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Perry, Ralph Winslow (1880 -)

Virgil Chirhart

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Recommended Citation

Chirhart, Virgil, "Perry, Ralph Winslow (1880 -)" (1936). *WPA Biographic Summaries*. 990.
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Ralph Winslow Perry was born March 7, 1880 on his father's farm, which is situated on Winnebago Prairie north west of Sartell in section twenty-three, township of Brockway. Ralph is the son of John Nelson and Mary Elizabeth (Getchell) Perry the pioneers.

Mary Elizabeth Getchell was the daughter of Winslow Getchell an early pioneer in Minnesota. Winslow first came to this state in 1852. Later he settled in Saint Anthony in 1854 with his family. In 1855 they came with a party of pioneers to Brockway township. They settled on a stretch of land known as Winnebago Prairie. It was in the cabin home of Winslow Getchell that the first school was held and the first church services were conducted in that district.

John Nelson Perry was born in Maine, Penobscot County, on March 29, 1836. John came to Minnesota in 1860. During the Civil War he drove an ox team between Fort Snelling and Fort Ripley, carting goods.

In 1861 he and his family were eye witnesses of the crossing of the prairie by a band of 1,400 Indians. This was before the outbreak and the Indians were very friendly. John Nelson married Mary Elizabeth Gretchell.

Ralph Winslow Perry received his schooling in the old school house on Winnebago Prairie. His first teacher's name was Miss Brand. The school was District 7 and was first conducted in the home of Winslow Getchell in the year 1859. This school is now known as the Perry School. After completing eight grades Ralph went to work for his father on the old farm. He worked and managed the farm until 1913.

On October 29, 1903 he married Mae Elizabeth (Lambert) Perry a daughter of William Lambert of Royalton.

They have seven children and two grandchildren. The children are: Ina, born July 4, 1907; Loyd, born August 12, 1909; Grace, born November

7, 1913; Harold, born May 1, 1919; Gladys, born March 10, 1917; Vera, born July 26, 1922; and Constance, born July 9, 1927.

Ina is married to Lloyd Cox and lives at Long Lake, Minnesota. They have two children.

Lloyd is working at Long Lake.

Grace, married Wade Pearson and lives in Sartell.

All the other children are at home.

When Ralph Perry was six years old the cyclone hit Saint Cloud and he well remembers and incident which occurred on their farm. Mr. Perry states, "We could see the cyclone as it hit Saint Cloud and it was aimed in our direction. My father took all of us and put us in the cellar with mother and himself, there was a roar outside and my parents opened the outside door to investigate. The twister jerked them out of the doorway and sailed them into the air and dropped them out by the road about a fourth of a mile away. When we found them they were clinging to some plum trees and were unscratched but thoroughly frightened. Our hog barn was completely destroyed."

"We could see the cyclone as it struck the farm at Mayhew Lake, where a wedding party was in progress."

Mr. Perry has played in an orchestra since he was twelve years old. He tells how he rode a horse to Duelm to play at a dance. They took a collection for the orchestra of three pieces. They generally got about four dollars. The journey required about two days.

Game was plentiful and they could see deer most anyplace.

Log drivers were still common and Mr. Perry says that the river was so filled with logs that you could walk across.

He was employed at the Sartell Brothers Saw Mill for a few years. This was at the time he was about sixteen years old.

PERRY, RALPH WINSLOW

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Mr. Perry still resides in Sartell where he has made his home since 1913. He operates a confectionery store and tavern.

Interviewed: Ralph Winslow Perry
Date: May 25, 1936
By: Virgil Chirhart

Publication Granted

FROM CENSUS RECORDS OF 1860

Enumerated on June 8, 1860 -- by C. Grandelmeyer

Post Office Brookway

Page No. 24

Line 15

Winslow Getchell	Age 58
Sex	Male
Occupation	Farmer
Born	Maine

Line 16

Hannah Getchell	Age 52
Sex	Female
Born	Maine

Line 17

John W. Getchell	Age 33
Sex	Male
Occupation	Farmer
Born	Maine

Line 18

Nathaniel Getchell	Age 31
Sex	Male
Occupation	Farm Laborer
Born	Maine

Line 19

Otis Getchell	Age 22
Sex	Male
Occupation	Farm Laborer
Born	Maine

Page 2 Census Record

Line 20

William Getchell (MS-1)

Age 17

Sex

Male

Occupation

Farm Laborer

Born

Maine

Line 21

Lucita Getchell

Age 14

Sex

Female

Born

Maine

Line 22

Erewitt A. Getchell (MS-1)

Age 11

Sex

Male

Born

Maine

Line 23

Francis L. Getchell

Age 9

Sex

Male

Born

Maine

FROM CENSUS RECORDS OF 1860

Enumerated on June 8, 1860 by -- C. Grandelmeyer

Post Office -- Brockway

Page No. 26

Line 37

John N. Perry

Age 23

Sex

Male

Occupation

Farmer

Born

Maine

Line 38

Mary E. Perry

Age 20

Sex

Female

Born

Maine