



Anglo-Celtic Roots

Quarterly Chronicle • Volume 29, Number 3 • Fall 2023

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The 1871 Canadian Census
—A Snapshot of our Ancestors' Lives

Injustice in New England:
A Witchcraft Accusation Before Salem

We Shall Remember Them:
Corporal George Henry Stevens, DCM, MM

FIRST CENSUS
OF
CANADA,
(1871).



Anglo-Celtic Roots

This journal is published quarterly in March, June, September and December by the British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa and sent free to members.

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Canadian Publications Mail Sales Product Agreement No. 40015222
Indexed in the Periodical Source Index (PERSI)

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Cover Illustration:

**Title page of the "Manual
Containing 'The Census Act,' and
The Instructions to Officers
Employed in the Taking of the
First Census of Canada."**

Source: Statistics Canada, The life of
an 1871 Census Enumerator,
statcan.gc.ca

From the Editor:

We begin this issue with an examination of the 1871 Census of Canada, the first following Confederation. Anne Renwick uses her Cassidy family, who emigrated from Ireland to New Brunswick in 1819, to illustrate the wealth of information that can be found if one looks beyond Schedule 1, the Nominal Return of the Living.

Carolyn Brown joined BIFHSGO's British Colonial Special Interest Group believing she had a few Nova Scotian ancestors who emigrated from the Thirteen Colonies. With the help of the group, she not only discovered her deep roots in the British colonies, but revealed that one ancestress was accused of being a witch long before the accusations in Salem occurred.

In our soldier's biography, Sheila Dohoo Faure tells the story of Corporal George Henry Stevens, a true hero, decorated for his bravery and devotion to duty.

And finally, once again, John D. Reid brings us select tidbits from his daily blog.



Barbara Tose

From the President



This past summer I visited the Brant County Branch of the Ontario Genealogical Society, in search of information about my Irish

Carruthers ancestors who settled there in the 1830s. Early records of Brant County appear to be scarce and the townships are not laid out in that military grid so familiar elsewhere; I had been baffled on many fronts. So I booked a date to visit and sent what I knew to the good folks at the end of the email. On arrival, all manner of early maps, church records and secondary sources were waiting for me. As a result several brick walls tumbled down, and new paths of research have opened up. And, best of all, now I have a new genealogy “pen pal” and they have a new member!

I found the same good luck with several family history societies in Scotland, who were equally as helpful, both when I visited and when sending the occasional query in the years since. These folks are as passionate as BIFHSGO members about family history and dogged in their efforts to solve a mystery. As local experts, they know the resources—many unavailable elsewhere—and if they can’t find the

answer, they often know who might know.

This is the reason behind the “Conference Connect” session with regional experts at this year’s virtual BIFHSGO Conference: “Leaving Their Scottish Homes: What Were They Thinking?” At 9 a.m. EDT on October 29, you can meet family historians, genealogists and archivists from various Scottish regions. Over the 90-minute session, you can visit one or all of the regional rooms where you can ask questions about local resources.

On other fronts, the BIFHSGO Board has been busy this summer, planning for upcoming activities and looking ahead to future years. The program for monthly meetings in 2023–2024 is set. By now you will have had the opportunity to choose where you might volunteer to help with the many BIFHSGO activities. It’s a great chance to meet other BIFHSGO members who are passionate about UK family history, and to help your organization at the same time.

For many BIFHSGO members it’s been a great summer of private research and organizational planning. Now bring on the fall!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dianne Brydon'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'D'.

Dianne Brydon

Family History Research

The 1871 Canadian Census—A Snapshot of our Ancestors' Lives[©]

BY ANNE L. RENWICK



Anne has been researching her own and other family histories from the British Isles for over 20 years. Participation in family history societies, and continuous learning through formal courses (Boston University's Genealogical Principles) and informal (online webinars), fuel her enthusiasm for finding out the stories behind the names. Along the way, BIFHSGO participation has taken her from newbie genealogist to being a proud winner of the 2021–2022 Best ACR Article award. Here is her latest story from the family tree that sparked her genealogical passion.

Introduction

The first census of Canada conducted after Confederation gives us an excellent opportunity to find details of our ancestors' ways of living. It not only tells us their names, ages, where they lived and where they were born, but it also includes eight other sources of details.

Initiated on 2 April 1871, the census consisted of nine separate schedules, the first of which was the Nominal Return of the Living—the one, and sometimes the only one, initially consulted by family historians. The subsequent eight, however, are like a one-stop shop for family details:¹

- Schedule 1—Nominal Return of the Living
- Schedule 2—Nominal Return of the Deaths within last twelve months
- Schedule 3—Return of Public Institutions, Real Estate, Vehicles and Implements
- Schedule 4—Return of Cultivated Land, of Field Products, and of Plants and Fruits
- Schedule 5—Live Stock, Animal Products, home-made Fabrics and Furs
- Schedule 6—Return of Industrial Establishments
- Schedule 7—Return of Products of the Forest
- Schedule 8—Return of Shipping and Fisheries
- Schedule 9—Return of Mineral Products

Most of these schedules still exist, and the first, second and sixth include names.

My project, designed to demonstrate the power of this census, focused on ancestors from Kings County, New Brunswick: William Cassidy and his wife Jane, the first of my Cassidy line who emigrated from Ireland in 1819, and their son Francis Edward Cassidy and his wife Jane. William had purchased the first acreage of property at Clover Hill from a previous settler in 1823.² The lake it overlooks ultimately became known as Cassidy Lake. When his father died in 1886, Francis, the middle son, continued to run and improve the farm. Cared for by Cassidys ever since, 2023 marks the 200th anniversary of the homestead.

Let's see what was happening there at the time of the first Canadian federal census in 1871.

Starting Information

At the start of the project, the following information was known:

- William Cassidy emigrated from Ireland with his wife Jane (Milligan) to New Brunswick in 1819.
- William began purchasing land in 1823, 48 km from Saint John, N.B., at Clover Hill in Kings County. By 1850 he had accumulated 596 acres.³
- William and Jane had 12 children, raising 11 to adulthood.⁴ Their middle son, Francis, would inherit the family farm.⁵ An unanswered question was why did he inherit instead of his older brother(s)?
- Francis and Jane Dunlop were married five years prior (in 1866) in Boston;⁶ Francis had been born at Clover Hill⁷ and Jane had emigrated to Saint John, N.B. in 1861.⁸
- Both couples lived on the farm in 1871.

Life at Clover Hill, April 1871

Schedule 1—Nominal Return of the Living⁹

The research starts with Schedule 1—its purpose to identify where William and Francis were actually living with their families.

The homestead fell into District 176—Kings, Sub-District K—Sussex, Division 1.¹⁰ The families of William Cassidy and Francis Edward Cassidy are enumerated on page 59, with William and Francis falling on lines 10 and 15 respectively.¹¹ The references to page and line numbers are important to note when researching the census, as they are used on each subsequent schedule to align with the proper person on Schedule 1¹² (see Figure 1).

As of 2 April 1871,¹³ living on the farm were William Cassidy (age 74) and his wife Jane (age 72), their daughter Mary (age 40), and their grandchildren Edward (age 16) and Jane (age 14). Enumerated as the next household were

son Francis Edward (enumerated as F. Edward, age 35) and his wife Jane (age 28), with their children Clary (Clara, age 3), William (age 2), and Mathew [*sic*] (age 2 months, born in January).¹⁴

Page 59		Province of New Brunswick		District No. 176 Kings		Sub-District K Parish	
Census of 1871		Schedule No. 1—Nominal Return of the Living.					
Enumerated in the order of valuation		Name		Age	Sex	Profession, Occupation or Trade	Religion
Line #	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	152	153	154	155	156	157	158
10	152	153	154	155	156	157	158
11	152	153	154	155	156	157	158
12	152	153	154	155	156	157	158
13	152	153	154	155	156	157	158
14	152	153	154	155	156	157	158
15	152	153	154	155	156	157	158
16	152	153	154	155	156	157	158
17	152	153	154	155	156	157	158
18	152	153	154	155	156	157	158
19	152	153	154	155	156	157	158
20	152	153	154	155	156	157	158
21	152	153	154	155	156	157	158
22	152	153	154	155	156	157	158
23	152	153	154	155	156	157	158
24	152	153	154	155	156	157	158
25	152	153	154	155	156	157	158
26	152	153	154	155	156	157	158
27	152	153	154	155	156	157	158
28	152	153	154	155	156	157	158
29	152	153	154	155	156	157	158
30	152	153	154	155	156	157	158
31	152	153	154	155	156	157	158
32	152	153	154	155	156	157	158
33	152	153	154	155	156	157	158
34	152	153	154	155	156	157	158
35	152	153	154	155	156	157	158
36	152	153	154	155	156	157	158
37	152	153	154	155	156	157	158
38	152	153	154	155	156	157	158
39	152	153	154	155	156	157	158
40	152	153	154	155	156	157	158
41	152	153	154	155	156	157	158
42	152	153	154	155	156	157	158
43	152	153	154	155	156	157	158
44	152	153	154	155	156	157	158
45	152	153	154	155	156	157	158
46	152	153	154	155	156	157	158
47	152	153	154	155	156	157	158
48	152	153	154	155	156	157	158
49	152	153	154	155	156	157	158
50	152	153	154	155	156	157	158

Figure 1: Extract of 1871 Canada Census showing families of William and F. Edward Cassidy starting at lines 10 and 15 respectively, and Robert Nesbitt (Cassidy in-law) starting at line 3
 Source: 1871 Census of Canada, New Brunswick, District 176 Kings, Sub-District K. Parish of Sussex, Division 1, Schedule 1—Nominal Return of the Living, page 59

At the neighbouring farm is Francis Edward’s sister Jane with her husband Robert Nesbitt and family.¹⁵

William and Jane's eldest son William Milligan Cassidy (age 51) is enumerated nearby with his family at his farm in Norton Parish.¹⁶

Schedule 1 also tells us that all are Wesleyan Methodists with the exception of Francis’ wife Jane, who, at the time, is Presbyterian. (Jane would become a Wesleyan Methodist in 1893).¹⁷

Schedule 2—Nominal Return of the Deaths within last twelve months¹⁸

Schedule 2 shows that no deaths were reported for any of these families in the year up to April 1871 (i.e., in Division 1 of Sussex Parish, Kings County). As a note of interest: for the few residents who did die, the main cause of death was an illness, though two people were killed by lightning—a 6-year-old boy in March and a 29-year-old man in June.¹⁹

Schedule 3—Return of Public Institutions, Real Estate, Vehicles and Implements

We learn the scope of the Cassidy farm in 1871 from this schedule.

Table 1: Extract of Schedule 3 for William and Francis Cassidy

(Source: 1871 Canadian Census, New Brunswick)

	William	Francis
Grand total of acres of land owned	250	
Number of town or village building lots		
Number of dwelling houses owned	1	1
Number of warehouses, stores, factories, shops, &c., owned	1	
Number of barns and stables owned	3	
Number of carriages and sleighs	3	
Number of cars, wagons and sleds	4	
Pleasure or common boats		
Number of ploughs and cultivators	5	
Reapers and mowers		
Horse rakes	1	
Thrashing machines		
Fanning mills	1	

William was enumerated as owning 250 acres of land, down from its peak of 346 acres in 1850.²⁰ The property had one dwelling house, one building from the “warehouses, stores, factories, shops, &c.” category, and three “barns and stables.” As well, William had three “carriages and sleighs,” four “cars, wagons, and sleds,” five “ploughs and cultivators,” one “horse rake,”²¹ and one “fanning mill.”²² Overall, there were five buildings, 12 vehicles, and two main pieces of equipment.

Francis, on the other hand, was enumerated as having no real estate, vehicles or implements, but he apparently owned a house. This would indicate he was sharing the homestead with his father.

The land ownership and two houses may be an error on the enumerator's part, as family knowledge recalls only one house on the one property. We also know from a deed that William had already transferred the 250 acres to Francis in 1868.²³

Schedule 4—Return of Cultivated Land, of Field Products and of Plants and Fruits

Here it becomes clear that Francis was helping his father work the family farm. He is enumerated as having produced only maple sugar (20 pounds), whereas his father reported the following:

Table 2: Extract of Schedule 4 for William Cassidy²⁴ (Source: 1871 Canadian Census, New Brunswick)

Occupied Lands		Owner (O), Tenant (T), or Employee (E)	0		
		Total Number of acres occupied	250		
		Number of acres improved	100		
		Number of acres in pasture	50		
		Number of acres of salt or dyked marsh			
		Number of acres in gardens and orchards	1½		
Field Products	Wheat		Acres		
			Spring Wheat—Bushels	5	
			Fall Wheat—Bushels		
	Bushels of Barley			5	
	Bushels of Oats			100	
	Bushels of Rye				
	Bushels of Peas				
	Bushels of Beans				
	Bushels of Buckwheat			25	
	Bushels of Corn				
	Root Crops	Potatoes		Acres	2
				Bushels	400
		Bushels of Turnips			25
		Bushels of Mangelwurzel and other Beets			1½
		Bushels of Carrots and other Roots			1
	Hay Crop		Acres	30	
			Tons of 2,000 lbs, or bundles of 16 lbs of Hay	30	
		Bushels of Grass and Clover Seed	1		
		Bushels of Flax Seed	-		
Plants, Fruits, and other Products			Pounds of Flax and Hemp	-	
			Pounds of Hops	-	
			Pounds of Tobacco	-	
			Pounds of Grapes	-	
			Bushels of Apples	15	
			Bushels of Pears, Plums and other fruits	-	
			Pounds of Maple Sugar	-	

Schedule 5—Live Stock, Animal Products, home-made Fabric and Furs

In this schedule, both William and Francis report almost equal amounts of livestock, animal products, and home-made fabric.

Table 3: Extract of Schedule 5 for William and Francis²⁵

(Source: 1871 Canadian Census, New Brunswick)

		William	Francis
Live Stock	Horses over 3 years old	4	
	Colts and Fillies		
	Working Oxen		
	Milch Cows	4	4
	Other horned Cattle	2	2
	Sheep	12	10
	Swine	2	1
	Hives of Bees	5	1
Animal Products	Cattle killed or sold for slaughter or export	1	
	Sheep killed or sold for slaughter or export	18	
	Swine killed or sold for slaughter or export	3	1
	Pounds of Butter	350	400
	Pounds of home-made Cheese		
	Pounds of Honey	100	
	Pounds of Wool	60	40
Home-made Fabrics	Yards of home-made Cloth and Flannel	100	300
	Yards of home-made Linen		

Though the census questioned the number and types of furs processed, both households reported nil.

The ratio of pounds of wool to yards of home-made cloth and flannel is interesting: William's farm produced 60 pounds of wool with 12 sheep, but only 100 yards of cloth. Francis' 10 sheep, on the other hand, produced only 40 pounds of wool, yet 300 yards of cloth. This difference may be explained by the fact that women frequently earned extra money by weaving cloth for others.²⁶

Schedule 6—Return of Industrial Establishments

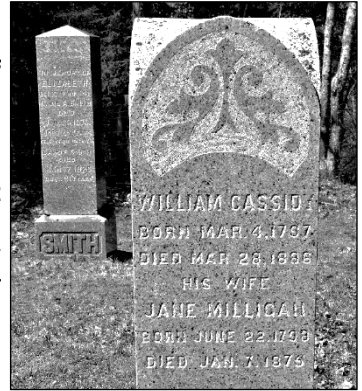
In the Kings County Sub-District of Sussex, Division 1, the 1871 Census shows 16 businesses for the area where the Cassidys lived:

Table 4: Businesses in the Area

(Source: 1871 Canadian Census, New Brunswick)

Type of Business	Number
Brick Factory	1
Country Blacksmith	3
Carriage Factory	3
Grist Mill	4
Saw Mill	2
Steam Tannery	1
Tannery	1
Furniture Shop	1

Figure 2:
Headstone of
William and
Jane
(Milligan)
Cassidy at
Cassidy Lake
Cemetery
Source: author



The last on the list, the Furniture Shop, was owned by William Cassidy. He reported \$200 in fixed capital invested; six working months in the year; one adult male employee [himself?]; a yearly wage of \$120; using “Assorted Woods” with an aggregate value of \$20. The product was “All kinds . . .” There was a further statistic of “1000,” though the unit of measure was not defined.²⁷

Schedule 7—Return of Products of the Forest

Though it was common for men on farms to go into the woods during the winter to cut and haul lumber,²⁸ William and Francis do not appear to have done so. In Schedule 7, William and Francis both report cutting only firewood (William 20 cords, Francis 10 cords). The census queries a number of other types of wood, the Cassidys reporting nil to all.²⁹

Schedule 8—Return of Shipping and Fisheries, and

Schedule 9—Return of Mineral Products

Neither of these schedules generated any statistics for the Sussex, Division 1 area of Kings County.

Summary—the Snapshot

In April of 1871, William and Jane Cassidy (ages 74 and 72 respectively), their 40-year-old daughter Mary and grandchildren Edward and Jane (ages 16 and 14) were living on the 250-acre homestead known as Clover Hill in Kings County, New Brunswick. William had owned the property since 1823 and later transferred the deed to his middle son Francis Edward. On the same farm at the time were Francis Edward (age 33) with his wife Jane (age 28) and their three children, Clara (3), William (2) and Matthew (2 months).³⁰

Francis was the only son of William and Jane living on the homestead. Most of his 10 siblings were relatively near Clover Hill, some on their own farms. One brother was working as a merchant in the city of Saint John and one sister had emigrated to the U.S.A. with her husband.

In 1871 the homestead consisted of two houses³¹ (possibly), three outbuildings, three vehicles, and seven pieces of equipment. William had a furniture (carpentry) shop, most likely the one the descendants know as being in one of the barns. The shop generated \$120 over six months of the year leading up to April 1871.

The two families kept horses, cows, sheep, swine and bees, and 100 acres of farmed land yielded spring wheat, barley, oats, buckwheat, potatoes, turnips, beets, carrots, hay and clover. In addition, there was a sugar bush and an apple orchard. The men cut 30 cords of firewood, most likely to keep the homestead stoves going, though no lumber to process and sell.

The processing of wool, weaving fabric, sewing and knitting clothes, making butter, cheese and maple sugar, collecting honey, and maintaining the vegetable gardens and small animals would all have been the domain of the women of the family, usually with the help of women neighbours and family members.³² Francis' wife Jane would probably have needed extra assistance, as she had two very small children and was pregnant for most of the year



Figure 3: Shuttle most likely carved by William and well used by Jane

Source: author

prior to census year. The census reveals the women produced 750 pounds of butter and 100 pounds of honey, processed 100 pounds of wool, and wove 400 yards of cloth—no doubt using the well-worn loom shuttle handed down in the family (Figure 3.).

In 1871 the homestead appears to have been basically supporting the two families, meaning little extra income was being generated. When Francis Edward took over Clover Hill, he created other income opportunities, including a grist mill, a saw mill and a cheese factory. As well, he built a little church with a cemetery (Figure 2), most likely as a result of being a very active member of and preacher in the Methodist Church (Figure 4).



Figure 4: Interior of Methodist Church built by F. E. Cassidy at Cassidy Lake, N.B.

Source: author

As to why Francis, the *fourth* son of William and Jane, "inherited the property," he actually already owned it when his father died. Francis and his wife Jane had returned from Boston soon after their 1866 marriage to live at the homestead, and their first daughter was born at Clover Hill in 1867.³³ The following year, William transferred the deed to the property to Francis³⁴ and the two families continued to work the farm together.



Figure 5: Aerial view of Cassidy farm c. 1950

Source: author

Francis Edward's Siblings

In compiling the analysis of the homestead in 1871, obvious by their absence from the farm were most of Francis Edward's siblings. From the Cassidy genealogy, we know Francis had 10 siblings³⁵ (the 11th had died young), so where were they when the 1871 Canada Census was taken? As shown in the table that follows, the census and other records were able to answer this question.

Table 5: Francis Edward's Siblings in April 1871 (Sources: see Reference Notes)

	Age	Where they were
William Milligan	51	With his wife Catherine (Brown) and family on his own farm in Norton Parish, Kings County, N.B. ³⁶
James A.	49	With his wife Elizabeth (Foster) and family on his own farm in St. Stephen, Charlotte County, N.B. ³⁷
Jane	46	With her husband Robert Nesbitt and family on a farm next to Clover Hill ³⁸
Margaret Ann	44	With her husband Thomas Jamieson and family on a farm in Upham, Kings County, N.B. ³⁹
Thomas	39	With his wife Elizabeth (Wanamake) and family in St. Martins, Saint John County, N.B. Occupation: Merchant ⁴⁰
Elizabeth Mary	40	She is the "Mary" enumerated as living with her parents William and Jane.
Henry	34	Most likely with his wife Ruby and children near Saint John, N.B. ⁴¹
Matilda	32	Living with her husband Alfred Hoar, who is a hotel keeper, and their son in Hopewell, Albert County, N.B. ⁴²
Eliner Nesbitt	29	Living with her husband, who is a minister, and children in Oswego, N.Y. ⁴³
Richard	27	Living with his brother James A. Cassidy and family in St. Stephen, N.B. ⁴⁴

The Clover Hill Homestead Today

Though still in the family, the property had not been used for a number of years prior to or since the house burned down in the 1970s. Echoes of life in 1871 for William and Francis and their families still remain: the church that Francis built and the Cassidy Lake cemetery, remnants of the original apple orchard and sugar bush, and a few artifacts owned by descendants (Figure 6).

Now 150 acres, the homestead is owned by a direct descendant of William and Francis. It has been given new life and a new purpose in the 21st century: now known as Camp Cassidy, the property is being



Figure 6: Cassidy cup and saucer that came with William and Jane (Milligan) Cassidy from Ireland in 1819
Source: author

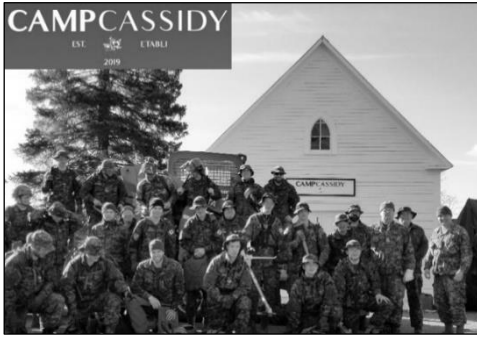


Figure 7: Canadian Armed Forces Reservists in front of Methodist church built by Francis Cassidy, now repurposed as a Camp Cassidy meeting centre

Source: CampCassidy.ca, used with permission

administrative centre, using as a guide the 1:12 scale model of the original built by William's great-grandson, another carpenter. (See *A Precious Legacy*, ACR Vol. 20, No. 4, 2014.)

Still within the family, the homestead has come a long way, continually evolving and telling stories since the first Canadian federal census in 1871.

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Reference Notes

- 1 Library and Archives Canada, *Census of Canada, 1871*, "How the Census Was Collected," <https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/census/1871/Pages/about-census.aspx>: accessed 16 January 2023.
- 2 Cassidy Lake/Homestead Property history, at cassidys.ca: accessed 24 January 2023.
- 3 Cassidy Lake/Homestead Property, at cassidys.ca: accessed 24 January 2023.
- 4 "Cassidy Lake Genealogy," at cassidys.ca: accessed 23 January 2023.
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 Massachusetts, U.S., Town and Vital Records, 1620–1988 for Francis E. Cassidy, image 136 of 170. ancestry.ca: accessed 4 October 2021.
- 7 Canada, New Brunswick Provincial Deaths, 1815–1938, Provincial Archives, Fredericton, database with images, image 195 of 1156. familysearch.org: accessed 24 October 2021.
- 8 Irish Passenger Lists, 1847–1871; J. & J. Cooke Passenger Lists, 1847–1867, page 149, image 165 of 349, ship *Elizabeth* 1861 to St. John. ancestry.ca: accessed 30 August 2022.

repurposed into a wellness centre and outdoor recreational facility for Atlantic Canada's military and first responder personnel (Figure 7). Local military have already voluntarily established hiking trails throughout, and the Methodist church has been repurposed into a meeting centre.

The plan is to rebuild the Clover Hill farmhouse as an

- 9 1871 Census of Canada, New Brunswick, District 176 Kings, Sub-District K. Parish of Sussex, Division 1, *Schedule 1—Nominal Return of the Living*, page 59, image 237 of 316. ancestry.ca: accessed 16 January 2023.
- 10 If a sub-district is broken into divisions, each can have its own set of schedules. In this case Sussex consisted of four divisions, therefore there were four separate sets of schedules.
- 11 1871 Census of Canada, New Brunswick, District 176 Kings, Sub-District K. Parish of Sussex Division 1, *Schedule 1—Nominal Return of the Living*, image 237 of 31. ancestry.ca: accessed 19 January 2023.
- 12 The microfilm images for Kings County, Sussex on *Ancestry* are organized starting and ending with Division 2, with the images of Divisions 1, 3 and 4 in the middle. This may be the way the pages were microfilmed by Library and Archives Canada, the Census repository.
- 13 Library and Archives Canada, Census of Canada, 1871, "How the Census was Collected." bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/census/1871: accessed 22 January 2023.
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- 15 1871 Census of Canada, New Brunswick, for William Cassidy and F. Edward Cassidy, District 176 Kings, Sub-District K. Parish of Sussex, Division 1, *Schedule 1—Nominal Return of the Living*, lines 10 and 15, page 59, image 237 of 316. ancestry.ca: accessed 16 January 2023.
- 16 1871 Census of Canada, New Brunswick, District 176 Kings, Sub-District H. Parish of Norton, Division No. 1, *Schedule 1 – Nominal Return of the Living*, line 13, page 18, image 10 of 105. ancestry.ca: accessed 23 January 2023.
- 17 Note for Janet Dunlop (I0051), transcription of "Memoriam for Mrs. F. E. Cassidy." cassidys.ca: accessed 4 October 2021.
- 18 1871 Census of Canada, New Brunswick, District 176 Kings, Sub-District K. Parish of Sussex, Division 1, *Schedule 2—Nominal Return of the Deaths within last twelve months*, pages 1-2, images 250-251 of 316, ancestry.ca: accessed 16 January 2023.
- 19 1871 Census of Canada, New Brunswick, District 176 Kings, Sub-District K. Parish of Sussex, Division 1, *Schedule 2—Nominal Return of the Deaths within last twelve months*, lines 4 and 5, page 1, image 250 of 316. ancestry.ca: accessed 16 January 2023.
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Injustice in New England: A Witchcraft Accusation Before Salem



BY CAROLYN BROWN

Carolyn Brown joined BIFHSGO's British Colonial America Special Interest Group about four years ago to learn more about her Thirteen Colonies roots. Thanks in large part to the support of the group, she has traced many of her ancestors in North America back to the early 1600s.

The early European settlers of the Thirteen Colonies faced numerous perils—harsh winters, crop failures and strife with Indigenous peoples. But in the case of my 10× great-grandparents, Thomas and Jane Walford, their own neighbours proved to be their greatest nemesis, when, in 1656 in New Hampshire, Jane was charged with witchcraft.

Thomas was born in 1590 or 1599 in Great Waltham, Essex, England. Jane's maiden name, birth details and parents are not known. One genealogist identifies her as Jane Guy, born 1598 in Finchingfield, Essex, England, daughter of Henry Guy and Edith Antrium, but does not specify the source.¹

While there is no record of Thomas and Jane's marriage—presumably in England—or the date they came to New England, they are thought to have been part of a failed settlement led by Robert Gorges in 1623 in the area of

what is now Boston, Massachusetts. Robert was the son of Sir Ferdinando Gorges, leader of the Council of New England, which had a royal grant to the property and governance of New England.² The immigrants in this settlement were Anglicans (also called Episcopalians), and the Walfords' religious affiliation probably had a bearing on their future and possibly the witchcraft accusations.

After the colony was abandoned, some would-be colonists returned, some dispersed and three households stayed, including the Walfords.

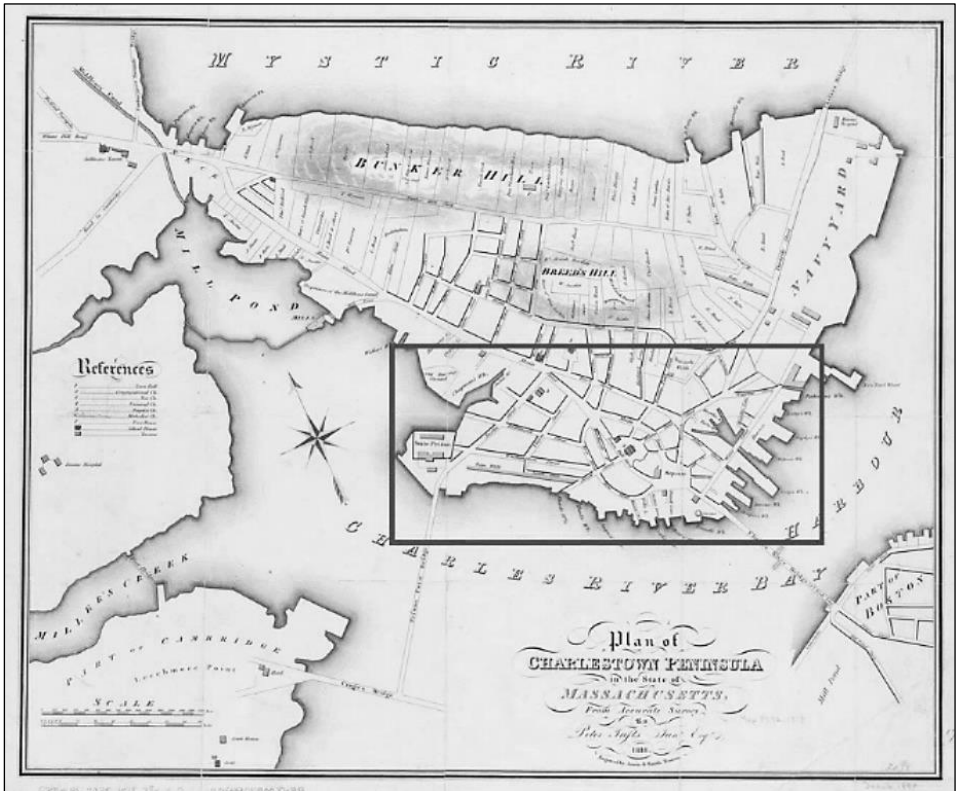


Figure 1: Map of Charlestown peninsula in 1818 by Peter Tufts, Jr., showing approximate area where the Walfords were living in 1628 (within the rectangle)

Source: Boston Public Library, Norman B. Leventhal Map Center, <https://collections.leventhalmap.org/search/commonwealth:cj82m224p>

First Europeans in Charlestown

In 1628, a group searching for a site for a new settlement was sent by Massachusetts Governor John Endicott from Salem to a site north of the

Charles River; the group included brothers Ralph, Richard and William Sprague, who went on to establish Charlestown the following year.

The new site was occupied by an Indigenous people called the Aberginians. Their chief, Wonohaquaham, whom the settlers called John Sagamore (“sagamore” meaning simply “chief”), consented to let them “settle about the hill of the same place, by the said natives called Mishawum.” Here they found “one English pallisadoed and thatched house, wherein lived Thomas Walford, a smith, situate on the south end of the westernmost hill of the East Field, a little way up from the Charles River side.”³

This is evidence that Thomas Walford (and his wife Jane) were the first European settlers in the area that became Charlestown; there may have been another European (William Blackstone) in what became Boston.⁴ Although Thomas’ occupation is usually given as “blacksmith,” the Wikipedia entry for Charlestown indicates that he had a monopoly on the fur trade in the region.⁵ It also credits him with negotiating between the Indigenous people (presumably because he spoke their language) and the new settlers.

Thomas and Jane joined the new settlement, but their new neighbours were Puritans. Many authors believe the religious difference contributed to the strife that followed.^{4,5}

On 3 May 1631 the Massachusetts Bay General Court ordered that “Tho: Walford, of Charlton, is fined 40s, & is enjoined, he and his wife, to depart out of the limits of this patent before the 20th day of October next, under pain of confiscation of his goods, for his contempt of authority & confronting officers, &c.” and on 3 September 1633 “that the goods of Thomas Walford shall be sequestered, & remain in the hands of Anchient Gennison [Ensign William Jennison], to satisfy the debts he owes in the Bay to several persons.”⁶

It’s unclear what happened, but there seems to have been a debt issue (debt was treated like a crime at the time) and a skirmish with authorities, which some interpret as Thomas Walford standing up to Puritan rule. It is unclear why the Walfords did not leave, as ordered, in 1631, but they do appear to have left after the second court order. According to a friend of the Walfords speaking in 1682/83 (years went from April to March in that period), “Thos Walford lived & planted upon the great island in Portsmouth above fifty years ago.”⁴

A New Home in Portsmouth

The Walfords’ new home was on Great Island (later New Castle) in Strawberry Bank (renamed Portsmouth in 1653), in New Hampshire.

In Portsmouth, the family prospered. They had six children, all of whom survived childhood; some sources list more, but this may be because of name variants.

Thomas seems to have joined the Puritans, because he became a “freeman of the town,” by taking the freeman’s oath on 7 May 1657.⁷ In Puritan settlements, settlers had to earn freeman status in order to participate fully in the community.⁸ To acquire this status, they had to join the church, pay off any debts and stay out of trouble with the law. In taking the oath, a new freeman swore to uphold the government and not conspire against it.

Thomas served on grand juries on four occasions between 1650 and 1660 and on a petit jury in 1656. He also served as a selectman in 1655 and 1658.⁴ In the New England “town meeting” form of municipal government established in the colonial period—and still operating in many municipalities today—the legislative body is a full meeting of all (at that time, male) residents and the executive body is a board of “selectmen” that makes certain types of decisions between full meetings.

By the time Thomas Walford wrote his will on 15 November 1666, he owned more than 170 acres of land, considerable livestock, an orchard and garden.⁷

But this successful life was sorely tested by accusations of witchcraft.

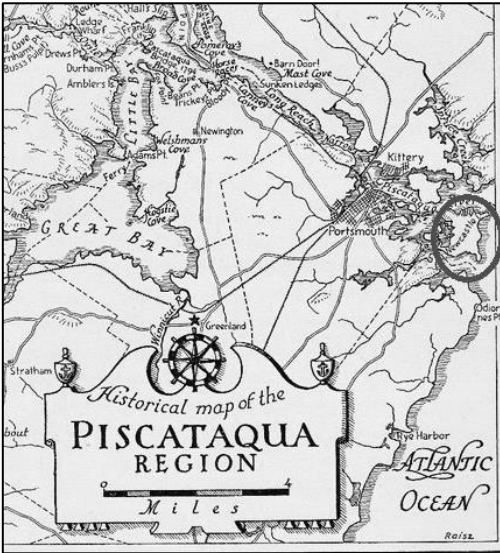


Figure 2: Historical map of Piscataqua Region in New Hampshire (part of)

Source: *Images of New Hampshire History* (<https://www.images-of-new-hampshire-history.com/Seacoast-New-Hampshire.php>)



Figure 3: Enlargement of Figure 2
Note the locations of Portsmouth (known at the time as Strawberry Bank) and New Castle (known as Great Island), where the Walfords settled

Witchcraft Comes to Portsmouth

Witchcraft was prosecuted in the region under a 1604 British statute that remained on the books until 1735.⁹ Most readers will be aware of the 1692 and 1693 witch trials in Salem, Massachusetts, fictionalized in Arthur Miller's play *The Crucible*. However, witch trials were common in many colonies long before the Salem events and often involved an accusation against a single person, unlike the mass hysteria that characterized the Salem trials. The first trial on record involved Joan Wright of Virginia in 1626; fortunately, she was acquitted. Virginia had about two dozen cases involving witchcraft (some records were lost, so the number is uncertain), but many were defamation suits against people making accusations. Connecticut had 43 witchcraft trials, of which 16 ended in executions, up to four decades before the Salem witch trials.¹⁰ Witch trials continued until 1706, when Grace Sherwood was accused in Virginia, found guilty but released when a retrial was ordered (which may never have happened).¹¹

In fact, many women had been accused of witchcraft before Jane Walford, and many more (and some men) would be accused afterward.

The accusation against Jane Walford was made in 1656, when Jane would have been 58 years old.

The following testimony was recorded in the town records and reproduced in the *Annals of Portsmouth*.¹² The main complainant was Susannah Trimmings:

As I was going home on Sunday night the 30th of March, I heard a rustling in the woods, which I supposed to be occasioned by swine, and presently there appeared a woman, whom I apprehended to be old goodwife Walford. ["Goodwife" or "Goody" was a common term for a married woman.]

She asked me to lend her a pound of cotton; I told her I had but two pounds in the house, and I would not spare any to my mother. She said I had better have done it, for I was going a great journey but would never come there.

She then left me, and I was struck as with a clap of fire on the back; and she vanished toward the water side, in my apprehension, in the shape of a cat. She had on her head a white linen hood, tied under her chin, and her waistcoat and petticoat were red, with an old green apron, and a black hat upon her head.

Susannah's husband, Oliver Trimmings, supported her story:

My wife came home in a sad condition. She passed by me with her child in her arms, laid the child on the bed, sat down on the chest, and leaned upon her elbow.

Three times I asked her how she did. She could not speak. I took her in my arms and held her up, and repeated the question. She forced breath, and something stopped in her throat, as if it would have stopped her breath. I unlaced her clothes, and soon she spake, and said, 'Lord have mercy upon me, this wicked woman will kill me.'

I asked her what woman and she said, 'Goodwife Walford.' I tried to persuade her, it was only her weakness. She told me, 'No,' and related as above and told me her back was as a flame of fire, and her lower parts were, as it were, numb and without feeling. I pinched her, and she felt not.

She continued that night, and the day and night following, very ill, and is still bad of her limbs, and complains still daily of it.

I am a scientific and medical writer/editor, and it certainly sounds to me as though Susannah Trimmings was really ill. The most probable cause is sciatica—pain, weakness and/or numbness in the lower back and legs because of pressure on the sciatic nerve. Given the sudden onset, it may have been due to a herniated disc in her spine. Because people believed in witchcraft and were ignorant of medicine, they attributed illness to external forces occurring at the same time, rather than considering internal bodily changes.

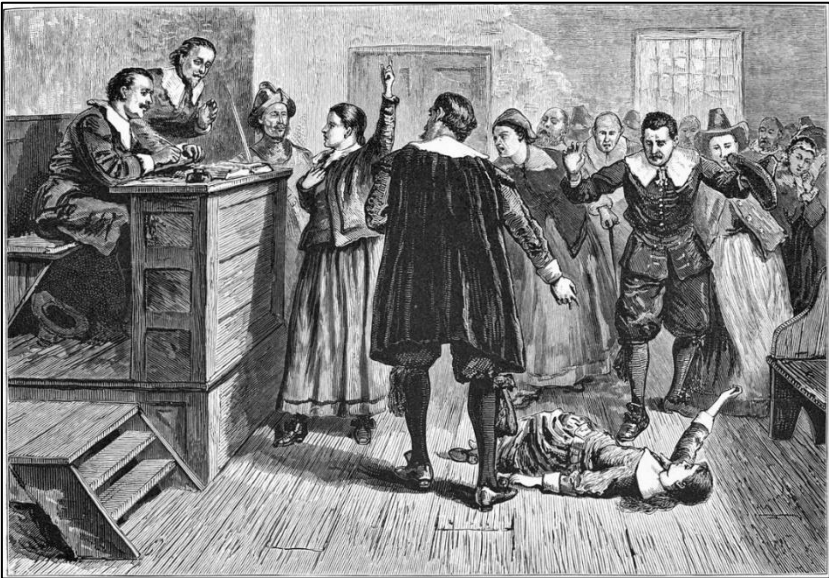


Figure 4: Witch trial in Salem, Mass., from William A. Crafts, *Pioneers in the settlement of America: from Florida in 1510 to California in 1849* (Boston: Samuel Walker and Company, 1876)

Source: Public domain image

Other testimony was even more fanciful. Nicholas Rowe said that, shortly after she was accused, Jane Walford came to him in bed in the evening, and put her hand upon his breast, so that he could not speak, and was in great pain until the next day. By the light of the fire in the next room, Rowe said the woman appeared to be Goody Walford, but she did not speak. He said she repeated her visit about a week after.

Another neighbour, Eliza Barton, took Jane's side. She said she saw Susannah Trimmings at the time that she was ill, and her face was "coloured and spotted." Susannah told Eliza the story, and Eliza replied that it was nothing but Susannah's fantasy.

Other neighbours jumped in. John Puddington said that Jane Walford had visited his mother three years earlier. During the visit, Jane said that her own husband called her an old witch and told her to leave when she looked at the cattle, "which is as much to say in our country, bewitching." Puddington's wife Agnes told a story that didn't even involve Jane Walford but was about a friend who said she was followed by cats.

Black hats, cats—this was the stuff of superstitious cliché. But its consequences could be serious.

Based on the testimony, Jeremy Walford, a grown son of Thomas and Jane, was "bound in a bond" of 20 pounds to ensure that his mother appeared in court. About a year later, Jane was discharged by the court, where some clearer heads must have prevailed.¹³

Jane had to fight these unjust accusations repeatedly.

Previously, in 1648, Thomas and Jane had sued Nicholas Rowe and his wife Elizabeth for slander because Elizabeth had allegedly said Jane was a witch.¹⁴ A jury found in favour of Thomas and Jane. Similarly, following the 1656 trial, Jane Walford sued another neighbour, Robert Couch, in 1670 for saying she was a witch—and won again.¹⁵

Epilogue: Death of the Settlers

Thomas Walford indicated in his will in 1666 that he was "very sick and weak of body," and he soon died. This would indicate a death from natural causes. However, a local history states "Thomas Walford, another of the early settlers of Sandy Beach, who came over in 1631, was killed by Indians on the hill by John S. Remick's. Tradition says that after he was shot he crawled on his hands and knees to where Robinson Foss now lives."¹⁶ This certainly appears to be the same person, but it seems unlikely that he was slain unexpectedly after writing a will in which he said he was sick. His cause of death remains unclear.

While the date of Jane's death is not recorded, four of her daughters filed a petition with probate court in 1681 in a continuing dispute over Thomas's estate, following Jane's death. Thus, she probably died in her 70s.

There's more to the story. In the next generation, Thomas and Jane's daughter Hannah (Walford) Jones was also accused of witchcraft in a case that was really all about a land dispute.⁴ Like her mother, Hannah managed to extricate herself—another survivor of the witchcraft allegations that were the true evil that stalked New England for 80 years.

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We Shall Remember Them

BY SHEILA DOOHOO FAURE

Sheila coordinates the team of volunteers writing biographies of World War I soldiers who died at No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station and are listed in the BIFHSGO database. She is also the BIFHSGO webmanager and was the administrative co-chair for last year's conference. This is the story of one of the war's recognized heroes.

Corporal George Henry Stevens, DCM, MM[©]

Regimental number: 5087

8th Battalion, Northumberland Fusiliers

born: 29 November 1886–died: 9 May 1918

Corporal George Stevens and his two brothers were dedicated to military service in the Great War. Two of the three died and one of them, George, distinguished himself with his bravery. He was awarded both the Military Medal (MM) (with bar) and the Distinguished Conduct Medal (DCM)—all within a year. His MM was gazetted on 21 August 1917,¹ the

bar less than three months later² and the DCM on 1 May 1918.³

The bar to his MM was awarded:

For gallantry and devotion to duty during operations on August 16th, 1917. In the attack on Langemark Zonnebeke Road as a company runner he was with his company officer until the latter was killed, when he continued to advance with the new

commander. He was first to reach battalion headquarters with an important message, and frequently went to and fro, during heavy fire, with messages, and never failed to deliver them.⁴

The citation for George's DCM, which was awarded for an act of gallantry in the field by a member of the armed forces below the rank of officer,⁵ reads:

For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. When on patrol he crawled on to the enemy's parapet and saw a party of about twelve of the enemy in the trench and on the steps of a dug-out. He threw a bomb into the entrance of the dug-out and signalled to a corporal close behind him, who bombed the party in the trench. On a previous occasion he had entered the enemy's front line and killed three of the enemy. He showed magnificent courage and determination.⁶

George and his family paid the ultimate price for his bravery. He died on 9 May 1918 and was mourned by his wife Margaret Summerville and son Harrison.⁷ His wife, who was living at 109 Percy Street in Blyth after the war, had the following inscription included on his gravestone:

EVER REMEMBERED BY
HIS LOVING WIFE & SON⁸

George served with the 8th Battalion of Northumberland Fusiliers, having enlisted in Blyth, Northumberland,⁹ at the very beginning of the war.¹⁰ The battalion was formed in Newcastle in

August 1914 as part of Kitchener's New Army.¹¹ George went to Gallipoli on 10 July 1915 with the rest of his battalion,¹² then presumably on to Egypt with the battalion in January 1916 and next to France in July 1916. He survived for almost the whole war but was fatally wounded a few months before its conclusion.

On 4 May 1918, his battalion was in the trenches near Mazingarbe, Lens, in northern France. The enemy was reportedly very quiet. However, George was wounded while on patrol¹³ and was admitted to No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station (CCCS) with bullet wounds to his right thigh and back. He died five days later and was buried on 10 May in Pernes British Military Cemetery (Plot 2, Row B, Grave 26), with the Canadian chaplain J. K. Tibbits presiding.¹⁴ The chaplain did not know the name of George's next-of-kin, and so he wrote to the adjutant of the 8th Battalion to notify his unit of his death.

Pernes British Military Cemetery was only set up in April 1918 when No. 1 and No. 4 CCCSs came to Pernes, driven back by the German advance.¹⁵ George was one of 185 injured soldiers admitted to No 1. CCCS on 4 May 1918 and one of 115 soldiers to die at the station that month.¹⁶

In addition to the DCM and MM, George was awarded posthumously the British War Medal (for service overseas between 1914 and 1918),

the Victory Medal (for service in an operational theatre) and the 1914–15 Star (for service in the war against Germany between 5 August 1914 and 31 December 1915).¹⁷

His medals for bravery were announced in the Newcastle newspaper,¹⁸ sadly just months before his death. After the award of his MM, George was the recipient of a gold watch presented by the people of Blyth.¹⁹

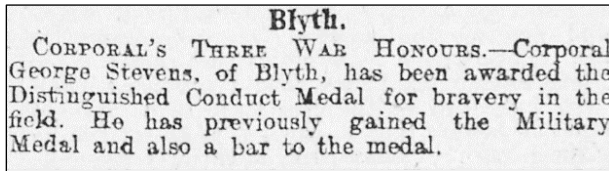


Figure 1: Newcastle Journal, 8 March 1918
Source: *Findmypast*

Who was this brave soldier? He was born George Nicholson, the illegitimate son of Isabel Nicholson, on 29 November 1886 and baptized on 2 January 1887 in Hunwick, about three miles from Bishop Auckland, Durham.²⁰ When George was born his mother was about 20 years old—the daughter of a coal miner in Bishop Auckland.²¹

When George was 2 years old, Isabel married Jonathan Stevens in Cockfield, Durham,²² and together they had eight children:

- Margaret Ann (born in 1890)²³
- Mary Isabel (born in 1892)²⁴
- Albert William (born on 1 July 1893)²⁵

- Joseph (born on 7 May 1895)²⁶
- Susannah (born in 1898)²⁷
- Elizabeth (born in 1900)²⁸
- Jonathan (born in 1902)²⁹
- Norman (born in 1905)³⁰

A few years after Isabel and Jonathan’s marriage, the family was living at Pearson Yard in Staindrop, Durham—13 miles outside Bishop Auckland.³¹ Ten years later, Jonathan, a coal miner, and the family had moved nearly 50 miles away to near

Tynemouth in Northumberland and were living at 4 Taits Buildings, Seaton Terrace, Holywell. George had joined Jonathan in the mines³² and would work at Isabella Pit in Blyth for the 13 years

before he enlisted.³³ The dangers of coal mining were brought home to the family when Jonathan died in a mining accident on 7 June 1905 in Cambois.^{34,35}

In 1911, Isabel was living with six of her children in Blyth, nine miles from Tynemouth, Northumberland, listed on the census under the name of Walker.³⁶ She may have married William Walker in 1908 in Tynemouth.³⁷ It is speculative because there is no mention of William on the 1911 census form, and Isabel indicated that her “present marriage” had lasted for 23 years, which is consistent with the date of her marriage to Jonathan Stevens.

The children all carry the name Stevens.

George was not with his mother; he was living at 59 Marlow Street in Blyth, where he was working as a coal hewer. He had founded his own family: on 11 December 1909 he married Margaret Summerville³⁸ (born in about 1891 in Blyth, Northumberland).³⁹ Although he was initially recorded as George Stevens on his marriage certificate, he and Margaret requested a correction on 3 September 1910 to change his surname back to Nicholson and remove Jonathan's name from his marriage certificate. (In spite of this 1910 name change, George enlisted in the army under the surname of Stevens.)

When George and Margaret's son was born the following year, his recorded surname was Nicholson. Harrison Summerville Nicholson,⁴⁰ born on 29 July 1910,⁴¹ would be their only child.

All three of George's brothers who were old enough to serve in the Great War enlisted in the Northumberland Fusiliers right at the beginning of the war. George was about 28 when he enlisted, but his brothers Albert and Joseph were 20 and 18 years old, respectively.

Albert was a miner when he enlisted as a private in the 13th Battalion of the Fusiliers on 3 September 1914.⁴² He served in England for a year, then went to France for two years. He

came home in September 1917 for about six months, and then went back to France for just a month before returning to his family. At some point he received a mild gunshot wound to his left arm, but after he came home for the last time, in April 1918, he was discharged (the following August) as no longer physically fit for service. He had been a good soldier. His military character was cited as good and he was described as "a sober and hard-working man."

On 22 June 1911, Albert had married Jane Matilda (known as Jeannie) Edwards and they had three children: Jonathan George (born on 12 November 1911), Albert William (born in 1913, but died the following year)⁴³ and Jane Matilda (born on 12 October 1915). The family was living at 4 Carlyle Court in Blyth around the end of the war.

George's brother Joseph was a labourer living at 38 Gladstone Street in Blyth when he enlisted on 22 August 1914.⁴⁴ Although he appears to have enlisted as a private in the Northumberland Fusiliers, he was posted immediately to the 9th Battalion of the West Yorkshire Regiment. He did not remain in the regiment for long—he was discharged on 10 October 1914 as not likely to become an efficient soldier. However, that does not appear to be the end of Joseph's service in the Great War. He enlisted in the Royal Naval Reserve (regimental number

4716) and was serving as a stoker on HMS *Russell* when he was killed.⁴⁵

The Royal Navy's HMS *Russell* was one of the fastest battleships in the world at the time it was launched in 1903. After the outbreak of the war, the ship was part of the northern patrol—established to prevent trade to and from Germany and prevent German warships from sailing between the North Sea and the Atlantic.⁴⁶ In November 1915, she was sent to the Mediterranean to support the Dardanelles campaign, although she saw limited service. However, on 27 April 1916, she was sailing off Malta when she struck two mines laid by a German U-boat. Most of the crew survived the sinking, although 125 men were killed.⁴⁷

Joseph was one of these. He was just 20 years old. His mother, who was living at 79 Shipley Street in Byker, Newcastle-on-Tyne, was notified of his death.⁴⁸

George's mother probably lived to see the service of three sons and the death of two. It is not certain when she died but it was probably between 1917 and 1921.⁴⁹

His eldest sister, Margaret, married William Thompson in 1908 in Tynemouth⁵⁰ and, in 1911, was living with her 10-month old son Ronald at 35 Disraeli Street in Blyth.⁵¹ In 1921, her brothers Jonathan and Norman were living with her at 15 High Street in Blyth.⁵² Although it is indicated that she is married, no information was found about the location of her husband either in 1911 or 1921.

Margaret's younger sister, Mary Isabel, married William Griffiths on 1 January 1911 in Bedlington Station, 5 miles from Blyth.⁵³ She and William had several children,⁵⁴ including twin sons born in 1919. They were given the names George and Joseph,⁵⁵ presumably named after their two uncles who died in the Great War.

After the war, George's wife and son were living at 109 South Percy Street in Blyth, where Harrison was a scholar. In 1934 he had just moved to Newton Abbot, Devon, when he married Catherine ("Kitty") A. Ord.⁵⁶ He probably died in Lichfield, Staffordshire, in 1993.⁵⁷

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Techniques and Resources

The Cream of the Crop

Selected items from recent posts on the Canada's Anglo-Celtic Connections blog at www.anglocelticconnections.ca



BY JOHN D. REID

Scotland

Now on *Ancestry*, a collection of *Red Books of Scotland* compiled by Gordon McGregor in 10

volumes contains genealogical records, between 1600 and 1939, of many of Scotland's families that are of importance nationally and locally. Records in the collection may include name, birth date and place, baptism date and place, marriage date and place, death date and place, burial date and place, and names of family members.

MyHeritage has made available a collection taken from the *General Register of Lunatics in Asylums* (MC7 series) at the National Archives of Scotland via Scottish Indexes. Each of the 127,746 records may contain the patient's full name, birth date, admission date, location within Scotland, and date of death in cases where a patient died in an asylum.

Many of the patients in this collection spent most of their lives in an asylum. For further background information, visit <http://www.scottishindexes.com/>.

Looking Ahead

There's still a lot to look forward to this year, including the Scottish-themed virtual BIFHSGO Conference being held 28–29 October. Chris Paton, Kirsty F. Wilkinson and Michelle Leonard, all very familiar on the Scottish genealogical scene, will be marquee speakers; I'll be particularly interested to learn from new-to-me speakers Chris Fleet on “Getting the Best out of the (excellent) NLS Maps Website” and Marjory Harper on Scottish emigration.

Before that, two regular BIFHSGO monthly meetings will inaugurate a special series: *Back to Basics*, with presentations by Ken McKinlay—the first on England and Wales in September, then on Ireland in October. Those take place at 9 a.m., before the

morning's main presentation. Ken will also speak in October in the Ontario Genealogical Society (OGS) monthly webinar series on *FamilySearch's* Ontario Land Records.

In November, Ken continues the *Back to Basics* series with a focus on military service. Then continuing on the military theme, I'm scheduled to present the OGS monthly webinar in November on "Remembrance of Canada's 'War' Dead, Overseas and at Home."

Ireland

With 3,193,180 records, "Northern Ireland, Valuation Revision Books, 1864–1933" is the largest database in the *Ancestry* collection specifically on Northern Ireland. Records in the collection may contain information on: names of property owners; names of occupants; description of property; changes in acreage; changes in property valuation; names of street; names of city, county, parish, and townland; names of affiliated poor law unions; and date of notation.

Web: "Northern Ireland, Freeholders Records" has 129,894 entries with links to images of the originals from the late 18th and early 19th centuries held at PRONI. Freeholders were men who owned their land outright or held it in a lease for the duration of their life or the lives of other people named in the lease. Freeholders' registers and poll books can be a substitute resource in light of the scarcity of surviving Irish records. Search them at PRONI, at

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/services/search-freeholders-records>.

If you're just starting to research Irish ancestry, an experienced BIFHSGO-member Irish researcher, Ann Burns, recommends consulting the website *Researching your Irish Ancestry* at <https://www.irelandxo.com/ireland-xo/news/researching-your-irish-ancestry>.

England and Wales

We can get birth and death registration information at a lower cost now that the UK's General Register Office (GRO) provides instant access to 1837–1922 birth records and 1837–1887 death records by downloading them as digital images. The digital downloads cost £2.50 each and are available to view immediately after purchase. They are images of the entries in the GRO register, not certificates.

Before railways, travellers would use turnpike roads as the quickest routes between cities in England and Wales in the 18th and most of the 19th centuries. The turnpike road system was not planned centrally but resulted from local enterprise, regulated through acts of Parliament. Bodies of local trustees were given powers to levy tolls on the users of a specified stretch of road, generally around 20 miles in length. Using money secured against this toll income, a trust improved and maintained a particular stretch of a turnpike road. The development of the system meant average travel speeds by coach

increased from 4 mph in the 1700s to 8 mph in the 1800s. Find out all you could want to know about turnpikes, gates, tollhouses and associated infrastructure, with maps by county to indicate the route an ancestor might have taken, at <http://www.turnpikes.org.uk/>.

The Women's Land Army (WLA)

Established to help the UK boost its wartime food production, the WLA employed over 200,000 women between June 1939 and November 1950. *Ancestry* has a legacy collection of transcribed and linked images of the women's original index cards. Details, often with additional information, include name, aliases, maiden names, address, employment county, employment place, birthdate, age at enrollment, date of enrollment, occupation, date of employment, date of release, and WLA membership number. Individuals born less than 100 years ago are excluded. December 1922 is the latest birth date posted by *Ancestry* at present—16,356 were born that year, up from 13,461 born in 1921 and 10,961 in 1920, so there are more to come.

The Six Best Free Websites for London Family History

Compiled by *Who Do You Think You Are?* magazine, these can be found at <https://www.whodoyouthinkyouare.com/feature/the-6-best-free-websites-for-london-family-history/> as follows:

Old Bailey Online comprises a fully searchable edition of the largest body

of texts detailing the lives of non-elite people ever published, containing records from 197,745 criminal trials held at London's central criminal court.

Old and New London is a multi-volume popular history of London published in the late 19th Century.

Collage: The London Picture Archive includes over 250,000 images of London from the collections at London Metropolitan Archives and Guildhall Art Gallery.

London's Screen Archives makes it possible to browse fascinating film clips drawn from borough collections across the metropolis.

London Lives is a fully searchable edition of 240,000 manuscripts from eight archives and fifteen datasets, giving access to 3.35 million names.

London's Pulse: Medical Officer of Health Reports 1848–1972 are in the Wellcome Collection and contain statistical data about births, deaths and diseases, but they also allowed the authors to express the diversity of their local communities and their own personal interests. Search the reports online at the Wellcome Library at <https://wellcomelibrary.org/moh/>.

Community Archives

Hundreds of UK archives from the Shetlands to the Channel Islands and in the Republic of Ireland are in the Community Archives and Heritage Group (CAHG), a special interest group of the Archives & Records Association, UK & Ireland. Check out the map of

member archive locations at <https://www.communityarchives.org.uk/index.php> and zoom in on an area of your interest—a fantastic variety of resources to explore.

Ottawa Sharpshooters Update Project

Volunteer projects are the essence of BIFHSGO and central to achieving its mandate to research, write and publicize family histories of our British ancestors.

In 2005 the Society published a book, *The Ottawa Sharpshooters*—the result of a BIFHSGO project to research the experiences of the men, most of British and Irish ancestry, who left Ottawa in April 1885 travelling west to suppress a rebellion on the Prairies and to compile biographies of those who served. Volunteer society members conducted the project.

Since the publication of the book, additional resources have become

available. The 1931 Census of Canada is the latest available new resource, along with more civil registration, other census records and many more digitized newspapers.

We're starting a project to take advantage of such newly available materials to update the biographies of the 53 officers and men who served; these will then be published on the BIFHSGO website.

Both Glenn Wright and I were involved in 2005 and will co-lead the project. Jean Kitchen has agreed to copy edit the texts and Sheila Dohoo Faure has undertaken to post the results on the Society website.

Are you interested in joining us? Your hands-on participation would be a good way to hone your research skills.

Find out more, with no obligation, by contacting queries@bifhsgo.ca

BIFHSGO News

Conference Connect - Scottish Regions

Leaving Their Scottish Homes: What Were They Thinking?

Saturday/Sunday 28–29 October 2023

BIFHSGO's Virtual Annual Conference

Details & Register at:

<https://www.bifhsgo.ca/registration>

Kirsty F. Wilkinson

Connect with Social Time

Marjorie Harper

Chris Fleet

Michelle Leonard

Chris Paton

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The Society

The British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa (BIFHSGO) is an independent, federally incorporated society and a registered charity (Reg. No. 89227 4044 RR0001). Our purpose is to encourage, carry on and facilitate research into, and publication of, family histories by people who have ancestors in the British Isles.

We have two objectives: to research, preserve, and disseminate Canadian and British Isles family and social history, and to promote genealogical research through a program of public education, showing how to conduct this research and preserve the findings in a readily accessible form.

We publish genealogical research findings and information on research resources and techniques, hold public meetings on family history, and participate in the activities of related organizations.

Each year members enjoy four issues of *Anglo-Celtic Roots (ACR)* and ten family history meetings, plus members-only information on bifhsgo.ca, friendly advice from other members, and participation in special interest groups. Membership dues for 2023 (individuals or institutions) are \$50 (with electronic ACR) or \$60 (with printed ACR).

BIFHSGO Calendar of Events

Saturday Morning Meetings

In-person—Geneva Hall, Knox Presbyterian Church, 120 Lisgar St., Ottawa

Online—on Zoom, **registration required**

14 October 2023

9:00 a.m.–9:30 a.m.

Back to Basics: Ireland

10:00 a.m.–11:45 a.m.

From Derry to Pontiac: The Dales of Clarendon

Nancy Dale Conroy tells of her Dale ancestors' journey from Derry to the Pontiac. From Ulster in the seventeenth century to the early twentieth century in Clarendon Township, Quebec, the story documents the Dales' adaption to the wilderness and contributions to the founding of Shawville, Quebec.

18 November 2023

9:00 a.m.–9:30 a.m.

Back to Basics: Military Records

10:00 a.m.–11:45 a.m.

We Will Remember Them

Members share their family stories of service & sacrifice

9 December 2023

9:00 a.m.–10:00 a.m.

Christmas Social

10:00 a.m.–11:45 a.m.

Great Moments in Genealogy!

Including:

Veronica Scrimger—Purleigh's Brick Wall:

Discovering the Brotherhood Colony in Purleigh, Essex

Nancy Higgins—It Could Have Been a Movie:

Charles Roper & His Fiddle

Check our website at www.bifhsgo.ca for up-to-date information on our monthly meetings, education talks, and details of special interest group meetings.

Articles for *Anglo-Celtic Roots*

Articles and illustrations for publication are welcome. For advice on preparing manuscripts, please email the Editor, at acreditor@bifhsgo.ca. The deadline for submissions to the Winter issue is 15 October 2023.