

Margaret McPhail Research Report, Ahnen

By Valorie Zimmerman, 11 April 2025

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Open Research questions

☐ Where is the evidence for her birth & family?

Executive summary

Timeline

4 August 1822 Birth: Stamford, Delaware or Genesee, New York, USA evidence?

~1841 Marriage to Walter Scott Cowan, probably Puslinch,
Wellington, Canada West/Upper Canada

1844 birth of son Walter Scott Cowan, Puslinch, Wellington,
Canada West

1851 Census¹ *Image on Ancestry; married with child, above.*

1861 Census, Puslinch,² *married, son Walter laborer; dau. Jane age 4.*

1871 Census, Puslinch,

Research notes

- a. Analysis of known information and available sources for the time and place.
- b. Analysis of each source consulted.
 - i. Citation.
 - ii. Abstract/transcription/translation (what does it say).
 - iii. Interpretation (what does it mean).
 - iv. Evaluation of reliability of the source. Is it an original document? Does the

¹ "Canada, Census, 1851", FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MWTK-483> : Tue Jan 28 16:13:23 UTC 2025), Entry for Margret Cowan, 1851.

² (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MQ7M-SRK> : Sat Jul 20 01:51:07 UTC 2024), Entry for Margaret Cowan, 1861.

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informant have first-hand information? Could the informant have a reason to lie? Could the recordkeeper have altered the document?

c. Comparison and correlation of sources.

i. Analyzing if different sources are about the same people and locations.

ii. Detecting and resolving conflicts between evidence.

iii. Aids: timelines, tables.

Conclusion

a. Assessment of the evidence, including a proof argument or statement if the research supports a conclusion.

Suggestions for further research

Appendix

a. Images of sources consulted (cross-referenced from research notes).

b. Possibly: other overviews, such as charts, maps, property lists, lists of associates.

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