

Harriet McKay Traill (1847-1920)

Harriet, the eldest daughter of the well-known HBC man, William McKay, was married to William Traill (1844-1917).¹

Harriet's parents William McKay [1818-1883] who was born February 16, 1818 in Beaver Creek and Mary Jane Cook [1824-1917] who was born in 1824 at Cumberland House. William McKay was a son of John Richards McKay [1792-1877] and Harriet Ann Ballenden [1797-1854]. On her mother's side Harriet was the granddaughter of Joseph Cook (b.c. 1792 in Rupert's Land) and Catherine Sinclair. Harriet was the sister of Thomas and John McKay of Prince Albert.

Harriet and her sister Kate were educated at Miss Matilda Davis' "School for Young Ladies" at Red River from 1858 to 1863. Kate—Catherine McKay Clarke like her sister Harriet also became one of the Metis "First Ladies" of the fur trade. She was the wife of Lawrence Clarke when he was Chief Factor HBC at Fort Carlton then Chief Factor for the Saskatchewan district at Prince Albert.

Harriet married William Edward Traill (1844-1817) at Fort Ellice on June 1, 1869.

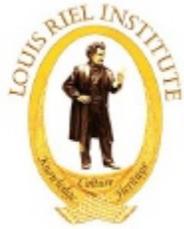
Children:

- Walter (1870-1932); married Harriet Ann McKay (1872-1948).
- Mary (Mollie) (1873-1874)
- William McKay (1875-1969); married Eleanor Frances Fortescue.
- Henry (1877-1878);
- Ethel (1879-1919); married Frederick Johnstone Bigg.
- Jessie (1881-1970); married William Rothney Drever.
- Mary (1883-1984);
- Maria "Yummie" (b. 1886-1969); married John McCloy.
- Harriet "Hattie" (1888-1930).
- Annie (1889-1977) (see Charlotte Gray, *Sisters in the Wilderness: The Lives of Susanna Moodie and Catharine Parr Traill*, Viking, 1999).
- Catherine Barbara (1892-1990); married Harold Kells Morrow.

¹ William Edward Traill, 1844-1917, was born in Ontario, the son of Thomas and Catherine Parr Traill. He joined the Hudson's Bay Company in 1864, became a junior trader in 1878, and chief trader in 1883. In 1869, he married Harriet McKay, 1847-1920, eldest daughter of Chief Trader William McKay. He served with the HBC at Fort Ellice, Egg Lake, Fort Pitt, Carlton House, Lac La Biche, Lesser Slave Lake, Fort Vermilion and Fort St. James. In 1893, he left the HBC to farm near Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. His brother, Walter J.S. Traill, 1847-1932, joined the HBC in 1866. He served in the Swan River district and at various USA posts before resigning in 1878. In 1881, he married Mary Gilbert, a widow with two children. He subsequently farmed near Pembina, then in Kalispell, Montana and finally in the Okanagan, British Columbia. Mary Traill, 1883-1984, the daughter of William E. Traill, was born in Lesser Slave Lake. She was a registered nurse, and ran a nursing home in Meskanaw, Saskatchewan for many years.

Traill had postings at Fort Ellice (1864-1867), Touchwood Hills (1867-69), the Saskatchewan River posts (1869-74), Lac La Biche (1874-81), Lesser Slave Lake (1881-85), Vermilion (1869-89), and finally Fort St. James (1889-93), where Traill served as Chief Factor.

In 1893, Traill left the HBC and the family farmed farm near Prince Albert, Saskatchewan at the town that was named for William Traill, Meskanaw (Meskanaw is the Cree word for trail). The nearby hamlet of Ethelton was named for their daughter Ethel.



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