

RACHAEL AND MIRIAM

The 1871 census of Marlborough township, Carleton county, Ontario, in the Report of Deaths within the Last Twelve Months, records the deaths of Miriam and Rachael Reddick with the notation "diphtheria"; they were five years old.

There is a part of a gravestone in the old North Gower Union cemetery which records two deaths:

Died Jan. 4, 1871
Aged 5 Ys. 4 M's & 10 D's
Twin children of
James & Matilda Reddick

They grew in beauty side by side:
They filled one home with glee:
They, too, are gone with their glorious bloom
From the gaze of the human eye.

The portion of the stone which would have contained the names has been broken off and is missing. There was no entry in the parish burial register of that period for the deaths nor was there for their baptism; they would have been born about August 25, 1865.

There is a photo, a tintype, of a middle-aged Matilda (Goldie) Reddick holding two children both about two years old. A niece has the photo and has identified them as Miriam and Rachael, twin children of James and Matilda, who died while very young. They would have been her mother's sisters.

It is a curious fact that on August 24, 1865, four daughters of James and Matilda were baptised in the North Gower Anglican church; these were Louisa, Matilda, Minerva and Jemima. The baptism register notes that they were "private baptisms" which may be significant. Jimmy was Presbyterian but Matilda was Anglican. Jemima's stepdaughter has said that as long as (or whenever) Jimmy was active in the church, it was the Presbyterian church that the family attended but when he ceased to be active, Matilda insisted that it would be the Anglican church that they would attend. It will never be known now what events occurred at that time but on, or very near, the day that the twins were born four daughters were baptised in the Anglican church but the twins were not. Perhaps they were baptised in the Presbyterian church. Presbyterian records are incomplete so the record cannot be found, if there ever was one. It is curious too that when Jimmy died, his burial was in the Anglican church. It may be that Matilda scored the last point in the game.