

Story of the Cotter family from Roger Cotter through Pat

Cotter's family.

Roger Cotter born ? died 1899. Born in Limerick county, Ireland- lived at Bloomington, Ill. until 1881 and migrated to Lyon County, Iowa and homesteaded one section east of Rock Rapids.

Family of Roger Cotter.

Patrick Cotter, born March 16, 1869, died November 14, 1953. only son.

Nora Cotter Maguire    Katy Cotter Calloran    Margaret Cotter (incompetent)  
Mary Cotter Kent

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Roger Cotter married Kitty Scanlon who was born in Waterford county, Ireland came to the U.S. and settled at Bloomington together with six or seven brothers, one of whom was a tinker. He became fabulously rich, married and had several daughters neither of whom married. He had property near Galveston Texas all left to his girls. The last girl Margaret Scanlon died in 1947 or 48 and left all the holdings to the Bishop of Galveston's holdings. At the time our father was living with us and had lost all track of the relatives. None of the Cotters or Scanlons from Ireland could read or write but all were educated after becoming American citizens.

Kitty Scanlon Cotter died in 1895. When Roger Cotter died he left Maggie in the care of Nora Cotter McGuire and her husband Marcus and as long as she lives and they cared for her they were to live on the homestead which was the entire section except one quarter which was deeded to our father, Pat when he married. I was born there? It left the section like this.?

Roger and Kitty Cotter took in a foster son James Callahan and reared him like a son. He was not adopted but did go as J. Cotter. Pa signed a note with his name as collateral. James never paid the note and Pa lost his farm. This must have been after his father Roger died. They then moved to a smaller farm a mile over and there Grace was born. I was born in 1899 and Grace was born in 1902.

Then they moved to a place near Edna, Iowa, south of the railroad and there Alice was born a year and a half later.

(Margaret?)

When they moved east of town where I started school in 1904 or 1905. I remember my first teacher was Daisy Baisy. We were about 3 miles from town then and Pa had old Pete, Jack and Jenny 1 cow and a pig or two and of course mama's chickens and garden. They got hailed out that year, grain only but corn made, but it was only a small farm. Pa did road work with old Jack and Pete and mamma boarded the road crew. At that time a bunch of "street arabs" from New York were brought to be let out to people- either adopt or foster so Pa took one- Wille Jungerman. They were tough devils or thieves or what have you but they had him at adna till we left the last farm and sent him back.

That year he rented the homestead because Nora and Marcus decided to go to Fort Pierre, S.D. (he to sell land). He was no farmer and lazy to boot so they took Maggie over and dumped her on Katie and Will Halloran, and boy, The uproar!

Then Katie and Will decided to go to law and get the homestead. Pa, God bless him, stayed clean. He had been given his share and lost it and he wouldn't have mama saddled with her poor health be saddled with Maggie. (She was tongue-tied and the doctor cut it and made it worse). Mag loved mama and we liked Mag. She was not violent or too bad but no education and had to be taken care of.

Anyway Katie and Nora lawsuited over the homestead for years and years, even after I was out of high school. I remember every year Nora came for the court session- they never spoke, go to church, meet on the steps outside and never speak. Lawyers got the land.

In the meantime we left the homestead <sup>near Rock Rapids</sup> where John Cotter was born in 1907 and moved to the Woodburn farm closer to town. There Pa built up his cow herd and horses, hogs, etc and made money- hard work on a half section of land and rented extra. I worked in the field, plowed corn, harrowed, made hay. It's a wonder I got through school and graduated with honors in high school and became a teacher at \$115:00 a month in Minn. After years on the Woodburn farm where Laurence was born in 1913 Pa decided to have a sale and he did have one of the greatest. Sold horses for \$500:00, a team, cows at \$750. each- carloads of hogs and machinery and all. It was fabulous and he bought the place in Beaver Creek, Minn. at \$325. and acre for a quarter section. Banks went bust and they lost it all after all those years of hard work. He took bankruptcy which they hated and then moved to White Lake S.D. Couldn't own a thing in Minn. after bankruptcy. By then I was married and gone most of the time.

Mary Cotter pa's sister

I don't know if she was the oddest child or not. I always thought that Nora was since she was given charge of Maggie. Anyway Mary Cotter married Chris Kent, he later deserted her. From what pa said she was home then caught a bad cold (at the wrong time, as pa delicately put it) contracted galloping consumption and died shortly after. I never knew what became of Chris Kent- he was black Irish and outside of what pa said I never heard much. I don't think mama knew him.

Pa and maa were married in 1874 in Sioux Falls, S.D. Mama was a telegraph operator, Iowa when she met Pat Cotter (he hauled grain there) and her Frank Green was section foreman. Then they went to Sioux Falls and pa followed her and they were married. Mama died in 1926. Of course she and pa are buried in S.F. at St. Michael's cemetery.

Outside of this I don't know much about early days but there is a book of Lyon county pioneers somewhere. Mary Kohrt read about Roger in it but never found a copy I could buy. An old lady named Johnsburger had the only one Mary saw and that spoke very highly of good old Roger Cotter.

I always felt that pa should have been buried in the cemetery in Rock Rapids with the other pioneers but the Greens wanted mama in S.F. cemetery so that is what he wanted so we sent him there. Weseley promised him long before he died that when the time came he would send him there and he did with money out of his own pocket.

I noticed that John E found Kate Cotter's headstone but I don't know where the rest lie. I would like to know if Mary Kent is there too but I have a feeling that she was the "wild" one or black sheep or whatever. Noone ever mentioned her but pa and that was when he was in our house at Montrose, Col.

If I feel up to it I may write to the Scanlons at Bloomington, Ill. I met a man at a Legion dinner who was from Bloomington and knew some Scanlons there.

But anyway for what it's worth that's what I remember. The Greens had a family tree traced once but I never saw a copy but they did get track of Grandpa Green's brother Joe Courteney.

(Courteney)