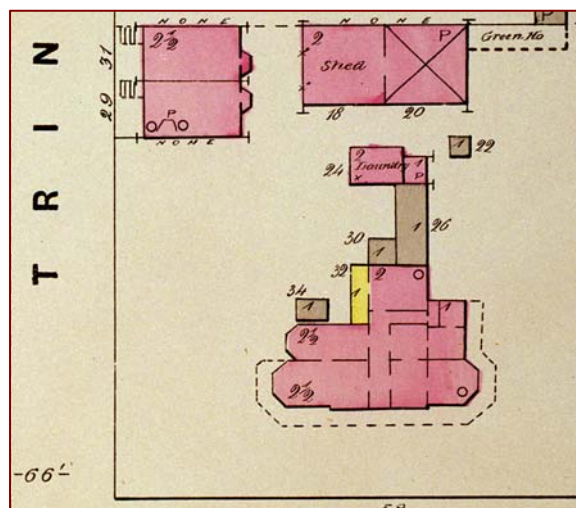


Residential Roots: James G. Worts



Only known photo of Lindenwold, 1870s



Lindenwold, Trinity & Mill, 1880

In 1831, James Gooderham Worts emigrated to Upper Canada with his father, and founding partner of Worts & Gooderham, James Worts. After his father's untimely death in 1834, the 15-year-old boy was probably cared for by his uncle, and future business partner, William Gooderham. In 1845, he was made a full partner, and the company became Gooderham & Worts. The rest, as they say, is history. Under the first generations' leadership, the distillery became the largest in the world and family businesses branched out into many areas.

Like William Gooderham, "JG" lived near the family business for his entire adult life. In 1840, the year he married Toronto native, Sarah Bright, he lived in a "cottage" at Trinity & Mill Streets where Rack House D and the Condos now stand. In the 1840s, however, the area was quite rural, with the windmill and distillery hugging the lakeshore in the distance. As the business grew, so did his family and his family residence. By 1861, eleven people were living under the Worts roof – mother, father, seven children ranging in age from 4 year old Fred to 16 year old Charlotte, and two 19 year old servants, Canadian-born Louisa Stedman and Irish immigrant Mary McMahan.

Historical records are sketchy, but according to the *Globe* Worts built a significant addition to his residence in 1868. The only known photograph of "Lindenwold" – as the Worts residence was called – depicts a substantial, 2- to 3-storey brick house with a handsome wrap-around verandah from which JG and his family could enjoy views of the distillery and the harbour beyond.



Clara (centre) & Lottie (right) 1860s

Surviving family letters document events, both large and small, and offer insight into the personalities of the participants. On March 1, 1862, 15-year old Clara shares gossip with her cousin Harriette (perhaps this was Harriet Gooderham who lived just down the street at the

William Gooderham house). The Victorian teenager looked forward to having a “jolly time” at Mrs. George Gooderham’s big party the next week and bumbles on about flirting, dancing, and skating with neighbours, cousins and young men like “Mr. Cosby” (who became her husband eight years later).



Clara Worts’ wedding dress

Naturally, when marriage did come her way, Clara was gowned in the highest style – a “rich, white corded silk dress, with a train of jassamines and orange blossoms, an elegant *point appliqué* veil, and wreath of orange blossoms”; married in Little Trinity Church, where her grandfather, uncles, and father were all prominent members; and fêted at a luncheon reception at “Lindenwold” on April 27, 1870. Altogether, the newspaper reported, it was “an unusually brilliant and fashionable gathering of the elite.”

Before long, JG took it upon himself to quell some of newly-wed Clara’s high spirits and (apparently) high spending. On July 19, 1870, he wrote a birthday letter, cautioning her to “settle down to a quiet life as soon as she [could].” In fact, he advised, she “should do as [her older sister] Lottie does, keep a correct housekeeping expense book ... Lottie is saving fast and as soon as you get over your wedding frolics you must try to do the same.” Whether she tamed her spending habits remains unknown ... but she certainly had fine and expensive taste, which is duly documented by invoices from Toronto cabinet-maker, R. Hay & Company (formerly Jacques & Hay), in the early 1880s, and surviving articles, like a set of hand-painted dinner plates ... one of which features her beloved childhood home, Lindenwold.



Clara Worts Cosby’s Lindenwold plate

Many thanks to Douglas Worts, Deb McKinley and “Clara’s Girls” for sharing Worts family photographs, letters, and memorabilia. Other sources include the 1861 Census, 1880 Goad’s map, and Steve Otto’s 1994 *Inventory of Archival Resources* report.

Please send your comments or questions to Manager of Heritage Services, Sally Gibson, sg@thedistillerydistrict.com.