

DESCENDANTS OF ROBERT SLIMMON & HELEN LINDSAY

1.9 David Slimmon (~1831 - 1911) & Mary Stewart (1838 - 1919)

No birth or baptismal records have been found for Robert and Helen Slimmon's ninth child, David, but at the time of the June 7, 1841 census of Scotland, his age was recorded as 10 years making his birth year approximately 1831. David would only have been about four years old when his mother died so his memory of her, if any, would have been extremely limited. Although he was still living at home in 1841, there is little doubt that he, like his older siblings, would have started working as a farm labourer at a very young age.

By the time of the 1851 census of Scotland, 20 year old David was one of ten labourers working for Samuel Sibbald on a 300 acre farm in the parish of Balmacellan, about 90 km south-west of Quothquan. David's connection to Samuel Sibbald may have gone back a few years earlier since Mr. Sibbald was also born in Libberton parish about twelve years before David.

Sometime between 1851 and 1863, David emigrated to Canada West (Ontario). There is no way of knowing whether there had been communication between David and his older siblings about their respective moves to Canada but it is unlikely to have been coincidence that David's move was sometime between those of John (1844) and William (after 1863).

On June 17, 1863, David married a fellow Scot named Mary Stewart at Woodstock in the County of Oxford, Ontario. Since Woodstock is only about 87 km from Drayton where David's older brother John was living, it seem likely there would have been some communication between the brothers at the time. Unfortunately, there do not seem to be any photos or oral family history related to the youngest Slimmon brother.

David's bride, Mary Stewart, was born October 15, 1838, the daughter of Robert Stewart and Mary Black of Carnwath parish in Lanarkshire. Carnwath is only about 9 km north of Quothquan so it seems likely that David and his new bride knew one another before emigrating to Canada. It was the registration of David and Mary's marriage in Ontario that confirmed David's relationship with this branch of the Slimmon family—his parent's names was recorded as "Robert Slimmons" and "Ellen Lindsay."

David and Mary had at least two children. A daughter, Mary (probably named after her maternal grandmother), was born in 1866 and another daughter, Ellen (probably named after her paternal grandmother), was born approximately 1869. Both children appeared in the 1871 census of Ontario where David's occupation was recorded as "Farmer" and they were living in the Norwich North sub-district of Oxford South in Ontario.

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David and Mary's eldest daughter Mary died on September 24, 1888 following a three month unspecified illness. Her age at death was recorded as 23 years.

At the time of the 1891 census, twenty-one year old Ellen was still living with her parents in the district of Oxford South but in the Burford sub-district. Their religion was recorded as "Free Church" rather than "Presbyterian" as it had been in the 1871 census.

The April 13 - 16, 1901 census for Burford Township lists only David and his daughter Ellen. Although difficult to read, that record appears to show David's birth date as May 20, 1832 and his age as 69. His occupation was still recorded as "Farmer".



No registration of David's death has been found but, according to the gravestone where he was buried in the New Durham cemetery, he died in 1911. Since he was recorded living with his daughter Ellen and her family at the time of the 1911 census, his death must have been some time after the census started on June 1 of that year. Although the gravestone records David's year of birth as 1828, it is inconsistent with his birth year (~1831) recorded at the time of the 1841 and 1851 censuses, and with his date of birth recorded in the 1911 census.

Assuming the census records to be the most accurate, David would probably have been approximately 80 years old when he died. It seems fitting that David would have been cared for in his final months by a daughter that was named after the mother he never really knew.

The 1901 census of Ontario lists a Mary Slimmon, born ~1840 as a resident of some type of institution in the Wentworth South district of Ontario. She was also recorded as being of "unsound mind." The same Mary Slimmon appears in the 1911 census as a resident of the Hamilton Insane Asylum and is listed as a housewife originally from Burford, Ontario. Other records from that institution indicate that she was originally committed at age 59. Since she was reported to have been 51 in the 1891 census, it suggests that she was probably admitted to the facility about 1899.

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Mary died on January 19, 1919. Her age at death was recorded as 86 years, 3 months, 4 days making her birth year 1833—five years earlier than her actual birth year of 1838. Her true age at death would therefore have been 81 years. The birth year recorded on the gravestone that Mary shares with her husband David and daughter Mary in the New Durham cemetery, is also incorrectly recorded as 1832.

Mary's death registration indicates she was living on Lot 24, Concession 6 of Burford Township at the time of her death. Since that is the land location where her daughter Ellen and Ellen's husband were living at the time of the 1911 census, it appears that Mary had been brought home to Burford Township sometime before her death. The cause of Mary's death was reported to be "senile heart".

Children of David Slimmon and Mary Stewart:

1.9.1 Mary Slimmon

- Born 1866
- Died 1889 at age 23

1.9.2 Ellen Slimmon

- Born 1870
- Married James Morgan Radford
- Died 1929 at age 59

