

A BIT OF HISTORY: The Knight Family

Many of the early settlers of Webster came from the states of Vermont and New Hampshire. Among those who came from New Hampshire was the Knight family, descendants of Enos Knight, who gave service in the Revolutionary War as a private in Captain Joseph Gould's company of militia, in Col. Baker's regiment which marched on the alarm of the 19th of April, 1775 ["the ride of Paul Revere"].

The first of the family to reach Webster, then known as Penfield, was Nathaniel Knight, who, in the year 1817, in company with Asa Robb and Reuben Cobb, walked from Hancock, New Hampshire to this town. Mr. Knight, the son of Benjamin and Lucy Baker Knight and the grandson of Enos, was born in Hancock, New Hampshire, June 4, 1795. In 1821 he was united in marriage to Mary (better known as Polly) Robb, who was born in Antrim, New Hampshire in 1801 and moved to Webster with her parents, Andrew and Betsey Robb, in 1816. Nathaniel and Polly purchased a farm on the Phillips Road which is now owned by Frank Holdraker. Here the couple lived and reared their family and spent their entire married life.

Nathaniel Knight was one of a noble little band, which in September, 1843, met in the old district school house and organized the first Universalist society of the town of Webster. Mr. Knight was at that time appointed moderator and afterwards held different offices in the society. He and his sons helped to gather cobblestones on the shore of Lake Ontario to be used in building the First Universalist Church in Webster. This building was later sold and is now known as Johnson's garage. [Transcriber's note: it is now Webster Automotive.]

Born to Nathaniel and Polly Knight were five sons, all but one of whom grew to manhood and lived to a good old age. Of these four, Andrew Melvin Knight was the only one to marry and leave home. In 1859 he was married to Phebe Ann Robb, daughter of Franklin and Sarah Ann Crocker Robb. After the Civil War, Mr. Knight bought a farm on the Webster-Nine Mile Point Road now owned by Stephen Rappaport. By trade, Andrew Knight was a carpenter and in partnership with his brother James Knight, Thomas Austin and Alanson Dayton, did much building in this vicinity. In 1904 Mr. Knight became blind and, because he was no longer able to work at his trade nor carry on his farm, moved to his new home on Lapham Park in the Village of Webster where he resided until his death in 1908.

Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Knight were the parents of three children, George Lyman, who in 1891, married Lillian Perry of Rochester, New York and died November 30, 1957 in San Carlos, California; Dayton Robb and Mary G., both of whom reside in the Village of Webster where Mary was preceptress of Webster High School for thirty-four years. She resigned this position in June, 1938. Dayton came back to Webster the spring of 1936, having buried his wife Winifred Alt Knight the previous October. Two great grandchildren of Nathaniel Knight, Mildred and Estelle Knight, daughters of George Lyman Knight, reside in San Francisco and Los Angeles, California.

The other Knight "boys," as they were always called, and their father, for Mrs. Knight had died in 1855, continued to live on the farm on the Phillips Road where in 1890 [on 26 Jan.], Nathaniel Knight died. The three brothers still kept the home. On this farm James, George and William Knight raised peaches. They were among the first to plant a peach

orchard in this section and their orchards drew many visitors from far and near. The peaches they raised were famous for quality and were mostly of the Crawford variety.

Some twenty years after the death of their father, the boys bought what was known as the Levi Harris house, located just west of the Village Hall. The hall was built on land sold by the Knight Bros. to the Village of Webster for that purpose.

For thirty-seven years the home of these four men was faithfully cared for by Miss Lucetta Loy who felt their home was her home and, in turn, she was considered one of the family. George W. Knight enlisted during the Civil War in Reynolds Battery where he served for several years.

Some time after Nathaniel Knight located in Webster, his half-brother Enos, also from Hancock, New Hampshire, with his wife Elizabeth Robb Knight, who was also a sister of Polly Robb Knight, made a home on the farm on the Phillips Road now owned by George Duerbaum. To this couple were born six children: Emma, who married William Zwenner; and Robert, who married Elizabeth Witmer and resides on the Phillips Road on the farm formerly owned by Kaspar Spall. Enos and Betsey's third child was Nathaniel, who for his first wife married Mary Johnson, and to them was born one son, James, called Jay for short. To Jay who married Letty Barnett, daughter of Philander and Martha Cobb Barrett, were born three sons, Barrett Clarence, George, and Roswell, none of whom are now living in Webster. Sometime after the death of Mary Johnson Knight, Nathaniel was married a second time to Lavina French.

Another son born to Enos and Betsey was Wallace William who died December 21, 1832.

Esther Knight was first married to Jacob Wright and for her second husband was married to Frank Dunlap to whom was born one son, Arnold, who lives somewhere in the state of Michigan.

Horton Knight was married to Mary Foster and to them were born two daughters, Florence who married Lewis Whitbeck, and Hallie who was married to John Terry Tuthill. To the former was born a son, Lewis and a daughter, Marie; to the latter came two daughters, Elizabeth and Marion, and a son John.

Of all this family there is no one in Webster to carry on the Knight name and so far as we know, only one elsewhere. This is John Knight, son of Clarence Knight and great, great, great-grandson of the first Enos Knight.

In the Rochester Times-Union of January 27, 1940 there appeared the following:

ROCHESTER'S PAST

Fifty Years Ago Today

January 27, 1890

Nathaniel Knight, who in 1817 had driven with Reuben and Asa Cobb from Concord, New Hampshire to Webster, died at his home in Webster.

Webster Herald, Webster NY, Fri. 8 Mar 1940