

### Extracts from the Hamilton Advertiser 1901

July 27, 1901 Stonehouse

#### Highland Gathering

A grand Highland gathering will take place here next Saturday. Piping and dancing, tug-of-war, and wrestling competitions will be included in the programme

#### Socialism

Mrs Winddington, the Socialist lecturer, visited the town last week, and for three or four evenings delivered lectures on Socialism at the Cross. Large numbers turned out each evening to hear the speeches which were delivered with great fluency. A large caravan with the mystic sign No. 2 formed the abode of the lady lecturer and her lady companion.

**The Late Fatal Crane Accident** On Tuesday, Lord Pearson and a jury had before them an action in which a widow and eight children of the late William Gray, contractor, Stonehouse sued the Caledonian Railway Company for £3,000 damages in respect of his death, which took place on 13<sup>th</sup> March last, as the result of injuries received at Stonehouse station on the same day. The deceased was carting stones from the station, and while loading a cart the jib of the defenders' crane fell upon him as he was stooping to unhook the shears, and inflicted fatal injuries. It was said that the crane was defective. Before the trial proceeded, the pursuers accepted a tender of £400, and the jury returned a formal verdict for that amount.

**Home From The Front** (Boer War) On Saturday last, it became known that Sergt. William Leishman, reservist, Gordon Highlanders, would arrive home from the front, and a large number of friends and acquaintances waited at the railway station to give him a warm welcome. The afternoon train was the one the Sergeant arrived with, and on alighting he was accorded a right hearty welcome, but with naïve modesty he restrained the more boisterous spirits from carrying him shoulder high.

He looked in very good health, but with his sun-tanned face one could see that he had encountered the

fierce heat of a tropical sun. He had travelled from Aberdeen, where he had to report before being allowed to go home.

We offer our hearty congratulations to him on his safe return to wife and children.

#### Scottish Regiment in the Boer war



March, 1944

**Flight Lieut. Alex Torrance, R.A.F.V.R.**, Meadowside, is one of the R.A.F. boys now giving the Japs something to think about in Burma. After successfully shooting up some sampans on the Sittang River and a convoy of motor vehicles one carrying Jap troops, the Stonehouse pilot used his Mosquito fighter-bomber to hit a Japanese factory by way of rounding off a day's score in a recent sortie over Southern Burma. "We had strafed about 15 sampans on the river", he says, "and then looked round for something else. About a mile outside Pegu, northeast of Rangoon, I spotted seven lorries on the road and then started to beat them up. One of them was carrying about a score of Japanese troops, and as our cannon and machine gun fire spattered around them, they started to jump over the side - right into the thick of it. They just folded up all over the road. We had a lucky break when we noticed puffs of steam chugging out of a factory at Bilinon, the railway about 60 miles north-west of Moulmein. I let fire at it and clouds of steam and smoke blew up all over the place". Before joining the R.A.F.V.R. in 1939 Ft. Lt.

Torrance was a compositor with "The Hamilton Advertiser". He sustained burning injuries to his face and hands while on service overseas in 1941, but was able to resume flying duties in a few months' time.

### COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING DATES 2011

Meetings are open to the public and normally scheduled for the third Monday of the Month and are held in the Public Institute Stonehouse starting at 7.30pm.

(Members meeting at 7.00pm)

17 th January 2011

21st February 2011

21st March 2011

18 th April 2011

16th May 2011

20 th June 2011

15 th August 2011

19 th September 2011

17th October 2011

21st November 2011

19 th December 2011

#### STONEHOUSE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

(www.community-council.org.uk/stonehousecommunitycouncil)

Chairman: George Smith, 6 Naismith Court, Stonehouse.

Email: georgepm244@aol.com

Secretary: Robert Freel, 75 Lockhart Street, Stonehouse .

Email: robfreel@btinternet.com

**THE HERITAGE GROUP HOLD THEIR MEETING ON THE FIRST MONDAY OF THE MONTH All members of the public are welcome to come along Why not join our group and obtain access to our website. stonehouseheritage.co.uk. Chirman Robert Freel.**

**The heritage group would like to add to their collection of School photographs.**

**The group are looking for class photos taken up until the year 2000 It would be of help if the pupils are named in the photographs.**

**We are also looking for views of the village from all ages. contact number 01698792014 Jim monie**



## DAUGHTER HANGED IN CATTLE WAR

**Cattle Kate** was born Ellen Liddy Watson on July 2, 1861, in Arran Lake, Bruce County, Ontario, Canada. Her father was **Thomas Lewis Watson, from Stonehouse Lanarkshire** who emigrated first to Iowa USA with his father John Watson around 1855. Her mother was Francis Close Watson from Dromore County Down Ireland.

The family settled near Lebanon, Kansas, and began to homestead. At the age of sixteen, Ella was courted by a local farmer named William A. Pickell, who was three years older than her.

The two were married on November 4, 1879. However, Pickell was abusive, both verbally and physically, and drank heavily. He often would beat Ella with a horsewhip. In January 1883, Ella fled to her parents' home. Pickell came after her, but was intimidated by her father and fled, having no contact with her afterward. Ella filed for divorce and moved to Red Cloud, Nebraska, fourteen miles (21 km) north of her family's homestead.

That same year she moved, against her family's wishes, to Denver, Colorado. One of her brothers lived there, and she stayed with him for a time, and then moved on to Cheyenne, Wyoming.

It was unusual during that period in American history for a woman to move independently and alone. However, she did so, finding work as both a seamstress and a cook. Ella later moved on to Rawlins, Wyoming. While in Rawlins she began working as cook and waitress in the premier boarding-house/hostelry in town, the Rawlins House.

It has been alleged that the Rawlins House was a brothel and Ella worked as a prostitute there, but it was not a brothel, and there is no evidence Ella ever worked as a prostitute anywhere. The speculation that Ella was a prostitute was circulated in newspaper articles later on by the influential cattle barons, in order to discredit her.

#### Life with Averell

On February 24, 1886, Ella met a homesteader named James "Jim" Averell, who was in town on business. The two began a romance, and she moved with him to his homestead near the Sweetwater River country.

He had previously married Sophia Jaeger after his second service in the army was up. The two had a child together, but both Sophia and the infant died from fever in August 1882. Devastated, Averell began homesteading fifteen miles (24 km) north of the homestead he had worked while married to Sophia. He began to frequent the Rawlins House, where he became acquainted with Ella, who then moved to his home.

Jim had built and opened a "road ranch" (a combination eating place and general store) on his homestead property, serving both cowboys and settlers who traveled through headed to Oregon and other locations west. Ella served as the cook, and she was allowed to keep the money she made, fifty cents a meal

In March 1886, Ella's divorce became final. Ella and Averell applied for a marriage license in Lander, Wyoming, that same year, but it is unclear whether the two ever legally married, as the license was never filed.

On June 26, 1886, Averell was appointed postmaster of the community. Ella, however, expressed her desire to have her own ranch, working independently from his.

#### Confrontations with the cattlemen's association

Ella filed on a homestead adjacent to Averell's in August 1886 and built a small two-room cabin. At the time, the Maverick Law stated that unbranded calves found on a property were to be branded with an "M" and became the property of the Wyoming Stock Growers Association, a powerful group of cattlemen at the time.

The cattlemen's association limited small ranchers from bidding on cattle at auctions. The cattlemen insisted

Kate Watson



that all ranchers, small and large, have a registered brand. The cost for registering a brand was set quite high, to ensure that few smaller ranchers could afford it. Also, a brand had to be "accepted", and the cattlemen's association had substantial power inside the committee that either rejected or accepted brands. Essentially, this locked out many smaller ranchers from operating within the scope of the law of the time.

The wealthy cattlemen began to build portable cabins on land, claiming it as homesteads, thus making the land theirs, and after registering it with the county; they would simply move the portable cabins to another location and repeat the same process over again. Averell, being the local justice of the peace, began writing about these acts to a newspaper in Casper, Wyoming. This infuriated the cattlemen.

On March 23, 1888, Ella filed her claim for her homestead, where she had built her cabin two years before. By law, this made the property hers.

Between her claim and Averell's, the two owned 320 acres (1.3 km<sup>2</sup>). She fenced much of the property and built a livery stable and several corrals. In 1888, under extreme pressure from small ranchers and homesteaders, the governor repealed the Maverick Law, bringing on heavy opposition from the wealthy cattlemen. By now, Ella had been dubbed by local newspapers as "Cattle Kate".

In the fall of 1888, Ella purchased 28 cattle from a man who was driving them from Nebraska to Salt Lake City, Utah. On December 3, 1888, Ella applied for the "WT" brand, but was rejected.

On March 16, 1889, likely feeling her own brand would never be accepted, she bought a brand already registered, thus now having a legal operating brand. That same year she adopted an eleven-year-old boy named Gene Crowder, whose father, a heavy drinker who was unable to properly care for his son, had worked for her previously. Gene and another boy, fourteen-year-old John DeCorey, worked her steadily increasing ranch. By the middle of July 1889, she had forty-one head of cattle, and she hired a man named Frank Buchanan to mend fences Albert John Bothwell, a wealthy cattleman and member of the cattlemen's association, lived only about a mile from the ranch. Although he had never owned the area of land on which Ella's ranch was now located, he had used it from time to time in years past. He now greatly resented the presence of her ranch.

Jim Averell had granted Bothwell right-of-way so that Bothwell could irrigate his property. Bothwell began to fence in parts of Ella's ranch and sent cowboys working for him to harass the couple. On 20 July 1889, a stock detective by the name of George Henderson rode over and checked on Ellen's pasture in the early morning, and found cattle in it, and some with fresh brands on them. This to his thought, she had some stolen mavericks in her pasture field.

That news of Ellen's alleged illegal branding spread to Bothwell, and he discovered a long sought after opportunity, an excuse to rid the countryside of Ellen Watson and

Jim Averell.

#### Aftermath

#### Lynching of Cattle Kate

1889". There were two other witnesses to the abduction, whom history seems to have forgotten. They were H.B Fetz, editor of the Sweetwater Chief, and his assistant J.N. Speer. They actually witnessed the whole frightening abduction with field glasses from the rooftop of their new frame newspaper building in Bothwell.

They had earlier been alerted by two unnamed cattlemen. They watched the group file right by, very near the newspaper office on its way to Len's calves, and they watched them parade by again later, when the abductors passed the north end of Averell Mountain and turn south toward Independence Rock.

Neither editor volunteered to give that first hand testimony about the abduction at the grand jury hearing later in Rawlins. I cannot believe that they did not feel guilty for not saying anything.

Her father Thomas Watson met with them after the inquest when he was at her place, he went over to their office and talked with them. I do not know if they told him of seeing her abduction by the cattlemen or not.

There was yet another witness to this abduction, but never said anything at any of the trials. His name was Dan Fitzer. He quietly chose to withhold this information. Years later he admitted to his family, that he seen the abduction.

He was ploughing up a new hay meadow for an experimental alfalfa planting on Schoonmaker's 'Gate' Ranch just north of, and a little downstream from, Devil's Gate. From this vantage point, Fitzer said he clearly saw Tom Sun's white topped tandem seated buggy and attentively observed the progress of the lynching party down in the river bottom.

I believe that most of the cattlemen wanted to just scare Jim Averell and Ella Watson out of the Sweetwater Valley. I believe that Tom Sun had no intentions of hanging either of them. He was in the wrong place at the wrong time. They talked about drowning them in the Sweetwater River. Ella quickly pointed out that there wasn't enough water in the river to give a land hog a decent bath, at that time of the year, the river was pretty dry.

To avoid riding right in front of Averell's store and alerting anyone who might be there, they turned north up the east side of Averell Mountain and around its north end and then headed southwest across the sagebrush toward Sweetwater River and Independence Rock.

The six lynchers tied their horses up in Spring Creek Gulch and had to drag both of their victims over some rocks in Spring Creek Gulch to a sight in Pine Canyon. No one would see them there, it was so secluded from rest of the countryside. High rocks all around and one some lone scrub pine trees there. They picked out a tree that was overlooking a small ravine and a rock underneath one of the limbs.

Only ropes that they had with them, were the lariats that they used for roping cattle with. They were thin and one of the lynchers made hangman nooses out of the two

ropes that they had. Bothwell got the noose over Jim Averell's head, but Ernie McLean had a time with Ella. She was dodging the rope and screaming at him, while the rest of the party just stood back and watched the proceedings, not realizing that they were really going to hang the pair. I believe that they thought, they were just only going to scare them, so that they would leave the area, but A.J. Bothwell had other plans.

As they argued with Jim and Ella about leaving the area, Bothwell looked at Jim with towering arrogance and told him that if he wanted to show everyone how brave he was he ought to be 'game and jump off', and shoved Jim off of that rock and over the ravine, where he started choking with the tight rope around his neck. At the same time Ernie McLean was trying to put the rope around Ella's neck. At the same time shots rang out from up in the rocks and John Durbin fell to the ground, hit in the leg, they looked up and seen Frank Buchanan firing at them.

Ernie McLean leaped forward and shoved Ella off the rock both of them were standing on The tree trembled and then both Ellen and Jim were suspended, writhing and kicking.

Ella could barely touch the ground with the toes of her moccasins. Neither one of them had their hands tied, so they were probably grabbing at the ropes around their necks, and trying to swing themselves back upon the rock they had been on.

The two were banging up against one another and were hitting and gouging and kicking unmercifully and spinning one another around, while they tried again and again to pull themselves up on those thin lariats.

Neither one of them had fallen no more than two feet, not enough to break their necks. They were strangling and slowly suffocating, in Ellen's struggle, she kicked off her newly purchased moccasins.

None of the lynchers tried to help them, just stood there and watched them, and probably laughing about it. Then the men stood there watching the foaming blood begin to ooze from the noses and lips of the grotesquely struggling pair grappling for life at the end of cowboys lassos.

Silence fell among the men and among the granite rocks as they listened to the gurgling sound of the dying. All of the six lynchers, turned and stumbled over the rocks that they had come up over, none of them saying a word to each other.

They left the two hanging there.

I believe that they would have been left there for the buzzards and insects if it had not been for Buchanan and his witnessing the event.

Bothwell would later acquire her land.

All of those six men had to have been bothered the rest of their lives over watching two people die a horrible death at the end of a rope. Only the person that was a winner was Bothwell, he finally got rid of them, and later on could acquire their land

#### Mine Accident 19 February 1902

Stonehouse – Mining Fatality – A sad fatality occurred on Wednesday at Overwood Quarry, Stonehouse, belonging to Messrs Baird & Stevenson, whereby a man named Robert Whitelaw lost his life. He was employed as a brusher and while engaged clearing the road along with a man named William Govan, a large stone weighing 15 cwt, came away and killed Whitelaw almost instantaneously. Govan miraculously escaped with a few bruises on the leg. Whitelaw resided at New Street, Stonehouse, and leaves a widow and small family. [Airdrie & Coatbridge Advertiser 22 February 1902]



Extracts from the Hamilton Advertiser July, 1935  
Tragic Fall From Viaduct

A distressing fatal accident occurred on Monday night, the victim being Jessie Frame Plenderleith, aged 19, of 25 Hill Road. Out walking with her young sister, they were returning over the viaduct which spans the River Avon, utilising the workmen's gangway. On hearing screams spectators were horrified to witness the unfortunate young woman clinging momentarily to the narrow ledge before crashing to her death over 100 feet below. Her young sister was so overcome with grief at the tragic occurrence that she had to be conveyed home.

#### August, 1939

#### Violet's Hectic Finish.

The league game at Loch Park on Monday night is likely to be long remembered for its hectic finish. With only 18 minutes to go and 3 goals down it seemed, on the face of it, as if Violet's home record was gone. But football wouldn't be anything if it didn't hold surprises! So, when everything seemed black, and everybody was feeling blue, the surprises started. Kirkland, who throughout had played a very useful game, suddenly commenced to force matters, and this had an immediate response from his colleagues. As a consequence, and to use a colloquialism, Burnbank were immediately forced back on their "hunters", and before they could quite realise where they were, had picked the ball three times out of the net. It was now level-pegging, and a minute to go. What a finish! Yes, sir, it was great stuff, and another sixty seconds might have seen Violet take full points!