

GLEN LESLIE NEWS

“THE MYSTERY HAS BEEN SOLVED”



In an effort to ensure that all the headstones in the Glen Leslie Cemetery that simply stated “baby” and the last name had an acknowledgement about the parents, the results of the research came down to one headstone that the family was not easily identifiable.

However the mystery of who the parents were of the “Taylor Baby” has been solved. The parents of the baby girl have been identified as William D. and Mabel J. (Dawson) Taylor. Alberta death records revealed that the baby girl was born on December 16 and passed away on December 18, 1920 in Bezanson

of pneumonia. The attending physician was Dr. J.R. Labadie who lived in the Bezanson area.

A search of the Peace Country Land Settlement Database revealed that a William D. Taylor had filed homestead applications on NW and NE 4-72-2-W6 (land located on the east side of the Smoky River) on June 4, 1920. He abandoned the NE quarter on June 23, 1921 stating the land had too much brush. At the same time, he cancelled the application on the NW quarter. An attached note stated that the Taylor’s currently resided in Glen Leslie but later lived in the Bezanson area. It would appear, that they were living in Bezanson when the baby girl passed away; therefore they would have abandoned and cancelled the homestead applications after that time.

The Taylor’s were listed on the 1921 Census as owning and living on 8-72-3-W6 in the Glen Leslie area however which ¼ of land was not identified. It was narrowed down to either the NE or SE quarter. The NE ¼ was the homestead of Johnny Kiebalo who received the patent on the land in 1916. The SE ¼ was the homestead of John McKenzie who received the patent on the land in September 1919. The “Smoky to Grande Prairie” history book stated that Mr. McKenzie sold his land to Johnny Kiebalo after the war. As such, it would be safe to assume that Mr. Taylor would have bought the original McKenzie homestead from Mr. Kiebalo as there would have been some sort of residence on that property.

Census forms include a great deal of interesting information; at the time of the census, William was 33 and his wife Mabel J. was 23. It further stated that they both were from England – the Land Database provided a bit more information insofar as to where William originated from which was Lancashire County, Liverpool, England. At the time of the Census being June 1921, they were only a family of two. William had immigrated in 1908 and Mabel in 1920. As the baby passed away in 1920, Mabel may have been expecting their first child when she immigrated.

How long the Taylor’s stayed in Glen Leslie is unknown however they would have sold their land and purchased the NW 6-72-2-W6 (RR31 and is the ¼ of land that the Ski Chalet is located on) in the Bezanson area from the Soldiers’ Settlement Board. The land had been the original homestead of Fred Thompson who sold it to the Soldier’s Settlement Board once he received the patent on the property in 1918.

The next occurrence of the Taylor name was found in the Grande Prairie Herald on March 20, 1923 under the heading "Bezanson News" which read:

"Born to Mr. and Mrs. W. Taylor on Monday March 5, a fine baby girl."

A subsequent newspaper dated April 17, 1923 stated:

"The dairy farmers of the district are going to watch with interest this coming season, an experiment which Mr. W. Taylor is going to carry out. He is going to seed a few acres to Sunflowers, build a ground silo and try and solve the problem of feeding dairy cows for profit during the winter. Success be with you Will - and others will follow your footsteps."

There still is a bit of a discrepancy in the dates as the 1921 Census gives a legal land description in Glen Leslie however the birth and death certificate state "Bezanson" for residence in 1920 and the information in the newspaper articles under the heading "Bezanson News" were in 1923. Only land titles would clarify that point however we do know that they resided in Glen Leslie and Bezanson for short periods of time. The "Smoky to Grande Prairie" history book stated that the Taylor's did not stay long in the Bezanson area and it is unknown as to where they relocated to.

Hopefully the Taylor's had a wonderful and prosperous life wherever they eventually settled.

By Wanda Zenner – June 2018