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Gard's Grassroots Genealogy: 2 Rutsey Woodards

Help me pull the weeds!



There were two Rutsey Woodards and the name Rutsey carried into other families; why not, it's a great sounding name. The surname name is said to have come to England with the Norman conquest as Wadard. I've seen the first name as Rutzig of Welsh origin. It also has been said to be Rudrick. In the late 1600s/early 1700s there were many Woodards in Vermont. Our line is said to have started with a John Woodard who, as far as I know, has not been tied into the other Woodards. I'll give below my take on the family from my info and what I could find that I believe. I never met any of my Woodards; there is a lot of general info "out there".



Rutsey Sr. is said b. ~1769-71 in Vermont and married "Annis" who seems to be Mary Anna Annis, a surname common in Vermont at the time. Gen'l agreement is she was b. 04Jan.1776. The marriage date is often given as 1770 but the occasional 1792 date referencing Ancestry.com [which I've not located yet] seems more likely; the place given was Vermont. Rutsey is probably the son of Daniel and it gets too murky for me before that. Rutsey and Mary are said to have been bur. in the Springford Cemetery, which we visited. Dave Cooper did a great job of photographing the cemetery but I can't find Rutsey Sr.; a photo of his wife's stone from find-a-grave on this page is included. No life photos from 1845. Much of this info is from the site of: [jen_and_cale_halbleib](#).



Rutsey is on the 1790 census in Whitestown, N.Y which is said to have covered a lot of the state at the time. Another source has them in present Jefferson County which would be around Utica or Rome. Present Whitestown is between the two cities. The Erie Canal went thru Rome later. In 1800 and 1810 they are still there. Note that these locations now, and probably then, are townships. A map of Jefferson County, probably modern, is nearby.

In 1820 and 1830 they are in Champion Twp. N.Y. just east of Watertown and maybe 40 mi. north of where they were. The family was plentiful, the census showed more than the known number of family numbers which I'm sure was not unusual. 1840 or 1850 my reference didn't have.

In 1851 [taken 1852] the census of Norwich Tp, Oxford Co. Ont. has Rutsey, a Universalist, living with the Siple family, Edward and Sarah and kids. My info is running thin but cousin Bertha Smart, dau. of G.W. Meddaugh's sister Rebecca m. Benson Siple ~1859. More to come.

Rutsey Sr.'s death date is often given as 29May1845 which is NOT consistent with the above. Other sources have his demise in 1856 which is consistent. This is especially true since wife Mary, d. 29May 1845, was buried at Springford in S. Norwich Twp., Oxford Co. Ontario giving some idea when they immigrated; the death date given is probably hers. Sadly, I have no info on her or idea why they moved. Their family is well documented on the web; I'll not do more here. That is what I have on the Sr. Woodards.



One of the sons of Rutsey Sr. is Rutsey Jr. b. 28Jan.1811 in Champion, Jefferson Co., N.Y. He m. Mary Shepherd 15Feb.1829 in Rutland Twp., Jefferson Co., NY which is a bit closer to Watertown. She was b. 26Jul.1808 in Copenhagen, Lewis Co., NY a bit SE of Watertown. We visited her parents home on the ridge of the Berkshires in New Marlboro, Berkshire, Mass. A map of the townships in Jefferson County is above. Lake Ontario is to the left and the St. Lawrence River is above.

Rutsey Jr. can be found in several censuses in South Norwich:

- In 1851[census taken 1842] he and family are in South Norwich, Oxford Co., Ont.; his religion listed as Universalist.
- In 1861 he was in the same location, aged 50, a Friend [Quaker?] with same family.
- Same location in 1871; he is now a Baptist and 60.
- In 1881 he is a 70 year old Baptist.
- For the 1891 census he is an 80 year old Baptist still in S. Norwich.
- Mary was 2-3 years older on each census and George, sometimes as Washington, was with them on the later censuses.

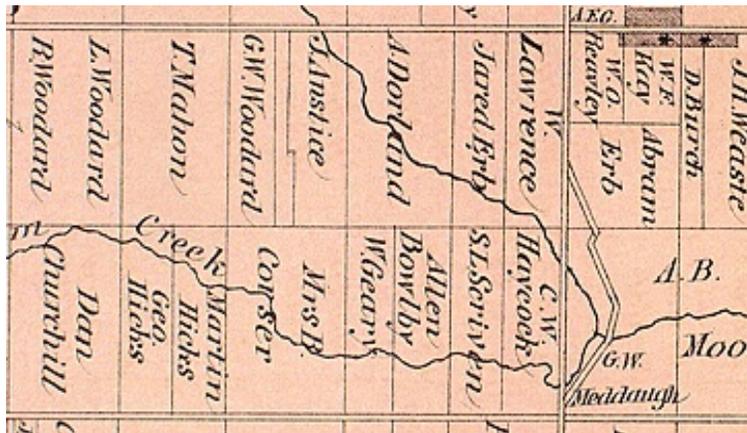
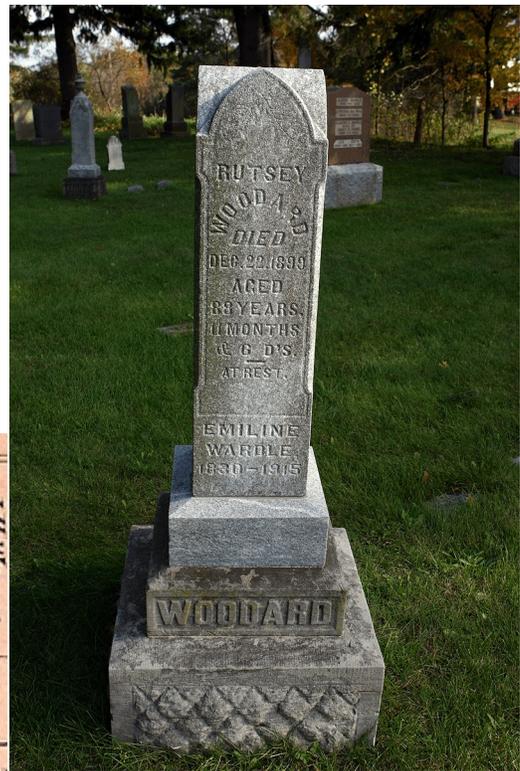
Interesting that by 1871 he was a baptist. By 1871, Abram Meddaugh had left his property in care of George W. Meddaugh and his neighbor C.W. Haycock may have been pastor of the Springford church by then; Rutsey lived nearby. See the snippet of map somewhere below. Springford would be just left of R.Woodard's property.

We were in Oxford county “poking around” and did find some information on Rutsey. One note from the trip:

Rutsey was killed at the age of 88 by a "stump puller" a locally made device consisting of a tripod of shafts of the customer's choosing supporting a cap with an ACME threaded shaft. The threaded shaft ran vertically and was connected to a long shaft typically tied to the saddlehorn of a saddle on a horse. One circuit of the horse (maybe 100') would raise the vertical shaft hence the stump about 2" which is a mechanical advantage of 600:1. A 33# force applied by the horse would produce a lifting effort of 20,000#. If something went wrong, you shouldn't be too close; unfortunately, Rutsey was. The local history book, "South of Sodom" [no, I'm not going to explain the name] refers to him as "Uncle Rutsey Woodard".

Rutsey’s death record has him d. 22Dec.1899 of “old age” which lasted 3 months. I imagine being insulted by a stump puller would age one considerably.

We were told we had to meet Garfield Wardle as he lived on the property owned by Rutsey. We met Garfield and his lady. He was in his apple orchard, one of the last ones left. They were delightful. She showed my wife Jean the Crown Patent to the land; I never did learn who it was issued to. The location sure seemed the same as on the map which I had not seen then. I believe



the map is from 1876. Note the proximity to G.W. Meddaugh’s and C.W. Haycock’s property. And note

that those are large lots, some started as 200 acres but were divided.

We were told that, because of Canadian Succession laws, the property went into the Wardle family. Rutsey & Mary’s daughter Emeline m. Edward Wardle. She was living with Rutsey & Mary in 1891 but I believe her husband d. in 1901, and, by the included pic of the

gravestone at Springford was buried with Rutsey. Garfield was her grandson.

Rutsey and Mary's children were:

- Emeline WOODARD b. 19 Mar, 1829
- George Washington WOODARD b. 02 Jan., 1830
- Manila WOODARD b. 03 May, 1834
- Lucius WOODARD b. 15 Feb., 1839
- Milo WOODARD b. 20 Aug., 1846

What info I have on Manila is on her husband's, [George Washington Meddaugh's, page](#). George and Manila moved to California in the early 1900s to be with their son Oscar. My father, Oscar Jr., would have known her but only until he was about 4. He did recall that her name was pronounced Meh-Ny'-la. That is all I ever heard of her from him.

Seems like Rutsey's family pretty much stayed together for many years. It was a beautiful area in Sept. from what we saw.

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26Sept.'14

rewrote whole mess