

THE CRICHTON FAMILY HISTORY

*"People will not look forward to Posterity
who never look backward to their Ancestors"*

This Crichton family history dates back to a Robert Crichton who was discharged from the Army at Glasgow, Scotland on 8 April 1783. He married and had three sons. Two sons served in the Army and a third son named John was born near Glasgow, Scotland 21 April 1787.

John Crichton married 6 June 1806 to Janet Hamilton, born 13 November 1786 near Glasgow, Scotland. There have been found over 1500 descendants of John and Janet Hamilton Crichton.

John and Janet Crichton had thirteen children, all born in Airdrie, Scotland. Four of these children died in Airdrie, Scotland, three were infants and Margaret (Margot) at sixteen years of age. The remaining nine children and their parents came to America at different times between the 1830's and 1850's. Eight of the children were married in Scotland and had their children with them when they came to America.

John Crichton was a spinner and weaver by trade in Scotland. When the Patent Looms came into use, a great many hand workers were thrown out of work. This was a very serious matter in those days, as it was quite impossible for a man to take up another trade, so they thought.

With a great many out of work, they decided to call a meeting of the Clan to decide the best place to go. New Zealand, Australia and America were considered with the majority in favor of America. They pooled sufficient money to send William to America to look conditions over. That was in 1838.

The William who was selected to spy out the land was William Robert Crichton. The eighth child of John and Janet Crichton and in 1838 he was a lad of seventeen. He went to Chicago, Illinois and worked in a butcher shop for a man named Clyborn. As William Robert was very religious he refused to work on Sundays so he left Mr. Clyborn's butcher shop and went to work for Diamond Bros. He was later offered forty to fifty acres of land on Lake Street, not far from what is now downtown Chicago as payment for a debt owed him. But when he went to look at it he found most of it under water so he refused the land and said he would take the money instead. The County Court House is now built there.

William Robert saved his money and on 22 May 1843 he went from Chicago to Dundee, Illinois. He purchased 80 acres of Government farm land at \$1.25 an acre west of Dundee, Illinois. He eventually owned 200 acres.

When it was settled that the rest of the family would be coming from Scotland to settle and farm the land in Dundee, William Robert married a Scotch lass he had met in Chicago on 26 January 1848. Grace Todd was born in Greenoch, Scotland on 6 March 1828. She came to America with her parents when she was seven years old. William Robert was employed on the First Drainage Canal from Chicago.

After Chicago, William Robert and Grace Todd Crichton moved to Dundee, Illinois where they built a log house and buildings and started to farm. There were no railroads and they had to drive to Chicago, which was their only market, with horses. They often walked this distance of nearly fifty miles. They cut wood and hauled it to Chicago to sell for \$1.25 a cord.

William Robert was a Republican but voted the Abolition ticket before the Republican party came into Power.

When William Robert Crichton arrived in America in 1838, he came on the heels of the panic of 1837 (during the Administration of Martin Van Buren) and the first accounts of the new land that he sent back to Scotland must have been discouraging. But times in Scotland were very bad too. After he had located and purchased the government land in Dundee, Illinois in 1843, a party was made up in Scotland in 1846 to come to America and join him. The rest of the family soon followed.

It is William Robert Crichton, eighth (seventh living) child of John and Janet Hamilton Crichton, and his wife Grace Todd Crichton's descendants that will follow here.

This Crichton History contains excerpts taken from original family history compiled from 1920 to 1931.

Mrs. Robert C. Crichton
Jean L. Crichton

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The following are excerpts from a book titled:

1841 - 1951 A CENTURY AND A DECADE OF THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH OF DUNDEE, ILLINOIS

This book was loaned to me by Caroline Schroeder Crichton Miller. Many names throughout the Crichton Family History are found in this book.

In a section of this book titled: A GOLDEN AUREOLE OF MEMORIES, I have copied the following:

GOLDEN FAMILIES

In our small church, twelve Golden Families, -families that have had continuous membership thru fifty, seventy-five, one hundred years! Thru the centuries that lie ahead may our church ever be able to use this golden yardstick in measuring its history. The harvest which these families have garnered, is a distillation of their many years of service, and shining through it all, across the years, is their loyalty today.

of these twelve Golden Families:

THE CRICHTON FAMILY 1848 -103 Years

The Crichton family was first recorded on Nov. 1, 1848, when Mr. John Crichton, one of the early Scotch settlers of this vicinity, became a member of this church. Five generations of this family have attended this church.

The late Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Crichton joined in 1872. Their large farm home was northwest of Dundee at the place that geologists claim to be one of the terminal moraines of the Wisconsin glacial period. The great accumulation of stones left strewn over the surface of the land is a regular feature of glacier phenomena. These have been cleared away thru the years, and piled in heaps along the boundaries of the fields; but the many queer shapes have held great interest for geologists.

This farm home abounded in an atmosphere of hospitality ~hat made' it a favored meeting place for Guild groups, and for the young people of the church. One of the Crichton daughters now living in Dundee is Mrs. Jennie Crichton Fitzsimmons (Mrs Roy). Mr. & Mrs. Roy Fitzsimmons became members in 1912. Miss Ruth Fitzsimmons, a member since 1927, is the only child remaining in Dundee. Others were Morris, 1929, Alan 1931, and Howard, 1936, the latter being noted for his beautiful singing. Mrs. Bessie Crichton Miller (1912) (Mrs. Fred M. Miller), Miss Bethea Crichton, 1912, Mr. Raymond Crichton, 1912; and Mrs. Margaret Price Lange, 1908, are active members.

The late Mrs. James Crichton was a member for over 70 years. A fifth generation includes the children of Mr. & Mrs. Howard Fitzsimmons.

John & Janet Hamilton Crichton

John Crichton

Born 21 Apr. 1787 Near Glasgow, Scotland

Died 21 Nov. 1862 Dundee, Ill.

Married 6 June 1806 Near Glasgow, Scotland

Janet Hamilton

Born 13 Nov. 1786 Near Glasgow, Scotland

Died 13 Nov. 1855 Dundee, Ill.

Both John & Janet Crichton are buried in West Dundee, Ill.

There were thirteen children born to this union, all in Airdrie, Scotland.

Jane or Jean	Born	28 Aug. 1807
Robert	"	7 July 1809
John	"	20 Feb. 1811
James	"	8 Feb. 1813
Neil	"	28 June 1815
Elizabeth	"	8 Oct. 1818
Margaret or Margot	"	8 Oct. 1818
William Robert	"	19 Apr. 1821
Janet	"	28 Oct. 1824
Grace	"	27 Jan. 1827
Male child	"	6 June 1829
Thomas	"	12 April 1831
Male child	"	10 July 1833

The last three male children died in infancy. Margaret, a twin, died at the age of 16. All four died in Airdrie, Scotland.

It is William Robert, eighth child of John & Janet Crichton descendants that we will follow.

William Robert Crichton

Born 19 Apr. 1821 Airdrie, Scotland
Died 7 Dec. 1900 Dundee, Illinois

At the age of seventeen in 1838, William Robert was selected by the members of the family to come to America to find land for the family. His journeys are told above in the Crichton family history.

Married 26 Jan 1848, Dundee, Ill

Grace Todd

Born 6 Mar. 1828 Greenoch, Scotland
Died 16 Nov. 1913 Dundee, Illinois

Parents were James Todd and Grace Hamilton of Greenoch, Scotland
Grace Todd's brother, Robert Todd, married Grace Crichton,
a sister of William Robert Crichton.

William Robert & Grace Todd Crichton are buried in West
Dundee, Ill. cemetery.

Six children were born to this union

Grace Hamilton

Born 2 June 1849, Dundee, Ill
Died 23 July 1913, Dundee, Ill

Jannet Hamilton

Born 9 Mar. 1851, Dundee, Ill
Died 12 May 1921, Carpentersville, Ill

John William

Born 15 Sept 1855, Dundee, Ill
Died Aug. 1925, Geneva, Ill

James Todd

Born 16 Dec. 1856, Dundee, Ill
Died 15 May 1916, Wayne, Ill

William Robert

Born 2 June 1862, Dundee, Ill
Died 6 May 1863, Dundee, Ill

William Robert

Born 4 June 1866, Dundee, Ill
Died 20 Nov. 1929, Elgin, Ill

It will be this last William Robert descendants to follow.

William Robert

Born 4 June 1866 Dundee, Ill.
Died 20 Nov. 1929 Elgin, Ill.
Married 27 Mar. 1889 Lake Geneva, Wisc.

Margaret Crichton

Born 1 Jan. 1862 Dundee, Ill.
Died 1938 Elgin, Ill.

Both William & Margaret are buried at West Dundee, Ill. Margaret was the fourth child of Neil Crichton. This William Robert father, the first William Robert, and Neil Crichton were brothers. This William Robert and Margaret were first cousins.

There were three children born to this union.

Cora

Born 5 June 1890 Dundee, Ill.
Died 1940 Elgin, Ill.
Married 1938 or 39 To Arthur Shedden
No Children. No further information.

Mable

Born 9 July 1894 Dundee, Ill.
Died No record
Married 1933 to a man by the name of Bigalow. Mable was shunned by the rest of the family because of their disapproval of Bigalow. Word of mouth was that he was lazy and would not work at a steady job. No mention of children.

Clarence William

Born 16 April 1901, Dundee, Ill
Died 17 Oct 1962, Elgin, Ill

Clarence Willtam Crichtondendants will be followed.

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*This version of the Crichton Family History was provided in May 2003 by Paula Smith
pjsmith@tampabay.rr.com and reformatted by Gary S. Collins to take up less space.*