



EDGAR

EVENTS

Researching and sharing Edgar family history No. 1 July 2006

The idea behind this newsletter is, as the title suggests, to publish news, history, and research items to members of the Edgar family worldwide. We all have our stories and family traditions and most importantly we are all searching for our roots. By sharing our histories we hope to help each other with what we know—hopefully to introduce ourselves to each other and maybe help make connections back in time. My own personal goal is to produce an Edgar family tree that covers the whole of N. Ireland, very optimistic!

James Edgar from Melville, Saskatchewan and I will be producing this newsheet every two months to try to collate all the latest news and views. In this, the first issue, we will be relating both James' and my known histories.

Issue No. 2 will have Richard Edgar's history from Portadown in N. Ireland and hopefully another story/history will be sent in by one of the many Edgar folk I have e-mailed regarding this project. We will also have a meeting page where Edgars from all over can get together via e-mail. To initially avoid spammers and unsolicited junk mail I will be e-mailing directly to you all using a group e-mail. Then after a while I will publish this on the Internet. If you have friends and family you want to include let me have their e-address and I will include them. We will be setting up a small forum for individuals to ask for research help you need, send your details/requirements and I will enter a contact line for example: "James Edgar, Canada researching Edgars from Kilkeel Co Down pre 1800" if this matches your research contact me and I will put you in direct contact with James.

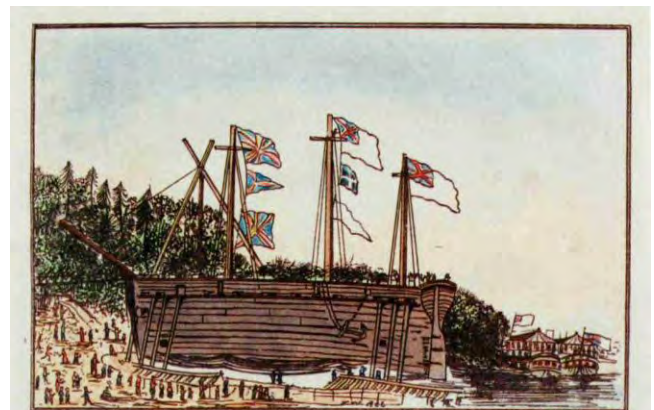
DNA research. Last year we started a DNA research project, the results of which are getting very interesting (go to the Relative Genetics website to find the details.) There are many myths and stories regarding the Edgar line, one of which is that ALL Edgars share a common ancestor, Edgar son of Cospatrick descendent of Crinan the Thane of Dunkeld in about 1250 A.D. This seems to have been dismissed by the DNA results. We are lucky in that we do have Steve Edgar in Toronto who can prove his lineage back to Crinan. His DNA has provided an excellent base for the research. James Edgar's DNA is a close match to his and with a root source going back to Norway fits in well with the history. Ellen (using DNA from a male member of her family) and Robert in the USA are from a different line. Their origins are N. Germany, Saxony. This fits in with the rumoured Edgars that came from Hanover in Germany and settled in Scotland/Ireland. It might even prove a connection to King Edgar, was he of Saxon origin? My own DNA proved to have a source from, wait for it, Macedonia, N. Greece. Nothing like an Edgar root source! Was it the milkman? Was an ancestor adopted? Was it a Macedonian soldier in the Roman army on Hadrian's Wall?..... Where do you fit in with the above ?

We need more DNA samples to verify and research the above. The DNA test is a simple cheek swab, sent to Relative Genetics in Salt Lake City. It costs \$195 US and is paid directly to them. I am the project coordinator and will make the arrangements for the kit to be sent to you.

Family Stories

Story No 1. Charles Edgar of Benagh, Kilkeel Co. Down

Our Edgar family history tells of my great-great-grandfather, Charles Edgar, arriving in Canada from Kilkeel in Co. Down N. Ireland around 1820 with his two sons, James (my great-grandfather) and Robert, who then cut down trees producing logs in the forest north of Quebec. Using the lumber they built a ship, and sailed it back to Ireland. Upon arrival they dismantled the ship and sold the lumber and the ship as building materials for new homes. With the proceeds from the sale, Charles financed the migration of the rest of his family to settle on a plot of land in Lancaster, Ontario -- the very same farm where my father was born in 1906. This story (actually a very similar story) was



VIEW of the large Ship COLUMBUS on the day of her launch at the Island of Orleans 8 miles from Québec being Wednesday the 28th of July 1824. The length of this Vessel which is the largest on record is 308 feet in the keel. 52 feet wide and 30 feet high. She measures 3700 tons register and carries 7500 loads of Timber. -

The ship *Columbus* is launched at Île d'Orléans, Que. (ABOVE), in an 1824 lithograph by an unknown artist. Rafts of squared lumber arriving at Québec were dismantled, then cobbled together into large, clumsy "timber ships" for the transatlantic crossing. On arrival in British ports, the vessels would be broken up and the timber milled into planks. No other such detailed image of this key process in the British timber trade exists in the National Archives of Canada holdings.

verified by the March/April 2003 issue of Canadian Geographic, a story of the ship Columbus on launch day in 1824.

When I saw the Columbus picture, I was astounded, riveted, and thrilled! This was about our family -- it confirms what sounded like a far-fetched story from the past and made it come alive. So there really were such ships built and sailed to Britain, just like

our family story said. Wow! What an adventure that would have been.

I have a family ledger which details the marriage of Charles Edgar to Susan Cummings in 1799 in Newry, Co. Down. The ledger also hints at the location of their farm in Benagh, near Kilkeel and after a visit to the area I was pleased to find Edgars still around! Jacky and his wife Delma live just off the seafront in a bungalow. We are in the process of trying to persuade them to provide a DNA sample to verify our possible connection. They have an Aunt who has had the family research done and can trace back to Arthur in the 1780s, he could well be the brother of my Charles. After extensive research over the years I have managed to find a lot of my family history with connections to the Somerville family. In St. Patrick's cemetery in Newry I came across some Cummings, possible relations to Charles' wife. In a village called Annalong in Co. Down we were searching another graveyard and I came across a Somerville adjacent to an Edgar, a coincidence or a relation? Prior to my known ancestor Charles, I have nothing; the records in N

Ireland are sparse to say the least. Further research is planned and I remain hopeful that a lucky break will happen in the future and reveal some history for me.

There was a possible significant breakthrough, during some research, the last will of Thomas Edgar of Derryleckagh turned up. He was a bachelor and left all his land to his nieces. Further research revealed that Thomas's grandfather, also Thomas, married Anne Bruce. This land at Derryleckagh was part of her dowry, which she inherited from the Bruce family. It turns out that she was a descendent of Edward Bruce, brother of Robert the Bruce. Edward conquered most of Ireland in the 1300s. There is a story that an Edgar was with him during the conquest. Until this was known it was supposed that all Edgars settled in Ireland during the Plantations of the 1630s. This takes Edgars back to 1350 or so, three hundred years earlier. This is possibly a hint that two Edgar families exist in Ireland. It is possible that Thomas and my Charles are related. -- James Edgar, Melville Saskatchewan (and siblings Robert, Steve, & Marylen)

Story No 2, Joseph Edgar, Newry Co. Down b. abt.1785

My family history research started from two or three pages of text written in a family bible dating back to 1815. By piecing the data together I managed to create a crude family tree from my ancestor in Ireland who married Jane Burns in 1805. After a lot of internet searching and a couple of trips to Ireland I was able to fill in details and answer a lot of questions. One major source of information was Jodie Edgar (wife of James in Melville) who has my eternal gratitude for some of the items she revealed.

Joseph was a rope-maker in Newry, Co. Down in the early 1800s; he married Jane and had eleven children, eight died in infancy and Robert died in his twenties. This left two remaining sons, Joseph Jr. and Hugh, to work with him in the rope business. Newry at this time was a thriving town, being a major port in N. Ireland. I have evidence that Joseph Sr also grew his own flax in Keggall near Camlough in Co. Armagh, maybe feeding his rope-making business. His home and business were at 47 Water Street and his sons lived up on High Street just below St.

Patrick's Church, where the family are buried. Their religion was Church of Ireland and they contributed to the rebuilding of St Patrick's Church. This is unusual in that most other Edgars ten miles away in Kilkeel are Presbyterian. He was a District Master in the Provincial Orange Lodge and signed a declaration of loyalty to Queen Victoria. When he died he left a will which was lost in the 1923 fire at the records office in Dublin. Then, from the mid 1850s onwards, times got hard in Newry, the canal was too small for the new larger steel boats that were being built, when they did get through they also required fewer ropes. Business must have dropped off steadily and the family decided to migrate. Salford, near Manchester, in the 1870/80s was their choice. The census records show grandson Joseph III with sister Sarah, brother Robert and his mother Elizabeth (nee James) living in adjacent houses. Joseph III, a railway lorry man had married Elizabeth Phillips from Ireland in Salford, they had six children, one of whom was my Grandfather Benjamin William Edgar. His siblings were Martha, a spinster who lived in Lincolnshire.

Edna who married 'Reg', and then went to London. John, who supposedly went back to Ireland to be a farmer, Joseph IV (Fox) Edgar, the 'black sheep', (I don't know why), I have no details other than his photograph, and William Blackburn Edgar who, with his wife and children Barbara and Graham emigrated to Australia in the 1950/60s. Where are all these people now, where are their descendants? My grandfather had one son Benjamin William Edgar II, Benjamin had me, Steven John and my sister Janis Lynne. Janis and I both have one child.

Hugh and Robert back in Newry must also have had children and they may also have migrated to the UK, I think to Liverpool, Manchester, and Durham, the names Joseph and John from Newry crop up in the 1901 census.

My only known relations are my mother, sister, wife, niece, son, and great niece. Where are all the rest?

Steve Edgar, Crewe. England

So, there we have the first two family stories, both connected in Newry in Co. Down. James and I 'met' on the internet about 3 years ago. His Charles and my Joseph were both in the Newry area in 1800-10ish—were they cousins? Were they brothers? After three years of research and two trips to Ireland we can now say, after the DNA results, NO!! We are not even distant relations, in fact we may even be different races the gap is that wide! The DNA so far points to three sources; will more research reveal more or confirm the three?

We're hoping the above may stimulate the memories of other Edgars who might share part of the same history. If you send your history I will publish it and send it worldwide. If you know of other Edgars who you would like to copy, please do so. Better still, send me their address and I will e-mail the next copy directly.

Your feedback and reaction will be invaluable for future newsletters, please e-mail your comments and, most importantly, your family stories.

Web sites of interest

<http://www.geocities.com/edgarwebsites/> Richard Edgar's Irish Web site

<http://jameswd.sasktelwebsite.net/> James Edgar's family history Web site

<http://www.clanedgar.com/> Clan Edgar homepage, based in Toronto.

<http://www.relativegenetics.com/relativegenetics> Homepage of our DNA Lab. in Salt Lake City

Forum

James Somerville Edgar, Canada. Researching Edgars in Benagh and Kilkeel Co. Down pre 1800.

Richard Edgar. N Ireland. Researching Edgars in Portadown. Co Armagh pre 1900

Steve Edgar, Crewe England. Researching Edgars in Newry and Co Armagh pre 1800