



# Anglo-Celtic Roots

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## *Anglo-Celtic Roots*

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**Kathleen Wrohan wearing  
her opals**

Source: Teresa Stokes,  
used with permission

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

This issue includes two remarkable family stories which I hope you will enjoy as much as we have while preparing them for publication.

Wendy Croome reveals the mystery of her great-aunt Maud whose “disappearance” in 1903 led to many speculations by family members. The truth has turned out to be more surprising—and fascinating—than the family stories and includes the finest opal jewellery in the world!

Dianne Brydon’s discovery of a letter, written by her 4x great-grandmother in 1823, describing her son’s emigration in 1820 from Scotland to Prince Edward Island, allowed her to determine that more than half of the 85 passengers on the same voyage were her ancestors!

Nigel Lloyd recounts the story of an English bricklayer who emigrated then fought with the Australian Imperial Force. Injured at the Battle of Fromelles, he succumbed to his wounds at No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station.

Pam Cooper, in anticipation of BIFHSGO’s Irish Family History Research Day (with Fintan Mullan and Gillian Hunt from the Ulster Historical Foundation), provides a comprehensive reading list from the OGS Library. Learn about the resources available locally before the live event on March 25.



Barbara Tose

## From the President

Spring is almost here, bringing longer days and warmer temperatures. It's also time to meet again in person, as BIFHSGO's March monthly gathering will be hybrid, after two months of online meetings. I commend Marianne Rasmus, David Jeanes and Barbara Tose for so capably working out the kinks involved in combining virtual with in-person meetings, so that members, both local and distant, can attend our meetings.

March will feature two BIFHSGO events, as we will also host an *Irish Family History Research Day* on March 25 with Fintan Mullan and Gillian Hunt from the Ulster Historical Foundation. This in-person full-day conference and these expert speakers have been well attended and well received in the past and we are pleased to bring them back to you.

As I write this, we are deliberating on the timing, theme and format for our BIFHSGO fall conference. It's Scotland's turn this year, a country whose genealogists throughout the pandemic have been extremely effective in offering free online webinars on many topics. We are considering how and where BIFHSGO can best meet the needs of our members in the face of the

available online Scottish options. If you would like to join the conference team in planning and delivering this year's program, please let us know without delay.

Spring is also the time to recognize one or more BIFHSGO members who have made outstanding contributions towards BIFHSGO's success by nominating them to the BIFHSGO Hall of Fame. Criteria and requirements are posted on the website (members' area). The deadline for nominations is April 30.

As spring approaches and plans accelerate for the summer, our thoughts turn to the end of our season of excellent talks and we also note that some of our Board members' terms will be expiring. We are looking for three directors—including a secretary—to join us in setting the future direction for our society and delivering our BIFHSGO activities. We know from your feedback that you find our program informative and inspiring. I'd love to have you join the Board and me to ensure that legacy continues!



Dianne Brydon

## Family History Research

# The Disappearing Act of Maud Cromie<sup>©</sup>



BY WENDY CROOME

*Wendy Croome was born in England and moved to Canada when she was three. She has been researching her family history for 50 years and joined BIFHSGO in 2005. Wendy thanks her husband Gil and Writing Group members for their helpful critiques of her articles for ACR over the years. Here she shares her most exciting find to date—what became of her great-aunt Maud!*

### Maud and her Family

In Maud Cromie's experience, people disappeared. She was undoubtedly told of her father's sister who had disappeared before Maud was born. Her father left for Australia when she was weeks old and her twin sister died when they were aged just six months. Then, sometime before her 10th birthday, her mother disappeared, leaving her with relatives. Before Maud was out of her teens, all of those relatives as well had all either died or moved away. Therefore, it was perhaps not surprising that some years later Maud herself disappeared.

Through family stories and my own research, I know a great deal about the Cromie family. Maud's father, my great-grandfather, Henry James Cromie, known as HJ, was born in 1847 in County Derry, Ireland. Maud's mother, my great-grandmother, Sarah Ann Guy, known as Annie, was born in 1854 in Victoria,

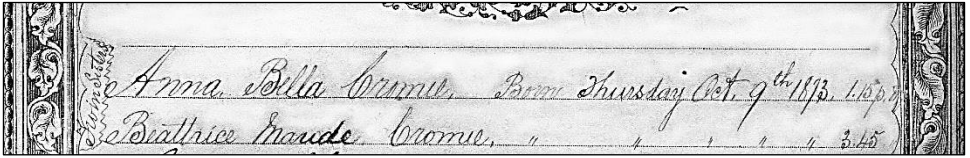
Australia. In the 1860s, HJ travelled from Ireland to Australia, and in July 1872, he and Annie were married in Echuca, Victoria. Six months later, in January 1873, the couple sailed on a three-month voyage from Melbourne, Australia to London, England. From there they travelled to Ireland to HJ's family, although HJ himself took off back to Australia almost immediately.

The Cromie family had lived for several generations in the Townland of Tamniarin, Dungiven Parish, County Derry. HJ's childhood home was a prosperous 100-acre farm that included a five-room white-washed stone house, seven out-buildings, crops, cattle and pigs. A long tree-lined drive guarded by stone pillars led to the house. There, on 9 October 1873, Annie gave birth to twin daughters—Anna Bella and Beatrice Maud (known as Maud).<sup>1</sup>

Two weeks later, HJ sailed back to Australia, accompanied by his sister

Sarah, while 19-year-old Annie and the twins were left to live with HJ's parents and six of his siblings—Sam, aged 20, Bella, 19, Maggie, 17, Robert, 16, Mary, 14 and Joseph, 11. When Maud was six months old, her twin, Anna Bella, died; Annie and Maud continued to live at the farm.

Albert Cromie (1885–1886) died in Scotstown; Robert Cromie (1887–1936) owned and published the *Vancouver Sun* newspaper in Vancouver, British Columbia; my grandmother, Frances (Cromie) Croome (1889–1971) lived in Regina, Saskatchewan where she



**Figure 1: Maud's birth entry from the Cromie family bible.**

Source: the author

According to a family story, sometime in the next few years Annie had a dispute with her mother-in-law, climbed out a small window during the night and went to England to find work, leaving Maud to be brought up by HJ's family, in particular his sisters Bella (Isabella) and Maggie. I don't know if either of Maud's parents ever returned to Ireland, or even how long they were separated, but by the early 1880s they were reunited and living in Scotstown, in the Eastern Townships of Quebec, Canada. I have published HJ's and Annie's stories in previous issues of *Anglo-Celtic Roots*.<sup>2</sup>

In Scotstown, HJ and Annie had six more children: George Cromie (1883–1956) graduated from Yale Forest School and became a respected pioneer in forestry practices in Connecticut, USA;

taught school, then volunteered with many organizations, leading to recognition in 1967 as one of the Canadian YWCA's "Women of the Century;" Sam Cromie (1891–1916) served as a lieutenant with the Coldstream Guards in World War I and died at the Somme; and Florence (Cromie) Burns (1895–1961) taught obstetrical nursing at the Yale School of Nursing in New Haven, Connecticut and was well known for her many community activities. Maud was probably aware that she had these siblings in North America, but she never actually knew any of them.

In 1893, when Maud was 20, the farm in Ireland was sold. By then, her grandparents and her Aunt Mary had died. Her other aunts and uncles had moved away from the farm—two uncles going as far as Australia. When the farm was sold,

Maud may have already been living in Belfast with her Aunt Isabella and Isabella's husband, Edward Osborne who had been married in 1883, when Maud was nine.

My grandmother, Maud's sister Frances, wrote a brief note on a family tree saying that Maud had married, but that she did not have any children. The note didn't name Maud's husband, but I found her marriage on 13 July 1895 in Belfast, to Francis John Waters, a constable with the Royal Irish Constabulary.<sup>3</sup>

I wrote to my mother's cousin, Leonard Cromie, to find out more about Maud. Leonard replied:

Maud, the survivor of the first-born twins, was allegedly 'lost at sea' in 1895 (in the Bay of Biscay as I recall the story)—and I suppose she was. Or was she? And how? By shipwreck, or overboard, accidentally, or otherwise? No details were ever given me by the older generation; they seemed reluctant to talk about her. My aunt Florence [Maud's youngest sister] ... would only say: "Maud ran off to South Africa with an actor and was drowned."

This sounded like an exciting story. Over the years, I looked for Maud in shipping, death and other records, but never found anything under either the Cromie or Waters names.

## **Maud's Disappearance**

Once newspapers came online, I found more to the story and it became even more intriguing. In

1911, Francis Waters, Maud's husband since 1895, married Isabel Tyney.<sup>4</sup> The next year Francis was tried on the charge of obtaining a marriage licence by falsely swearing that he was a widower. The trial was widely covered in the newspapers, which reported that there was a mystery about whether the first Mrs. Waters (Maud Cromie) was living or dead.

Maud's aunt, Isabella Osborne, testified at the trial that she last saw Maud in 1903 in London, when she was living apart from Francis Waters. In Maud's last letter to her aunt, she said, "I am simply disappearing from everybody, but if I ever become better off may re-appear." Isabella Osborne said that for nine years she had heard nothing from Maud.<sup>5</sup> I wondered how easy or how difficult it would have been for Maud to "simply disappear." At the BIFHSGO Annual Conference in September 2022, one of the speakers, Ian H. Waller, spoke about why people moved to London, with one of the main reasons being desertion from a marriage. He emphasized how easy it was to disappear in London, saying "London was for the Anonymous."

Francis Waters testified at his trial that in 1903 his wife, a typist, wrote to him saying that she was going to South Africa. They had lived happily together, but she was driven from Belfast by anonymous letters, the

writers having made her life there intolerable. No information was given in the newspapers about the content of the anonymous letters. Francis said that he had done everything possible to find his wife and he had letters from police officers in all parts of the world, but no information could be found on his missing wife. He also said that some time before, a mysterious visitor had called at his office in Belfast and told him that Maud had committed suicide on the road between Cape Town and Johannesburg. Waters was found not guilty of providing false information about his marital status and was discharged.<sup>6</sup>

Newspaper reports of another trial added to the mystery. In 1916, Francis Waters' second wife, Isabel, was tried for bigamy. Isabel had married William McBride in 1913, believing that her earlier marriage to Francis Waters was invalid because he was still married when he married her. Isabel said at the trial that after she had married Francis, she had never lived with him, because he had never given her a satisfactory answer as to what had become of Maud. She said that two of his stories were that Maud had fled Ireland after she tried to poison her father-in-law, and that she had committed suicide on-board ship on the way to South Africa. However, Isabel said that she had often been informed, and sincerely believed,

that Maud was still living. The judge charged the jury to decide whether the accused had "honestly and bonafidely and reasonably thought the first marriage was void by reason of Mrs Waters [Maud Cromie] being alive." The jury was convinced that Isabel believed that Maud was still alive, and they acquitted her on the charge of bigamy.<sup>7</sup>

After reading the newspaper accounts, I still did not have any more concrete information than I had learned from family stories, though I had read a few new theories. Perhaps Maud left Belfast because of anonymous letters, or perhaps she left because she had tried to poison her husband's father. Maybe she committed suicide on-board ship, or maybe in South Africa. Maybe she had "simply disappeared," as she had told her Aunt Isabella Osborne that she would?

I believed that that was all we would ever know—until August 2021, when I received an unexpected email that changed everything.

### **An Exciting Message**

The email came through WikiTree,<sup>8</sup> an online family tree website, where I had posted a very brief profile of Beatrice Maud Cromie. The entire email read:



I am writing a biography for the publishers Simon & Schuster and believe that you might be closely related to the mother [should be mistress] of its subject, by whom he had several children. It would be tremendously helpful for my researches if we could get in touch.

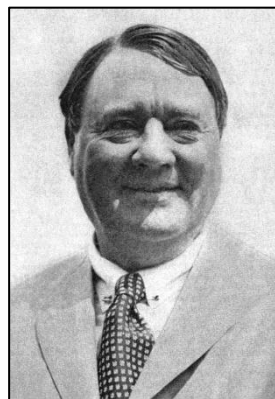
Yours sincerely, Andrew Roberts  
FRSL, FRHistS, PhD, MA

From time to time, other people have emailed me through WikiTree. These contacts have never led to anything useful, so I was skeptical at first that anything would come of this one. However, I became intrigued after I realized that my correspondent, Andrew Roberts, is a well-known English historian and journalist, who has published many biographies of people, including Winston Churchill, Napoleon and King George III. I wondered what he could be working on that could have anything to do with my great-aunt, Maud Cromie.

After we had exchanged a few emails, Andrew said that he would be happy and willing to share his research and conclusions with me, if I promised not to reveal any of it until his book was published. Of course, I promised to keep the secret, and thus began an exciting six months of correspondence with Andrew and his two researchers.

Andrew Roberts' book was published in August 2022 and is titled *The Chief: The Life of Lord*

*Northcliffe, Britain's Greatest Press Baron.*<sup>9</sup> I had never heard of Lord Northcliffe, but online sources, as well as the book, contain a voluminous amount of information that showed me what an influential figure he was in journalism.



**Figure 2: Lord Northcliffe.**

Source: *The Outlook*, 13 September 1922, Paul Thompson, photographer; <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.32106019606687&view=1up&seq=74>

*Encyclopedia Britannica* online gives this brief summary of Lord Northcliffe's life and career:

Alfred Charles William Harmsworth, Viscount Northcliffe, (born July 14, 1865, Chapelizod, near Dublin, Ire.— died Aug. 14, 1922, London, Eng.), British newspaper publisher. After an impoverished childhood and a few attempts to make a quick fortune, he joined his brother, Harold Sidney Harmsworth (1868-1940), in publishing popular periodicals that formed the basis of Amalgamated Press, at the time the world's largest periodical

publishing empire. In 1896 he started the *Daily Mail*, one of the first British newspapers to popularize its coverage to appeal to a mass readership. He also founded the *Daily Mirror* (1903) and bought *The Times* (1908), transforming it into a modern newspaper. His influence was greatest in shifting the press away from its traditional informative role to that of the commercial exploiter and entertainer of mass publics. He has been considered the most successful publisher in the history of the British press.<sup>10</sup>

Alfred Harmsworth was created Baron Northcliffe in 1905 and Viscount Northcliffe in 1918. In line with the usual custom in the British peerage, he is usually referred to by his title "Lord Northcliffe" or simply "Northcliffe." According to *Wikipedia*, Lord Beaverbrook said that Northcliffe was "the greatest figure who ever strode down Fleet Street."<sup>11</sup> A quote from the book's dust jacket provides some insight into Northcliffe's character: "He was a tough and uncompromising businessman, frequently levelled with charges of megalomania, but in *The Chief*, Andrew Roberts puts Northcliffe's ruthlessness in the context of a life of visionary business skill, journalistic brilliance, distinguished wartime public service and heartfelt patriotism."<sup>12</sup>

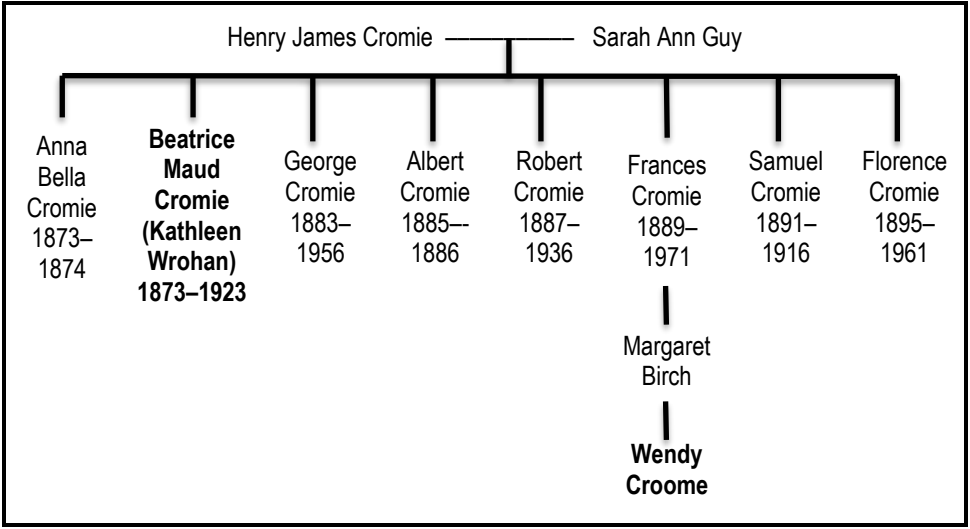
One well-known fact about Lord Northcliffe's personal life is that, although he was married, he had a series of mistresses. For 18 years, his mistress was a woman named Kathleen Wrohan, but even during his time with her, he had at least two brief affairs. Kathleen Wrohan was always very mysterious about her origins. She sometimes represented herself as Australian, although she apparently had a strong Irish accent. There were rumours that she was the illegitimate daughter of King Edward VII, or of the Countess of Glasgow, or of both.<sup>13</sup>

## The Reveal

Now that the book has been published, I can finally reveal the scandalous and well-kept secret that Kathleen Wrohan was my great-aunt, Maud Cromie!

Documents in the Northcliffe Archive Papers, held privately by the Harmsworth family, led Andrew Roberts to believe that Kathleen Wrohan was Maud Cromie. An obvious step was to see if my DNA matched that of Kathleen's descendants. However, when the results of the testing arrived, they were very disappointing, because none of Kathleen's descendants matched me, nor did they match relatives on Lord Northcliffe's side.

At the same time as the DNA was being analyzed, a thorough search



**Figure 3: Cromie family tree showing relationship of Maud to the author.**

Source: Wendy Croome

was carried out for birth records for Kathleen's three children: Alfred John Francis Alexander Wrohan (1910–1992), Katherine Dorothea Geraldine Mary Northcliffe Wrohan (1912–1968), and John Harold Northcliffe Wrohan (1914–1999). Despite an exhaustive search, no birth records were found, but a baptismal record was found for the youngest. John Harold Northcliffe Wrohan was baptized at St Martin-in-the-Fields, London, 22 April 1914 as "the adopted son of Francis & Kathleen Wrohan, 23 Avenue du Bois, Paris, Gentleman."<sup>14</sup> There is no record of anyone named Francis Wrohan, but the word "adopted" stood out. The baptismal record, plus the lack of any other records for any of the three children, led the researchers and Andrew Roberts to

conclude that they had all been informally adopted by Kathleen, possibly in France. So there never was a possibility of a DNA match with my family.

Kathleen Wrohan's name makes her easy to search in public and official documents. Although the surname Rohan is relatively well-known in Ireland, the only on-line references I can find to Wrohan, are almost certainly for Kathleen and her descendants. Kathleen's name rarely occurs in public documents and if we were limited to them, there is very little to connect Maud Cromie and Kathleen Wrohan.

One clue that they might be the same person is that the first mention anywhere of the name Kathleen Wrohan occurs right

around the same time that Maud Cromie disappeared. The second public clue is more convincing. Although Kathleen was usually very careful to conceal or lie about personal details on any official documents, I found her on a passenger list of the RMS *Mauretania* arriving at New York in October 1908. There she stated that she was Irish and had been born in Dungiven, Ireland.<sup>15</sup> Dungiven is Maud Cromie's birthplace, and was a small enough place that anyone without a connection there would be unlikely to have heard of it.

Despite the scarcity of public information, private documents in the Northcliffe Archive Papers supplied convincing evidence that Kathleen Wrohan was really Maud Cromie. In 1907, Kathleen wrote to Lord Northcliffe's friend and solicitor asking him to procure the birth certificate of a child called Beatrice Maud Cromie, born about 1872 at Tamniarin, Dungiven, Derry, Ireland, to Henry James and Annie Cromie. (This was Maud's birth place and these were her parents.) About this time, Kathleen arranged for a quarterly allowance to be paid to Maud Cromie's aunt, Isabella (Cromie) Osborne, but specified that Isabella not be told who was paying it. After Isabella had been receiving the money for four years, she wrote to the solicitor, stating her belief that the

person sending her the allowance was her niece. Isabella told the solicitor that she would be most thankful to know that her niece was alive, but not to let the niece know she had inquired about her, because she supposed the niece wanted to keep out of sight. Isabella also asked the solicitor to inform his client of her husband's (bigamous) remarriage the previous year.

Kathleen Wrohan's wills are also in the Northcliffe Archive, and they also support the conclusion that she was the same person as Maud Cromie. In the 1907 version of the will, one beneficiary was "my distant relative" Isabella Osborne, and in the 1912 version, Isabella was to inherit one third of Kathleen's estate. Isabella is not mentioned in Kathleen's final will, dated 1917,<sup>16</sup> by which time Kathleen had her three children.

### **Kathleen Wrohan**

There is no way to know for sure how Kathleen met Lord Northcliffe, but it is possible that she was working as a typist at one of his newspapers and caught his eye. However they met, it seems that he began supporting her in a lavish lifestyle not long after she had arrived in London.

For such a wealthy woman, and one who moved in society, there are very few mentions of Kathleen Wrohan in the newspapers. As

Andrew Roberts says in *The Chief*:  
Mistresses are notoriously difficult for historians to track down after over a century, but harder still when the most powerful press proprietor in British history wants to keep her hidden.<sup>17</sup>

The few newspaper articles that mention Kathleen are mostly found in provincial and foreign newspapers, that is, ones not controlled by Lord Northcliffe. Probably the first time her name appeared in print was in November 1902, in the following notice:

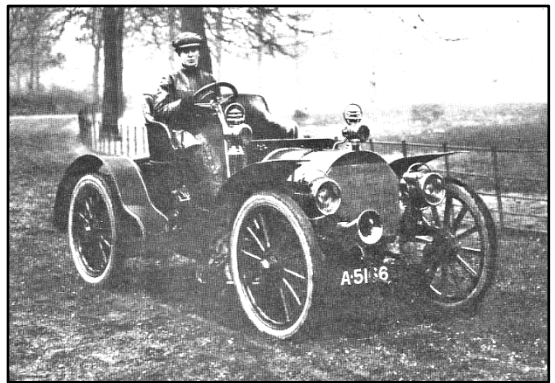
THREE POUNDS REWARD—LOST, on Saturday morning Nov. 1, in an omnibus, between Chancery-lane and Bloomsbury-street, GOLD CHAIN PURSE, containing about £3 10s. Anyone taking the same to M. Wrohan, 14 South-square, Gray's Inn, will receive above reward.<sup>18</sup>

The initial “M” rather than “K” raises a question as to whether this was Kathleen Wrohan. However, as already stated, Wrohan is a very uncommon name. Perhaps the “M” is for Maud, and she changed her surname before changing her given name. Whether or not this was a genuine first sighting of Kathleen Wrohan, it is certain that by 1904 Kathleen was no longer riding omnibuses, but was roaring around the country in a motor car.

That year she was fined twice

for speeding, in two different parts of England. In one case, “Mrs. Wrohan of Savoy Hotel, Strand,” was measured driving at a rate of nearly 28 miles per hour! When she was stopped, she said that she knew she was going too fast, but she wanted to get home, and she asked if she could pay the fine there and then.<sup>19</sup>

Kathleen’s travels weren’t confined to England. Society columns in the local newspapers of the time often included lists of guests staying at the major hotels. Kathleen was listed at the Grand Hotel du Louvre, Paris, France in 1904; Hotel Metropole, Brighton, Sussex in 1905 and again in 1906; Bertolini's Palace Hotel, Naples, Italy in 1908; The Waldorf, New York, USA, also in 1908; The Hermitage, Monte Carlo, Monaco in 1909; and the Hotel Le Meurice, Paris in 1912. According to *The Chief*, these hotels were often



**Figure 4: Kathleen Wrohan in her car, 1903.**

Source: All photos of Kathleen Wrohan provided by Teresa Stokes and used with her permission.

near where Lord Northcliffe was staying at the same time, but in public documents I found only one probable sighting of Kathleen and Northcliffe together. On the passenger list of the SS *Kaiser Wilhelm II*, leaving Southampton for New York on 24 August 1904 were "Mrs. Wrohan" and "Sir F. Harmsworth."<sup>20</sup>

When she was in London, Kathleen lived in a series of grand apartments and houses. In the newspaper article about speeding, she gave her address as the Savoy, a luxurious hotel. Electoral registers from 1907 to 1910 record her at several different houses in the exclusive districts of Belgravia and Mayfair. In 1910, Kathleen leased a 15-room house at 40 Grosvenor Street,

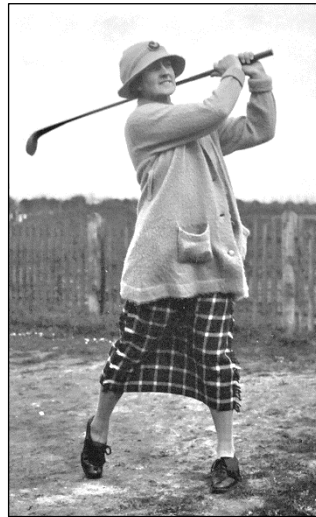


**Figure 5: Lord Northcliffe.**

Source: Wikicommons, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alfred\\_Harmsworth,\\_1st\\_Viscount\\_Northcliffe](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alfred_Harmsworth,_1st_Viscount_Northcliffe)

Mayfair. The 1911 Census reveals that the household included a butler, a cook, two housemaids, a kitchen maid, and a footman.<sup>21</sup>

When Kathleen was not travelling or living in a grand London house, she lived in the Corner House, a cottage in the grounds of Elmwood, Lord Northcliffe's country estate in Broadstairs, Kent. From the cottage, she and the children often visited Lord Northcliffe at Elmwood. He was extremely generous to Kathleen, setting up a trust for her and providing her with an income as well as the house. Starting in 1908, she received an annuity of £8,000 per year, nearly £1 million pounds today. Despite that income, Northcliffe sometimes had to pay off her debts because of her "dress bills, large numbers of servants in big houses in the grandest areas of



**Figure 6: Kathleen Wrohan.**

London, and lavish hospitality in Biarritz and the south of France."<sup>22</sup>

By 1909, only a few years after she had moved to England from the farm in Ireland, Kathleen was prominent enough in society to be presented to King Edward VII and to Queen Alexandra. In 1909, the *Court Circular* reported that "Her Majesty the Queen received Mrs Wrohan, from Australia."<sup>23</sup> The Australian press seems to have accepted that she was Australian. In 1910, a newspaper in Sydney reported that "Mr. Hugh Dixon was among the Australians at the King's levee earlier in the week. Mrs Wrohan, of Victoria, was presented by the Countess of Glasgow."<sup>24</sup>

Some of the few mentions of Kathleen in the press are in lists, such as the list of box holders for the Royal Opera House. In 1913, Lady Northcliffe was in one box and Mrs Wrohan was in the next one. It appears that Lord Northcliffe deliberately paid for adjacent boxes for his mistress and his wife (who was known to have her own affairs).<sup>25</sup>

Although newspaper glimpses of Kathleen reveal her lavish lifestyle, there is little insight into her character, either in public documents or in *The Chief*. However, in an Australian newspaper, I found a memoir written in 1926 by Richard Speaight, photographer to the Royal

Family. In this excerpt he describes Kathleen as a kind and generous person:

Another munificent client—perhaps the best I ever had—was the late Mrs. Wrohan. ... she possessed literally the finest opals in the world. On one occasion my wife was painting her head and shoulders wearing nothing but opals (the miniature was afterwards exhibited at the Academy and caused a great deal of comment). ... while the sittings were in progress the opals were sent back each night to her jeweller in Oxford Street. One evening, just as the special messenger was leaving with them, the telephone rang and a mysterious message was conveyed to me requesting that the opals should be sent to Claridge's. I did not like the sound of it all, particularly as I knew that Mrs. Wrohan usually stayed at Brown's Hotel. ... All was well, however; the message was genuine. I went up to her suite and had barely opened the door when Mrs. Wrohan appeared. She must have felt intuitively that I was nervous. "What a fool I have been," she exclaimed, "to cause you all this anxiety. As a matter of fact, though, each of these opals is known to every big jeweller in Europe, and they could not possibly have been disposed of without my hearing about it and consequently stopping it. In any case, they are nothing like my best opals. Please forgive the trouble I have caused you and come and see my collection tomorrow."

Next day I spent an hour inspecting tray after tray of the most lovely gems. Among them was a box of a dozen jewelled butterflies. Some measured 4 in. across, each wing a single opal. I openly expressed my admiration. "Well, Mr. Speaight," she said, "which do you like best?" ... [I replied] "this cameo in opal with the old marquise setting appeals to me most." "Many people would not

1912 there is a mention of her donating to the *Daily Mirror* Pudding fund in her children's names<sup>27</sup> and in 1921 she presented the trophy in a children's golf competition.<sup>28</sup> In August 1921, she was living in the Corner House, a cottage in the grounds of Elmwood, with a parrot, canaries, pigeons, dogs and her three children.<sup>29</sup> Perhaps she was reminded of her childhood on her grandparents' farm in Ireland.

Lord Northcliffe was kind to Kathleen's children. In June 1946, his former private secretary, Humphrey Davy, recalled Northcliffe playing with the two boys and a girl at Elmwood "joining in their fun as if he were an elder brother, as happy as a sand-boy." Davy reported that they called him "Harmy."<sup>30</sup>

Lord Northcliffe died in London in 1922. Kathleen lived only a year longer, dying of heart failure at age 49, on 4 July 1923 in Kent. We learn a little more of her from her obituary:

We regret to learn of the death of Mrs. Kathleen Wrohan, of Elmwood, Reading Street. The death occurred suddenly from heart failure on Wednesday night at a Broadstairs nursing home. Mrs Wrohan was a great friend of the late Lord Northcliffe and under the terms of his will, ... she came into possession of Lord Northcliffe's famous Thanet seat. Here she made various minor



**Figure 7: Kathleen Wrohan with one of her children.**

think it valuable. It is the oldest though, and a great favourite of mine." ... She then asked the jeweller for a card. On it she wrote: "With my love, Katie Wrohan." "Now take it home," she said, "and give it to your wife."<sup>26</sup>

Once Kathleen had children, much of her time seems to have been spent with them at Elmwood. In



alterations and improvements but did not materially alter the conduct and control of Lord Northcliffe's establishment. She had an intense love of the sea and all that appertained to it and possessed a considerable knowledge of nautical matters. This prepossession she shared with her sons and for their benefit a lookout house was constructed at the former summer house at the eastern end of Elmwood grounds overlooking Joss Bay. The funeral has been fixed for to-day (Saturday) the first part of the service taking place at St. Peter's Church at 11.30 a.m.<sup>31</sup>

Kathleen's will was probated on 25 July 1923 and shows that she left a sizeable estate.

Wrohan, Kathleen of Elmwood St. Peter Thanet Kent widow died 4 July 1923 at Cliffe Coombe Broadstairs Kent. Probate London 25 July to Sir George Augustus Sutton baronet and Montague Ellis solicitor. Effects £151,411 13s. 1d.<sup>32</sup>

The bulk of her estate (worth about £10 million today) was left to her three children: Alfred John Francis Alexander Wrohan (1910–1992), Katherine Dorothea Geraldine Mary Northcliffe Wrohan (1912–1968), and John Harold Northcliffe Wrohan (1914–1999).<sup>33</sup>

© Wendy Croome

## Reference Notes

<sup>1</sup> Cromie Family Bible, in possession of the author's family.

- <sup>2</sup> "The Journeys of Annie Cromie," *Anglo-Celtic Roots*, Vol 15, No 2, Summer 2009 and "Henry James Cromie: A Life of New Beginnings," *Anglo-Celtic Roots*, Vol 22, No 3, Fall 2016.
- <sup>3</sup> Copy of marriage certificate for Francis John Waters and Beatrice Maud Cromie, married by licence, 13 July 1895, at St George's, Belfast Parish, Co. Antrim (*Irish Genealogy.ie*).
- <sup>4</sup> St. Paul's Church Parish Register, Colwyn Bay, Denbighshire, Wales, entry for the marriage of Francis Waters and Isabel Tyney, 23 August 1911 (*Findmypast*).
- <sup>5</sup> "Policeman's Romance," *Belfast Weekly Telegraph*, 15 June 1912, p 9, col 5 (*The British Newspaper Archive/Findmypast*).
- <sup>6</sup> "Officer's Romance," *Daily Herald*, London, 13 June 1912, p 2, col 5 (*The British Newspaper Archive/Findmypast*).
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- <sup>8</sup> WikiTree (<https://www.wikitree.com>).
- <sup>9</sup> Roberts, Andrew, *The Chief: The Life of Lord Northcliffe, Britain's Greatest Press Baron* (London, Simon & Schuster, 2022).
- <sup>10</sup> *Britannica*, entry for Alfred Charles William Harmsworth, Viscount Northcliffe of Saint Peter. (<https://www.britannica.com>).

- 11 Lord Beaverbrook, *Politicians and the War, 1914–1916* (1928) 1:93, cited as footnote in “Alfred Harmsworth, 1st Viscount Northcliffe” (*Wikipedia*).
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- 13 *Ibid.*, pp 115–116.
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- 16 Roberts, *The Chief*, pp 117–119.
- 17 *Ibid.*, p 115.
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- 19 "A Batch of Motor Car Cases: A Lady's Speed," *The Surrey Mirror and County Post*, 21 June 1904 (*The British Newspaper Archive/Findmypast*).
- 20 Passenger Lists Leaving UK 1890-1960 (*Findmypast*), entry for Mrs Wrohan leaving Southampton for New York, USA on the SS *Kaiser Wilhelm II*, 24 August 1904.
- 21 1911 Census Returns of England and Wales (*Ancestry*), entry for Mrs Wrohan (head of household) in 1911 England Census Summary Books, RG78, Piece 14, Sched. 126.
- 22 Roberts, *The Chief*, pp 176-177.
- 23 "Court Circular: Buckingham Palace, July 14," *The Mail*, London, 16 July 1909, p 4 (*The British Newspaper Archive/Findmypast*).
- 24 "London Social Letter (from our correspondent) March 10, 1910," *Freeman's Journal* (Sydney, Australia), Thursday, 21 April 1910 (*Trove*).
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- 27 "How Daily Mirror Pudding Fund Can Make Christmas Happy," *The Daily Mirror*, 20 December 1912, p 14 (*The British Newspaper Archive/Findmypast*).
- 28 "Five Year Old Boy is Golf Sensation," *The Victoria Daily Times*, Victoria, British Columbia, 8 October 1921, p 8 (Newspapers.com).
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- 30 *Ibid.*, p 264.
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- 33 Roberts, *The Chief*, p 460.

# “The Next Fertile Valley: Renfrewshire to P.E.I. in 1820 On-Board the Alexander<sup>©</sup>”



BY DIANNE BRYDON

*An historical geographer by training, Dianne Brydon has been researching her Renfrewshire family story for five years whenever she can get to Scotland, where she has sneezed through many dusty bundles of archival documents. In 2017 Dianne published, with her father, The Stalwart Brydons: From Scotland to Galt to Portage La Prairie, her paternal family history. She has published two previous articles in the ACR and presented talks for BIFHSGO and other family history societies. She is currently the society's president.*

## The Letter

Two hundred years ago this month, Margaret (Anderson) Stevenson, my maternal 4x great-grandmother, wrote this letter from her home on Wardwell Park Farm in Kilmacolm Parish, Renfrewshire, Scotland. She sent it to her son, Robert Stevenson, who had settled near St. Andrews, New Brunswick, after emigrating to Canada in 1818. Margaret tells Robert about the emigration of his brother John Stevenson, my 3x great-grandfather, to Prince Edward Island (P.E.I., then a British colony), about his life there, and the situation at home in Scotland.

At the time of writing, Margaret was 75 years

old. There are some inconsistencies in her account, due to passage of time, or old-age confusion. Still, the letter is gold for the information she imparts



**Figure 1: The author sitting on the doorstep of Wardwell Park Farm ruins, Renfrewshire, 2022.**

Source: Author

about life in both P.E.I. and Kilmacolm in 1823. It allowed me to piece together the story behind my families' emigration to Canada in 1820 and to learn about their lives. Quite simply, it is remarkable that such a letter, especially written by a woman, still exists.

The letter was transcribed and printed in *The Charlottetown Guardian* (P.E.I.) on 27 September 1934 (p 4). It's evident some of the original handwriting was illegible, as there are gaps in the content. There are also inconsistencies between the spelling of the various farm names Margaret mentions and the names on maps of that era. This might have been due to the newspaper misreading her handwriting and incorrectly transcribing the names in 1934, or she used local spellings of those names. The newspaper included the following explanatory paragraph regarding the letter's provenance:

The Guardian is indebted to the Rev. Charles E. Johnson, of Margaree, Inverness County, Nova Scotia, for a copy of the following hitherto unpublished letter of over a century ago, concerning New Glasgow, P.E.I. Rev. Mr. Johnson obtained the letter while visiting in Sydney, N.S. at the home of Mr. Harry Stevenson.

---

*Wardwell Park, Scotland  
10th March, 1823*

*To Robert Stevenson  
Near St. Andrews, N.B.*

*Dear Son:*

*I received your letter of November 9th upon Saturday 13th February and am very glad that you are all in health. I had been at that time off my ordinary for more than two weeks and although I was so revived by your letter that I had the appearance of being quite well yet I cannot.... better, but I have reason to praise God for his goodness... with pain or sickness and have been able to sit up.....cough difficulty of breathing and extreme weakness are my chief complaint.*

*Concerning John [Robert's brother] going away it is near three years in the spring of 1819.<sup>1</sup>*

*Robert Orr,<sup>2</sup> Hardridge, and James Arthur from Hurton went to Pr. Edward Is. with their families in 1820. Your brother went in the same vessel [with his wife Margaret Nisbet and their children]. Along with him there went Alexander Laird, Burn-bank, and family; James Laird, Nutton, and family; James Houston, Woodend, and family; James Semple, Mount Blow, and family; Alexander Lang*

*Jr., Botherickfield, with his wife, newly married; George Nisbet and family. The old woman went along with them [this I interpret to mean Margaret and George Nisbet's mother, my 4x great-grandmother Katherine Guild, the letter writer's contemporary and actually 5 years younger than she], 105 persons in all.<sup>3</sup> The vessel stopped a short time at the Island and returned bringing the greatest number of letters to Kilmacolm that ever came from a foreign land either before or since, being little short of a hundred. The best account we can give of their contents is a copy of the following song composed by your brother.*

*(Tune: Jamie Riley and Colin Bann)*

*Dear friends and good old  
neighbours  
Pray lend a patient ear  
Until we do inform you  
Of our arrival here  
Our vessel being moored  
Up the river we did go  
But when we saw New Glasgow  
Our hearts were filled with woe  
(The greatest part were most  
distracted at seeing the forest)*

*This conduct so infamous  
Like Israel of old  
Who after their deliverance  
Did fret and grieve and scold.*

*They soon forgot the slavery  
And toil they had endured,  
And for the flesh pots in Egypt  
They longed every hour.*

*To their cruel task masters  
They wished to return,  
They would rather die in Egypt  
Than languish here and mourn.*

*They saw the sons of Anak,  
Men of six cubits high:  
Large towns and walled cities  
Which reached to the sky*

*They the pleasant land despised,  
They awful fate we view,  
Lest we like them should perish,  
For want of courage true.*

*So we laid aside our mourning,  
Our tears they are all dry,  
And now we mean to conquer  
Or in the attempt die.*

*We here do not need weapons  
For warfare that are made,  
No nor scaling ladders  
To climb the balustrade*

*Nor in this barren wilderness  
Does there before us lie  
The swelling stream of Jordan  
Our course (?) for to annoy.*

*Till we arise like heroes  
Our purpose to pursue  
And show the brave Canadians  
How Scottish boys can plow.*

*All you who are in hardship  
And cannot pay your rents,  
You need not fear to venture  
Your lot along with us.*

*The soil is dry and fertile,  
We have a verdant sky,*

*And all that land produceth  
It can be sold quite high.*

*Our belly is our factor,  
He may us crave severe,  
But if we should run in arrears,  
He will not poind [impound/  
confiscate] our gear.*

*When he sends us a summons  
It costs us no expense,  
And with sequestrations  
He never threatens us.*

*Those who some years before us  
Have from oppression fled,  
An ocean of difficulties  
I find they had to cross.*

*But now they roll in plenty,  
Their barns with wealth are filled,  
And cattle in abundance,  
They have upon the field.*

*Those lines for to conclude anew  
We bid you all adieu,  
We mean not to advise you  
But tell you just what's true.*

*We mean not to deceive you,  
From no sinister view  
Your coming or your staying  
To us no good can do.*

*-JOHN STEVENSON*

*The above is the best statement of their arrival and circumstances at that time which we think can be given in a few words. We can get a letter from John once a year. He has got up a house and a loom and has as much work as he can do himself. The boys manage the farm. His daughter is married. [This I interpret to mean his oldest daughter, Catherine Stevenson, my 2x great-grandmother, who married James Dickieson, my 2x great-grandfather.] We had a letter June last. They have been all in health since going there. Their cattle have thriven well. Crops, and all, equal expectation. The lawsuit respecting the Ducal [sic] estate was settled in May 1821.<sup>4</sup> The following list includes all the farms from which tenants have gone or have been turned out since 1818:<sup>5</sup>*

*1 Burnbrae; 2 Midbranches; 3 Burntbank; 4 Greenside; 5 Lukerton; 6 Tounfoot; 7 High nutton; 8 Laighwood-head; 9 High Hugh; 10 Laigh Hugh; 11 Hardridge; 12 Horswand; 13 Burnbank; 14 Midtoun; 15 Bridge-end; 16 West Lawpark.*

*There are six more sequestered upon the estate.*

*The last letter we had from John came with a man of the name of Malcolm Brown, a grandson of Malcolm Baxter who had been there about two years and gave a particular account of their situation as being on the whole favourable. John has a son born to him since going there and called him Robert. Mrs Kirkwood is nursing her twelfth child. Her next youngest is the same age as your youngest... and sisters and their families are... Oatmeal has been the whole of their diet. Potatoes 6/8d per bbl. many of them have... Two penny loaves weigh 29 oz. The fair price of oatten [oats] for the upper ward of Lanark shire is thirteen shillings and four pence per bbl. A good milk cow is not*

worth above six or seven pounds, the very best are about eleven pounds. The tax is off the salt which sells at one penny per pound. Those who...on potatoes and got no other...live very.... We had the stormiest winter which has been since 1795. The wreaths [snow drifts] in some places, 16 feet deep. The overseer upon the road from Edinburgh to Berwick, a distance of 45 miles expended 400 pounds for clearing the snow off the road. Jannet Love, east side, is married to Alexander Lang, west side. Wm. G... married his girl who belongs to Inner kes [Innerkip?] parish. Write me by the first opportunity as you will..... often requested to do so by me. I add no more but remain your affectionate mother Margaret Anderson.

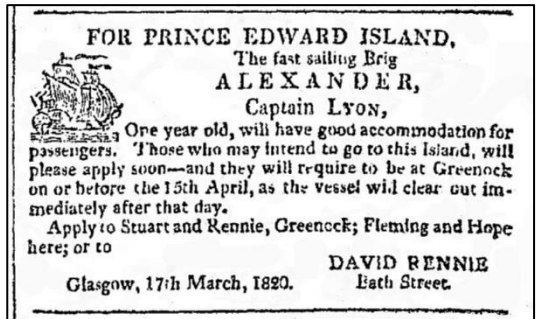
If you could find an opportunity to St. John's Newfoundland direct to John Stevenson, New Glasgow, Prince Edward Island to be forwarded to Stewart and Renny.

Recd. at Frederickton [sic] Jy. 14th 1823

## The Emigration Plan

On 25 April 1820, a small news item in *The Edinburgh Advertiser* reported, "...the Alexander, from Greenock, with emigrants for Prince Edward's Island got under weigh [sic] with a fine breeze. This vessel sailed with 85 passengers on-board, of which 17 were children. They were chiefly of the agricultural class; but among them were some weavers."<sup>1</sup>

A month earlier, an advertisement had appeared weekly in *The Glasgow Herald* offering passage on the *Alexander* (Figure 2). The advertisement didn't tell the full story—the owner planned to transport settlers to the Island on the outbound journey and collect a shipload of timber before returning to Scotland. An earlier item had advertised,



FOR PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND,  
The fast sailing Brig  
ALEXANDER,  
Captain LYON,  
One year old, will have good accommodation for passengers. Those who may intend to go to this Island, will please apply soon—and they will require to be at Greenock on or before the 15th April, as the vessel will clear out immediately after that day.  
Apply to Stuart and Rennie, Greenock; Fleming and Hope here; or to  
DAVID RENNIE  
Bath Street.  
Glasgow, 17th March, 1820.

Figure 2: Advertisement for the journey of the *Alexander* to P.E.I.

Source: *The Glasgow Herald* 17 March 1820, p 3

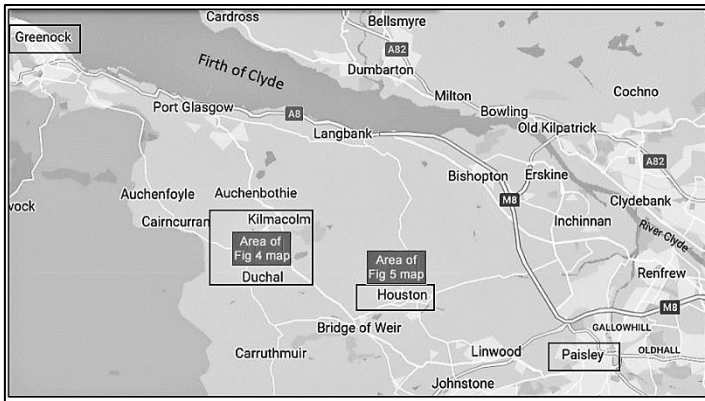
To farmers or others who may be inclined to settle on Prince Edward Island... this will be a very favourable opportunity, at the best season of the year, and the owner having a large tract of good land near the capital of the Island to SELL or LET on large leases, will give good encouragement to farmers of experience and capital who may wish to emigrate.<sup>2</sup>

The man behind the scheme, David Rennie, was a merchant in Glasgow and co-proprietor of Stuart and Rennie, running an import business between the Newfoundland Colony and Scotland. The company had been in existence since at least 1785, based in Greenock, one of the busiest ports in western Scotland. Rennie owned, or had shares in, several ships to transport his goods and cargoes, the *Alexander* being one of them.<sup>3</sup>

Rennie had bought Lot 23 in P.E.I. in 1810, comprising several hundred acres on the north shore, where he decided to settle, clear his land and collect tenant rent. The exact financial arrangement between the emigrants and Rennie is not yet known. The 1841 Census of P.E.I. enumerated the number of people in each household who repaid their passage money to the proprietors or their agents; all of the people known to have been on the *Alexander* reported having done so. Just how Rennie negotiated their land leases is, as yet, unclear.

About half of the people who took up Rennie's 1820 offer were families from the parishes of Kilmacolm, and Houston-Killallan in Renfrewshire, as well as the town of Paisley (Figure 3). Many of them were my maternal ancestors.

Who were they?—and what compelled them to go?



**Figure 3: Map locating Greenock from where the *Alexander* sailed, Kilmacolm parish, Houston-Killallan parish, and the town of Paisley.**

Source: Google Maps

only 126 living in the village of Kilmacolm, including eight weavers and not one, but two, clockmakers. People met to transact business in one of the six alehouses, much to the chagrin of the parish minister. By 1811, the population had risen to 1,474.

## Emigrants from Kilmacolm

Kilmacolm in the 1790s was not a wealthy parish: land was poor and farms were small. Houses were generally of one storey and primitive. In 1792, about 950 people were living there, with



Most of the parishioners were farmers, who were observed to be resisting new approaches to farming, clinging rather to traditional methods. In 1792, only half of the acreage in the parish was under cultivation, leading the parish minister to remark, “The farmer imagines himself more profited by collecting earthen dunghills.” Possessing very few horses, people were pulling their carts themselves.<sup>4</sup>

The Stevenson family farmed at Wardwell Park. Though small (only seven acres) and tumbling down a very steep hillside to the burn, it supported the nine people in the household, supplemented with money which my 4x great-grandfather Charles and his son William earned as shoemakers. In 1797, they were doing well enough to own a horse, one of 53 households in the parish to do so (an additional 42 owned more than one).<sup>5</sup> This was truly a measure of wealth, as many Scots were poor tenant farmers or agricultural labourers without the resources to purchase what was considered to be a luxury. Son William took over the tack (leasehold tenure) on Wardwell Park in 1817. With the transfer of the tack, William’s rent more than doubled.

There was a reason for this steep escalation of rent. In 1815, Alexander Porterfield, the landowner of Duchall Estate, on which the Stevensons and their neighbours had been tenant farmers for generations, died childless. There being no clear heirs to the estate, it took the court a few years to determine who would succeed him. Detailed surveys were produced, as well as accounts of farms, farmers, crops and rents paid.<sup>6</sup>

During this time, the two claimants to the estate, Sir Michael Shaw Stewart and James Corbett Porterfield, began to consolidate the farms into larger pastures for raising sheep—it was more lucrative than chasing after their tenant farmers for rent. Letters between them and the factor tell of efforts to evict one or another tenant. Some farmers tried to stand their ground, but with little success.<sup>7</sup>

Tenant farmers were asked to make an offer on the rent they would pay. In 1817 William Stevenson offered to almost double what his father had been paying the previous year—from £7 to £12—but his offer was deemed too low. They settled on £19.12.5 per year for 19 years, but by “crop 1818” (how they termed the rental year) he was already £9 in arrears. Many Stevenson neighbours fell deeper into debt and were forced to leave their farms.<sup>8</sup>

Some of those who were consequently turned out of their homes were listed in the letter written in 1823 by Margaret Stevenson (see above).<sup>9</sup> The ellipses in Figure 4 encircle the farms that Margaret identified as having been vacated in the vicinity of the Duchall Estate house. Life on little

Wardwell Park Farm (marked with a rectangle) must have been very lonely after the exodus of her neighbours.

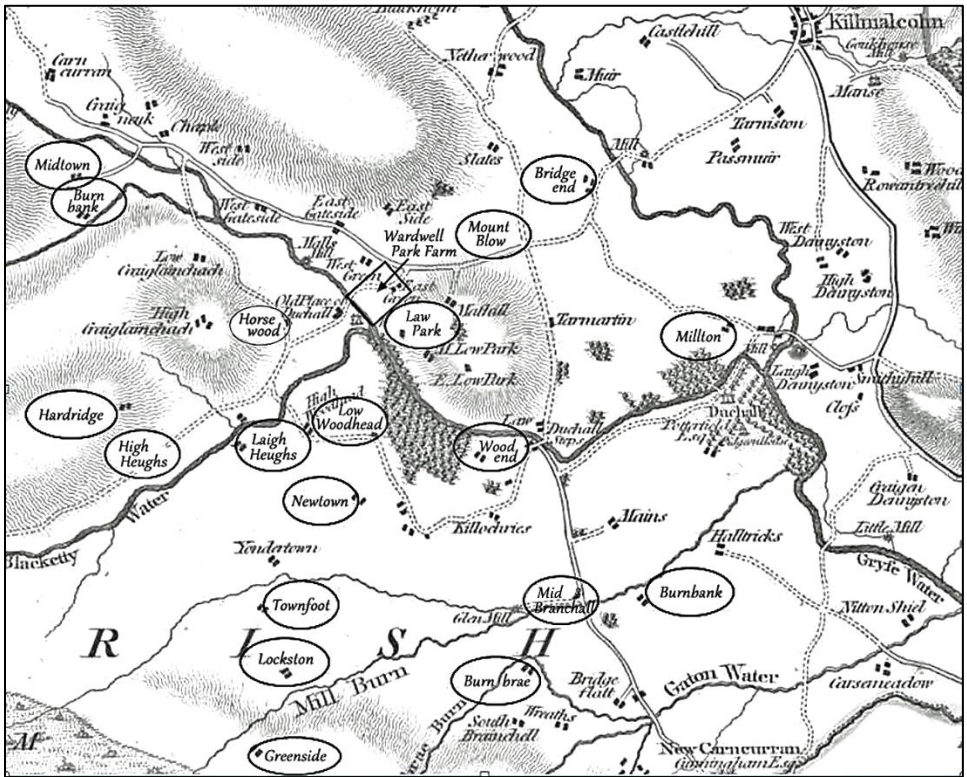


Figure 4: Extract from Map of the County of Renfrew by John Ainslie, London (1800), showing the vacated farms in Kilmacolm parish (in ellipses) surrounding Wardwell Park Farm.

Source: National Library of Scotland, reproduced with permission

The following neighbours mentioned in Margaret’s letter were passengers on the *Alexander*:<sup>10</sup>

- My 3x great-grandfather James Houston, wife Janet Millar, children James (age 16), Elizabeth Jane (14), Margaret (10), Grizel (9), my 2x great-grandfather John (then aged 5) and Jane (2) from Woodend Farm,
- Alexander Laird and his wife Agnes Laird, with sons John (24) and Alexander (10) from Burnbank Farm (in 1818 he owed £28 pounds in rent arrears),
- James Laird and his daughter Margaret (25) from Nutton Farm, and

- James Semple, his wife Mary Inglis and children James (4) and Jean (2), from Mount Blow Farm.

These four families comprised 18 of the 85 people on-board, including my 3x great-grandparents and my 2x great-grandfather.

It is a mystery why William Stevenson and his family did not choose to leave with the rest, nor why he was allowed to stay on the Duchall Estate when so many others were evicted. Twenty years later, at age 66, William was still working as a shoemaker at Wardwell Park with his son and another journeyman shoemaker. Twenty years after that his daughter-in-law Hellen Stevenson continued to farm there.<sup>11</sup>

## **The Paisley Emigrants**

John Stevenson, William's next youngest brother and my 3x great-grandfather, had moved to the town of Paisley in the 1790s and worked there as a weaver.<sup>12</sup> At that time, the population of Paisley was about 15,000, but by 1820 it had increased to more than 25,000.<sup>13</sup> By then, John found life difficult for a different reason than the Kilmacolm folk: fluctuation in prices for woven cloth meant that John's earnings for his weaving was always tenuous; the cost of living had increased; and the increasing mechanization of the weaving process was starting to force home weavers out of work. Growing unrest among the Paisley weavers due to these factors led to the 1819 riots in the streets of Paisley.

Perhaps John saw Rennie's advertisement or heard about it from his former Kilmacolm neighbours. Perhaps the "community emigration" of people he had known growing up spurred John and wife Margaret to go. Perhaps the strife in Paisley suggested the time was right to leave. Whatever their reasons, they decided to take their family to P.E.I. Margaret's brother George Nisbet, a shoemaker, and his wife and family opted to accompany the Stevensons. All told the Paisley contingent comprised:

- My 3x great-grandparents John Stevenson and Margaret Nisbet, their children, Charles (aged 18), Catherine (16—my 2x great-grandmother), John (15), Andrew (13), William James (10), Margaret (8), George (5), Jane (4) and Janet (1),
- George Nisbet, his wife Martha Hart and children Andrew Nisbet (16), William Nisbet (14), Martha Nisbet (9), George Nisbet (6), and Catherine Nisbet (3), and
- Katherine (Guild) Nisbet, George and Margaret's mother, and my 4x great-grandmother.

In 1817, Katherine Guild, as executrix for her wealthy brother Robert Guild's estate in Tranent, near Edinburgh, submitted an inventory of the estate's assets to the Sheriff's Court.<sup>14</sup> The timing of her efforts to settle the estate in the years leading up to their emigration suggests that money from her inheritance might have paid some of the travel and land settlement costs.

Katherine was 67 when she left Scotland, one of the oldest on the ship, and she had already "travelled" a great distance—spending about 20 years in each of Tranent Parish, Edinburgh, and finally Paisley town, outliving two husbands and four children. She had resided in cities for 47 years; her next move was to the middle of the P.E.I. wilderness.

Altogether, these three Paisley families comprised 19 of the 85 people on-board, including my 4x great-grandmother, my 3x great-grandparents, and my 2x great-grandmother.

### **Emigrants from Houston-Killallan**

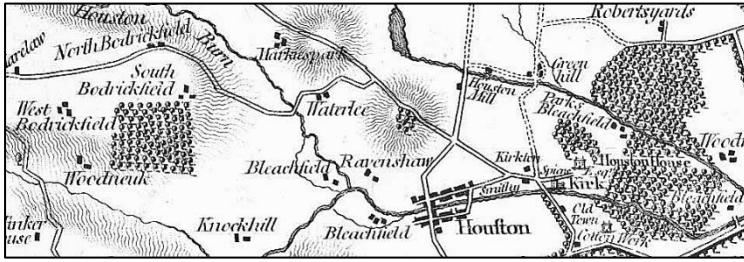
The town of Houston, Renfrewshire, adjacent to Kilmacolm Parish, was a happening place in the 1780s and 1790s. The estate owner, James Macrae, had razed an old castle in 1780 and used the stones to create the new town of Jamestown just west and north of the old village of Houston and since incorporated into Houston town. About a third of the parish population lived in the 35 new houses there, some of which had two storeys.<sup>15</sup>

By 1791, about 1,000 people were living in the parish of Houston-Killallan. About 15 per cent of the population worked as servants, along with a few carpenters, tailors, shoemakers and a clockmaker. There were very few poor or indigent people. Many of the young women and girls in Houston village sported silk dresses and cloaks of the latest fashion. Men were dressed in English cloth and good linens.

Houston-Killallan was a hub of textile production. As in the parishes around Paisley, many families had looms at home and produced cotton, muslin, lawns and fine silk gauze.<sup>16</sup>

And there was bleaching. This century-old practice involved spreading yards of linen (and later cotton) fabric or thread on the fields and pouring on solutions of bleach to hasten the sun's ability to whiten them. As fabric and thread production increased in Paisley and Glasgow, the goods were shipped to the countryside where there was space and available clean water to process them. Thomas and James Carlile established a large bleachfield west of Jamestown in the 1780s, to process the cloth shipped from their father's mills in Paisley. Cotton mills soon followed. As the bleaching industry

became more industrialized, the Carlile brothers built the Houston Bleachworks near the bleachfields, sometimes referred to as the Ravenshaugh (or Ravenshaw) Bleachworks.<sup>17</sup> (Figure 5)



**Figure 5: Extract from Map of the county of Renfrew by John Ainslie, London (1800), showing Houston village, Ravenshaugh (Ravenshaw) farm with surrounding bleachfields, and Bodrickfield farm to the left.**  
 Source: National Library of Scotland, reproduced with permission

By 1811 the population in Houston-Killallan Parish had grown to 2,044, of which 524 people lived in the town of Houston. The number of people

involved with agriculture in the parish decreased from over two-thirds in 1791 to only 20 per cent in 1831. Instead, most people were occupied in the cotton trade—commerce, manufactures or handcrafts. Prosperity would continue; by 1845 in a parish with almost 3,000 people, only 28 people were on poor relief.<sup>18</sup>

In the midst of this growth and expansion the following young people from Houston-Killallan took up David Rennie’s offer to emigrate:<sup>19</sup>

- James Arthur (30), the son of a weaver, who took up the trade himself, and his wife Mary Barr,
- John Arthur, James’ brother, single (aged 28),
- My 2x great-grandfather James Dickieson, single (22), whose family lived at Ravenshaugh Farm in the midst of the bleachfields until at least 1816,
- William Fyfe [or Fife] (26), a shoemaker, his wife Jean Arthur (23) and their three children, Robert (4), Elizabeth (2) and new baby Margaret, and
- Alexander Lang (25) from Bodrickfield Farm and his brand new bride Marion Wilson (23).

All lived, or had lived as children, in the parish; the two Arthur men were siblings; and given their similar ages it is possible they were all long-time friends. William Fyfe carried with him a note from the parish minister stating: “That the bearer William Fyfe and spouse Jean Arthur resided in this parish from their infancy free from public scandal or any ground of church censure known to our session were communicants attached at Houston,

Renfrewshire. Dated 2 April 1820. Signed by John Monteith, Minister and A. MacLean.”<sup>20</sup>

All told, these folks from Houston comprised 11 of the 85 people on-board, including my 2x great-grandfather.

In the midst of the economic boom in Houston, what was it that enticed them to leave their homes and their families for Prince Edward Island? Alexander Lang’s father had been prosperous enough to own two farm horses on Bodrickfield Farm in 1797, but by 1820 agriculture was on the wane in Houston. James Arthur, a weaver, suffered under the same conditions as James Stevenson in Paisley. My 2x great-grandfather James Dickieson, who later reported his occupation as a joiner, grew up on Ravenshaugh Farm, surrounded by bleachfields, about a mile from Houston town. Perhaps he saw little appeal in that industry.

Young, and with their lives ahead of them, it seems they took stock of their options and set off together in search of new opportunities.

### Ancestors On-Board

At least four of the people on the ship were my 3x great-grandparents: James Houston and Janet Millar, and John Stevenson and Margaret Nisbet. Their children, John Houston (aged 5) and Catherine Stevenson (aged 16) who accompanied them, would later become my 2x great-grandparents, along with James Dickieson (aged 22) who was also a passenger. Catherine and James met on the ship and they were married on-board, or shortly after arriving in P.E.I., by her father John Stevenson, who reputedly had been an elder in the Scotch Baptist Church in Paisley.<sup>21</sup>



**Figure 6: John Houston and Margaret Arthur, the author’s 2x great-grandparents, 1870s.**  
Source: Family collection

It would be several years before young John Houston married Margaret Arthur (Figure 6). She was born in Scotland in 1819, the daughter of William Arthur and Margaret Glen, my 3x great-grandparents. William was brother to John and James Arthur, who were passengers on the *Alexander*. William and Margaret had a third child in P.E.I. a few years after the *Alexander* arrived; it’s unclear if they came with the rest of the Arthur clan or followed later. The father of William, James and John Arthur—himself named William, and my 4x great-grandfather—died in P.E.I., so he might also have been among the unidentified passengers on the *Alexander*, or

perhaps he followed them sometime later.

## Two Hundred Years Later

And so it was that 200 years later I discovered that more than half of the passengers who journeyed across the Atlantic Ocean on the *Alexander* were my ancestors, several of them later intermarrying and producing new generations in my direct line. That little ship, which carried so much of my DNA, arrived in P.E.I. on 22 May 1820. Whatever their impetus for emigrating, all of the passengers came in search of “the next fertile valley, a better home, a richer life.”<sup>22</sup> And I’m proud to know now that they all achieved their aim, settling near each other, becoming prosperous farmers and pillars of their community.

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## Reference Notes for Margaret’s Letter:

- <sup>1</sup> The *Alexander* made two sailings: some people left Kilmacolm via Greenock, in 1819; Margaret’s son John Stevenson was on the second sailing, as she states correctly in the next paragraph.
- <sup>2</sup> Once again, Margaret has been confused in the intervening years. According to the Island Register, Robert Orr sailed on the *Alexander* in 1819 not 1820.

## Jamie Riley and Colin Bann: the tune

The reference in Margaret’s letter to the tune to which John Stevenson set his words made my ears twitch. I wanted to know how his song would have sounded to those who read his lines, as I am sure they would have known the tune well. I searched for the title online but came up empty. So, using the resources available to me, I contacted my friend Shelley Posen, a folklorist, to see what he could tell me. He had collected and researched a version of this song during time he spent in Chapeau, Quebec. There are many songs called or involving a “John Riley” who ran off with a woman who in some versions is called “Colleen Bawn.” Searching those two terms online produced this article, *Glimpses into the 19th Century Broadside Ballad Trade: No. 30: Willie Reilly and his Colleen Bawn* (<https://www.mus-trad.org.uk>), which describes the history of the song and its numerous versions.

Although the song likely originated in Ireland, the circumstances it describes—a supposed abduction of Colleen Bawn by John Riley, his subsequent trial and vindication by Colleen Bawn—were also known in Scotland. The change of location likely explains the name change from John to Jamie. As for the change from “Colleen Bawn” to “Colin Bann,” Shelley perhaps puts it best, “Names—of places and people—are one of the major Achilles’ heels of trad song identification and indexing. In an oral-auditory world, accents change and ears work differently; the plots stay the same, but the places’ and characters’ names vary all over the place.”

With Shelley’s help, I also found a YouTube version of “*Willie Reilly and His Colleen Bawn*” by Tom Lenihan ([https://youtu.be/Gi318\\_nAXt4](https://youtu.be/Gi318_nAXt4)), which has the same musical metre as John Stevenson’s song. And now I know how to hear his words!

Barbara Tose

See <https://www.islandregister.com/alexandr1820.html>.

- 3 There were, in fact, 85 people aboard the *Alexander*, as reported in the customs report upon arrival in Prince Edward Island. (Custom house reports are compiled from a variety of sources on the Island Register website.) [https://www.islandregister.com/ship\\_data1a.html](https://www.islandregister.com/ship_data1a.html)
- 4 Alexander Porterfield, the landowner of Duchall Estate, died childless in 1815. There being no clear heirs to the estate, it took the court a few years to determine who would succeed him.
- 5 Around 1816, the two claimants to the Duchall Estate, Sir Michael Shaw Stewart and James Corbett Porterfield, began to consolidate the farms into larger pastures for raising sheep. Letters and accounts in the Shaw Stewart Family of Ardgowan Collection (GB243/T-ARD) at the Glasgow City Archives document their efforts to evict many of their tenant farmers.

## Reference Notes for Dianne's Article

- 1 *The Edinburgh Advertiser*, "Naval Intelligence," 25 April 1820, p 5. Prince Edward Island, or P.E.I., was then a British colony.
- 2 Advertisements in *The Glasgow Herald*, 17, 24 and 31 March, p 3; the ship returned with timber—in *The Glasgow Herald*, 4 August 1820, p 4; advertisement in *The Edinburgh Advertiser*, 6 February 1819, p 107.
- 3 Information about Rennie has been compiled from a variety of sources including: Marshall, I. and Macpherson, A. G., "William Eppes Cormack (1796–1868): A Biographical Account of the Early Years," *Newfoundland and Labrador Studies*, 31(1), 2016. Retrieved from <https://journals.lib.unb.ca/index.php/NFLDS/article/view/25776>. [Cormack was David Rennie's stepson and land agent in P.E.I.]; and National Records of Scotland, 1823 Rennie, David, Wills and testaments Reference CC9/7/84 Glasgow Commissary Court, images 415, 416, 417, 476, 477 and Reference SC36/48/18, Glasgow Sheriff Court Inventories, images 89 to 93.
- 4 *Statistical Accounts of Scotland*, "Kilmacolm, County of Renfrew," Vol. IV, 1792, pp 274 to 279; James Murray, *Kilmacolm: a parish history 1100-1898* (Paisley: Alexander Gardner, 1898), pp 162 to 166.
- 5 These numbers were compiled from the farm horse tax roll for Renfrewshire, Kilmacolm parish, 1797-98, Volume 11/E326/10/11/189 on *ScotlandsPlaces* website.
- 6 Information about the negotiations over the Duchall Estate can be found in Murray, op.cit. p 254. The Shaw Stewart Family of Ardgowan Collection, GB243/T-ARD, at the Glasgow City Archives holds original documents for Duchall Estate during this period.
- 7 As an example: Account—The claimants of the estate of Duchall Debtors To William Campbell, Writer [lawyer] in Johnston, Ardgowan Collection. The account lists the costs incurred related to the actions taken in the removal of tenant John Scott, noting that he refused to go.



- 8 Rental of the Entailed Ducall Estate 1816 and 1817; A Discharge between the Claimants of the entailed estate of Ducall 1818 and Papers Concerning Settlement of Ducall Estate; all from the Ardgowan collection. Charles Stevenson's name and assignment to Wardwell Park appears on the rental rolls in 1816; William's name begins to appear in 1817, and in 1818 on a list of tenants in arrears.
- 9 The letter from Margaret (Anderson) Stevenson to Robert Stevenson, 10 May 1823 was transcribed and published in *The Charlottetown Guardian*, 27 September 1934, p 4. It has also been transcribed and published on *The Island Register* website, at <https://www.islandregister.com/letters/stevenson1.html>.
- 10 The names of the passengers on the *Alexander*, and some of their birthdates, were identified on *The Island Register* website, compiled using information from newspapers and family information at <https://www.islandregister.com/alexander1820.html>. The families' residences in Scotland were located by cross-referencing information in Margaret Anderson's letter with details in birth and marriage records at *ScotlandsPeople*, which sometimes identified farms and family connections. Alexander Laird is listed in the record of arrears mentioned in endnote 8.
- 11 National Records of Scotland ([www.nrscotland.gov.uk](http://www.nrscotland.gov.uk)): 1841 Census, entry for William Stevenson, ref. 1841/569/2/1, p 1; 1861 Census, entry for Hellen Stevenson, ref. 1861/569/4/2, p 2.
- 12 John Stevenson was married in Paisley in 1799 and his first two children were baptized in the High Church there in 1802 and 1804. Subsequent children were not recorded, probably because the family converted to the Baptist faith. Margaret's letter mentions that John Stevenson had set up his loom after his arrival in Canada, and the 1841 Census of P.E.I. reports his occupation as a weaver (PARO Collections Database, P.E.I. Provincial Archives). His granddaughter was told he exchanged weaving for flour and other essentials after he arrived in Canada (see *History of My Ancestors*, by Margaret Stevenson Gregor, written from memory at the age of 84, circa 1928, found on *The Island Register* website at <https://www.islandregister.com/newglasgowvitals.html>).
- 13 The population growth of Paisley is outlined in Andrew Eadie, "The Burgh of Paisley 1795-1855, 60 Years of Change, Improvement and Calamities," *Renfrewshire Local History Forum Journal*, Vol. 15, 2009, p 1.
- 14 National Records of Scotland, 1819: entry for Guild, Robert in Wills and testaments, ref. SC70/1/19, Edinburgh Sheriff Court Inventories.
- 15 Information about Jamestown is found in the *Scottish Journal of Topography, Antiquities, Traditions*, Edinburgh, Saturday, September 11, 1847, pp 19-20; and in George Crawford, *A General Description of the Shire of Renfrew*, published 1710 in Glasgow and updated by George Robertson in 1818, p 381.
- 16 Information about Houston and Killallan Parish and the town of Houston is taken from the *Old Statistical Accounts of Scotland*, Houston parish, 1791, pp 319-326.

- 17 The Carliles and their bleachfield are mentioned in the *Old Statistical Accounts of Scotland*, Houston and Killallan parish, 1791, p 321–322; and the *New Statistical Accounts*, Houston and Killallan Parish, 1845, p 52; Ravenshaw Bleachworks are mentioned in the Renfrewshire OS Name Books, 1856–1857 OS1/26/10/39 on the *ScotlandsPlaces* website.
- 18 The 1811 population of Houston is reported in Crawford/Robertson, op. cit. pp 381 and 432; later statistics are from the *New Statistical Account of Scotland*, Houston and Killallan parish, 1845, pp 46–56.
- 19 See endnote 10 for the process of determining Houston emigrants' information. Birth records found on *ScotlandsPeople* for James Dickieson's siblings (born while he was a child) identified their birthplace as Ravenshaugh Farm between 1794 and 1816.
- 20 The content of the document is quoted on *The Island Register* webpage, which states the original is in the possession of a descendant, Arthur Fyfe of Stanley Bridge, P.E.I. <https://www.islandregister.com/alexandr1820.html>. This practice was common; it is possible other passengers arrived with similar documents which have not survived.
- 21 There is no official record for the marriage of Catherine Stevenson and James Dickieson. Once in New Glasgow, P.E.I., Catherine's father John Stevenson preached to the community who gathered in his home, then later in a small meeting house; he eventually founded the New Glasgow Church of Christ.
- 22 Quote from the Preface to Trevor Herriot, *River in a Dry Land: A Prairie Passage*, (McClelland and Stewart, 2000), page unnumbered.

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# We Shall Remember Them

BY NIGEL LLOYD

*A BIFHSGO member for eight years, Nigel Lloyd has been writing soldier biographies for the No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station project for five years. He gave a Great Moments talk about his great-great-grandfather Edward Lloyd, for which he won the best Great Moment talk award for 2018-19. In this article, he recounts the story of an English bricklayer who emigrated and fought with the Australian Imperial Force.*

## **Private Thomas Walton ©**

**Regimental number: 4932**

**53rd Battalion, Australian Imperial Force**

**born: 1888–died: 20 July 1916**

Thomas Walton was born in the second quarter of 1888 in London, England (birth registered in Hampstead), the third of six children born to Henry Walton and his wife Mary, née Stubbs. The others were Ellen (b. 1885), William (b. 1886), Harry (b. 1890), Elizabeth (b. 1893), and Frederick (b. 1896). William was also born in London, but the four others were all born in Barnsley, Yorkshire.<sup>1</sup>

Henry Walton was a mason/stonemason in Barnsley for most of his career, as recorded in every census from 1871 to 1911.<sup>2, 3, 4, 5, 6</sup> However, in 1884 he was working as a railway employee, according to his marriage record.<sup>7</sup> He and Mary were married in St. Pancras Old Church, London, even though the census records show they were both born in Yorkshire. It would appear that the railway job took them to London for a few years.



PRIVATE THOMAS WALTON.

### **Figure 1: Lives of the First World War, Imperial War Museum**

Source: <https://livesofthefirstworldwar.iwm.org.uk/story/38092>

Thomas was still living with his parents in Barnsley in 1911, age 22, and was working as a bricklayer.<sup>8</sup> However, on 27 July 1911 he set sail

from Liverpool on SS *Persic*,<sup>9</sup> arriving in Sydney, Australia, on 8 September.<sup>10</sup> According to his entry in the database De Ruvigny's Roll of Honour on *Ancestry*, Thomas had been a bricklayer in the employ of Messrs. W. Dunk and Sons in Barnsley, and he followed his trade in Australia, working in Sydney, Yass and Goulburn.<sup>11</sup> He emigrated with two friends from Barnsley, Walter Armitage and Tom Hall, and he lived in Yass with a Mr. Methley, another Barnsley man.<sup>12</sup>

After the start of the First World War, Thomas enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force in Goulburn on 14 August 1915.<sup>13</sup> His mother is listed as next of kin, as his father had passed away on 4 January 1914.<sup>14</sup> Thomas was 5' 8" tall and weighed 155 lbs, with blue eyes and black hair. His religious denomination was Anglican.

On 20 April 1916 Private Thomas Walton was transferred from the 1st Battalion to the 53rd Battalion. On 19 June 1916 he embarked at Alexandria, Egypt, to join the British Expeditionary Force and disembarked at Marseilles, France, on 28 June. The soldiers took the train to Thions and then marched to their position in the line near Fleurbaix.<sup>15</sup>

Less than one month later, on 19 July 1916, the battalion was involved in the disastrous Battle of Fromelles.<sup>16</sup> It was designed as a

feint to draw the Germans away from the Battle of the Somme further south, but the Germans quickly realized this. A seven-hour preparatory bombardment alerted the Germans to the attack and was ineffective. The attackers suffered heavily from German machine guns. Some trenches were captured, but the Australians were forced to withdraw due to lack of support. The battalion started the action with 28 officers and 823 other ranks, but of these, 24 officers and 601 men were killed, wounded or missing.<sup>17</sup>

One of the wounded was Private Thomas Walton, who suffered gunshot wounds to the back and arms. He died of his wounds on 20 July 1916 at No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station at Bailleul<sup>18</sup> and was buried the same day in the Bailleul Communal Cemetery Extension, Nord, Reference II. F. 17.<sup>19</sup> There is no inscription on his headstone. The cemetery lies in the east end of the town of Bailleul, in the Nord department of the Hauts-de-France region; it contains the remains of 4344 soldiers from the two world wars.

No record has been found of his war medals, but he should have received the Victory Medal (for service in an operational theatre) and the British War Medal (for service overseas between 1914 and 1918) for his

service. He should also have received the 1914–15 Star, for service in any theatre of the war in 1914–15.

According to a local newspaper article on Thomas's death, all four sons of Henry and Mary joined the Army during the war.<sup>20</sup> No military record has been definitively attributed to the eldest son, William, but according to the above article, he was training in England in 1916. In 1904 at age 18 he had married Eleanor Johnson, who was 21.<sup>21</sup> At the time of the 1911 Census, they had no children and William was working as a house painter.<sup>22</sup> However, three Walton children were born in Barnsley with mother's maiden name Johnson over the next few years: Joseph William in 1912, Mary in 1916, and Kathleen Joan in 1923.<sup>23</sup> These may be their children.

Third son Harry also got married before the war, in 1913, to Eliza Crossley.<sup>24</sup> He was working as a plumber at the time. On 29 March 1915, Harry enlisted in the Field Artillery Brigade as a driver.<sup>25</sup> He served in France and was promoted several times, ending the war as a sergeant. In 1939 he was back living in Barnsley with his wife and working once again as a plumber.<sup>26</sup>

Youngest son Frederick was working as a house painter in 1911.<sup>27</sup> According to his entry in De Ruvigny's Roll of Honour, Frederick

enlisted in the 14th (Service) Battalion of the Black Watch (Royal Highlanders) on 2 July 1915.<sup>28</sup> He served with the Expeditionary Force in Egypt and subsequently in France, where he was killed in action on 2 September 1918 during an attack on the village of Moislains.<sup>29</sup> He had risen to the rank of lance sergeant.<sup>30</sup>

Frederick's mother was still alive to learn that she had lost a second son in the war, but she died soon afterwards, at age 58.<sup>31</sup>

Oldest daughter Ellen was working as a tailoress in 1901.<sup>32</sup> Five years later she married John Wesley Bingham.<sup>33</sup> They had two children: Harry, born in 1907,<sup>34</sup> and George Edward, born 13 years later, after the war.<sup>35</sup> In 1921 all four were living together in Bradford at 25 Thirkhill Street, and John Wesley was working as a coffee roaster.<sup>36</sup> Ellen was still living in the same house in 1939 with George Edward. She was now a widow, working as a shop cleaner.<sup>37</sup>

Elizabeth, the other daughter, was living with her parents and working as a tailoress in 1911.<sup>38</sup> She got married after the war, on Christmas Day 1920, to George Peaker Stanley, a blacksmith.<sup>39</sup> They were living in Worsborough, Yorkshire, in 1939, with a child, Leonard, born in 1930.<sup>40</sup>

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## Reference Notes

- <sup>1</sup> "GRO online index–birth," *General Register Office* (<https://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/>: accessed 23 March 2022), search for Walton, mother's maiden name Stubbs.
- <sup>2</sup> "1871 England Census," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 23 March 2022), entry for Henry Walton, Registration district: Barnsley, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 3, Piece: 4644, Folio: 76, Page: 52.
- <sup>3</sup> "1881 England Census," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 23 March 2022), entry for Henry Walton, Registration district: Barnsley, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 19, Piece: 4604, Folio: 11, Page: 15.
- <sup>4</sup> "1891 England Census," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 23 March 2022), entry for Henry Walton, Registration district: Barnsley, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 19, Piece: 3774, Folio: 18, Page: 29.
- <sup>5</sup> "1901 England Census," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 23 March 2022), entry for Henry Walton, Registration district: Barnsley, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 08, Piece: 4312, Folio: 209, Page: 43.
- <sup>6</sup> "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 23 March 2022), entry for Henry Walton, Registration district number: 507, Sub-registration district: Barnsley, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 17, Piece: 27576.
- <sup>7</sup> "London, England, Church of England Marriages and Banns, 1754–1936," *Ancestry* ([ancestry.ca](http://ancestry.ca): accessed 23 March 2022), entry for Henry Walton.
- <sup>8</sup> "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 23 March 2022), entry for Thomas Walton, Registration district number: 507, Sub-registration district: Barnsley, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 17, Piece: 27576.
- <sup>9</sup> "UK and Ireland, Outward Passenger Lists, 1890–1960," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 30 March, 2022), entry for Thos Walton.
- <sup>10</sup> "Victoria, Australia, Assisted and Unassisted Passenger Lists, 1839–1923," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 30 March 2022), entry for Thomas Walton.
- <sup>11</sup> "UK, De Ruvigny's Roll of Honour, 1914–1919," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 30 March 2022), entry for Thomas Walton.
- <sup>12</sup> "Report in the Barnsley Chronicle," *Lives of the First World War* (<https://livesofthefirstworldwar.iwm.org.uk/story/38092>: accessed 31 March 2022).
- <sup>13</sup> "Australia, WW1 Service Records, 1914–1920," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 26 March 2022), entry for Thomas Walton. Unless otherwise specified, all information about his military service comes from this source.
- <sup>14</sup> "England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1858–1995," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 30 March 2022), entry for Henry Walton.
- <sup>15</sup> "Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries, 1914–18 war, AWM4 Subclass 23/70/1 - 53rd Infantry Battalion," *Australian War Museum*

- ([https://www.awm.gov.au/col\\_lection/C1344872?image=4](https://www.awm.gov.au/col_lection/C1344872?image=4): accessed 31 March 2022).
- 16 "Battle of Fromelles," *Australian War Memorial* ([https://www.awm.gov.au/col\\_lection/E84321](https://www.awm.gov.au/col_lection/E84321): accessed 31 March 2022).
  - 17 "Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries, 1914–18 war, AWM4 Subclass 23/70/2 - 53rd Infantry Battalion," *Australian War Museum* ([https://www.awm.gov.au/col\\_lection/C1345443?image=7](https://www.awm.gov.au/col_lection/C1345443?image=7): accessed 31 March 2022).
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  - 19 *Commonwealth War Graves Commission* ([www.cwgc.org](http://www.cwgc.org): accessed 27 March 2022), entry for Thomas Walton, Service No: 4932.
  - 20 "Four Sons with the Colours," *Barnsley Independent*, 5 August 1916, page 8, *British Newspaper Archive* (<https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk>: accessed 27 March 2022), search for Walton.
  - 21 "West Yorkshire, England, Church of England Marriages and Banns, 1813–1935," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 27 March 2022), entry for Eleanor Johnson.
  - 22 "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 23 March 2022), entry for William Walton, Registration district number: 507, Sub-registration district: Barnsley, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 06, Piece: 27565.
  - 23 "GRO online index–birth," *General Register Office* (<https://www.gro.gov.uk/gro>: accessed 10 April 2022), search for Walton, mother's maiden name Johnson, district of birth Barnsley.
  - 24 "West Yorkshire, England, Church of England Marriages and Banns, 1813–1935," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 27 March 2022), entry for Harry Walton.
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  - 26 "1939 England and Wales Register," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca): accessed 5 April 2022), entry for Harry Walton, Schedule number: 250, Sub-schedule number: 1, Enumeration district: KABO, Registration district: 507-1.
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- 30 "UK, Army Registers of Soldiers' Effects, 1901–1929," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.ca: accessed 27 March 2022), entry for Frederick Walton.
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- 32 "1901 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.ca: accessed 29 March 2022), entry for Ellen Walton, Registration district: Barnsley, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 08, Piece: 4312, Folio: 209, Page: 43.
- 33 "England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.ca: accessed 5 April 2022), entry for Ellen Walton.
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- 38 "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.ca: accessed 23 March 2022), entry for Elizabeth Walton, Registration district number: 507, Sub-registration district: Barnsley, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 17, Piece: 27576.
- 39 "West Yorkshire, England, Church of England Marriages and Banns, 1813–1935," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.ca: accessed 27 March 2022), entry for Elizabeth Walton.
- 40 "1939 England and Wales Register," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.ca: accessed 5 April 2022), entry for Elizabeth Stanley, Schedule number: 159, Sub-schedule number: 2, Enumeration district: KPBA, Registration district: 507/A.

## **BIFHSGO NEEDS YOU**

*At our June AGM we will elect new directors to BIFHSGO's board.*

*We are seeking members to serve as:*

**Secretary**

**Program Director-in-training**

**and 3 Directors-at-Large**

*to help deliver our communication, research or outreach functions.*



# Ulster Historical Foundation: Publications 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.*

On 25 March 2023, BIFHSGO will host speakers from the Ulster Historical Foundation for the third time, following the previous popular and successful Irish research days held in 2015 and 2018. Since 1956, the Ulster Historical Foundation (UHF), originally known as the Ulster-Scot Historical Society, has supported those researching their Ulster<sup>2</sup> ancestors with education, a robust publishing program and a research service. The OBOGS Library has a great collection of the Foundation's publications, with 29 books, and volumes from three series: gravestone inscriptions (28); *Familia: Ulster Genealogical Review* (16); and five issues of the annual *Directory of Irish Family History Research*. The Library's resources cover a wide range of topics and span most of the UHF's publishing history, from the 1960s to as recently as 2021.

For those with Ulster ancestry (including all nine historic counties), there is no better way to

prepare for the upcoming Irish Research Day than to review your own research and to investigate the UHF resources that are available at the OBOGS Library. This note will introduce you to a selection of the UHF publications that are in the collection.

### Books

While the UHF's publications cover a wide range of topics and genres from research guides to histories, including books on economic and social histories, biographies and regional studies, this note will focus on three areas, namely, research guides, the Ulster Plantation, and migration studies. These were chosen since they illustrate well the range and depth of UHF publications. The Library also holds other books published by the UHF.

### Research Guides

Dr William Roulston has been the UHF's Research Director since 2006. Among the many books he has published are several excellent

guides for researchers. *Researching Scots-Irish Ancestors: The essential genealogical guide to early modern Ulster 1600-1800*, 2nd edition (2018) is recognized as an authoritative and indispensable guide for anyone researching the nine historic counties of Ulster in the 17th and 18th centuries. Its coverage was doubled in the second edition, with the identification of sources for church records, as well as sources specific to the 17th century, by period, starting prior to the Plantation era, and to the 18th century, including landed estate papers, the Registry of Deeds, wills and testaments, and many others. Detailed appendices outline the surviving records by parish as well as what is held in approximately 350 landed estate collections, and in archives and libraries. More recently, Roulston has written two shorter guides which will be of interest to many—*Researching Farming Ancestors in Ireland* (2021) and *Researching Presbyterian Ancestors in Ireland* (2020). Both provide detailed definitive guides to their topics. If you work through all of the suggestions and record sets he has described in these two volumes, you can be certain that you have “left no stone unturned” in your research.

Other UHF research guides in the Library collection include several guides by place:

- *My Roots: Tracing Your Belfast Ancestors* (2007), by William Roulston
- *Researching Down ancestors: a practical guide for the family and local historian* (2008), by Ian Maxwell
- *Researching Armagh ancestors: a practical guide for the family and local historian* (2004), by Ian Maxwell.

### **The Ulster Plantation**

The UHF has published a great deal of research on the Ulster Plantation, which was the deliberate settlement or “plantation” of settlers from Scotland and northern England in the province of Ulster from approximately 1610 to 1640.

The Library’s collection of books includes:

- *The Londonderry Plantation, 1609-1641: The City of London and the Plantation in Ulster*, by T.W. Moody (2019, a reprint from 1939)
- *The Ulster Plantation: In the Counties of Armagh and Cavan, 1608-1641*, by R. J. Hunter (2012)
- *Men and Arms: The Ulster Settlers, c.1630*, edited by R.J. Hunter (2015)
- *The Scottish Migration to Ulster in the Reign of James I*, by M. Perceval-Maxwell (1973, reprinted 1999)
- *The Plantation of Ulster: British Settlement in an Irish Landscape*,

1600-1700, by Philip Robinson (1984, reprinted 2000)

- *Plantation Acres: An Historical Study of the Irish Land Surveyor and His Maps*, by J. H. Andrews (1985). Maps and surveys from the 1500s onwards.

## Migration

The diaspora of the Ulster Scotch-Irish has been another major focus for the research and publication work of the UHF. Our collection includes studies of Scotch-Irish emigration to pre-Confederation Canada, as well as to early Colonial America. Some of these items include:

- *From Ulster to Canada: The Life and Times of Wilson Benson, 1821-1911*, Cecil J. Houston and William J. Smyth (2015). This book warrants special mention. It was inspired by the handwritten journal of Wilson Benson, first published in 1876 and rediscovered by Canadian scholars decades later. His journal has been described as an “astute and reflective chronicle” that is both consistent and accurate in relation to known events. This made it particularly useful for researchers of both pre-famine Ulster and pre- and post-Confederation Ontario. Half of the book is a reprint of the 1876 printing of Benson’s journal, while the other half has several articles which give the social, political and economic

context to the main periods of his life, with chapters on pre-famine Ireland, the transatlantic journey, the experience of settling in Canada between 1840 and 1870, and the Irish community in Artemesia Township, Grey County in the late 19th century.

- *Scotch-Irish Merchants in Colonial America: The Flaxseed Trade and Emigration from Ireland, 1718-1775*, Richard K. MacMaster (2009)
- *Ulster Emigration to Colonial America, 1718-1775*, R. J. Dickson (1966, reprinted 1988)
- *Essays in Scotch-Irish History*, edited by E. R. R. Green (1969, reprinted 1992). The five essays in this volume were presented at a conference on the Scotch-Irish held in Belfast in 1965. A new introduction reviews current research. The essays deal with the contributions of the Scotch-Irish to the American Colonies in education and cultural adaptation in the Colonies, including their role in shaping patterns of settlement and land use. Another essay looks at Ulster emigration in the “later” period, 1783-1815, while a final essay uses emigrants’ letters as source documents for the emigrant experience.

These are just a selection of the UHF books in our collection, chosen to illustrate the diversity and depth of

their resources, rather than being exhaustive. However, one other book warrants a mention because of its continued usefulness—*The Famine in Ulster: the regional impact*, edited by Christine Kinealy<sup>3</sup> and Trevor Parkhill (1997). This book is different than others I have seen on the Famine since it takes a county-by-county approach, showing that both the incidence and severity of the Famine and the measures taken (or not taken) to mitigate it varied by county. Each of the nine historic counties—Antrim, Armagh, Cavan, Donegal, Down, Fermanagh, Londonderry, Monaghan and Tyrone—are the subject of a separate chapter.

### **Gravestone Inscriptions**

The Library holds 28 volumes of gravestone inscriptions published by the UHF between the 1960s and 1990s covering the counties of Antrim and Down, as well as the city of Belfast. In each case, a brief history and context for the graveyard is provided as well as a listing of the gravestones, some of which may no longer be readable decades later. The volumes for Belfast are particularly interesting, as the stone inscriptions have been supplemented by information from wills and other biographical sources.

### ***Familia: Ulster Genealogical Review***

Since 1985, the membership arm of the Ulster Historical Foundation, the

Ulster Genealogical and Historical Guild, has published an annual review, *Familia*. Each issue includes eight to ten in-depth articles, several review articles and up to a dozen book reviews. The article topics are wide ranging, thoroughly researched and documented, and are generally a very enjoyable read. They can provide much needed context as well as new avenues for your research. The review articles of special topics, such as the 1798 Rebellion, or Ireland and The Great War, are also informative and present a good overview of the chosen topic. Finally, the book reviews provide a good way to learn about new books and research dealing with Irish history and society, and family history research sources, enabling you to find authors in areas of interest to you. The Library holds 16 annual issues of *Familia*, from 1986 to 2020. Each volume is a gem, worthy of a read. Following is a very small sample of articles, with the year of issue in brackets:

- “The poor and distressed inhabitants of Belfast: the Poor’s Money Lists of 1753” (2000)
- “Irish emigration: new sources, new approaches, new results” (2019)
- “Charles Cosslett’s Travel Diary: 1790s Ireland and Britain Observed” (2017)
- “The migratory path of eighteenth century Ulster Nonconformists: Quaker John

Starr of Antrim, Cavan and Pennsylvania” (2015)

- “First do the research, then plan the reunion: The Keyes (Co. Fermanagh) Family Reunion in 2007” (2008), by Karin Keyes Endemann (a former BIFHSGO member and Board member)
- “Archbishop Crolly and the Development of Catholicism in Ulster 1812-1849” (1993)
- “The 1844 Marriage Act: Politico-Religious Agitation and its Consequences for Ulster Genealogy” (1986).

## Directory of Irish Family History Research

While the annual UHF *Directory of Irish Family History Research* may be most known for its listing of member interests, it also includes a number of short articles and notes on topics of interest to family history researchers. We have five issues of this annual directory, and the feature articles have included:

- “Deportation of pauper orphans from Omagh Workhouse, Tyrone to Australia in 1849” (poor law, a list of those deported by name, age, residence or workhouse and religion, first hand and contemporary reports)
- “Names of those seeking compensation in counties Antrim and Down after the 1798 Rebellion” (the list includes names, occupation or status and residence)
- “Echoes of Ulster in Colonial Maryland Land Tracts” (name of

land tracts in Maryland, associated landholder and place of origin in Ireland or Scotland)

- “Petitions of insolvent debtors County Londonderry, 1832-1834,” including name, address, occupation, insolvency court and date the petition was scheduled and information and search tips for these records
- “Tenants on the estates of the Earls of Antrim in the seventeenth century”
- “Poll Book for Cavan, May 1761”
- “An Index to the Freeholders register, Donegal, 1767-1771”
- “Index containing information on the Irish in Glasgow and Lanarkshire.”

## Finding UHF and Other Ulster Resources in the OBOGS Library

The OBOGS Library catalogue is found at <https://ottawa.ogs.on.ca/researching/indexes/library-catalog/>. The search engine will search any word from the title, author’s name, publisher, donor, description or keywords. To find the books and series published by the UHF, search the catalogue using the search terms { Ulster Historical Foundation } or { UHF }. Additional words can be used to narrow your search to particular places or topics. Books on the same subject are generally classified in the same area, so once you find some entries of interest, browse the catalogue to find others in the same area, or plan to visit and browse our shelves.<sup>4</sup>

For Ulster researchers, the Library also holds several key series:

- The 40-volume set of *Ordnance Survey Memoirs of Ireland*, and the *Index to People and Places* in all 40 volumes. Published by the Institute of Irish Studies, Queen's University at Belfast and the Royal Irish Academy, Dublin
- Six (of seven) volumes of the set: *Place-Names of Northern Ireland*, published by The Institute of Irish Studies, Queen's University of Belfast
- *North Irish Roots*, the Journal of the North of Ireland Family History Society, 68 issues, 1984-2017.

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

## Reference Notes

- 1 The Ottawa Branch OGS (OBOGS) Library 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. The Archives requests that an appointment be made by

contacting them at [archives@ottawa.ca](mailto:archives@ottawa.ca) or by calling 613 580 2857.

- 2 In this context, Ulster refers to the nine historic counties of Antrim, Armagh, Cavan, Donegal, Down, Fermanagh, Londonderry, Monaghan and Tyrone, rather than the six counties of present-day Northern Ireland.
- 3 I discovered this book in our collection when the Library acquired a more recent book on the Famine, also edited by Christine Kinealy: *Irish famines before and after the Great Hunger*, edited by Christine Kinealy and Gerard Moran, Quinncipiatic University Press, Hamden CT, USA, 2020.
- 4 Browsing in combination with searching is a good idea since a search will only pick up elements in the catalogue entry including the description and keywords. If a description has not yet been done for that item, it would not be picked up if the search term used isn't in the catalogue entry. For the UHF collection, descriptions are being added where they are missing to assist those researching using these resources, e.g., the names of graveyards in each volume of inscriptions, and the titles of articles in each volume of *Familia*.

# The Cream of the Crop

Selected items from recent posts on  
*Anglo-Celtic Connections*  
blog at [www.anglocelticconnections.ca](http://www.anglocelticconnections.ca)

BY JOHN D. REID

## Ottawa Genealogists to Gather on May Day

Internationally known speaker Daniel Horowitz, and two of our leading Ottawa genealogists, Mags Gaulden and Glenn Wright, will be presenting at OPL Genealogy Day, a free event in the Chamber, Ben Franklin Place at Nepean Centre-pointe, on Monday 1 May. Daniel will highlight the *MyHeritage* Library Edition, which recently became free online to Ottawa Public Library cardholders, and give a tour of all *MyHeritage's* new photo features. In "Jumping the Pond," Mags will illustrate combining DNA and archival records, and Glenn will dig into books and newspapers online. In the lobby, Global Genealogy, Patricia McGregor Books and Kyla Ubbink Book and Paper Conservation will show us the products and services they offer. A similar event in August 2019 attracted 160 attendees. No preregistration is required, just turn up. All are welcome. The event is sponsored by the Ottawa Public Library with BIFHSGO and Ottawa Branch OGS (*Ontario Ancestors*) as supporting co-sponsors.

## Other Special Events

Elsewhere in this issue you will find information on Irish Family History Research Day, Saturday 25 March, with Fintan Mullan and Gillian Hunt from the Ulster Historical Foundation at the Chamber, Ben Franklin Place. For those lacking Irish interest, there's another option that day when the Ottawa Branch of OGS (*Ontario Ancestors*) will present an online version of their annual seminar Gene-O-Rama, with speakers Jean Wilcox Hibben, Ken McKinlay, Linda Corupe and Nancy E. Lowe (<https://geneorama.ogs.on.ca/>).

## Canada

Library and Archives Canada is currently digitizing and preparing the 1931 Census for release. They plan to have the first online access tool available for June 2023 which will allow access to digitized images by sub-district. Work to transcribe and create a nominal index will begin as soon as public access is available. This follows the same process used for releasing and indexing the 1950 US census in 2022 that enabled timely access for others to produce indexes and transcriptions. *Ancestry* will likely use the same optical character

recognition technology they used to index the 1950 US census promptly after release.

### **FamilySearch**

Ottawa Public Library (OPL) card-holders can now access a range of record images from *FamilySearch* previously found exclusively at LDS Family History Centres, through the OPL's 33 branches. A double sign-in process is required, using both an OPL card and a *FamilySearch* account. In other *FamilySearch* news, it's announced that the Family History Library in Salt Lake City and all local family history centres are being rebranded as *FamilySearch* centres, or centers!

### **Secrets of 929**

If you wander the shelves at your local library looking for genealogy books, you find them under the Dewey Decimal Classification 929. The parent, 92, represents biography, genealogy and insignia, and 9 is for history and geography. One way to find out which genealogy books are popular is to check out Library Thing at <https://www.librarything.com/mds/929>. There are lots of sub-classifications. Probe down far enough and you'll find 929.1072041, which includes these popular specialist genealogy reference books:

- *Tracing Your Irish History on the Internet* by Chris Paton
- *Researching Scots-Irish Ancestors: The Essential Genealogical Guide*

*to Early Modern Ulster, 1600-1800* by William Roulston

- *Scottish Genealogy* by Bruce Durie
- Who Do You Think You Are? Encyclopedia of Genealogy* by Nick Barratt.

### **Goldie May**

*Goldie May*—"Software power tools for genealogists" provides research power tools for genealogy. The free version includes Automatic Research Log; Screenshots; Collaboration; Collection Hints; Export to CSV; and Subway Map timeline tool (5 ancestors per month). Additional functionality is available in paid versions. *Goldie May* is accessed through a Chrome browser extension with data stored in the cloud. There's a three-minute introductory video at <https://www.goldiemay.com/#video/>.

### **Estimating Age**

Many factors confound the ability to accurately estimate age from a photograph, including familiarity with the person, the quality and lighting of the photograph, and the presence of facial features that are commonly associated with different age ranges (such as wrinkles, gray hair, etc.). In general, people are better at estimating the ages of those of the same vintage as themselves, not so with those significantly younger or older. People in old photos may look older at the same age due to the grind of physical labour and poorer nutrition.



Could artificial intelligence (AI) help remove the human factor? A recent article “Biases in human perception of facial age are present and more exaggerated in current AI technology” at <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-022-27009-w.pdf> (pdf), compared the performance of human observers and several AI programs in estimating people’s ages from photos. The results showed that present-day AI is even less accurate and more biased than human observers when judging a person’s age, even though the overall pattern of errors and biases is similar. AI tended to overestimate the age of smiling faces even more than human observers did, and showed a sharper decrease in accuracy for faces of older adults compared to those of younger age groups, for smiling compared to neutral faces, and for females compared to males. The most significant deviation between estimated and actual age is for older adults judged to be younger than their actual age. You might want to try it yourself with one or more of the websites in the table in the *Nature* article cited.

### **What are the Attributes of a Good Genealogist?**

A good genealogist is someone passionate about discovering the stories and history of their ancestors. They are curious, persistent, and dedicated to finding and verifying information about

their family tree. A good genealogist is also organized and detail-oriented, as they often have to manage a large amount of information and keep track of multiple sources.

In addition to these technical skills, a good genealogist is also empathetic and understanding. They recognize that family history is often tied to complex emotions, and they approach their research with sensitivity and respect for the experiences and feelings of their ancestors. A good genealogist is also patient, as the process of tracing family history can be slow and require a lot of research and problem-solving.

Overall, a good genealogist is a combination of a detective, historian, and storyteller, all fueled by a deep love and curiosity for their family’s past.

The above was written by the AI app *ChatGPT* in response to the prompt “What are the attributes of a good genealogist? Express emotion.” How long will it be before I can retire from writing this column?

**Cemetery and Burial Records**  
*CemSearch*, at <http://www.cemsearch.ca/>, is a compilation of 446,382 cemetery transcriptions from 931 cemeteries in a 26-county area focused on an area stretching in Ontario as far north as Halibur-

ton, east to Napanee, and west to Bowmanville. There are also outliers including Ottawa and even a few cemeteries from Connecticut. Images of the general burial registers, with 495,000+ historic records from the City of London Cemetery and Crematorium dating from 24 June 1856 to 19 October 1998, are now free to view at <https://col-burialregisters.uk/>. It's a pilot project. There is no name indexing; you need to know the approximate burial date to do a practicable search.

In January, *MyHeritage* added a collection of 274,226 burial and

cremation records from the Metropolitan Borough of Dudley from 1859 onwards. Cemeteries included are: Dudley, Stourbridge, Gornal Wood, Lye and Wollescote, Cradley, Halesowen and Brierley Hill.

### **Kensington and Chelsea Records**

For the London researcher, in early February *Ancestry* added a collection of 66,506 Poor Law Records, 1695–1921, and 50,756 Church of England Parish Chest Records, 1597–1950, both with transcriptions and corresponding images.

## **BIFHSGO News**

**Gary A. Bagley** — We regret to report that the last founding member of BIFHSGO, Gary Bagley, died at the age of 79, on 24 December 2022 in Orillia, Ontario. He served our Society as treasurer from September 1994 to December 1996 and as BIFHSGO's auditor from 2001 to 2004.

He was inducted into our Hall of Fame in 2006.

He can be heard speaking about the founding of BIFHSGO at [https://web.archive.org/web/20121004041836/http://bifhsgo.ca/upload/files/Podcasts/Founder\\_Gary%20Bagley%20May%202012.mp3](https://web.archive.org/web/20121004041836/http://bifhsgo.ca/upload/files/Podcasts/Founder_Gary%20Bagley%20May%202012.mp3).

**Betty B. Warburton** — We are also saddened by the passing of long-time BIFHSGO member Betty Warburton, who died peacefully in her sleep on 12 February 2023 in her 96th year. One of the earliest members (no. 29), Betty was everyone's dream volunteer. She handled registration for the first five conferences and, as part of the library team, helped sort and catalogue some 1,300 volumes prior to the opening of the BIFHSGO library in 2000. As librarian from 2002 to 2015, she wrote book columns for every issue of ACR and oversaw the transition to the on-line catalogue. Betty was one of five members appointed to the BIFHSGO Hall of Fame in 1999, the year of its inception.

## BIFHSGO Board of Directors 2022–2023

President	Dianne Brydon	president@bifhsgo.ca
Recording Secretary	Gillian Leitch	secretary@bifhsgo.ca
Treasurer	Jennifer Hill	treasurer@bifhsgo.ca
Program	Marianne Rasmus	programs@bifhsgo.ca
Membership	Anne Coulter	membership@bifhsgo.ca
Research & Projects	Ken McKinlay	research@bifhsgo.ca
Outreach	<b>Vacant</b>	
Communications	<b>Vacant</b>	
Education	<b>Vacant</b>	
Director-at-large	Patricia Grainger	first_directoratlargo@bifhsgo.ca
Director-at-large	Sue Dawes	second_directoratlargo@bifhsgo.ca
Past President	Duncan Monkhouse	pastpresident@bifhsgo.ca

### Communications:

<i>Anglo-Celtic Roots</i> Editor	Barbara Tose	acreditor@bifhsgo.ca
<i>Newsletter</i> Editor	Sue Dawes	See above
Web Manager	Sheila Dohoo Faure	webmanager@bifhsgo.ca
Queries	Sheila Dohoo Faure	queries@bifhsgo.ca
Volunteer Liaison	<b>Vacant</b>	
Photographer	Dena Palamedes	
<b>Conference 2023</b>	<b>Vacant</b>	
<b>Public Accountant</b>	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 2023 (individuals or institutions) are \$50 (with electronic ACR) or \$60 (with printed ACR).

# BIFHSGO Calendar of Events

## Saturday Morning Meetings

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

**Online**—on Zoom, **registration required\***

### **8 April 2023** **Canadians on Vimy Ridge, April 1917:**

**10:00 a.m.–11:30 a.m.** **Resources and Research**

The capture of Vimy Ridge by Canadians troops in April 1917 still resonates with us today. **Glenn Wright** will review the common and not-so-common resources for researching and documenting your soldier's role in this most significant battle of the First World War.

### **13 May 2023** **New Netherland Roots of Canadians**

**10:00 a.m.–11:30 a.m.**

Despite the focus on the Pilgrims, many Canadians have roots in a contemporary competitor, the Dutch colony of New Netherlands. **Brian Laurie-Beaumont** covers the history of New Netherland from the 17th century to their eventual defeat and integration while revealing the resources available for genealogical research.

### **10 June 2023** **Annual General Meeting**

**9:00 a.m.–9:45 a.m.** **Great Moments in Genealogy!**

**10:00 a.m.–11:30 a.m.**

**Introducing the Cripwells** (Paul Cripwell)

**Message from the Grave: Desperately Seeking Charity Gerow** (Jane Simpson)

**Your Great Moment** (You) Marianne is looking for a third Great Moment talk. Will it be you?

Contact Marianne at [programs@bifhsgo.ca](mailto:programs@bifhsgo.ca) if you are interested in giving a short 15 minute presentation.

\* **Check our website at [www.bifhsgo.ca](http://www.bifhsgo.ca)**

for meeting registration, up-to-date information on our monthly meetings, education talks, events 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 15 April 2023.