2 1884 aged 28 yrs. 4 months 15 days, Wife of Murray WOODS

6. Didamia Anne Ross

Other than her will, which can be found at the land registry in Brampton, there is little record of her life. What we can decipher is that she was a spinster, and died in June of 1896 around the age of 48 years old.³⁰

7. Sarah Celestine Ross

Sarah Celestine had a similar fate as her sister above, not much is known of her, other than her will. She died May 1st, 1897, a spinster with no children.³¹

8. James Woodford Ross

Marriage:³²

- James Woodford Ross
 - Marriage happened on 28th December 1879

³⁰ Last Will and Testament of Didamia Anne Ross presented in 1896, under concession 2, lot 12, NDS, Reg # 9237. Microfilm consulted at the Region of Peel Land Registry, Brampton, Ontario.

³¹ Last Will and Testament of Sarah Celestine Ross, presented in 1897, under concession 2, lot 12, NDS, Reg # 10662. Microfilm consulted at the Region of Peel Land Registry, Brampton, Ontario.

³² Ontario Marriage Registration, County of Peel, Division of Toronto Township, source <www.ancestry.com> Accessed at the Mississauga Library, Central Branch.

- 28 yrs.
- Lives and born in Toronto Township
- Methodist
- F: George W. Ross, M: Deidama Ross
- Spouse: Emily Gilliland
 - 28 yrs. Old
 - living in Yorkville
 - F: John Gilliland, M: Rosina Gilliland
- Witnesses: A.Z. Tolman and Annie D. Ross (both of Toronto Twp)
- Rev. James Potts

Birth:³³

- Ethel Maude Annie E. Ross
 - Born December 5th, 1880
 - F: James Wood ford
 - M: Emily Gilleland Ross

James was by far the most elusive, after the birth of his child here, and the Quit Claim record from 1889, citing him as living in Essex Centre there are no records of him. Little is know of what he did with his life, or where he ended up.

9. Rebecca Evangeline Ross

Marriage:³⁴

- Eva Ross
 - Married March 27th 1884
 - Took Place in Peel
 - 26 yrs.
 - Born Cooksville
 - Baptist
 - F: George W. Ross
 - M: Dedamia W. Paul Ross
 - Spouse: George E. Cook
 - 22 yrs old
 - Baptist
 - F: Henry Cook
 - M: Mary Johnston
 - Born in Trafalgar

³³ Ontario Birth Registrations, County of Peel, Division of Toronto Township, source <www.ancestry.com> Accessed at the Mississauga Library, Central Branch.

³⁴ Ontario Marriage Registration, County of Peel, Division of Toronto Township, source <www.ancestry.com> Accessed at the Mississauga Library, Central Branch.

- Witnesses to marriage John F. McClland and Emily E. Duncan (both of Toronto City)
- Married by John D. Leek

Births:³⁵

- Mary Woodford Cook
 - Born March 18th 1894
 - F: George E. Cook
 - M: Evangeline Ross
 - Father farmer in Cooksville
 - Attended by Dr. Sutton
 - Reg. # 024585

- Wilfred Arthur Winstanley (Windinley ?) Cook
 - born 2 Aug. 1896
 - Peel
 - F: George E. Cook
 - M: Rebecca Evangeline Ross
 - Attended by Dr. Sutton

- Herberta G.W. Cook
 - Born 21st July 1888
 - Toronto Twp.
 - F: George E. Cook
 - Rebecca Eva Cook

Eva was the only female child of George Woodford Ross to have children. She married George E. Cook, as stated above. It is still unknown whether this is the same Cook family related to Jacob Cook who founded Cooksville in Toronto Township. There are no known records of his father Henry Cook, however it is a possibility.

10. Alexander Campbell Ross

Births:³⁶

- Leroy Woodford Ross
 - Father: Alexander Campbell Ross, mother: Lottie Minton Ross
 - Farmer, Toronto Twp.
 - Born Sept. 7th 1881
 - Dr. Aikins attended

³⁵ Ontario Marriage Registration, County of Peel, Division of Toronto Township, source <www.ancestry.com> Accessed at the Mississauga Library, Central Branch.

³⁶ Ontario Birth Registrations, County of Peel, Division of Toronto Township, source <www.ancestry.com> Accessed at the Mississauga Library, Central Branch.

Alexander Ross was also a challenge. While he can be found on the 1881 census (appendix one) with two children more, George K. Ross, and Alfred A. Ross, little else can be found in vital records. However, if we turn to the newspapers of the day, (below) we find that he moved to the North West Territories at some point, and eventually met his death there.

Perhaps one of the most fascinating depictions of nineteenth century life is through newspapers of the time. In the Peel Region there were two major newspapers papers which survive to this day; The Streetsville Review, and The Brampton Conservator. For research purposes regarding this project, they are most valuable for their obituaries. Below you will find the excerpts taken from the Streetsville Review and the Brampton Conservator regarding the Ross family. The tender words used, and the fondness with which these people are spoken opens a door into a more personal side of life for the Ross family.

Streetsville Review:

Aug. 5th 1909 Corbin Ross obituary³⁷

- died July 30th 1909 at Cedar Park Farm
- born and died there
- the funeral took place Aug. 1st at Erindale Cemetery
- conducted by A.O.U.W. of which he was a member³⁸
- left 2 daughters Ida and Emma
- his wife died previously

Feb. 20th 1913 Benjamin Ross Obituary

- "The Funeral of the late Benjamin Ross a former resident of this locality took place to Clarkson Cemetery on Monday. He died on Saturday in Trafalgar, where he has been living lately. He left a wife and three children. Miss Kate Ross and Mrs, Wright here are sisters. He was a member of the Cooksville Lodge A.O.U.W. Some of the members of which attended the funeral."³⁹

May 21st 1914 Elizabeth Wright Death

³⁷ Obituary, The Streetsville Review, 5 Aug 1909, page 5, column 3. Index compiled, edited and transcribed by Margaret Beettam. -- Acton, Ont. : M. Beettam, 1996, Period of Coverage: 1900-1909. Referenced at the Region of Peel Archives, Brampton, Ontario.

³⁸ A.O.U.W. stands for "Ancient Order of United Workmen" and was an early organization that worked somewhat like a union. Phoenix Masonry, Copyright 1999-2006 visited on 3 September 2006 <<http://www.phoenixmasonry.org/masonicmuseum/fraternalism/aouw.htm>>

³⁹ Obituary, The Streetsville Review, 20 Feb 1913, page 1, column 5. Index compiled, edited and transcribed by Margaret Beettam. -- Acton, Ont. : M. Beettam, 1996, Period of Coverage: 1910-1918. Referenced at the Region of Peel Archives, Brampton, Ontario.

- "WRIGHT- In Toronto on Saturday, May 16th 1914, Elizabeth A. Wright, aged 74 yrs. Interred at Erindale Monday" ⁴⁰

Brampton Conservator:

Feb. 29th 1878 George W. Ross' obituary⁴¹

- died at Cedar Park Farm, Cooksville
- died Feb. 18th aged 81 yrs.
- resident since 1832
- was member of the Wild Lodge No.309 I.O.G.T.⁴²
- leader of this A.R. Johnson sent "heartfelt sympathy" on behalf of the lodge
- was "well respected and a good kind neighbour"

Dec. 26th 1879- Marriage announcement⁴³

J.W. Ross married Miss Emily Gilliland of Yorkville on the 18th of Dec.

Jan 29th 1886 Emma A.M. Cox obituary⁴⁴

- died Jan 20th 1886
- at cedar park farm Cooksville
- "Dearly beloved wife of Corbin L. Ross"
- "In the blessed hope of a glorious resurrection"

Aug. 24th 1888 Alex C Ross obituary⁴⁵

- died at his residences in Yorkton, Assinibois, N.W.T. on Aug. 13th 1888
- of hemorrhage of the lungs
- youngest son of the late George W. Ross "Cedar Park Farm", Cooksville

⁴⁰ Obituary, *The Streetsville Review*, 21 May 1914, page 5, column 3. Period of Coverage: 1910-1918.

⁴¹ Obituary, *The Brampton Conservator*, 1 March 1878, page 3, column 1. Indexed by Beettam, Margaret -- [Oakville, Ont.] : Halton/Peel Branch O.G.S., c1989, Period of Coverage: 18 Oct 1876- 26 Dec 1889. Referenced at the Region of Peel Archives, Brampton, Ontario.

⁴² The International Order of Good Templars (IOGT) is a temperance organization started in 1866 in Canada, imported from the U.S. It is a temperance organization, which still exists today.

⁴³ Obituary, *The Brampton Conservator*, 26 Dec 1879, page 3, column 2. Period of Coverage: 18 Oct 1876- 26 Dec 1889.

⁴⁴ Obituary, *The Brampton Conservator*, 29 Jan 1886, page 3, column 4. Beettam, Margaret -- [Oakville, Ont.] : Halton/Peel Branch O.G.S., c1989, Period of Coverage: 18 Oct 1876- 26 Dec 1889.

⁴⁵ Obituary, *The Brampton Conservator*, 24 Aug 1888, page 3, column 5. Beettam, Margaret -- [Oakville, Ont.] : Halton/Peel Branch O.G.S., c1989, Period of Coverage: 18 Oct 1876- 26 Dec 1889.