

Mr. F. S. Parrott

A NEW CENTURY, 1900 TO 2005

From Farm to Foundation

Twenty-five-year-old Frederick Stanley Parrott's reprieve from the family business of farming came to an abrupt end in 1903. For seven years, Fred, as he was commonly known, had worked as a book-keeper for Eastman Kodak in Rochester, New York, a bustling 19th-century metropolis ranked as America's twenty-fourth largest city (population 162,800). Although there is no record of the young Canadian bachelor's years there, life in affluent Rochester would certainly have been a far cry from small-town Napanee, where Fred had grown up.

Rochester was a beautiful city with agrarian roots and a burgeoning industrial base. Wealthy families built opulent homes around the city's great public parks, the University of Rochester and several colleges offered liberal arts, religious and technical educations, and the city was a transportation hub, boasting a steamship port, the Erie Canal and five train stations. Eighty miles to the northeast, across Lake Ontario, a completely different world awaited Fred — a 220-acre farm on the southeastern outskirts of Belleville in Thurlow Township.

For Fred, the farm must have been a comparatively lonely environment, but in fact, it was not particularly isolated. The old Kingston Road, which carried horse-drawn traffic between

Belleville and Kingston, ran alongside it. Now, rather than wandering along bustling, fashionable city streets, Fred found himself driving a team of horses over hayfields and leading his herd of dairy cows across the road to drink from the Bay of Quinte. On Sundays, he broke the routine of farm life with the 20-mile buggy drive to Napanee to visit his parents. Sometimes, those Sunday drives reached farther afield, occasionally involving visits to cousins in Sydenham, some 40 miles away. In fact, it was there that Fred met Lillian Maude Parke (1883-1953), originally from Gananoque, who was there visiting her grandfather.

In spite of the distance between suitor and flame, the romance blossomed. While the steam whistle of the Grand Trunk Railway may have haunted Fred's dreams in his early days on the farm, the train probably made his courtship of Maude possible, since the couple lived 60 miles apart. No correspondence between the two exists today, but Fred certainly had matrimony on his mind when he set about updating the old farmhouse in 1909, adding a second floor and enlarging the windows and kitchen. Fred and Maude were married on June 22, 1910, at her parents' farm in Philadelphia, New York, near Watertown,



Frederick Stanley Parrott as a young man; his brother Marsh Parrott and grand nephew Gerald Hagerman; his mother, Jennie Fellows Parrott (left to right).