

CENTENNIAL FARMS SPOTLIGHT

FLEMING W. DAILEY & EDITH ELLEN (WATKINS) DAILEY FARM

OSSEO, MICHIGAN

ESTABLISHED NOVEMBER 1, 1901



*Above: The pre-1900 farmhouse.
Right: Edith Ann Watkins Worley
and husband Virgil Worley.*



*Left: Fleming W. Dailey with his
beloved horses, Tom and Dick.*



Edith Ellen Watkins Dailey and her husband Fleming W. Dailey purchased a 50-acre farm in Osseo from John Reed on November 1, 1901.

The following year, Fleming decided to follow Edith's suggestion to move the barn farther away from the road. He started digging to create the slope for the new barn grade when he found something completely unexpected—the bones of human remains. Due to the location of the bones, it was believed that they belonged to Winona, a member of the Potawatomi tribe of Native Americans and who also happened to be the daughter of Chief Baw Beese. Winona was killed for murdering her husband. Her body was buried approximately two miles south of Baw Beese Lake, which is where the barn is located.

Fleming took the bones to Hillsdale authorities. They were stored in the city government building and later displayed at Paul Revere School, which was eventually converted into the Fayette building and now serves as a storage building for Hillsdale College. A Paul Revere School's janitor burned the bones for unknown reasons.

Fleming died in 1933 after a battle with pneumonia. Edith became fully blind by 1947, which resulted in the farm being purchased by Edith Ann Watkins Worley and Virgil Worley on January 14, 1949.

The farm became exclusively owned by Edith Ann when Virgil passed away in 1962. Edith Ann's daughter and son-in-law, Liz and Floyd C. Webb, moved back to the Hillsdale area in 1976 and rented the farmhouse. The couple lived there in exchange for their contributions to the renovation and restoration of the home. Liz and Floyd purchased the farm on October 31, 1989. Ownership briefly reverted

back to Edith Ann in the spring of 2000 after the couple divorced. However, Liz purchased the farm back and still owns it today.

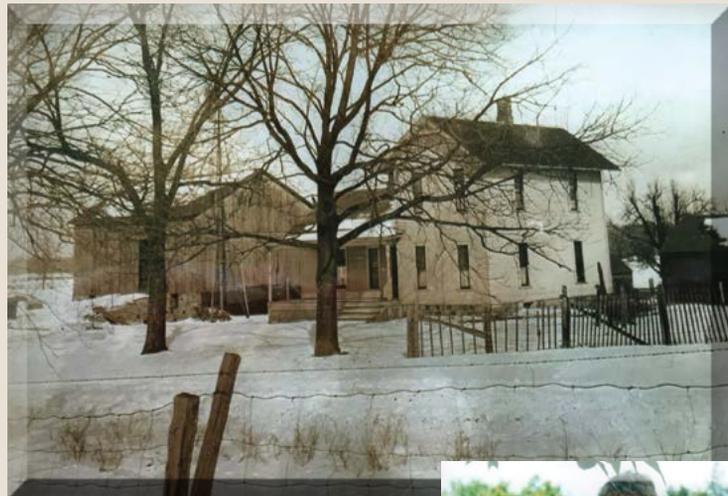
Farm operations have evolved as time passed, and each owner did things a little differently. However, the lofts in the barn were always used to store hay and straw while the basement remained a space where animals were penned and milked. Fleming and Edith Dailey had cows, sheep, and chickens. They raised corn, hay, oats, and wheat for livestock feed and sold the leftovers. They also maintained an orchard and shipped apples by train to Portland, Oregon, and the Palmer House Hotel in Chicago. Fleming was known to do threshing around the area because he owned a Nichols and Shepherd steam threshing machine.

The orchard was removed when Virgil and Edith Ann assumed ownership, but all other operations continued. Edith rented the acreage when she became widowed and her sons were no longer available to assist her. Wheat, hay, corn, and soybeans were grown on the rented land.

The crop rental continued when Floyd and Liz took over as farm owners. Today, Liz's brother, Roy Worley, farms the land. He rotates growing corn, soybeans, and wheat. The barn is now used to house building materials and farm equipment. Liz maintains vegetable and flower gardens, a tradition that started with Edith Dailey. ❏



Above: A photo of the barn taken in 1989. Right: Edith Ellen Watkins Dailey and Fleming W. Dailey on a trip to the Porcupine Mountains in the Upper Peninsula.



Above: Both the barn and house were built before 1900. Right: Elisabeth Worley Webb, Edith Watkins Worley Ash, and Tansley Elizabeth Webb Stearns.



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