

## **Sarah Augusta Nicoll Nicoll**

Welcome, welcome. Thank you for coming. My name is Sarah Augusta Nicoll Nicoll. . . .that's right, 2 Nicolls. I was Nicoll before I married one. Today is the 21<sup>st</sup> of March 1910 and a VERY important day for me. Can you guess? It is my DEATH DAY. I ceased to live today and before I head on to my hereafter (wherever) I came here to visit one of my 'special places'. . . .this burial plot of the 6<sup>th</sup> William Nicoll.

The grave dearest to my heart is this tiny one here. William Nicoll -30 March 1844 – 2 May 1844 (32 days) "Of such is the kingdom of heaven" (engraved on his tombstone).

A hundred years from now, people will walk by these graves and say: "William Nicoll, Oh I've heard of him, and here is his wife Sarah Greenly, and their little girl, only lived six years, what a shame. Oh they lost another child too! Little William. Pity". Only they didn't lose this child. I DID, AND MY BELOVED HUSBAND WILLIAM #7 DID. If they only looked at the dates, William the 6<sup>th</sup> died in 1823, my wee William was born and died in 1844. TWENTY-ONE YEARS AFTER HIS GRANDFATHER DIED! That would have been some trick.

And my bones will not rest with my baby.

When the good Lord took our baby, I didn't think He was such a GOOD Lord. My Beloved's mom, Sarah Greenly understood. By the time she was 30, she had lost her baby AND her husband. She was an angel to us. The following August we were blessed with a second child. It was another boy. We named him after her. William GREENLY Nicoll. Five more children would follow his birth.

We all lived together in this house where Timberpoint is today. It was home to the Nicoll family from 1702 until 1899 when we moved into our son William Greenly Nicoll's home in Babylon. He is a prominent lawyer and former surrogate judge. Oh, there were a few years, in the 1860's when we moved to Huntington because my husband thought the schools were better there. In fact, our son William Greenly, was in the first graduating class of Huntington HS in 1862.

It was a rather large farm house. Even though my Beloved William #7 graduated from King's College (now called Columbia University) we were farmers. It wasn't a mansion with rooms of paneling imported from Europe, no fancy-schmancy architect designed it, there was no Aolian organ with 7,000 pipes (I wonder who played that thing), and no bowling alley imported from Switzerland with a mossy roof. There were no poultry houses designed by Isaac H. Green. Our chickens slept in the chicken coop and didn't seem to mind. . . the eggs were very good too. One thing we didn't have was a lot of money. We did have a lot of land, at least at first, but there was no sewing machine company or railroad to fuel our endeavors. I remember one year we didn't have enough money to pay our taxes. My Beloved thought and thought, he finally had a solution. He would cut down more trees and sell the lumber. Taxes paid. Problem solved.

Our big house was comfortable for its time. Several coal stoves supplied the heat until a central plant was installed in the 1880's. If you have ever experienced coal heat, you know it is hot, dusty and has an odor and those heavy ashes had to be carted out. Our boys had to keep the wood box filled behind the wood fired kitchen stove. Lighting was by kerosene lamps. Wicks needed trimming and the reservoir kept filled. There was always plenty of work to be done inside and out. It was a good life and a good home. Traditionally, we Nicolls believed in education for our sons and respect for the God given land, air water to which we owe everything. You might say we were original conservationists. We lived simply, wasted nothing, and tried to be good Christians.

Life on the farm evolved, as it does everywhere. I remember the 1870's and 80's. (The farm was sold to William L. Breeze in 1883 but Nicoll left in 1899) {Havemeyer} The farm was smaller then. The children were grown and on with their lives. W lived in the big house, Beloved and I, and Mom, Sarah Greenly was with us (until 1887). It was customary in those days for farm owners to provide and maintain residences for their year-round employees. There were well built cottages for them on the farm. Of course, they did not have the facilities you would expect today. A pitcher-spout pump in the kitchen supplied water. There was a wood burning range and fireplace for cooking and heat. Our workforce was usually three resident farmers, a coachman and a gardener who did not work in the wintertime. We hired extra help to harvest and in winter to cut and store ice. They usually worked ten hours with an hour for lunch. The pay they received seems little today, but it was really pretty good for the time. Resident farmers earned \$30/month, with rent, firewood, milk, and the privilege of a garden which we plowed and fertilized. We also gave them fish in season, Southern watermelons (before ours ripened) and a turkey for Thanksgiving. All monthly men received an extra \$25 on March 1<sup>st</sup>. The coachman was a bachelor who boarded in the big house. He was paid \$25/month. Day workers received the prevailing rate of \$1.50/day. We had six children. Anyone who grew up in a family with a Mom & Pop business (and a farm IS a Mom & Pop business) learns the meaning of WORK. We grew corn, potatoes, oats, rye, buckwheat, root crops and rotated our crops in the

fields. My Beloved had a large garden where we grew all sorts of vegetables. . . except cauliflower, and fruits galore. He was always very generous giving away food to anyone in need. He was kind to birds and animals too, for he scattered grain in winter for birds and never minded how many ears of corn the squirrels stole from the corn crib. He would never allow anyone to harm them.

My Beloved William was a very active man. Not only at home but in the church, community offices, and the Republican Party. He ran for state senate, as his Greenly grandfather did, but he was not successful.

We donated a half acre of land in Great River for the creation of a little chapel, which was an extension of St. Mark's Church in Islip. It opened on Nov 16, 1862. Others like Alva Vanderbilt, Bayard Cutting and the Hollins family, with more assets would donate money and more land. This became Emmanuel Church. My Beloved William always carted coal to fill the church bins, he was senior warden of the church for over 20 years, lovingly cared for the church cemetery which opened in 1878, and kept the ice house at Seaside Home filled.

In 1882, the Trinity Church Seaside Home opened. It was a summer camp for children from NYC. Alva Vanderbilt donated 8 acres of riverfront land. There was an old house on the property and it has been told that Mrs. Vanderbilt's mother sometimes used the house. It must have been haunted since she died, six years before Alva married William Vanderbilt. Alva was very involved with the camp. After she and William Vanderbilt divorced in 1895, she married Oliver Perry Belmont the following year. Trinity Church asked her to remove her name from the list of Board of Directors in their annual report. The problem solved when they no longer listed the names of ANY on the Board of Directors.

Well my dears, it is time for me to go. I am survived by four of my seven children, William Greenly, Sarah, Frances Augusta, and Henry (I think he's in Florida). My first child, Wee Willie, lies here with his grandparents and aunts. Mary Shelton Nicoll Woodbury died in Knoxville Tennessee in 1890. Edward Holland Nicoll was also a lawyer. He died of TB in San Diego in 1898. My Beloved William the 7<sup>th</sup> lost his fight with kidney disease ten years ago in 1900. I will go now to Emmanuel Church cemetery to be with the remains of my family. . . except for wee Willie.

Come visit my grave sometime. You can't miss it. It is the BIG PINK OBELISK just to the left of the gate. Many of us Nicolls are there.

I heard a rumor. . . promise you won't tell? There are going to be two TIFFANY WINDOWS dedicated to the church, one for my Beloved and one for ME! Now won't that be grand!