



# Anglo-Celtic Roots

Quarterly Chronicle • Volume 30, Number 1 • Spring 2024

## **In This Issue**

*Stories from the War: Part II*

*The Hector: 250 Years of History and Heritage*

*We Shall Remember Them:*

*Private William Gerald Arthrell*

*British Military Resources at the  
Ottawa Branch OGS Library*



## *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.

Unless otherwise stated, permission to reprint for non-profit use is granted to organizations and individuals provided the source is credited.

Articles accompanied by the copyright symbol © may not be reprinted or copied without the written permission of the author.

Opinions expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of BIFHSGO or its officers, nor are commercial interests endorsed.

BIFHSGO members are invited to submit family history stories, illustrations, letters, queries and similar items of interest in electronic format using MSWord-compatible software, to [acreditor@bifhsgo.ca](mailto:acreditor@bifhsgo.ca). Please include a brief biographical sketch and a passport-type photograph.

Authors are asked to certify that permission to reproduce any previously copyrighted material has been acquired and are encouraged to provide permission for non-profit reproduction of their articles. The Editor reserves the right to select material that meets the interest of readers and to edit for length and content.

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

Managing Editor: Barbara Tose

Assistant Editor: Christine Jackson

Editors Emeritus: Jean Kitchen, Chris MacPhail

Layout Designer: Barbara Tose

Proofreaders: Sheila Dohoo Faure, Jean Kitchen, Marnie McCall, Christine Jackson

## ***British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa***

Founded and incorporated in 1994

Charitable Registration No. 89227 4044RR0001

Contact BIFHSGO at

PO Box 38026

Ottawa ON K2C 3Y7

[queries@bifhsgo.ca](mailto:queries@bifhsgo.ca)

[www.bifhsgo.ca](http://www.bifhsgo.ca)

# Contents

## COLUMN

*From the President/2*

## FAMILY HISTORY RESEARCH

*Stories From the War: Part II*  
Carol Annett/3

*The Hector: 250 Years of History and Heritage*  
Carolyn Brown/19

*We Shall Remember Them: Private William Gerald Arthrell*  
Sheila Dohoo Faure/25

## TECHNIQUES AND RESOURCES

*British Military Resources at the Ottawa Branch OGS Library*  
Pam Cooper/34

*The Cream of the Crop*  
John D. Reid/41

## BIFHSGO NEWS/44

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

*Back cover*

**Cover Illustration:**  
**Hume Ritchie (L) and Dick MacKinnon that appeared in the Trail Daily Times, 6 November 1944, page 1**  
Source: Collection of Dick MacKinnon

## ***From the Editor:***

This issue begins with the continuation of Carol Annett's exciting survival story involving her father and his fellow airmen, following the crash of their Lancaster bomber in Nazi-occupied France during WW II.

Carolyn Brown is descended from one of the Scottish passengers who arrived on board the *Hector* in 1773. Last September, she was amongst the descendants participating in the 250th anniversary celebrations of the ship's arrival in Pictou, N.S. Here she addresses why this particular voyage has gained almost legendary status in Canadian history, and how our perception of it has changed.

Sheila Dohoo Faure brings us the biography of a Canadian soldier who died at the No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station due to a head wound. Private William Gerald Arthrell, perhaps due to the nature of his injury, is featured in a little-known story about the removal of body parts for medical purposes in the Great War.

Finally, Pam Cooper brings us another installment on resources available at the Ottawa Branch OGS Library—this time items that could assist you in your British military research.

Barbara Tose



## From the President



Spring is almost here and with it the start of BIFHSGO's 30th anniversary year. Our writing competition deadline is 31 May, followed closely by the Annual General Meeting in June, when a year of celebration begins!

In anticipation of this milestone, your Board of Directors has been reflecting on where we have come from, where we are now and, especially, where we are going. The board recently completed a strategic planning exercise where we reviewed our current situation and how we can best continue to serve our members. The discussions were thoughtful, and the results showed a commitment to, and enthusiasm for, rejuvenating the society by building on its strong 30-year legacy.

To plan our path forward, we need to hear from you. Is our program serving your family history research needs? What topics would you like to learn more about? What program format best suits your learning style? How can we help you celebrate your achievements? And how can you help your society? Watch for a survey in your inbox over the coming weeks. Please take a few minutes to let us know your thoughts so that we can develop a program that will breathe new life into your genealogy.

Spring is also the time when we renew our board. At least two members will

be leaving in June and we are looking forward to welcoming new faces and new ideas. Could you be one of them? If you are unsure of exactly where you might best serve, please consider joining as a director-at-large. Past President Duncan Monkhouse can answer any questions you may have. Email him at [pastpresident@bifhsgo.ca](mailto:pastpresident@bifhsgo.ca).

Speaking of new faces, we are also seeking a managing editor for *Anglo-Celtic Roots*, as Barbara Tose will step down in December, after 5 years of dedicated service in that role. If you are reading the quality articles in this issue, you know how valuable the journal is for British Isles family history. Please consider joining the team to ensure its continuing production.

As an indication of our journal's value, we were excited to hear, at our February meeting, that a number of you are planning to submit one of *your* stories to our 30th anniversary writing competition. We look forward to reading them in future issues of *Anglo-Celtic Roots*.

So, please, join us as we mark this banner year. Our history, our future—so much to celebrate!

Dianne Brydon

## Family History Research

# Stories From The War: Part II<sup>©</sup>

BY CAROL ANNETT



*Carol credits her father, who was a master storyteller, with getting her started in family history. He left her not only his genealogy research files, but also a treasure trove of oral anecdotes about the family. Since his death in 2002, Carol has been honouring his memory by continuing to research and write down the ancestral narratives, including the one that follows, the second part of her dad's own story of serving with the RCAF during World War II.*

### Recap of Part I and Introduction to Part II

The first part of this story, published in the Winter 2023 issue of this journal, introduced two RCAF crewmates from 419 Moose Squadron in WW II—the author's father, Flight Sergeant (F/Sgt) Richard Glanville “Dick” MacKinnon, air bomber, and Pilot Officer (P/O) Wilfred Devine, navigator. Both men survived when their aircraft was shot down over occupied France on 25 July 1944, but Wilfred became a prisoner of war. Part I began with Wilfred's capture and continued with Dick's training and their bombing operations leading up to the crash. Part II covers the story of Dick's evasion, evacuation and repatriation from France while Wilfred was still a prisoner in Germany. “Stories from the War: Part II” follows Dick and Wilfred during and after the war and, in a surprising way, after they died.

Unless otherwise specified, quotations are taken from an interview the author conducted with her father.

### “I couldn't feel myself falling”<sup>1</sup>

When Dick MacKinnon bailed out of the front hatch of the burning Lancaster bomber, his chute jerked him severely because he had fastened only one of the two hooks to his harness. In total darkness, Dick descended lopsided. Crashing abruptly into a wheat field, his neck was badly scratched and his back was sprained.<sup>2</sup> Relieved, however, to find that the whole German army was not waiting for him, he unbuckled the harness and ran for cover. Suddenly, a white object billowed up in front of him. Realizing he had walked in a circle back to his parachute, he buried the chute properly and hid in a wooded area.

## “They got me into a peasant costume”

At daybreak, Dick awoke to find a French boy staring at him. Recalling Miss Lingle’s French lessons at Trail High School, he asked, “Où est votre papa?” The boy showed the way to his father, a woodcutter, who drew a map in the sand directing Dick to his house. “So, I hightailed it to his house,” said Dick. “The woodcutter had told me not to approach the house in daytime.” After dark, the occupants let him in the back door and gave him a meal. They warned him that the Germans guarded the Marne River in the evening, so he should only cross it during the day.

French supporters showed Dick his location on the escape map he carried, printed on a silk

handkerchief. He was directed from one safe village to another. One group gave him some pants, a jacket and a beret. He bundled his uniform into a sack that he could carry. If the Germans caught him without his uniform, they would shoot him as a spy.

He decided to test his peasant disguise in a town occupied by German troops on either side of the road. Other airmen had told him, “If you want to be taken for a Frenchman, show complete indifference to the Germans.” So that is what he did. The soldiers threw stones at him but allowed him to pass. Another airman had told Dick that the safest place to hide was in a bordello in a large city. Dick decided to go to Paris—to find

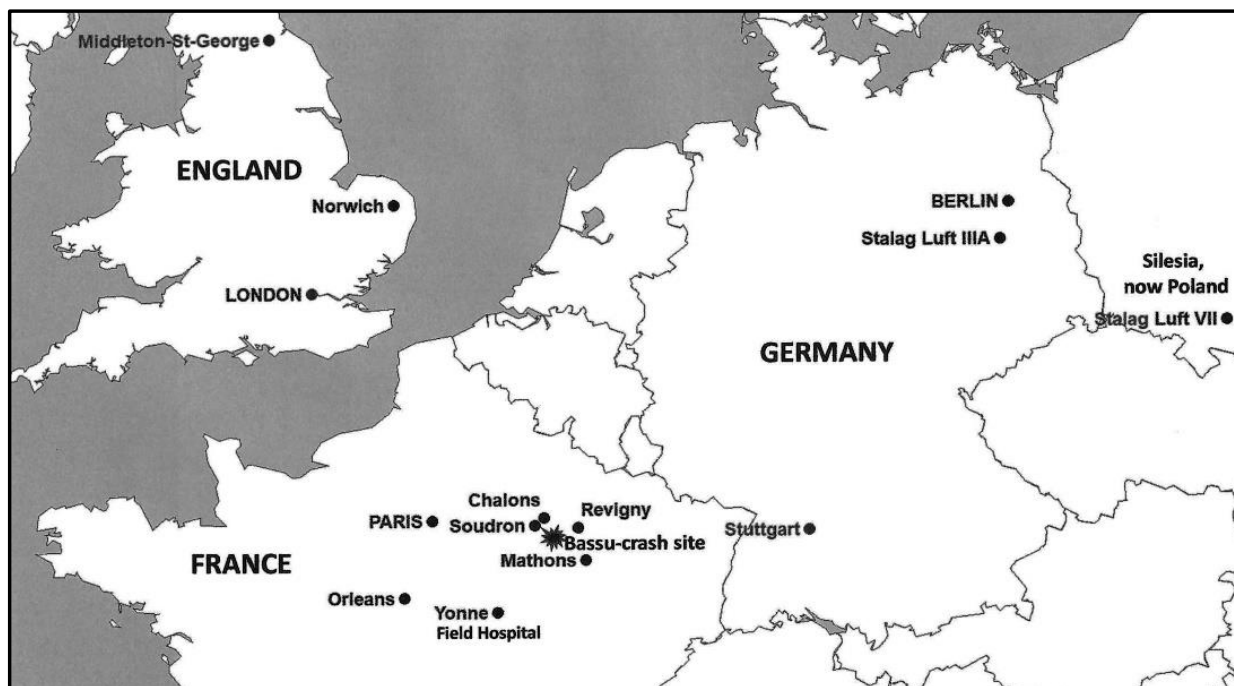


Figure 1: Location of Soudron, where Dick MacKinnon was sheltered after the crash, and POW camps in Germany where Wilfred Devine was sent

Source: Author

a bordello—but he didn't make it there.

### **“I whispered that I was a Canadian aviator”**

Dick knew from his map that he had landed close to Châlons-sur-Marne, a town 170 km east of Paris, where the Germans had a garrison and prisoner of war camp (Figure 1). After the crash, he walked along the north side of the Marne River for five days. Then he crossed the river and headed west. Around the 1st of August, he arrived at Soudron, a village 30 km southwest of Châlons. Dick ventured into a café, even though there were German soldiers inside. When he whispered to the waitress that he was a Canadian aviator, she excitedly took him to a barn behind the café where 15 people later showed up to have a party. Dick said, “This was a first for the little village and they weren't going to let it pass without some sort of celebration. I do remember standing on a table singing, but I can't tell you what the song was.” The arrival of this Canadian aviator gave the villagers hope that liberation would soon follow.

### **“Mon ami du Canada”**

One of the people in the barn, Raphaël Bernadec, was not just a member of the Resistance. Under his collar he wore a hammer and sickle pin. “He said he was a Com-mun-eest,” Dick said later, “but he was a good Com-mun-eest!”

Bernadec had fled the authorities in Paris. He did not want to draw attention to himself or to this Allied airman, whom he was now volunteering to shelter. Dick followed Raphaël to his two-room house where he was taken in for the next three weeks.

Dick would leave the Bernadec house during the daytime. When he returned, a towel in the back window was the signal that it was safe for him to enter. If the towel was missing, he hid in the woods. The Bernadec family provided shelter for the 20-year-old Canadian aviator but sought donations to feed the tall young man. Raphaël obtained food for Dick and took him around the area by bicycle. He enjoyed introducing “mon ami du Canada” to trusted friends who would offer bread, cheese and wine. Gaston Lévêque and his wife, Rolande, also befriended Dick and also provided meals.

### **“Juste un oeuf!”**

One day Dick took off on his own to check out a Junkers 88—a German night fighter—that had crashed. However, German guards stopped him at the bridge and asked for his identity papers. Dick responded, “Pas de papiers avec moi. Dans la maison” [transl. “no papers with me – at home”]. The soldiers' French was worse than Dick's and he got away with it. The guards made him wait with some French women who

had bicycled up to the bridge. The women chatted with the guards to draw attention away from Dick. One of the Germans faked throwing a hand grenade at one of the women. When she shrieked, he joked that it was just an egg—"juste un oeuf!"

After several minutes, the guards let the women return to the village. One of them, who had been at the party in the barn, beckoned to Dick, "Viens, Richard" [transl. "Come on, Richard"]. The guards let Dick leave too. Near the Bernadec house, he turned off the road. The signal towel

was not in the window, so he stayed in the woods until dark.

Another time, Dick opened the door to a German soldier asking for water, which Dick gave him. After he left, Madame Bernadec was trembling with fear. "I thought the woman was going to have apoplexy," said Dick. But her reaction was understandable—she could be shot if the Germans caught her sheltering an Allied airman. Thankfully, Dick did not have to play the "indifferent Frenchman" role much longer. The Allies were forcing the Germans to retreat.

### "De Gaulle asked the FFI to give the Germans trouble"

On 23 August 1944, a massive force of Resistance fighters expelled the Germans from Paris. The victory made headlines around the world including in Canada, where Prime Minister Mackenzie King was elated.<sup>3</sup> De Gaulle, the leader of the Free French, gave a speech from city hall in Paris that was broadcast by radio throughout the country. "Our brave forces of the interior will turn into modern fighting units," he said. "We will keep fighting until the last day."<sup>4</sup> The Forces françaises de l'intérieur (FFI, also referred to as the Maquis) all over France, including in Soudron where Dick was, took de Gaulle's words as a call to arms.

The liberation of Paris spurred the people of Soudron to form their

**FORCES FRANÇAISES DE L'INTÉRIEUR**  
**LIVRET MILITAIRE INDIVIDUEL**  
*(extrait)*

**CHAMPAGNE**  
 N° 31

Nom MACKINNON  
 Prénoms Richard  
 N° d'incorporation \_\_\_\_\_  
 Unité 7 REC  
 Grade Sergent  
 Affectation \_\_\_\_\_  
 Né le 4/4/1924  
 à Canada  
 Situation de famille C.  
 Profession Aviateur

Signature du titulaire: *R. Mackinnon*      Signature du Chef de l'Unité: *Mickey*

**RECRUTEMENT :**  
 Centre Châlons-sur-Marne  
~~XX~~ 1er Août 1944  
 Mobilisé le 26 août 1944  
 Date d'arrivée à l'unité \_\_\_\_\_

**SIGNALEMENT :**  
 Taille 1 m. 80  
 Cheveux Chat. Clair  
 Moustache \_\_\_\_\_  
 Yeux bleus  
 Nez ordinaire  
 Forme de visage ovale  
 Signes particuliers \_\_\_\_\_

Empreintes

**Figure 2: Identity card for the Forces Françaises de l'Intérieur (FFI)**  
 Source: Collection of Dick Mackinnon



own small Resistance cell. Dick's three-week stay with the generous and courageous Bernadec family came to an end. He joined the Maquis group at their camp in the woods where he was issued an FFI identity card (Figure 2). To his surprise, another English-speaking recruit arrived—a journalist named Gault MacGowan.

### **“Joining us at this camp was an American war correspondent”**

On the 14th of August, MacGowan and other correspondents were driving outside Paris when German soldiers ambushed them.<sup>5</sup> The Germans detained MacGowan at a prison camp in Châlons before placing him on a train to Germany on the 24th of August. Late at night, when the guards were distracted, MacGowan leapt from the train. Eventually, he found his way to the same Maquis cell that MacKinnon was already with.

MacGowan would write, “We lived a life like Robin Hood, not in Sherwood Forest, but in Christmas Tree land, for everywhere there were deep glades of pine, spruce and fir trees.”<sup>6</sup> Alongside the FFI fighters, he and MacKinnon sheltered in huts and slept on straw mats on the ground. MacKinnon developed a cold and hay fever which worsened into bronchitis from sleeping on the ground.

MacGowan was keen to report on the German retreat. So the 50-year-

old war correspondent and the 20-year-old Canadian aviator teamed up. MacKinnon had already been on highway raids, laying three-pronged spikes to impale the tires of the German trucks. On one of his outings with MacGowan, the Germans spotted them and opened fire with machine guns, sending them scrambling for cover. Their highway raids lasted only a few days. At the end of August, advance troops from the American army arrived and liberated Soudron.

### **“There was tremendous excitement when the Americans arrived”**

With the arrival of the U.S. soldiers, MacKinnon found himself in demand. “I acted as an interpreter for a while there because the Americans couldn't speak French,” he later said. “A lot of the villagers wanted to tell the soldiers about the traitors in their midst.” It was not surprising that loyal French citizens were eager to report Nazi sympathizers. What would later be astonishing to MacKinnon's descendants was his skill as an interpreter. Yet when it counted, Miss Lingle's high school French lessons enabled him to befriend French citizens, to fool the Germans, and, for a brief time, to translate for American soldiers. On 28 August 1944, Dick officially made himself known to American authorities as a Canadian evader (soldier or airman

in enemy territory who evaded capture) and asked for help in getting out of France.

On the 29th of August, Gault MacGowan witnessed the liberation of Châlons-sur-Marne by the troops of XII Corps of U.S. General Patton's Third Army.<sup>7,8</sup> While the city was celebrating its freedom, Dick was travelling south of Châlons to an American field hospital at Yonne. After receiving treatment for his bronchitis, he made his way to an airfield in Orléans with a Spitfire pilot and a British major who had also evaded the Germans. "With these two guys," he said, "I was able to get on an American Liberator aircraft and was flown back to England, to Norwich." Dick MacKinnon was no longer missing in action.

### **"We went to an Air Force headquarters in London"**

After Dick's father received a telephone call from Ottawa with the welcome news, he sent a telegram to Dick's girlfriend, Marjorie, letting her know he was safe in London.<sup>9</sup> He sent a cable to his son with the message, "Good news yourself and Hume," referring to Dick's friend, Hume Ritchie, who was evacuated from France on the same day as Dick.<sup>10</sup>

At headquarters in London, Dick was issued a new RCAF identity card and uniform. He submitted an evasion report describing his

actions in France,<sup>11</sup> in which he reported that he did not know the fate of his crewmates; he mentioned meeting Gault MacGowan in the Maquis camp but did not divulge the names of the members of the Resistance who sheltered him. In London, Dick stayed at the Maple Leaf Club on Cromwell Road, one of the hostels provided for Canadian and Newfoundland service members.<sup>12</sup> This was luxury accommodation compared to sleeping outdoors with a Maquis cell in France.

On the 21st of September, Dick and his pilot Jack Phillis, whom he now knew had survived, were sent to the RCAF Personnel Despatch Centre in Warrington, Yorkshire.<sup>13</sup> The doctor who examined Dick noted that he was underweight, having lost 17 lbs; his abdomen and legs were scarred with lesions from scabies; and his x-rays still showed signs of bronchitis. More worrisome was the report from a French doctor that he may have come in close contact with a case of tuberculosis. In the medical board report, the specialist wrote "Diagnosis: General debility. Advise repatriation and careful recheck for TB in 2 months or earlier if any complaints develop."

In September 1944, while Dick was being assessed for repatriation, his crewmate, Wilfred Devine, was mentioned in a Canadian newspaper as "Previously reported



**Figure 3: Gaston and Rolande Lévêque, members of the Resistance, and Gault MacGowan, journalist**  
Source: War scrapbook of Dick MacKinnon

missing on active service—now reported prisoner of war (Germany).”<sup>14</sup> After Wilfred was captured with six RAF airmen on 10 August 1944, the Germans forced the men into a truck and drove them to a German camp where they were brutally interrogated.<sup>15</sup> Afterwards, they were packed with 100 other men into cattle cars bound for a second camp. On the 22nd of August, this batch of prisoners, Trupp 27, arrived at Stalag Luft VII, a prison camp for airmen, at Bankau, located near the border with Silesia, which later became Poland.<sup>16</sup> While Wilfred was surviving on a daily ration of boiled beet greens and potatoes, MacKinnon and Ritchie prepared to return to Canada.

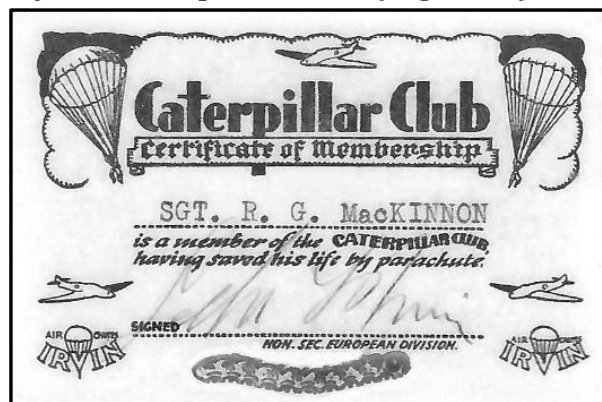
On the 15th of October, Dick and his buddy Hume Ritchie sailed from Scotland aboard the SS *Île de*

*France*.<sup>17</sup> After landing at Halifax, they were transported by train to Rockcliffe, Ottawa, for further debriefing and medical examinations. Dick and Hume finally returned to British Columbia on 31 October 1944.

**“The eyes of the caterpillar were red”**

On leave in his hometown, Trail, B.C., with memories of the war still fresh in his mind, Dick added photos, postcards and newspaper clippings to his war scrapbook.

He never forgot his encounter with Gault MacGowan, whose photo he pasted next to a snapshot of his Resistance friends, Rolande and Gaston Lévêque (Figure 3). On the same page was a letter from the Irvin Parachute Company informing Dick that he would be sent a Caterpillar Club membership card and pin for having had his life saved by an Irvin parachute (Figure 4).



**Figure 4: Caterpillar Club membership card**  
Source: Collection of Dick MacKinnon

Since the aircraft had been on fire, the eyes of the caterpillar pin would be red. Leslie Leroy Irvin, a former movie stuntman from California, invented the free fall parachute in 1919.<sup>18, 19</sup> His company mass-produced parachutes throughout WW II and saved thousands of flight crew, like Dick MacKinnon. While waiting for his caterpillar pin to arrive, Dick added more clippings to his scrapbook, including an article about his own story.

### **“Bombardiers MacKinnon, Ritchie Stick Together”<sup>20</sup>**

On 6 November 1944, Dick MacKinnon and Hume Ritchie were on the front page of the *Trail Daily Times* (see cover photo). They had trained together as air bombers, sailed together to England, evaded capture in occupied France at the same time, and returned home together. Their stories had even more in common than Dick and Hume realized.

The enemy shot down Hume Ritchie’s bomber on his first and only bombing operation, one of the fateful raids on Revigny-sur-Ornain. In his book *Massacre over the Marne*, Oliver Clutton-Brock would describe Hume Ritchie’s evasion story in detail.<sup>21</sup> The Resistance members who protected Hume lived just 40 km away from Soudron, where Dick was being sheltered. The Germans captured George Alexander from Hume’s aircrew likely at the same time as

they took Dick’s crewmate, Wilfred Devine, prisoner. Hume and Dick were lucky. They could easily have been the ones still languishing in a German prison camp instead of celebrating their return home.

### **“Coast Airman Landed in Nazi Horror Camp,” *Vancouver Sun* 1945**

Dick recorded the fate of his air force friends in his scrapbook and in his red notebook. Behind every name was a story. Leslie Head, a fellow Mooseman whose bomber was rammed by a suicidal German fighter pilot, survived to be taken prisoner in what he called a Nazi horror camp.<sup>22</sup> Steve Saprunoff’s prison guard, who was a fan of the Trail hockey team, recognized the Smoke Eaters jersey Steve wore under his flight suit, and gave him extra food rations. Steve survived the war but his brother, Sam, is buried in Belgium.<sup>23, 24</sup>

John Lees’ plane crashed in England when he was returning from a mission.<sup>25</sup> Robert Lepsoe of Trail, who interrupted his medical school training to become a Spitfire pilot, was killed in action.<sup>26</sup> Bud Ruppel, the brother of Dick’s girlfriend Marjorie, lies in an unmarked grave near Berlin.<sup>27</sup> Lees Lake, Mount Lepsoe and Mount Ruppel in British Columbia would be named in memory of these fallen airmen.

After the war, Dick’s friends John Lees, Robert Lepsoe and Sam

Saprunoff were among the names engraved on the Trail cenotaph erected in 1951 in memory of Trail residents who died in WW I, WW II, and the Korean War.<sup>28</sup> Nineteen aviators mentioned in Dick's scrapbook and in his red notebook were among the 136 names engraved on the brass plaque bearing the names of the dead from WW II (Figure 5). These were 19 young men whom Dick knew from school or sports teams that he would never see again. The war robbed Trail of a generation of promising young men—Dick's generation. He was acutely aware of these losses and how close he came to being one of them.

### “On VE Day we took our mother to church”

After Dick arrived home, he was still in the Air Force. However, he would not go overseas again. He spent his

remaining months in the RCAF posted in Vancouver. On 3 March 1945, before the war in Europe was officially over, the RCAF discharged Dick “by reason of reduced requirements.”<sup>29</sup> On 8 May 1945, Germany surrendered and the Allies declared victory. On this day, known as VE Day, Dick and his brother, Bob, who had served in the Royal Canadian Navy, accompanied their proud mother to church. Meanwhile, in Europe, the Russians were liberating prisoners from German camps.

Wilfred Devine endured over eight months of hardship as a prisoner of war. The first five months was spent at Stalag Luft VII. Then the Germans moved the entire camp out of the path of the Russians who were advancing towards Berlin. In his book *The Long Road*, Oliver Clutton-Brock



Figure 5: Highlighted names on the Trail cenotaph are RCAF men known to Dick MacKinnon according to his red notebook

Source: See reference note 28

describes how the Germans forced 1,500 weakened captives, including Wilfred (Figure 6), at gunpoint to cover most of the 250 km journey on foot.<sup>30</sup> The horrific march began at 4:00 a.m. on 19 January 1945 in bitterly cold winter conditions. On the



**Figure 6: P/O Wilfred Devine, Hamilton, Ontario, 1945.**

Source: Collection of Patricia Devine

5th of February, the emaciated surviving prisoners staggered into Stalag Luft IIIA, south of Berlin, to endure three more months of captivity and starvation rations.

Finally, in May 1945, the Russians captured Berlin and freed captives like Wilfred from the camps.<sup>31</sup> After he returned

to Canada, it would be years before Wilfred Devine heard from Dick MacKinnon.

### **War memories linger on “civvy street”**

Three action-packed years of Dick MacKinnon’s life were over. Now

came the task of getting back to civilian life—they called it “civvy street.”<sup>32</sup>

Dick was among 54,000 veterans who accepted the Canadian government’s post-war offer of financial aid to attend university.<sup>33</sup> He enrolled at the University of British Columbia, which moved 370 army huts onto campus to serve as housing and classrooms for the huge influx of veterans.

Lonely, unable to concentrate, and sleepless from working nights at the post office, Dick later admitted that his first year of university was pure hell. Having married Marjorie, he settled into his studies better in his second year. While she lived in residence at a school of nursing, Dick moved off campus to board with her mother. On graduation, he accepted a position with a company in Ontario. In Kingston, he and Marjorie added four children to the post-war baby boom. They raised them in the province of Quebec where Dick’s company transferred him next. Dick regaled his children with stories about growing up in the Gulch in Trail, but he rarely told stories about the war. However, he carefully packed away his war mementoes and brought them with him whenever he moved.

Towards the end of his career, Dick’s company transferred him back to Ontario. In the 1980s, he took early retirement because his wife became seriously disabled.

Dick's family considered that his role as Marjorie's caregiver was his most heroic by far.

As the 40th anniversary of the end of the war approached, Dick found himself adding items to his war collection once again.

### **Andy Mynarski, hero of 419 Moose Squadron**

In 1981, Dick clipped an article from the *Toronto Star* about Andrew Mynarski, the famous Mooseman from 419 Squadron.<sup>34</sup> Mynarski's surviving crewmates were symbolically recreating their last operation during which Mynarski had died. Andrew Mynarski was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross, the most, the most prestigious honour for valour, for his selfless attempt to save the tail gunner trapped in his turret on their burning aircraft. Seeing Mynarski's story would have been a poignant reminder to Dick of his own fiery crash just six weeks after Mynarski died, when four of his own crewmates perished. In 1984, the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum near Hamilton, Ontario, restored a Lancaster bomber dedicated to the hero of Moose Squadron.<sup>35</sup>

### **"Three thousand miles across a hunted ocean..." J. P. Lardie**

Dick did not attend the dedication of the Mynarski Lancaster. Nor did he participate in other Air Force

events, though he saved the invitations in his collection. In 1985, the Middleton St. George Memorial Committee invited him to travel to England. They were unveiling a plaque to honour former members of the three squadrons of No. 6 Group based at Middleton St. George. Had Dick attended, he would have heard Chaplain J. P. Lardie's prayer<sup>36</sup>

Three thousand miles across a hunted ocean they came, wearing on the shoulder of their tunics the treasured name, "Canada," telling the world their origin. Young men and women they were, some still in their teens, fashioned by their Maker to love, not to kill, but proud and earnest in their mission to stand, and if it had to be, to die, for their country and for freedom.

Dick stayed closer to home in 1985 and visited the Lancaster bomber on display at the Canadian Aviation Museum in Ottawa with his two young grandsons. Forty years after his bombing missions, the aircraft in which he had flown was a relic of history.

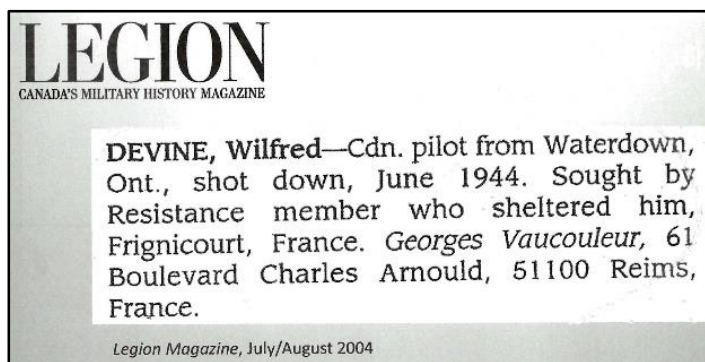
### **"Two dollars should cover this," Vince Elmer**

In a letter to Vince Elmer, volunteer historian of 419 Squadron, Dick's former crewmate Wilfred Devine mentioned that he attended the dedication of a Lancaster Mark X bomber aircraft to the memory of Andy Mynarski VC in 1984.<sup>37</sup> Wilfred was writing to thank Vince

for sending him the squadron history book.<sup>38</sup> Dick learned about the book from Wilfred, who also lived in Burlington. Vince Elmer sent Dick a copy of the book asking only for two dollars to cover postage.<sup>39</sup> In yellow highlighter, Dick marked in the book the bombing operations Phillis Crew had flown, starting with their first outing to Coutances on the night of D-Day.

In 1994, when articles related to the 50th anniversary of D-Day filled the newspapers, Dick cut them out and added them to his collection.<sup>40</sup>

Other articles featured an RCAF veteran named Phil Marchildon. In a Nissen hut in England during the war, Dick had had a long discussion about baseball with Marchildon, who had interrupted his successful professional baseball career to join the RCAF. In 1995, 50 years after the Russians liberated him from a prisoner of war camp, Marchildon published his memoirs, prompting several newspaper articles,



**Figure 7: Query from Georges Vaucouleur that was published in *Legion* magazine, July/August 2004**

Source: Collection of Patricia Devine

clippings of which were the last to be added to Dick's collection.<sup>41</sup>

In 1995, while his wife, Marjorie, my mother, was a patient in a chronic care ward in Burlington, my father was living alone. One evening I persuaded him to make an audiotape of his war memories for his grandchildren. As if he were talking about what he had done yesterday, he recalled details from the war over 50 years earlier. It felt like an adventure at the time, he said, and he never doubted that he would make it out. He did survive, and now his descendants have a story of his war experience in his own words.

### **Two WW II veterans die one year apart**

Richard Glanville MacKinnon, World War II veteran, died on 13 September 2002.<sup>42</sup> We held a visitation at the facility where my mother was still a patient and where he had been a well-respected volunteer. One of the visitors was a frail, elderly man whom the family did not recognize. The stranger was Wilfred, the navigator from Dick's Lancaster crew and prisoner of war, come to pay his respects to his former comrade. World War II veteran Wilfred Devine died 22 November 2003, one year after Dick, leaving a widow, Patricia, but no children.<sup>43</sup>

At this point, you might expect these war stories to end with



the deaths of the two former crewmates. But there was a surprise in store for Patricia Devine and me.

Eight months after Wilfred died, a notice appeared in the “Lost Trails” section of Canada’s military history magazine, *Legion*<sup>44</sup> (Figure 7). Georges Vaucouleur, a former French Resistance member, was seeking information about Wilfred Devine from Waterdown, Ontario, an airman shot down in 1944, whom he had sheltered during the war. Friends brought the notice to the attention of Wilfred’s widow, Patricia Devine, who wrote to Georges Vaucouleur. She also contacted me.

In 2005, Georges Vaucouleur, Patricia Devine and I shared maps, documents, and photos via snail mail. It was Georges who told us about the raid in the Forêt de Mathons that led to the execution of four members of the Maquis and the capture of Wilfred Devine and six other aviators. I sent Georges a translated copy of the interview I had conducted with my father, which mentions Gaston Lévêque, Raphaël Bernadec, and their wives who sheltered him from the Germans. Georges’ next letter to me contained a priceless gift.

### **“J’ai retrouvé la fille de Gaston Lévêque,” Georges Vaucouleur**

Gaston Lévêque’s daughter had sent Georges a snapshot taken 60 years earlier, and he had sent a grainy

photocopy of it to me (Figure 8). The portrait shows Dick MacKinnon with the two couples who kept him safe when it was a perilous time to be a member of the French Resistance. Dick, or Richard as they called him, wearing his flight suit, is standing between Madame Bernadec and Rolande Lévêque, one arm draped over each woman’s shoulder. At his feet sit the two Resistance men—Gaston Lévêque and Raphaël Bernadec, the good Communist.



**Figure 8: Photo sent to Georges Vaucouleur by the daughter of Gaston Lévêque**

Source: Letter from Georges Vaucouleur to the author

Someone took this photo around the end of August 1944 when Dick was about to leave France, possibly the

last time he saw the couples who were his protectors and friends. Four ordinary people showed extraordinary courage, kindness, and generosity towards a 20-year-old Canadian who had risked his own life fighting for their freedom. We must not forget their stories and the horrors of the war that brought them together.

### **It's Never Too Late**

When I started writing *Stories from the War* in January 2022, a trucker convoy had set up camp in front of the Parliament Buildings in Ottawa. Protesters were waving Nazi symbols and lamenting their so-called oppression during the Covid pandemic. Their attitude showed shocking disrespect and ignorance of what it meant to really lose freedom at the hands of a brutal enemy led by a ruthless dictator. Shortly after, Russia attacked Ukraine and history seemed to be repeating itself. Suddenly, a world war that ended more than 75 years ago became relevant to the present.

The RCAF veterans and former French Resistance members who appear in this article are long dead. Today, more than ever, it is important to tell their stories.<sup>46,47</sup> This is how we remember.

Acknowledgment: The author thanks John D. Reid for finding the SS *Île de France* troop passenger lists at [heritage.canadiana.ca](http://heritage.canadiana.ca).

© Carol Annett 2024

### **References**

- 1 Annett, Carol. Interview with Richard Glanville MacKinnon, Burlington, Ontario, 15 April 1995. Topic: WW II service. Audiocassette tape and transcript privately held by interviewer, Ottawa, Ontario.
- 2 Digital copy of compiled service record, Richard Glanville MacKinnon, R178188, Flight Sergeant RCAF, World War II, Library and Archives Canada. Short Medical Board Proceedings, 04 September 1944, 126, 127 mention scratches on back and sprained back.
- 3 "MacKenzie King Elated at News," *The Gazette* (Montreal), 24 August 1944, 17 (Newspapers.com).
- 4 "The French Fight On," *Herald Express*, Torquay, Devon, UK, 26 August 1944, 1 (Newspapers.com).
- 5 Alexander Gault MacGowan, *Wikipedia* ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander\\_Gault\\_MacGowan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_Gault_MacGowan), accessed 11 July 2023).
- 6 MacGowan, Gault, "Like Robin Hoods, FFI Streamed to Aid Paton," *The Atlanta Constitution*, Atlanta, Georgia, U.S.A., 08 September 1944, 1 ([www.newspapers.com/](http://www.newspapers.com/): accessed 21 April 2022).
- 7 Girod, Alain, "La Liberation de Châlons-sur-Marne," *MémorialGenWeb* (undated) ([https://www.memorialgenweb.org/documents/documentation\\_locale/20150608141351.pdf](https://www.memorialgenweb.org/documents/documentation_locale/20150608141351.pdf), accessed 14 May 2021).
- 8 Hogan, David W., *Northern France: The U.S. Army Campaigns of World War II*, U.S. Army Center of Military

- History (undated) ([https://history.army.mil/html/books/072/72-30/CMH\\_Pub\\_72-30.pdf](https://history.army.mil/html/books/072/72-30/CMH_Pub_72-30.pdf): accessed 11 July 2023).
- 9 Telegram. R. MACKINTON [sic], Trail, BC, to Miss Marjorie Ruppel [sic], Vulcan, Alberta. Canadian Pacific Telegram, September 1944. Collection of RGM.
  - 10 C and W Cable and Wireless. MUM, DAD, DON MACKINNON, TADANAC, BC, to SGT MACKINNON, ROYCANAIRF LONDON, 6 September 1944. Collection of RGM.
  - 11 MacKinnon, Richard Glanville, Escape/Evasion Reports, Prisoners of War Section, National Archives, UK. Ref. WO 208/3322/52, Code MI9/SPG: 2265 (<https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/D7319370>, accessed 11 July 2023).
  - 12 Brochure, Maple Leaf Club II. From Collection of Richard Glanville MacKinnon.
  - 13 Digital copy of compiled service record for Richard Glanville MacKinnon, R178188, 04 September 1944, 126, 127 (Library & Archives Canada).
  - 14 "Previously Reported Missing on Active Service—Now Reported Prisoners of War (Germany)," *Vancouver Sun*, 18 September 1944, 12 (Newspapers.com).
  - 15 Clutton-Brock, Oliver. *Massacre over the Marne: The RAF Bombing Raids on Revigny, July 1944* (1994), 212, 213.
  - 16 Clutton-Brock, Oliver and Raymond Compton. *The Long Road: Trials and Tribulations of Airmen Prisoners from Bankau to Berlin June 1944-May 1945*. (London: Grub Street Publishing, February 2021), Chapter Six: August 1944, Truppen 18-28 (Kindle version, <http://www.amazon.ca>: accessed 2022).
  - 17 SS *Île de France* passenger lists, entries for MacKinnon Image 3808 and Ritchie Image 3811. Canadiana Héritage, Directorate of Movements : C-5715 ([https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac\\_reel\\_c5715/3808](https://heritage.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.lac_reel_c5715/3808)).
  - 18 Leslie L. Irvin, *Wikipedia* ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leslie\\_L.\\_Irvin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leslie_L._Irvin), accessed 11 July 2023).
  - 19 IrvinGQ. Irvin GQ Caterpillar Club (<https://www.irvingq.com/our-story/caterpillar-club/>, accessed 15 Feb 2022).
  - 20 "Bombardiers MacKinnon, Ritchie 'Stick Together'." *Trail Daily Times*, 04 December 1944, 1.
  - 21 Hume Ritchie evasion story—in Clutton-Brock, *Massacre over the Marne*, 179–180.
  - 22 "Coast Airman Landed in Nazi Horror Camp." *Vancouver Sun*, 5 June 1945, 9 (www.newspapers.com). Also, in collection of RGM.
  - 23 "Things you may not know about the Smoke Eaters," Historic Trail Smoke Eaters/Overtime/Steve Sapruff (<http://www.historic-smokeeaters.ca/overtime/>).
  - 24 "Pilot Officer Sam Sapruff," Canadian Virtual War Memorial, Government of Canada (<https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembra>

- nce/memorials/canadian-virtual-war-memorial/detail/2777939?Samuel%20Saprunoff, accessed 13 July 2023).
- 25 British Columbia, Geographical Names. Results for Lees Lake (<https://apps.gov.bc.ca/pub/bcgnws/web/>).
- 26 Government of Canada. *Canadian Geographical Names Database* (CGNDB), search results for Mount Lepsoe (<https://geonames.nrcan.gc.ca/search-place-names/search?id=&snrc=&q=Lepsoe&category=0>).
- 27 British Columbia, Geographical Names. Results for Mount Ruppel (<https://apps.gov.bc.ca/pub/bcgnws/web/>).
- 28 *Waymarking*. Canadian Legion Memorials, Cairns and Cenotaphs. Trail Cenotaph, Trail, BC (<https://www.waymarking.com/>).
- 29 Richard Glanville MacKinnon discharged from RCAF 03 March 1945. Digital copy of compiled service record, R178188, 91 (Library & Archives Canada).
- 30 Clutton-Brock, Oliver and Ray Crompton, *The Long Road*, Chapter 12—19 January–5 February 1945: Evacuation (E-book edition).
- 31 “Further Lists of Liberated Members of R.C.A.F. Released,” *Windsor Star*, 6 June 1945, p 10. Entry for Devine, Wilfred Henry PO, Waterdown (Newspapers.com).
- 32 “Back to ‘Civvy’ Street: Post-War Veteran Re-Establishment,” Veterans Affairs Canada/Canada Remembers ([www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/classroom/fact-sheets/civvy](http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/classroom/fact-sheets/civvy)).
- 33 RCAF Personnel Counselling Report, 93. Digital copy of compiled service record for Richard Glanville MacKinnon, R178188, Flight Sergeant RCAF, World War II (Library and Archives Canada).
- 34 Emmerson, Jim. “37 years later, air crew to ‘finish op’,” *Toronto Star*, 26 February 1981, 1, 15. Clipping from the collection of RGM.
- 35 Avro Lancaster Mk. X in the collection of the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum, Hamilton International Airport, Ontario (<https://www.warplane.com/aircraft/collection/details.aspx?aircraftId=4>).
- 36 Chaplain’s prayer delivered by Father J. P. Lardie at the dedication of the RCAF Memorial at Middleton St. George (UK), 15 June 1985. Bomber Command Museum of Canada/No. 6 Group and the Canadian Squadrons (<https://www.bombercommandmuseum.ca/bomber-command/bomber-command-no-6-group-and-the-canadian-squadrons/>).
- 37 Letter from Wilfred Devine to Vince Elmer, 03 August 1984, re attending Mynarski Lancaster dedication. Copy of letter sent to Carol Annett by Patricia Devine.
- 38 *The Moose Squadron 1941–45: The War Years of 419 Squadron* (Canadian Forces Training Material Production Centre, Winnipeg: 1977).
- 39 Letter from Vince Elmer to Dick MacKinnon, 11 March 1985, re 419

- Squadron history book. Collection of Dick MacKinnon.
- 40 D-Day: A Special Section on the Normandy Landings, *Toronto Star*, 6 June 1994, Section D.
- 41 Marchildon, Phil with Brian Kendall. "Pitched into War," *Toronto Star*, 7 May 1995, C1, C3.
- 42 Richard G. MacKinnon, died age 78, 13 September 2002, Burlington, Ontario. Obituaries, *National Post*, 17 September 2002, 35.
- 43 Wilfred Henry "Wilf" Devine, died age 88, Saturday, 22 November 2003, Burlington, Ontario. Obituary in *Hamilton Spectator*. CanadianObits.com ([https://canadianobits.com/obit/index/webbbs\\_config.pl/read/1101](https://canadianobits.com/obit/index/webbbs_config.pl/read/1101)).
- 44 "Lost Trails," *Legion: Canada's Military History Magazine*, July/August 2004, 90.
- 45 Georges Leon Vaucouleur, born 24 April 1924, Vitry-le-François, Marne, France, died 19 April 2012, Reims, Marne, France, age 87. Ancestry.ca/France: Death Records, 1970-2021 (<https://www.data.gouv.fr/fr/dataset/s/fichier-des-personnes-decede/>).
- 46 Obituary for Margaret Patricia Devine, died 17 June 2012. Smith's Funeral Home, Burlington, Ontario (<https://www.smithsfh.com/memorials/margaret-devine/2536131/obituary.php>).
- 47 Grand Forks Cemetery, Grand Forks, British Columbia. Entry for Hume Paul Ritchie, died 27 October 2010 (<https://grandforks.ca/cemetery/>).

---

## The *Hector*: 250 Years of History and Heritage



BY CAROLYN BROWN

*Carolyn Brown, originally from Nova Scotia, has traced her ancestors back to those who came to Nova Scotia on board the Hector in 1773. In September 2023, she gathered with other descendants of the Hector's passengers for the 250th anniversary of that renowned ship's arrival.*

**A** gathering wind whipped across Pictou Harbour, Nova Scotia, on 15 September 2023. The Governor General of Canada (Figure 1), the Premier of Nova Scotia, the Mayor of Pictou and descendants of the estimated 190 Scots who arrived on the ship

*Hector* celebrated the ship's landing exactly 250 years earlier. It was the kickoff of a planned weekend of celebrations, unfortunately disrupted by the tail end of Hurricane Lee. In 1773, the *Hector* had also encountered a hurricane on the Atlantic Ocean that blew the ship



**Figure 1: Governor General Mary Simon opens the celebrations of the 250th anniversary of the *Hector's* landing, 15 Sept. 2023. Simon's husband, retired journalist Whit Fraser, is a descendant of a *Hector* passenger.**  
Source: Carolyn Brown

back about two weeks' sailing (Figure 2). As master of ceremonies Sandy McKay joked, visitors were treated to the full, immersive *Hector* experience.

Why is a particular ship of settlers—among the hundreds before and after—considered notable over centuries of Canada's history? And how has the perception of the *Hector's* voyage changed as our perception of Canada's past has changed?

These questions crossed my mind several times during that weekend.

As a descendant of one of the *Hector's* passengers, I was treated as an honoured guest at a unique civic event blending past and present. Like many of the descendants, I attended out of an interest in my own family's history. But placing that history in a larger context was the focus of the 250th anniversary celebrations.

## History

The *Hector's* significance is often misunderstood. What is now the Maritime provinces had been called Nova Scotia (Latin for New Scotland) since 1621, when the British granted a royal charter for the colony to Sir William Alexander, a Scotsman.<sup>1</sup> However, there was no significant Scottish settlement in the Maritimes for another 150 years.

Rather, when it was officially named Nova Scotia, it was already known as Mi'kma'ki, the traditional territory of the Mi'kmaq people,<sup>2</sup> or Acadie, so named by the French, who established the first permanent European settlement at Port-Royal in 1605 and had widespread, thriving colonies by 1700.<sup>3</sup> War between the English and the French resulted in the well-known expulsion of the Acadians in 1755. To replace the Acadians with settlers loyal to the Crown, the English government invited settlers from New England, beginning in 1758. This population was called the "New England Planters" ("planter" being simply an archaic word for

“colonist”—unrelated to their actual livelihood).<sup>4</sup> Other colonists before the *Hector* voyage included Acadians who had stayed (taking allegiance to the Crown); Protestant Irish from Ulster; Methodist English from Yorkshire; and German- and French-speaking Protestants from Germany, Montbéliard (a principality on today’s France–Switzerland border) and Switzerland.<sup>5</sup>

For example, in my case, when my *Hector* ancestor arrived, dozens of my New England, Irish, English and German ancestors were already in Nova Scotia, and many of them had been born there.

The *Hector* was not even the first Scottish immigration ship. Four ships had taken settlers from Scotland to Prince Edward Island between 1770 and 1772—the *Annabella*, the *Falmouth*, the *Edinburgh* and the *Brig Alexander*.<sup>6</sup> And the *Hector* did not bring the first settlers to the Pictou area, as 120 people were already living there when the ship landed.<sup>7</sup> Some of these pre-*Hector* Pictou settlers were Scottish. One of my ancestors, John Christie, migrated from Roxburghshire, Scotland, to Pictou a year before the *Hector* (the date is literally carved in stone on his grave), but there is no record of his passage in any archives. He and a few other Scots may have come on cargo vessels.

But the *Hector* was the first major Scottish immigrant ship to come to

Nova Scotia, and it proved important because of what came after it. It kicked off a massive wave of Scottish migration, initially to Pictou (with some ships arriving in Halifax), then to New Brunswick, Lower Canada and Upper Canada, over the next 80 years.<sup>8</sup>

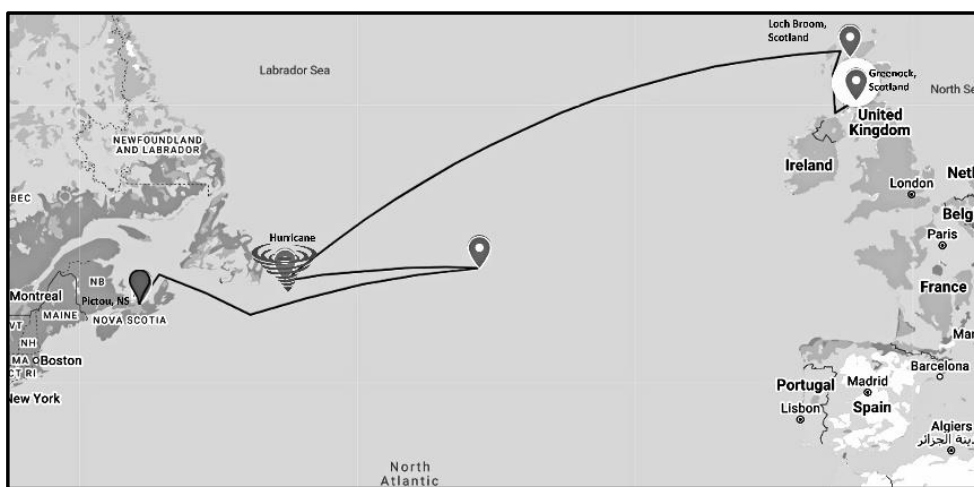
And the facts of the *Hector’s* voyage make a great story in many ways.

Most of its passengers were Scottish Highlanders impoverished following the collapse of the Jacobite rebellion at the Battle of Culloden in 1746. British measures, often referred to as the “Highland Clearances,” threw tenant farmers off their land. The British regime also tried to suppress Highland power and culture through laws restricting the power of clan chiefs and outlawing Highland dress.

Impoverished and oppressed, Highlanders started to emigrate. *Hector* passengers were mainly Highlanders from Loch Broom, with a few Lowlanders also joining the ship from Greenock. The ship started out across the Atlantic later than planned. It was a leaky old tub: “The passengers could pick the wood out of her sides with their fingers.”<sup>9</sup> Smallpox broke out, killing many passengers, mainly children.<sup>10</sup> The hurricane lengthened the voyage to 11 weeks in total (Figure 2).<sup>11</sup> The food became mouldy and ran out. When Pictou Harbour finally came into view, a bagpiper among the

passengers started to play, piping the settlers to their new home.

Their problems did not end there. The settlers were betrayed by the Philadelphia Land Company, which owned a tract of 200,000 acres. Promised provisions did not materialize. The land grants were not on the shore, as expected, but deep in the woods. It was too late in the year to grow any food, and there was little time to build shelters.



**Figure 2: The route of the *Hector* in 1773**

Source: Carolyn Brown, Google Maps

Fortunately, after proceeding on to New England, the *Hector* returned with some provisions. The main land agent and recruiter, John Ross, refused to let the migrants have the provisions because many had refused to settle where they were supposed to. So the Highlanders seized two other agents, took their guns and then took what they needed, before returning the guns and releasing the agents. However, lacking the means to make it through the first winter, many

migrants scattered to existing settlements, temporarily or permanently.

But there were heartwarming stories as well, of how earlier settlers in Pictou (most of whom had come from Philadelphia on the *Betsey* in 1767)<sup>12</sup> helped the immigrants despite having had a lean harvest. The local Mi'kmaq people showed the newcomers how to make snowshoes and moccasins

and to hunt for deer and moose.<sup>13</sup>

These First Nations people are credited with helping the Scots survive the first few years.

The *Hector* is sometimes called “Canada’s Mayflower.” However, the comparison does not hold water, as the *Hector* was not Canada’s first European immigrant ship. But the two stories have some points in common: they are about oppressed people seeking a better future, overcoming hardships, establishing long-term settlement and coexisting with Indigenous peoples. The *Hector* immigrants were not entitled citizens of the colonizing power. Rather, they were economic and political migrants, pushed out more than they were lured in.



### **“A Good Country for a Poor Man”**

My ancestor Andrew Main (Senior) got onto the *Hector* with his wife, Jane Gibson, and two children.<sup>14</sup> He disembarked a widower, with only one child (Andrew Junior). A Lowlander from Dunfermline, Scotland, Main probably did not fit in with the Gaelic-speaking, kilt-wearing, clan-based Highlanders. He soon moved on to Great Village, Nova Scotia, and hence to Noel Shore, on the Bay of Fundy. Here, he married Jane Hamilton, whose origins are unknown. I am descended from their daughter Mary, who married a son of Loyalists.

In 1794, Main wrote to a nephew back in Scotland, “If you are



**Figure 3: An accurate reproduction of the *Hector* was launched in 2000. However, by 2020, it needed extensive repairs and is currently in dry dock, undergoing restoration.**

Source: Dennis Jarvis, 2011, used under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic licence

desireous [sic] to be acquainted with the situation in this country, and if land can be purchased easy, I have to inform you that this is a good country for a poor man, if not superior to any in the world.” He went on to extol the climate, soil, crops, land prices and opportunities for work in the trades, such as weaving.

Andrew Main Sr. died at the age of approximately 82, leaving eight children.

### **How History Becomes Heritage**

The *Hector*’s voyage quickly became legendary. A passenger list was put together from memory years later, and those passengers acquired a certain veneration. They are the subject of a painting by U.S. Victorian-era artist Charles Sheldon, which shows the passengers wading ashore, led by the bagpiper. Pictou, which grew as a thriving centre for the logging industry, adopted the slogan “Birthplace of New Scotland.”

In the 1990s, a group of townsfolk decided to capitalize on the town’s history and created the Hector Heritage Quay, where visitors could tour an accurate reproduction of the ship on the water (Figure 3) and learn about the *Hector*’s voyage in a museum on land. (The ship is currently in dry dock for extensive

restoration work.) Scottish historian and media personality Neil Oliver, best known for his *Coast* TV series, hosted the documentary *The Hector: Canada's Mayflower* in 2017.

As a prelude to the 250th anniversary celebrations, a genealogy conference entitled *Ships to Shore* was held in New Glasgow in September 2023. It brought together local historians, genealogists and descendants to learn more about the region's history and genealogy resources. To put the *Hector* in its true context, historian John Ashton's keynote address emphasized the area's pre-*Hector* history, focusing on the contributions of the Mi'kmaq people. Organizer of the descendants' events, Brenda Hutchinson, told participants about her research into the passengers and their descendants. One of her unenviable tasks was checking whether people planning to visit for the anniversary were actually descendants. Some people's impression that they had an ancestor on the ship was mistaken; one person thought everyone with Scottish background from Pictou was a *Hector* descendant.

Together, Ashton and Hutchinson have written *Distinguished Descendants: of Ship Hector Passengers* (Marquis, 2023), a compilation of profiles (Figure 4). The book paints a picture of people who contributed to society both in Canada and the United States in

many fields of endeavour. The two descendants best known today are Frank Sobey, founder of the grocery store chain, and John Walter "Grant" MacEwan, Dean of Agriculture at the University of Manitoba, Alberta provincial politician, Mayor of Calgary and Lieutenant-Governor of Alberta—MacEwan University in Edmonton, Alberta, is named in his honour.



**Figure 4: Historian John Ashton and organizer Brenda Hutchinson sign copies of their book *Distinguished Descendants: of Ship Hector Passengers*.**

Source: <https://shiphectordescendants.com/2023>; used with permission from Brenda Hutchinson

### **The *Hector* Today**

As the *Hector* story has been retold, its significance has evolved. It began as a settler story for Canada's Scottish migrants, but has become a broader immigration story, including Indigenous peoples in the larger narrative.

One of the presentations at the *Ships to Shore* conference was about the 150th anniversary of the *Hector's* arrival held 100 years ago. Taking

place during the roaring 1920s, the 150th anniversary filled streets with parades and boasted a whirl of social events for hundreds of visitors. By contrast, the 250th anniversary had a more 21st-century feel: reflective and inclusive, less of a party and more of a partnership. Young people performed the Highland fling and Mi'kmaq jingle dances. One pipe band played Stan Rogers' Canadian folk classic "Northwest Passage." Cape Breton-based traditional music superstars the Barra MacNeils showed up unexpectedly at the closing event and played a set.

In 2024, the reconstructed *Hector* will go back in the water so that another generation can learn about its place in Canada's history.

## References

- 1 Margaret Conrad, *At the Ocean's Edge: A History of Nova Scotia to Confederation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2020), 65.
- 2 *Ibid.*, 15–24.
- 3 *Ibid.*, 57–65, 77–95.
- 4 *Ibid.*, 140–145.
- 5 *Ibid.*, 144–148.
- 6 Lark Szick, *Passenger Manifests to Atlantic Canada* (<http://cbns.org>).

- cbns.ca/Main/Ships.html, accessed Nov. 12, 2023); and David Hunter, *The Island Register* (<https://www.islandregister.com/>, accessed Nov. 12, 2023).
- 7 Ron Wallis, *Town of Pictou: Birthplace of New Scotland*, "History of Pictou" (under "Residents") (<https://www.townofpictou.ca/history-of-pictou>, accessed Nov. 12, 2023).
- 8 Lucille H. Campey, *After the Hector: The Scottish Pioneers of Nova Scotia and Cape Breton 1773–1852* (Toronto: Natural Heritage Books, 2004, 2007), XIII.
- 9 *Ibid.*, 21.
- 10 This account is summarized from Campey, 18–23.
- 11 Donald MacKay, *Scotland Fare-well: The People of the Hector* [ebook], Chapter 9: The Gloomy Forest.
- 12 *Ibid.*, Chapter 8: The Philadelphia Plantation.
- 13 *Ibid.*, Chapter 9: The Gloomy Forest.
- 14 This section from John Victor Duncanson, *Rawdon and Douglas: Two Loyalist Townships in Nova Scotia* (Belleville, Ontario: Mika Publishing Company, 1989), 436–441.

"In the end, we'll all become stories." ~ Margaret Atwood

Send us *your story* by 31 May 2024 to enter our

30th Anniversary Writing Competition.

See [www.bifhsgo.ca](http://www.bifhsgo.ca) for details.

# We Shall Remember Them

BY SHEILA DOHOO 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.*

## **Private William Gerald Arthrell<sup>©</sup>**

**Regimental number: 68287**

**25th Battalion (Nova Scotia Rifles)**

**Canadian Expeditionary Force**

**born: 24 November 1896–died: 26 March 1916**

For the most part, Private William Gerald Arthrell's story is like that of many Canadian soldiers who died in the Great War. However, his death was distinguished from that of so many others by his posthumous involvement in a little-known aspect of the war. It even inspired a literary reference to the event.

On his Canadian Expeditionary Force attestation form, William is recorded as having been born in Staffordshire, England, on 24 November 1897.<sup>1</sup> However, he was actually born on 24 November 1896,<sup>2</sup> making him 19 years old when he enlisted. Since there appears to be no reason that he would want to report his birth as occurring a year later, this discrepancy is likely simply a mistake.

William was the eldest child of William Sr. and Alice (née Guy) Arthrell, who had married in Lichfield, Staffordshire, in 1895.<sup>3</sup>

His father was born on 22 September 1871<sup>4</sup> in Burntwood, Staffordshire,<sup>5</sup> and his mother in July 1872,<sup>6</sup> also in Burntwood.<sup>7</sup>

They had two more children before leaving England for Canada—both registered in Lichfield:

- John George (born on 21 June 1900)<sup>8</sup>
- Jessie (born on 30 July 1902)<sup>9</sup>

In 1901, the family was living on Ironstone Road in Burntwood, about eight kilometres from Lichfield, where William Sr. was a coal miner. Over the next few years, the extended Arthrell family immigrated to Canada. Census records reflect that William Sr., Alice and their three children came to Canada at some point in 1902 or 1903.<sup>10</sup> The only passenger list record located, however, was for William Sr., who came with his younger brother, John, in 1903.<sup>11</sup> All William Sr.'s surviving family

members came to Canada about the same time—a second brother, Henry, and their father, George, came in 1905,<sup>12</sup> and their mother, Emma, came with the remaining siblings, Emma and Herbert, in 1906.<sup>13</sup> They all settled in Nova Scotia.<sup>14</sup>

William Sr. and Alice had two more children. Charlotte Emma (cited alternately as Charlotte and Emma) was born in Stellarton, Nova Scotia, on 11 October 1904.<sup>15</sup> However, their last child, Julia Arlien, was born on 25 July 1915 in Staffordshire, when the family returned to England during the war.

In 1911, the family was still living in Stellarton, where William Sr. was a mine manager and William Jr., at the age of 14, was a machinist. When, four years later, he enlisted on 31 March 1915 in Glace Bay, Nova Scotia, to serve in the Canadian Expeditionary Force, William Jr. was at least half a foot taller than the average soldier: 6' 2½".<sup>16</sup> He had a fair complexion, brown eyes and fair hair and was working as a miner.

On 20 May 1915, he sailed to England on the SS *Saxonia* with the 25th Battalion of the Canadian Infantry. After their arrival on 29 May, he remained in England, spending at least some time in the Canadian military camp at East Sandling<sup>17</sup> until he left with his battalion for France, arriving on

15 September. At the end of November, he went to the brigade grenade school.

His time on the Front was probably not much longer than three months. At the beginning of 1916, the 25th Battalion was positioned near Ypres, Belgium, and was in and out of the front line—exchanging positions with the 24th Battalion. The role of the Canadians was to wear down the enemy by constant sniping, raiding and artillery attacks. In early January, the 25th Battalion distinguished itself by adopting a new device in trench warfare.

To achieve surprise, the raiding party cut the enemy's wire by hand rather than with the artillery. Ironically enough, the experiment proved too successful. The wire-cutting group completed its task before the assault group was ready to enter the gap; and in the meantime a German wiring party discovered and repaired the damage, making the obstacle much stronger than before. The approach of daylight obliged the raiders to withdraw. Not long after this the enemy introduced tempered steel wire, and hand-cutting became a very slow and difficult process.<sup>18</sup>

The battalion was preparing for its first major engagement: the Actions of St Eloi Craters in the Ypres Salient.<sup>19</sup> In the days leading up to 26 March, the battalion exchanged heavy artillery fire and grenades

with the enemy,<sup>20</sup> and it was during one of these attacks that William was injured. He sustained shrapnel wounds to his head and a fractured skull on 24 March<sup>21</sup> and was taken to No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station,<sup>22</sup> where he died at 1:20 a.m. on 26 March 1916, at the age of 19. The likelihood of his receiving a head injury was perhaps increased by his height—he was probably significantly taller than many soldiers around him.

This is where William's war experience differs so much from others. Military historian Tim Cook, in his book, *Lifesavers and Body Snatchers: Medical Care and the Struggle for Survival in the Great War*,<sup>23</sup> reveals that autopsies were carried out on some Canadian soldiers during the Great War as part of a program that removed soldiers' organs for medical research purposes. William was one of these soldiers.

By August 1919, 799 body parts had been extracted, without the explicit consent of the soldiers, under the provisions of the attestation paper that they had signed at enlistment.<sup>24</sup>

William's autopsy may have been related to the nature of his injuries. In his book, Cook reflects on William's death and is under the impression that he did not have a steel helmet, saying:

Like his fellow soldiers on the Western Front, Arthrell had not yet

been equipped with a steel helmet, an important protection that might have deflected the bullet that smashed his skull. Despite the shattered cranium and exposed brain matter, Arthrell clung to life for thirteen hours but died the next day at No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station.<sup>25</sup>

However, William probably *did* have a steel helmet when he died. When steel helmets were first available, there were only sufficient supplies to equip one in five soldiers.<sup>26</sup> The 25th Battalion, part of the 5th Canadian Brigade, had received 450 helmets on 20 February 1916,<sup>27</sup> before some other CEF units. Cook's source of information refers to soldiers of the 6th Brigade wearing their helmets for the first time on 4 April 1916. This may explain the contradiction.<sup>28</sup>

The steel helmet offered important protection from projectiles; however, it did not work for William. The military's record of his death indicates that he

... was in the front line trench preparing to stand to when a high explosive shell exploded above the trench, a piece of shell going through his steel helmet, into his head. He was evacuated to No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station where he succumbed to his wounds.<sup>29</sup>

The 25th Battalion's medical officer also kept reports on incidents involving battalion soldiers. His account of

William's injury says that he was

... sent to amb[ulance] with fractured frontal bone with hernia of brain through [...] opening which is about 3" long. The shrapnel [...] pierced the steel helmet he had on making a hole about 1" square. His pulse was good and he could grip with his hand but was not conscious. He is still alive.<sup>30</sup>

He also reported on an earlier incident involving a soldier's helmet, with a different outcome:

During the heavy bombardment this morning about 5 a.m. when the British to our left took the [...] one of our men #68100 Sgt Williams, was rather severely wounded by shrapnel. A piece pierced the steel helmet [...] a scalp wound only, the helmet undoubtedly saving his life.<sup>31</sup>

Sadly, it did not save William's life. Would it be too speculative to think that this was why his body was chosen for autopsy? Helmets, new equipment for soldiers, were expected to save lives. Perhaps an autopsy was an opportunity to address the question of why a helmet had failed to protect William.

William's family would not have known anything about this. A letter was sent to William's father in Nova Scotia just to notify him of his son's death. William's mother had

returned to England in 1915 and remained there until after his death.<sup>32</sup> The rest of the family had joined her at some point, because all family members (William Sr., Alice, John, Jessie, Emma and Arlien) sailed back to Canada in April 1916.<sup>33</sup>

William's father had the following inscription included on his son's gravestone:

JOHN 15.13<sup>34</sup>

[Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.<sup>35</sup>]



Gravestone for Private W. G. Arthrell, third from left  
Source: John D. Reid

In 1921, the family, without either of its sons, was living on Bridge Street in Stellarton, where William Sr. was now a superintendent in a coal mine.<sup>36</sup> Both William Jr.'s parents died in Nova Scotia—William in 1941<sup>37</sup> and Alice in 1956<sup>38</sup>—and are buried in

Brookside Cemetery, Stellarton. All but one of their remaining children moved to Ontario.

William Jr.'s brother, John George, died soon after the Great War of pyrexia—a fever that could have come from a number of sources. He died on 16 October 1923 in Stellarton, where he had been a coal miner.<sup>39</sup> He was survived by his wife, Minnie Gertrude Walsh, whom he had married on 13 February 1920,<sup>40</sup> and his son, William Hillard (born on 29 September 1920).<sup>41</sup> When his son was born, John was living in Kirkland Lake, Ontario, working in the mines,<sup>42</sup> but he returned to Nova Scotia before his death.

William Jr.'s sister Jessie married Warren Irwin MacDonald on 5 August 1925 in Stellarton<sup>43</sup> but moved to Ontario before her death at the age of 86. She died in 1988 in Paris, Brant County, Ontario.<sup>44</sup>

The Arthrells' only surviving Canadian-born child, Charlotte Emma, remained in Nova Scotia. She was living with her parents and her sister Julia in Stellarton in 1940<sup>45</sup> and married there on 29 April 1942.<sup>46</sup> She died in Stellarton on 15 June 1966 and was also buried in Brookside Cemetery.<sup>47</sup>

The Arthrells' last child, Julia Arlien, first came to Canada at the age of 1, a month after her brother's death. She grew up in Nova Scotia and

married John Dan MacDonald in Glace Bay on 31 December 1941.<sup>48</sup> John served with the Royal Canadian Navy<sup>49</sup> and Julia was a corporal in the Canadian Women's Army Corps<sup>50</sup> during the Second World War. Although they married in Nova Scotia, they were living in southern Ontario later in their lives. Julia died in Paris, Ontario, on 30 December 1973<sup>51</sup> and her husband five years later.<sup>52</sup>

© 2023 BIFHSGO

## References

- 1 "Service Files of the First World War, 1914–1918–CEF," *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/first-world-war-1914-1918-cef/Pages/search.aspx>: accessed 6 June 2022), entry for William Gerald Arthrell, Reference: RG 150, Accession 1992–93/166, Box 255–48, Item Number: 14538. Unless otherwise noted, all information about his service comes from this source.
- 2 "Copy of an entry of a birth," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/>: accessed 10 January 2024) entry for Arthrell, William Gerald; "GRO online index (birth)," *General Register Office* (<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/>: accessed 15 November 2022), entry for Arthrell, William Gerald, Registration district: Lichfield, Volume: 06B, Page: 501.
- 3 "England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 4 November 2022), entry for William



- Arthrell, Registration district: Lichfield, Inferred county: Staffordshire, Volume: 6b, Page: 853.
- 4 "Canada, Find a Grave Index, 1600s–Current," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 5 November 2022), entry for William Arthrell.
  - 5 "1901 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 5 November 2022), entry for William Gerald Arthrell, Registration district: Lichfield, Sub-registration district: Lichfield, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 13, Piece: 2655, Folio: 72, Page: 32, Household schedule number: 178.
  - 6 "1911 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 4 November 2022), entry for William Arthrew [sic], Province: Nova Scotia, District: Pictou, District number: 50, Sub-district: 33 – Stellarton, Sub-district number: 33.
  - 7 "1901 England Census," *Ancestry*, entry for William Gerald Arthrell.
  - 8 "Canada, Find a Grave Index, 1600s–Current," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 4 November 2022), entry for John George Arthrell.
  - 9 "Canada, Find a Grave Index, 1600s–Current," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 24 November 2022), entry for Jessie MacDonald.
  - 10 "1911 Census of Canada," *Ancestry*, entry for William Arthrew [sic]; "1921 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 12 March 2022), entry for Wm Bothwell [sic], Province or territory: Nova Scotia, District: Pictou, City, town or village: Stellarton Ward 2.
  - 11 "Canada, Incoming Passenger Lists, 1865–1935," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 14 November 2022), entry for Wm Arthrell.
  - 12 "UK, Outward Passenger Lists, 1890–1960," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 14 November 2022), entry for Hy Arthrell.
  - 13 "Canada, Incoming Passenger Lists, 1865–1935," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 11 November 2022), entry for Herbert Arthrell.
  - 14 "1911 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 4 November 2022), entry for William Arthrew [sic]; "1911 Census of Canada," *Ancestry*, entry for William Arthrew [sic]; "1921 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 12 March 2022), entry for Herbert Arthrell, Province or territory: Nova Scotia, District: Pictou, District number: 50, Sub-district: 33 – Stellarton, Sub-district number: 33.
  - 15 "Nova Scotia Births, Marriages, and Deaths," *Nova Scotia Archives* (<https://archives.novascotia.ca/vital-statistics/>: accessed 4 November 2022), entry for Charlotte Emma Ferguson, Death registration: Year: 1966, Number: 4045.
  - 16 The Centre for Economic Policy Research (CEPR) reports that, based on a sample of servicemen born in the 1890s, the average British soldier was 5'6". ("Short poppies: The height of World War I servicemen," CEPR (<https://cepr.org/voxeu/columns/short-poppies-height-world-war-i-servicemen>: accessed 23 January 2024)).

- 17 “War Diaries - 25th Battalion, Canadian Infantry,” *Library and Archives Canada* (<https://recherche-collection-search.bac-lac.gc.ca>: accessed 15 November 2022), Reference: RG9-III-D-3, Volume number: 4933, Microfilm reel number: T-10735, File number: 417.
- 18 *The Official History of the Canadian Army in the First World War: Canadian Expeditionary Force 1914–1919* (Colonel G. W. L. Nicholson, C.D.), *Government of Canada Publications* ([https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection\\_2009/forces/DA3-4462E.pdf](https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2009/forces/DA3-4462E.pdf): accessed 14 November 2023), 135.
- 19 “25th Battalion (Nova Scotia Rifles), CEF,” *Wikipedia* ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Actions\\_of\\_St\\_Eloi\\_Craters](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Actions_of_St_Eloi_Craters): accessed 13 November 2023).
- 20 “War Diaries - 25th Battalion, Canadian Infantry,” *Library and Archives Canada* (<https://recherche-collection-search.bac-lac.gc.ca>: accessed 15 November 2022), Reference: RG9-III-D-3, Volume number: 4933, Microfilm reel number: T-10735, File number: 417.
- 21 “War diaries - Medical Officer, 25th Canadian Infantry Battalion,” *Library and Archives Canada* (<https://recherche-collectionsearch.bac-lac.gc.ca/>: accessed 14 November 2023), RG9-III-D-3, Volume number: 5039, Microfilm reel number: T-10930, File number: 872, File part: 6.
- 22 A casualty clearing station was a military medical unit behind the front lines, usually located near transportation. Casualties who did not soon die or could not be adequately treated in the clearing station were stabilized before being transported to a field or military hospital. “Casualty Clearing Station,” *Wikipedia* ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Casualty\\_Clearing\\_Station](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Casualty_Clearing_Station): accessed 4 July 2022). A very comprehensive description of the casualty clearing stations is presented in the blog “Casualty Clearing Stations During WW1,” *Chiddicks Family Tree* (<https://chiddicksfamilytree.com/2021/05/09/casualty-clearing-stations-during-ww1/>: accessed 4 July 2022).
- 23 Tim Cook, *Lifesavers and Body Snatchers: Medical Care and the Struggle for Survival in the Great War*, (New York: Penguin Random House, 2022,) 287–288.
- 24 The tone of Cook’s book is very critical of this practice, particularly because it was done without the soldiers’ consent and, in part, included encouraging the building of medical museums to display body parts publicly.
- 25 Tim Cook, *Lifesavers and Body Snatchers: Medical Care and the Struggle for Survival in the Great War*.
- 26 “Artifact Backgrounder: Mark I Helmet,” *Canadian War Museum* ([https://www.warmuseum.ca/s3/supplyline/assets/teacherresources/CWM\\_SupplyLine\\_MarkIHelmet\\_EN\\_FINAL\\_20140922.pdf](https://www.warmuseum.ca/s3/supplyline/assets/teacherresources/CWM_SupplyLine_MarkIHelmet_EN_FINAL_20140922.pdf): accessed 13 November 2023).
- 27 “War Diaries - 25th Battalion, Canadian Infantry,” *Library and Archives Canada*.
- 28 *The Official History of the Canadian Army in the First World War*:

- Canadian Expeditionary Force 1914–1919* (Colonel G. W. L. Nicholson, C.D.) indicates that “At three in the morning of 4 April the 6th Canadian Brigade . . . wearing steel helmets for the first time (only 50 per company were available), took over from the British 76th Brigade . . .” The 25th Battalion was part of the 5th Brigade, rather than the 6th.
- 29 “Canada, War Graves Registers (Circumstances of Casualty), 1914–1948,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 4 November 2022), entry for William Gerald Arthrell.
- 30 Ibid.
- 31 “War diaries - Medical Officer, 25th Canadian Infantry Battalion,” *Library and Archives Canada*.
- 32 “Service Files of the First World War, 1914–1918 – CEF,” *Library and Archives Canada*, entry for William Gerald Arthrell.
- 33 “Canada, Incoming Passenger Lists, 1865–1935,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 11 November 2022), entry for Jessie Arthrell.
- 34 *Commonwealth War Graves Commission* (www.cwgc.org: accessed 8 December 2022), entry for Arthrell, W.J. [sic].
- 35 *King James Bible Online* (https://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org: accessed 8 December 2022).
- 36 “1921 Census of Canada,” *Ancestry*, entry for Wm Bothwell [sic].
- 37 “Canada, Find a Grave Index, 1600s–Current,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 10 October 2022), entry for William Arthrell.
- 38 “Canada, Find a Grave Index, 1600s–Current,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 5 November 2022), entry for Alice Arthrell.
- 39 “Nova Scotia Births, Marriages, and Deaths,” *Nova Scotia Archives* (https://archives.novascotia.ca/vital-statistics/: accessed 4 November 2022), entry for John George Arthrell, Death registration: Year: 1923, File: 99, Number: 644.
- 40 “Nova Scotia Births, Marriages, and Deaths,” *Nova Scotia Archives* (https://archives.novascotia.ca/vital-statistics/: accessed 4 November 2022), entry for John George Arthrell, Marriage registration: Year: 1920, Number: 41784.
- 41 “Nova Scotia Births, Marriages, and Deaths,” *Nova Scotia Archives* (https://archives.novascotia.ca/vital-statistics/: accessed 23 November 2022), entry for William Hillard Arthrell, Male birth registration: Year: 1920, Number: 99000918.
- 42 Ibid.
- 43 “Nova Scotia Births, Marriages, and Deaths,” *Nova Scotia Archives* (https://archives.novascotia.ca/vital-statistics/: accessed 4 November 2022), entry for Jessie Arthrell, Marriage registration: Year: 1925, Number: 43485.
- 44 “Canada, Find a Grave Index, 1600s–Current,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 24 November 2022), entry for Jessie MacDonald.
- 45 “Canada, Voters Lists, 1935–1980,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 24 November 2022), entry for Charlotte Arthrell in 1940, Location: Pictou, Nova Scotia, Canada, Electoral district: Pictou.

- 46 "Nova Scotia Births, Marriages, and Deaths," *Nova Scotia Archives* (<https://archives.novascotia.ca/vital-statistics/>: accessed 4 November 2022), entry for Charlotte Emma Arthrell, Marriage registration: Year: 1942, Number: 112306.
- 47 "Nova Scotia Births, Marriages, and Deaths," *Nova Scotia Archives*, entry for Charlotte Emma Ferguson, Death registration: Year: 1966, Number: 4045.
- 48 "Nova Scotia Births, Marriages, and Deaths," *Nova Scotia Archives* (<https://archives.novascotia.ca/vital-statistics/>: accessed 4 November 2022), entry for Julia Arleen [*sic*]
- Arthrell, Marriage registration: Year: 1942, Number: 117362.
- 49 Ibid.
- 50 *The Expositor*, Friday, 31 December 1993, *Newspapers.com* ([www.newspapers.com](http://www.newspapers.com): accessed 25 November 2022), entry for MacDonald, Arleen [*sic*], Brantford, Ontario.
- 51 Ibid.
- 52 "Canada, Find a Grave Index, 1600s–Current," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk): accessed 25 November 2022), entry for John Dan MacDonald.

## British Military Resources at the Ottawa Branch OGS Library

BY PAM COOPER

*Pam is a BIFHSGO member and volunteer with the Ottawa Branch OGS (Ontario Ancestors) Library,<sup>1</sup> which incorporates BIFHSGO's former library collection.*

Many family historians devote time to researching their military ancestors. A great deal of information is available online, including in the databases of commercial genealogical companies such as *Ancestry*, *Findmypast* and *MyHeritage*, and on the websites of national, regional and regimental archives, museums and libraries. However, knowing what is available, where to find it and, most importantly, how to understand it, can often be achieved by consulting print resources. The Ottawa Branch OGS (OBOGS) library has a wealth of print resources to assist those researching British and Canadian military ancestors, as well as on-site access to the Library Edition of *Ancestry* and a subscription to the *British Newspaper Archives*.<sup>2</sup> Given the volume of military information in the library's collection, this article focuses on *British* military reference sources.

The books range from classic reference manuals and comprehensive guides for researching a particular branch of the military, to specialist resources for

tracing regiments or individual regimental histories, medals and awards, pensions, war graves and resources by conflict. The listings which follow are grouped by these topics. Books can be useful in themselves, by providing a detailed guide to source material which can then be found online, or for providing background and context to your research. Beyond this, the bibliographies and notes can be used to find additional resources, either online or in hard copy. In addition, the library's collection of journals should not be overlooked for identifying sources or case studies when researching individual military ancestors.

### **General Military Resources in the OBOGS Collection**

A good starting point for researching an ancestor who served in the British military is the guides to the records published by The National Archives (formerly The Public Record Office) at Kew in Surrey. These guides and handbooks, usually prepared by the archivists responsible for those military holdings, are a detailed, comprehensive introduction to the records and where they can be found. Our library's collection includes the following:

- ***Tracing Your Ancestors in the National Archives: The Website and Beyond***, 7th edition, Amanda Bevan (2006). This volume has five chapters on finding army records, broken down by period, and chapters on the Royal Navy, Royal Marines, Royal Air Force and prisoners of war and internees.
- ***Army Service Records of the First World War***, 3rd edition, William Spencer (2001)
- ***Army Records for Family Historians***, Simon Fowler and William Spencer (1998)
- ***Tracing Your Naval Ancestors***, Bruno Pappalardo (2003)
- ***Naval Records for Genealogists***, N. A. M. Rodger (1988)

In a similar vein, the Imperial War Museum has published a set of shorter guides, by branch. These evolved out of their finding aids to provide researchers with a more comprehensive guide to the records and where to find them:

- ***Tracing Your Family History: Army*** (1999)
- ***Tracing Your Family History: Royal Navy*** (1999)
- ***Tracing Your Family History: Royal Air Force*** (1999)

Another good starting point are the excellent Pen & Sword guides for different branches of the military, each by an expert, which provide a comprehensive overview and guide for that branch of service. The library holds:

- ***Tracing your Army Ancestors***, 3rd edition, Simon Fowler (2017)

- ***Tracing Your Naval Ancestors***, Simon Fowler (2011)
- ***Tracing Your Air Force Ancestors***, Phil Tomaselli (2007)
- ***Tracing your Royal Marine Ancestors***, Richard Brooks and Matthew Little (2008), published in association with The Royal Marines Museum
- ***Tracing Your Secret Service Ancestors***, Phil Tomaselli (2009)

Beyond these starting points, the library has a wealth of other resources for researching different aspects of family history related to the British military. The references below are organized by topic. They are a selection and are not exhaustive.

## Army

- ***My Ancestor Was in the British Army: How Can I Find Out More About Him?*** 2nd edition, Michael J. Watts and Christopher T. Watts (Society of Genealogists, 2011)
- ***Redcoat: The British Soldier in the Age of Horse and Musket***, Richard Holmes (Harper Collins, 2002)
- ***Militia Lists and Musters 1757–1876: A Directory of Holdings in the British Isles***, 4th edition, Jeremy S. W. Gibson and Mervyn Medlycott (Federation of Family History Societies (FFHS) 2000)
- ***The British Army: Its History, Traditions and Records***, Iain Swinnerton (FFHS 1996)
- ***Tudor and Stuart Muster Rolls: A Directory of Holdings in the British Isles***, Jeremy S. W. Gibson and Alan Dell (FFHS 1989)
- ***His Majesty's Regiments of the British Army*** (Metro-Provincial Publications, 1949)

## Tracing Regiments

- ***In Search of the Forlorn Hope: A Comprehensive Guide to Locating British Regiments and Their Records (1640–WW I)***, vol. 1 & 2 and supplement, John M. Kitzmiller II (Manuscript Publishing, 1988)  
These volumes provide a complete toolbox for identifying the regiment with which someone may have enlisted, where to find information on that regiment's history and where it was stationed; they can serve as both a reference book and guide to how to solve typical research problems related to researching a regiment.
- ***The Service of British Regiments in Canada and North America: A Resume, with a chronological list of uniforms portrayed in sources consulted. Based on regimental histories held in the Department of National Defence Library***, vol. 1 & 2, Charles H. Stewart, compiler (Department of National Defence, Ottawa, 1962).

These volumes are an office compilation prepared by the reference staff of the library of the then Department of National Defence, with a regiment-by-regiment listing of when British regiments served in North America; includes references to regimental histories.<sup>3</sup>

- ***Tracing the Rifle Volunteers 1859–1908: A Guide for Military and Family Historians***, Ray Westlake (Pen & Sword, 2010)
- ***The Royal Fusiliers (The 7th Regiment of Foot)***, Michael Foss (Hamish Hamilton, 1967)
- ***A Short History of the 9th Queen's Royal Lancers, 1715–1949*** (Gale & Polden, 1949)

## Navy

- ***The History of the British Navy***, Michael Lewis (Pelican Books, 1962)
- ***The Victorian and Edwardian Navy from old photographs***, with commentaries by John Fabb (B. T. Batsford, 1983)
- ***Nelson's Navy 1793–1815***, Military History Sources for Family Historians Series, Keith Gregson (FFHS, 2006)
- ***The Old Scots Navy from 1689 to 1710***, James Grant (Publications of the Navy Records Society, Vol. XLIV, 1914)

## Scottish

- ***Highland Soldier: A Social Study of the Highland Regiments, 1820–1920***, Diana M. Henderson (John Donald Publishers, 1989)  
Beyond being a detailed social history of life in the Highland regiments, there are appendices providing the “genealogy” of the kilted and Highland-based regiments (namely, when each regiment was first raised and the subsequent name and numbering changes to assist in tracing their history) and the locations of these regiments, year by year from 1820 to 1920.
- ***Highlander: The History of the Legendary Highland Soldier***, Tim Newark (Constable & Robinson, 2009)
- ***The Naming and Numbering of Scottish Regiments of Foot Cavalry and Militia***, David W. Webster (The Scottish Genealogy Society and the author, 2002)  
A short, but detailed, reference work to both the Scottish regiments in the United Kingdom and those in Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa.
- ***Scotland Forever: A Gift-Book of the Scottish Regiments***, with a Preface by The Earl of Rosebery, K.G. (Hodder & Stoughton, 1915)  
Prepared as a fundraiser for the Scottish Branch of the British Red Cross during the Great War, chapters outline the involvement of Scottish regiments from 1634 to the South African War (1899–1901).

- **Regiments of the Scottish Division: Histories, Tartans and Music**, Peter Simkins, et al. (Macmillan Press, 1973)
- **Queen's Own Highlanders: Seaforth and Camerons** (J.G. Eccles, 1978)

## Irish

- **Heroic Option: The Irish in the British Army**, Jean Bowen and Desmond Bowen (Pen & Sword, 2005)
- **An Outline History of the Royal Irish Rangers: (27th (Inniskilling), 83rd and 87th), 1689 to 1969** (Royal Irish Rangers, abt 1970)
- **Sketches of Irish Soldiers in Every Land**, Col. James E. McGee (Fr. Pustet, 1881)

## Colonial Service

- **Tracing your British Indian Ancestors**, Emma Jolly (Pen & Sword, 2012)
- **Sahib: The British Soldier in India, 1750–1914**, Richard Holmes (Harper Perennial, 2006)

## Military Life

- **Mr. Kipling's Army: All the Queen's Men**, Byron Farwell (W. W. Norton, 1981)  
Includes a list of the wholesale changes in the naming and numbering of regiments undertaken in the Cardwell reforms of the 1880s.
- **Military Barracks**, Trevor May (Shire Publications, 2002)
- **The Victorian Soldier**, David Nalson (Shire Publications, 2000)

## Medals

- **British Military Medals: A Guide for the Collector and Family Historian**, 2nd ed., Peter Duckers (Pen & Sword, 2013)
- **Campaign Medals of the British Army 1815–1972: An Illustrated Guide for Collectors**, Robert W. Gould (Arms and Armour Press, 1972)
- **Medals: The Researcher's Guide**, William Spencer (The National Archives, 2006)
- **Ribbons & Medals: Naval, Military, Air Force and Civil**, Captain H. Taprell Dorling (George Philip & Son, 1956)
- **British Campaign Medals, 1815–1914**, Peter Duckers (Shire Publications, 2000)
- **The Victoria Cross**, by Peter Duckers (Shire Publications, 2005)

## Pensions and Graves

- **British Army Pensioners Abroad, 1772–1899**, Norman K. Crowder (Genealogical Publishing Co., 1995)
- **Index to WO 120 vols. 35, 69 & 70: Royal Hospital Chelsea Registers**, Norman K. Crowder, no date.



- ***The Unending Vigil: The History of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission***, Philip Longworth (Pen & Sword, 2003)

### By Conflict

- ***The Crimean War 1854–56***, Phil Tomaselli (FFHS, 2006)
- ***The Zulu War 1879***, Phil Tomaselli (FFHS, 2006)
- ***Anglo-Boer War 1899–1902***, Phil Tomaselli (FFHS, 2006)

### The Great War

- ***The Great War Handbook***, Geoff Bridger (Pen and Sword, 2009)
- ***Tracing Your Prisoner of War Ancestors: The First World War***, Sarah Paterson (Pen & Sword, 2012)
- ***World War I Army Ancestry***, 3rd edition, Norman Holding (FFHS, 1997)
- ***More Sources of World War I Army Ancestry***, 3rd edition, Norman Holding (FFHS, 1998)
- ***The Location of British Army Records, 1914–1918***, 4th edition, Norman Holding, updated by Iain Swinnerton (FFHS, 1999)
- ***My Ancestor was a Woman at War***, Emma Jolly (Society of Genealogists, 2013)

Although this book addresses mainly the 20th century, including the two World Wars, it also covers the role of women before and after that period, both in military service and in industrial work, particularly munitions.

- ***Sussex in the First World War***, edited Keith Grieves (Sussex Record Society, 2004)  
This volume adds context and understanding by providing useful insights on the “home front.”
- ***From Sussex Shore to Flanders Fields: Edward Heron-Allen's Journal of the Great War***, editors Brian W. Harvey and Caroline Fitzgerald (Sussex Record Society, 2002)
- ***Passchendaele: the fight for the village*** (Battleground Europe - Ypres), Nigel Cave (Pen & Sword Books, 1997)
- ***The Old Front Line***: with an introduction to The Battle of the Somme, Col. Howard Green et al. (Pen & Sword Books, 2006). Based on a contemporary account.
- ***Tracing British Battalions on the Somme***, Ray Westlake (Pen & Sword, 2009)
- ***Salient Points: Cameos of the Western Front, Ypres Sector 1914–1918***, Tony Spagnoly (Pen & Sword, 1998)

### WW II

- ***Tracing Your Second World War Ancestors***, Phil Tomaselli (Pen & Sword, 2011)

- *The Second World War, 1939–1945*, Phil Tomaselli (FFHS, 2006)
- *Second World War Lives*, James Goulty (Pen & Sword, 2012).

## Conclusion

I hope this selection of British military resources in the OBOGS library piques your interest sufficiently to visit the library and explore our collection. The focus on British, rather than all military reference materials, reflects the wide range and volume of what is available. The library also holds significant information for researching Canadian and early American military events, including the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, the North West Rebellion,<sup>4</sup> the South African War (1899–1902)<sup>5</sup> and both world wars.<sup>6</sup>

We look forward to seeing you in the OBOGS Library in the City of Ottawa Archives Reference Room. For questions or assistance, please contact the OBOGS librarian at [ottawalibrary@ogs.on.ca](mailto:ottawalibrary@ogs.on.ca).

## Reference Notes

- <sup>1</sup> The Ottawa Branch OGS Library (OBOGS) is a family history reference library housed in the Reference Room of the City of Ottawa Archives at 100 Tallwood Drive. The library catalogue can be found at: <https://ottawa.ogs.on.ca/researching/indexes/library-catalog/>. The Reference Room is open Tuesday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and most Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. No appointment is needed.
- <sup>2</sup> Access to the Library Edition of *Ancestry* is provided by the City of Ottawa Archives; the annual subscription to the *British Newspaper Archives* is provided by BIFHSGO.
- <sup>3</sup> Copies of this, as well as amendments from 1964, also appear in the catalogues of Library and Archives Canada and the Military History Research Centre of the Canadian War Museum.
- <sup>4</sup> See, among others, *The Ottawa Sharpshooters: The Story of the Company and the men who served during the North West Rebellion, incorporating the Diary of Capt. A. Hamlyn Todd*, edited by John D. Reid (BIFHSGO, 2005).
- <sup>5</sup> See, among others, *Index to Canadian Service Records of the South African War (1899–1902)*, held at the National Archives of Canada (BIFHSGO, 1999).
- <sup>6</sup> See, among others, *Canadians at War 1914–1919: A Research Guide to World War One Service Records*, Glenn Wright (Global Heritage Press, 2010).

**NOTICE**  
**The Annual General Meeting**  
**of the**  
**British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa**  
**Will be held at 9:00 a.m. 8 June 2024.**  
**Please join us!**

# The Cream of the Crop

Top items from recent posts on Canada's Anglo-Celtic-Connections blog at [www.anglocelticconnections.ca](http://www.anglocelticconnections.ca)



BY JOHN D. REID

## England and Wales

The General Register Office for England and Wales has let a contract for the digitization of its marriage records. It holds out the prospect that we will have access to pdfs of civil marriage certificates in the same way, and at the same lower cost, as we do for births and deaths (limited years).

ACR Editor Barbara Tose was undoubtedly excited to see *Ancestry* add a collection of 15,054,046 names from the North Riding of Yorkshire electoral registers. It includes Whitby, the base for Barbara's ancestry, with over 2,500 Tose entries. Other major communities are Middlesbrough, Redcar, Scarborough, Northallerton, and a host of smaller ones. Ken McKinlay found relatives in Cayton, and I confirmed my grandmother and her mother in Great Ayton. The registers include the names of registered voters in the North Riding and their place of residence. Depending on the year, you may find a complete street address, the name of a house, the name of the street, or the name of the polling district. Registers weren't produced in 1916 and 1917 or from

1940 to 1944 during the two world wars.

In February, *Ancestry* made available the electoral registers from 1902 to 1970 for the City of Westminster, including the former metropolitan boroughs of Marylebone and Paddington.

*The Genealogist* has expanded its collection of Lloyd George Domesday Survey resources with over 170,000 searchable property records for 1910s Northamptonshire. Covering 345 parishes, they were surveyed in the years between 1910 and 1915 for the Inland Revenue Valuation Office. The records comprise the IR 58 Field Books and accompanying IR 121 to IR 135 Ordnance Survey maps. Find out more at [thegenealogist.co.uk/1910](http://thegenealogist.co.uk/1910) Survey.

*Ancestry* has added 323,144 indexed records from Norfolk, England, Indexes to Wills, Probate, Administrations and Marriage Licence Bonds. Searches for individuals will return their name, the event type, event or probate date, spouse's name and a link to the Norfolk Record Office online catalogue. That will lead to the original document, often available only as a microfilm copy at the Norfolk Record Office.

Records for Christ's Hospital, the charitable school with records from the 16th century, are accessible from the London Metropolitan Archives. A team at the Museum of Christ's Hospital in Horsham, West Sussex, where the school moved in the early 1900s from its site near St. Paul's Cathedral, can access these records, and often more, and is pleased to answer enquiries, especially those relating to family history. Records available often include copies of birth and parents' marriage certificates, which were included with petitions for entry to the school. While there is no charge for this service, donations are invited for detailed reports. Contact [chmuseum@christshospital.org.uk](mailto:chmuseum@christshospital.org.uk) with any request.

## Scotland

*Ancestry* has added indexes to records of criminals in Aberdeenshire, with links to 32,051 records in the form of ledgers with printed column headings and handwritten entries. Depending on the source, the years covered are 1842 to 1922. A search returns the name and sometimes the trial date and trial place. There are links to more complete transcriptions and to the original register image.

*MyHeritage* is now providing an index entry to 501,793 prisoner records from various prisons in Scotland between the years 1791 and 1965. Records typically include the name of the prisoner, year and place of birth, residence, and the year and place of

imprisonment. The full original record, containing much more detail, can be ordered for £5.00 at [www.scottishindexes.com](http://www.scottishindexes.com).

Also from *Scottish Indexes* via *MyHeritage*, the collection Scotland, Court of Session Processes, Acts and Decrees, 1560–1930 comprises 584,355 index records that typically include the name of the person in the court case, the date of the case, and the description of the case. Using a given name and trial date from this database, you may find more complete information in newspapers.

## Ireland

John Grenham's first blog post for 2024 revealed what some would consider issues with Irish Catholic parish boundaries. How significant are the boundaries? Was anyone ever turned away from church for crossing into a neighbouring parish? His second blog post was "Why impressive pedigrees mean diddly-squat." (<https://www.johngrenham.com/blog/>)

The Ulster Historical Foundation has a new website with a range of resources conveniently available. Many are obscure and free to view. (<https://ulsterhistoricalfoundation.com/>).

*Emerald Roots*, the official podcast for the Irish Family History Centre, is promising more episodes in 2024 after a hiatus (<https://www.irishfamilyhistorycentre.com/emerald-roots-podcast/>).

## Maps

U.K. Ordnance Survey maps, published in 1973, came out of copyright on 1 January 2024. The National Library of Scotland (NLS) was on the ball, making 1,868 maps available online—1,151 detailed maps at scales of 1:1,250 and 1:2,500 covering areas in Scotland, and 717 less detailed maps at scales of 1:10,000/1:10,560 covering regions of England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales. More are being added. For the complete collection see <https://maps.nls.uk/>.

The NLS also posted online War Office one-inch to the mile maps of Ireland (G.S.G.S. 4136), published in 1940 to 42. The maps were revised for major landscape detail, and some later editions have a purple overprint showing bogs (<https://maps.nls.uk/additions/#152>).

## Newspapers

In the New Year, *Findmypast* made available, without charge, 78 digitized and searchable 19th-century British newspapers, which previously required a paid subscription. Significant newspapers with over a 50-year run include *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper* and *Reynolds's Newspaper*.

A blog post on what is and isn't available online for Toronto and area newspapers is at <https://jamiebradburncreative.wordpress.com/online-newspaper-guide/>. We're still waiting for the *Toronto Telegram*!

## Bits and Bobs

### *Genealogical Query Optimization (GQO)*

...is the process of crafting a straightforward, concise and practical question that will help you find genealogical information. A well-written query can save you time and frustration. It will attract the attention and assistance of others with relevant knowledge or resources and can also serve as cousin bait. My blog post at <https://www.anglocelticconnections.ca/2024/01/11/genealogical-query-optimization/> includes tips and further references on GQO.

### *An Ounce of Prevention*

The British Library and Toronto Public Library have both been dealing with ransomware attacks in recent months. Services have been unavailable. While there are likely more attractive ransomware targets than your personal website or computer, forewarned is forearmed. Beware of common methods of phishing through downloads of malicious software or legitimate-looking sites asking for passwords. You've probably heard advice about keeping your operating system, apps, and other software up to date a million times. You know to use strong passwords, not reuse them, and enable two-factor authentication where available. Other advice is to use reputable antivirus and anti-malware software and back up your data regularly. Remember LOCKSS—"lots of copies keeps stuff safe." Backup the gedcom

for your genealogy database and other unique data on the cloud, on a USB drive (and then unplug and store it away). Give a duplicate to a relative or friend. If you do get hit by a ransomware attack, or more likely a hardware failure, you'll be in a good position, with a lot of work, to recover. Or would you enjoy the task of re-researching your family tree? Think about it!

### **RCMP's The Quarterly**

An extensive run of issues of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police magazine, *The Quarterly*, has been

added to the collection at [Canadiana.ca](https://www.canadiana.ca). Included are issues from Vol. 1, No. 1 (July 1933) to Vol. 30, No. 4 (April 1965). The journal includes reports of RCMP news, articles on the history and practices of the RCMP, accounts of social events and ceremonies, personal essays by RCMP members, and much more. For family history, there is coverage of transfers, retirements, births, marriages, deaths and obituaries. The whole collection is full-text searchable at <https://www.canadiana.ca/view/sru.00004>.

## **BIFHSGO News**

*The British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa acknowledges that its activities take place in the ancestral homeland of Indigenous people who have inhabited these lands for millennia. We acknowledge the enduring presence here of all First Nations, Métis and Inuit people. We recognize the importance of bringing awareness and understanding of our diverse nation's past to all, and we promote research and education programs that bring us together as Canadians.*

**!!!! BIFHSGO NEEDS YOU !!!!**

We are seeking interested members to fill  
4 key positions:

**President**

**Communications Director**

**Program Director**

**ACR Editor**

Contact [pastpresident@bifhsgo.ca](mailto:pastpresident@bifhsgo.ca) for more information.

## **BIFHSGO Board of Directors 2023-2024**

President	Dianne Brydon	president@bifhsgo.ca
Secretary	Laurie Dougherty	secretary@bifhsgo.ca
Treasurer	Jennifer Hill	treasurer@bifhsgo.ca
Program	Marianne Rasmus	programs@bifhsgo.ca
Membership	Anne Coulter	membership@bifhsgo.ca
Research & Projects	Sue Lambeth	research@bifhsgo.ca
Outreach	Patricia Grainger	outreach@bifhsgo.ca
Communications	Vacant	
Director-at-large	Susan Smart	first_directoratlargo@bifhsgo.ca
Director-at-large	Beth Adams	second_directoratlargo@bifhsgo.ca
Past President	Duncan Monkhouse	pastpresident@bifhsgo.ca

### **Communications:**

<i>Anglo-Celtic Roots</i> Editor	Barbara Tose	acreditor@bifhsgo.ca
Newsletter Editor	Susan Smart	first_directoratlargo@bifhsgo.ca
Web Manager	Sheila Dohoo Faure	webmanager@bifhsgo.ca
Queries	Sheila Dohoo Faure	queries@bifhsgo.ca
Social Media	Dianne Brydon	president@bifhsgo.ca
Photographer	Dena Palamedes	
<b>Conference 2024</b>		Conference_program@bifhsgo.ca

**Public Accountant** McCay Duff LLP

## **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 2024 (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**

- †13 April 2024 **Vimy: Exploring the Battle and the Legend**  
10:00 a.m.–11:45 a.m. Vimy is more than a battle from the First World War. It is commonly said that Vimy marked the “birth of a nation.” How did the four-day battle of Vimy in April 1917 transform into an origin story? **Dr. Tim Cook** will explore the emergence of the Vimy idea, its changing meaning, and its endurance as a symbol of Canadian service and sacrifice.
- †11 May 2024 **My Farrell Brick Wall and New Cousins: From Inchigeelagh, Cork to Holytown, Scotland and St Andrew's West, Ontario**  
10:00 a.m.–11:45 a.m. A complicated brick wall became a Covid project when **Dena Palamedes** and **Helen O'Farrell Sloan** connected via DNA. Their patience and persistence brought that wall down, revealing a tale of two brothers separated by an ocean.
- †8 June 2024 **Annual General Meeting**  
9:00 a.m.–11:45 a.m. **Great Moments in Genealogy**  
Short 15 minute talks still needed.  
Contact **Marianne Rasmus** at **programs@bifhsgo.ca** if you have a story to tell.

**\*Zoom only meeting** †**Hybrid meeting**

**Check our website at [www.bifhsgo.ca](http://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](mailto:acreditor@bifhsgo.ca). The deadline for submissions to the Summer issue is 13 April 2024.