

# Milton W. Carpenter

## First Of Long Line

One of the early day pioneers of Dixon was Milton Carpenter, born in Niles, Michigan, November 8, 1836, the son of John Whipple Carpenter (born in Rhode Island) and Elizabeth True Carpenter.

Milton Carpenter was a lineal descendant of William Carpenter, who came to America in the ship Bevis in 1638, and who was one of the original proprietors of Weymouth and Rehoboth, Massachusetts. William had knowledge of the law and served as arbiter in legal matters in the new settlement. For several years he was town clerk, serving also as constable, and as deputy to the general court of Plymouth from 1641 to 1643, and, again, in 1656. He was appointed Captain by Governor Bradford during Gorton's Rebellion, and he, and his wife, Abigail, contributed toward the expenses of King Philip's War. He died a young man in 1659, leaving his wife and eight children.

Milton Carpenter descended from William's fourth child, Joseph, who was born in England in 1634, and married Margaret Sutton, daughter of John Sutton of Hingham, Massachusetts. Joseph Carpenter was one of the founders of the First Baptist Church in Rehoboth, Massachusetts.

Milton Carpenter's great-great-grandfather was Uriah Carpenter, Jr., a sergeant in the Revolutionary War.

Milton Carpenter and his brother, Lewis Whipple Carpenter, left Savannah, Missouri, where their father, John Whipple Carpenter, was a well-known and experienced carriage maker, and crossed the plains to California. Milton made his home for a while in Sacramento, then in Napa, plying the trade of wheelwright, learned from his father in Missouri. In 1857 Mr. Carpenter located in the town of Silveyville, establishing a blacksmith and carriage shop. When the railroad was completed and Dixon began to grow on its present site, Mr. Carpenter moved his business to the new town, on the site of what is now known as Rossi Plaza. Mr. Carpenter soon added to the undertaking business of its kind in northern Solano County. He was prominent in the manufacture of buggies, carriages and wagons. Vehicles bearing the

stamp of his handiwork were found in many of the surrounding counties.

On June 9, 1869, Milton Carpenter married Rhoda Caroline (Carrie) McCracken, the daughter of John and Rebecca Brown McCracken.

Mr. and Mrs. McCracken were members of the historic Donner Party, crossing the plains from Missouri in 1846 with the Donner group, until they reached the Hastings Cutoff, where they parted — the McCrackens heading for California via Oregon group lived for awhile at Sutters Fort while Mr. McCracken fought in the Mexican War.

In 1847 the family moved to Sonoma, and in 1848 camped on the Yuba River searching for gold. Returning to Sonoma, Mr. McCracken operated a fruit ranch, where on November 18, 1850, Carrie was born. She attended school there, along with the children of General Vallejo. At the age of 18 Carrie came to Silveyville to visit her young married sister, Mrs. Johnny Howard. It was here that she met Milton Carpenter and married him in 1869. They established their home in Silveyville, and in 1871 moved the home, as well as the business, to Dixon, where part of the original house still stands on North First Street. Milton and Carrie had six children: William Vaslett, Milton Plummer, Charles L. Lulu, Rose and George Leland. The only two to grow to maturity were Milton and George. The elder Milton Carpenter passed away March 1, 1900, and Carrie passed away December 24, 1940.

Milton P. Carpenter continued to operate the family business, and when George grew older he joined his brother in the Blacksmith Shop, Hardware Store, and Funeral Home. Milton married Margaret McDermott in 1897. They had two children: Edward R. and Milton W. (Boy) Carpenter. Edward is married to the former Leah Shively, and their only child, Carolyn, is Mrs. David W. Gosard, Jr., of Seattle, Washington. She has three children, Star, Shelly and Stone. Boy Carpenter married Sadie L. Ferguson and they had three children, Betty Mae (Goodin) (children: Cherie (Mrs. W. Fanning), Sue-San, Barbara D., Dyrk and Bettina Mae); Susan Jane (Webb) (children: Billy, Francine and David); Milton W. Carpenter IV married to the former Virginia

Crockett, (children: Sidney, Gloria, Milton V and Margaret).

George L. Carpenter married Faye E. Putnam, the daughter of a pioneer Dixon couple, Ike and Helen Culver Putnam. To George and Faye were born two children, Gloria, who died in 1929 at the age of 16, and Margaret Jane, now Mrs. Eggert Rohwer, Jr., of Woodland. Roberta Jane McMills, now Mrs. Thomas R. Ellison of Santa Clara, is Margaret Jane's daughter.

In 1942 Milton P. and George built a new funeral home on North First St., after having operated out of their original building on Main Street for many years. After their deaths (Milton in 1958 and George in 1949) the management reverted to Milton IV. The Hardware Store closed its doors in 1962 after serving the communities of Silveyville and Dixon for 105 years.