

## The Russell Family

Information provided by Bertha Russell Mercer

William and Emma Russell moved from Indianapolis, Indiana in 1916 and settled on a farm in Millersburg.

William Russell's first wife, Sevilla, had passed away in 1904, and he married Emma Campbell on August 4, 1908 in Kokomo, Indiana. Together they raised his three children, Phyllis, George and Harry. They later took in Raymond Wood (known as Shine), the son of Emma's sister.

Phyllis married Ira Schnepf and Harry married Lillian Houghmaster, both were from Millersburg families.

George was born in Bluffton, Indiana on January 22, 1897. He married Lorena D. Banta on September 30, 1916. She had been born at Logansport, Indiana, on the banks of the Wabash River October 28, 1896. Both her parents were deaf mutes. In 1918 with their infant son, Billy, they came by train from Indiana to Michigan to help on the farm. They later settled at the logging camp near Millersburg where George worked and Lorena served as camp cook.

George and Lorena had eight children:

Bill lives in Indianapolis. He and his wife, Anne, who died in 1997, had no children.

Mae lives in Flushing. She and husband, Willard, who died in 1982, have 10 children.

Ed and his wife, Muriel (Schuler) lived in Millersburg and have four children. Ed passed away in 1989.

Marie and her husband Linwood Sabin live in Millersburg and have one child.

Shirley and her husband Alvin Zampich live in Millersburg and have four children.

Esther and her husband Bob Schuler lived in Millersburg until their deaths, hers in 1974 and his in 1996. They had four children.

Louise and her husband Don Darga live in Rogers City and have six children.

Bertha and her husband Don Mercer live in Spring Arbor and have three children.

George worked as janitor of the Millersburg School from 1947 until his retirement. Almost every adult around today can remember "Old George" tying their shoelaces, fixing their bikes, or knowing where they could always find



**William & Emma Russell**



**George & Lorena Russell in 1918**



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him, down in the furnace room smoking his pipe. He and his wife also took care of the roller-skating rink at the community hall.

He also served as Village and Township Clerk for over 36 and 38 years respectively. After his retirement at age 80, Lorena took over as village clerk. One of the common sayings around Case Township was "Old George will take care of the problems that we incur." He was sorely missed.

The Village of Millersburg dedicated their park by the Ocqueoc River as the George W. Russell Community Park 1977 in honor of all his years of service to the community.

George passed away December 6, 1978 at age 81 Lorena lived to the age of 101 before succumbing to death on February 2, 1998.



*Senior Citizens King & Queen, 1970*

in



*Russell Family, L-R, George, Lorena, Bill, Mae, Marie, Shirley, Esther, Louise, Bertha, and Eddie.*