



Margaret Paterson

September 22, 1890 - August 19, 1990

Margaret Paterson was born in Dover Township in Ontario, Canada in 1890. Her parents were John Paterson and Fanny Hope. John immigrated to Canada from Scotland in 1879. Fanny immigrated from Scotland three years later, arriving at the port of New York on May 11, 1882.

Margaret was the youngest of four children born to John and Fanny: Isabella (b. 1883), Agnes (b. 1886), Mabel (b. 1889). John and Fanny were married on May 23, 1882 near Chatham, Ontario, Canada.

The 1891 census of Canada showed Margaret living with her parents, her three sisters, her uncle James Paterson, and her grandparents, James and Jane Paterson.

Margaret's sister, Agnes, appears to be the first of the children of John and Fanny Paterson to move to Detroit from Chatham. The 1910 census shows Agnes working as a chambermaid at St. Lukes Hospital in Detroit. That same year, Agnes married Charles Murray, a manufacturer who lived in Detroit. A border crossing record shows Margaret visiting Detroit in 1912.

Margaret married Arthur Roy Coleman on May 29, 1916. The marriage was performed by a minister from the Presbyterian church, which was the religious affiliation of Margaret's family. Roy was a Methodist. Margaret was then living in Chatham and Roy in Detroit. The couple stated that they intended to reside in Chatham.

Margaret and Roy later moved to Detroit. The 1920 census shows them renting at 3454 Woodward Avenue – about 1.5 miles from the Detroit river. Margaret's two children, Jean (age 3 ½) and Betty (age 1 ½) lived with them as did Dodd (age 9 ½). Dodd was Roy's son and Margaret's stepson. Also in the household was Margaret's sister, Agnes Murray, and Roy's nephew, Donald.

The 1930 census shows Margaret and Roy renting an apartment at 16538 Woodward Avenue in Highland Park, Michigan. Monthly rent was \$40. Living with them was Dodd (age 19), Betty (age 11) and Murray (age 9). Living next door was Margaret's sister, Agnes, along with her friend Ethel Chatrand and her cousin William Kerr, a relative who had immigrated from Scotland in 1927.

After Roy died in 1932, Margaret and her children continued to live in the apartment on Woodward Avenue.

Isabelle Paterson, sister of Margaret and Agnes, moved to the Detroit area to live with her sister Agnes in 1939. The border crossing record shows that Agnes was still living at 16538 Woodward Avenue. Their sister Mabel was therefore the only sibling to remain living in Canada.

Margaret's daughter Betty married Casper Basler. Her son Murray married Kathleen Steil. Daughter Jean had died in an accident in 1923.

Margaret later married Laban "Jack" Finney. Jack died in 1945. Since she had changed her last name from Coleman to Finney, Margaret was later known to her grandchildren as "Grandma Finney."

Margaret and her sisters Agnes and Belle later moved into a house owned by their cousin William Kerr on Hollywood Street in Highland Park. They had to move when William died before he was able to execute a will in which he intended to bequest the house to his cousins.

Margaret then lived with her daughter Betty and her son-in-law Casper and their family at the Basler farm in Carsonville, Michigan. She helped look after the Basler children and tended the household garden and fed the chickens. Margaret would occasionally visit the Coleman household in Ferndale, Michigan, and the Colemans would also periodically visit Margaret at the Basler farm. Margaret taught the Coleman and Basler children to respect nature and to be kind to animals.

Margaret eventually became frail and moved into a small group home for elderly women in the Carsonville area. When her health finally failed, she was transferred to a nursing home in the area. Margaret died about a month before her 100th birthday.

Links to documents and photos mentioned above:

[Margaret's 1890 birth certificate](#) / [record of birth](#)
[1912 boarder crossing](#) / [1916 marriage record](#)
Census records: [1891](#) - [1901](#) - [1920](#) - [1930](#)
Photos: [Murray and Dan](#) / [Carolyn and Tara](#)
[Jack Finney and Margaret](#) / [Agnes Murray](#)
[Betty, Margaret, Connie, and Coleman kids in 1970](#)
[Eulogy at funeral service](#) / [Memorial tea bag launch](#)