

## In Memoriam: Margery Lumsden Stratton

The following information comes from her formal obituary:

Margery (Lumsden) Stratton, 93, of Burley, Idaho, formerly of Youngstown, New York, passed away on Friday, May 6, 2016, surrounded in body and in spirit by her loved ones. She was predeceased by a son, Jeffrey Douglas Stratton and her husband of 67 years, Wendell Dewitt Stratton.

Margery was born in Chester, PA, to the late John and Dorothy (Wilson) Lumsden. She had a younger sister and two brothers. She attended Wilson College in Chambersburg, PA, and Rider Business College in Trenton, NJ. From 1942–45 she worked at Luscombe Airplane Corporation in Trenton. After raising four children, she joined Dan and Lucy Wilson Realty in Youngstown, NY. In 1988, at the age of 65, she purchased the business. She was president of the Niagara Falls Board of Realtors from 1990–1991.

Margery was a longtime member of First Presbyterian Church of Youngstown, NY, serving as Sunday school teacher, deacon, trustee and elder.

Surviving are her son, William (Mary) Stratton of Sun Valley, ID; daughters, Wendy (late Thomas) Gross of Stevens, PA., and Suzanne (Brian) Livermore of Burley, ID, with whom she resided, as well as nine grandchildren, nine great-grandchildren, and five nieces.

While Margery lived elsewhere for most of her adult life, she maintained an interest in our local history, especially that of her ancestors, and maintained her Society membership for years so she could receive the *History Quarterly* by mail.

Margery's daughter Suzanne sent the following personal note:

I am sad to inform you that my mother, Margery L. Stratton, who has been a member for years, has passed into the arms of her loving Lord. She flew to Jesus on May 6, surrounded in spirit and body by her loving family. We had just sung the old gospel hymn, "In the Sweet By and By," and were in the midst of the second verse of "I'll Fly Away" when she went. It was bittersweet. One is never really prepared to say goodbye, but she said on many occasions that she was ready.

She moved to Idaho to live with us 3½ years ago after an illness that left her unable to live alone. Every day was a gift! She loved her books on tape and her favorite BBC shows ("As Time Goes By," "All Creatures Great and Small," "To the Manor Born," and many others.)

Mom was alert and engaged with life until May 4 when she suffered a debilitating stroke that left her paralyzed on her right side. She went to the hospital, and as she had a DNR [medical directive] in place, she was enrolled in hospice and came home to spend her last hours in the 4-poster bed that was made by her forbear at the Wilson family home (Lafayette's Headquarters) in Valley Forge. It is now in my home in Idaho.

She enjoyed having me read the *Tredyffrin Easttown History Quarterly* she received to her, and I would describe the pictures, etc. If you remember, she was the granddaughter of Henry and Belle (Essler) Wilson of Valley Forge.

Margery was interred at Great Valley Presbyterian Church in Malvern, PA on Friday, 17 June 2016 at 11am.

Former Society President Roger Thorne adds:

For a decade Margery and I exchanged correspondence about local history with some regularity, and though I never met Margery, I shall miss her. She was proud to be a Wilson descendant, and often helped me to understand the nuances of that somewhat complicated family. Frequently, after I wrote an article about some local subject in the *Quarterly*, she would respond in an email with a memory or a thought. These were always valued, and many of her messages have been archived as part of our local compendium.

Margery lived with her family in Morrisville, Bucks County, PA for most of her childhood. Morrisville was a mere fifty miles from her grandparent's farm in Valley Forge. Her grandparents—Henry Ritter Wilson and Belle Esler Wilson—resided in what they referred to as "Brookside Farm" (otherwise known as Lafayette's Headquarters during the Valley Forge Encampment). The Wilson family had lifetime use of the farm after the land was purchased by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for the first state park in 1893. Margery's keen observations of life at Brookside during the 1930s, codified in diaries while a teenager, will be shared with our readership in a future issue of the *History Quarterly*.



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