



EDGAR EVENTS

**Researching and sharing Edgar family
history No. 16, May 2008**



DNA Update

by James Edgar (Editor) (jamesedgar@sasktel.net)



Interest in our DNA project continues to grow, with prodding and suggestions from people like you and me. **Joyce Phipps** of Texas encouraged her cousin, **Jim Edgar** of Pine Mountain, Georgia, to submit his DNA for analysis. I have word the swabs have been received at DNA.Ancestry.com, so we should see the results soon. **SteveUK** is fond of making wagers on the outcome – contact him at banjos@edgarhome.fsnet.co.uk if you'd care to follow up. Will Jim be E3b, I1a, I1b, or R1b? Who knows?? I'm willing to make a small wager that he's related to **Frankie Sawyer's** family, some of whom went to Alabama, but one or two stragglers may have stayed behind in Georgia. Her cousin **Charles Edgar** tested as R1b.

On another front, in my role as National Secretary of The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada, I regularly receive a membership list. I had long noticed on the list another **Jim Edgar** in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador. I telephoned him last week to describe our genealogical interest, and to see if he'd like to join our project. Jim is an enthusiastic historian and, yes, he wants to get his DNA analyzed! He tells me his family came to Newfoundland from Oxford, England, in 1810. Could this be a new line? Perhaps we have a connection to King Edgar I the Peaceful of England — wouldn't that be interesting??

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edgar_of_England

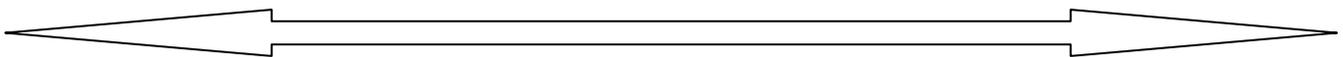


It turns out this second Jim has more in common with us than name only; he shares a passion for WWI history with **Richard Edgar** of Tandragee, Northern Ireland, who also has an abiding interest in the happenings during the Battle of the Somme. Jim has researched the three Edgars who died in Belgium on 1916 July 1. That date is carved in stone for Newfoundlanders, as it marks the day that the 1st Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment was almost completely annihilated in the fighting at Beaumont-Hamel — of the 780 present on July 1, only 68 were able to answer roll call the following day.

Richard recently wrote to us: “this year I will not be the only Edgar on the western front; I will be visiting Verdun, Ypres and Somme this June and July. I have a picture somewhere which I took of the memorial stone underneath the Caribou in Newfoundland Park; in the picture you can read the name **Edwin Edgar**, one of the Newfoundlanders lost on the 1st July 1916, Edwin has no known grave. Newfoundland Park is a lunar landscape, over the years the rain and grass have rounded off the craters and trenches, but you still get a good impression of the battlefield. The Caribou calling for her lost young is a very moving monument.”

More information is available here from Veterans Affairs Canada

www.vac-acc.gc.ca/remembers/sub.cfm?source=memorials/ww1mem/beaumontamel#3



Edgars and Pewter

by Steve Edgar of Weston, Crewe (*banjos at edgarhome.fsnet.co.uk*)



I regularly trawl the Internet searching for “Edgar,” just to see what turns up, I have even tried it on eBay with some good results (try it, but don’t bid against me!!). I recently bought a small glass bottle made for a pharmacist in Kent in the 1800s with the name “James Edgar” on it. I posted this to his namesake, James, our Editor in Canada. (This Edgar in Kent must be worth some research, I think they would likely have belonged to the Edgars from Ipswich.) There are some other various Edgar-related items that that can be bought from sites like eBay.



Another item I bought was a one-pint pewter measuring jug, made by the company of Edgar & Son in Bristol. I did a bit of an Internet search on “pewter + Edgar + Bristol” to find that they were trading at the end of the 1700s and early 1800s. They had no prior history, they just appeared in the city.

Pewter is an alloy of lead and tin, and was extensively used as tableware in times past. It is soft, easily worked, and is less brittle than clay pottery. (Broken pottery is so common that archaeological digs are dated by the pottery found in them). Pewter was an answer



to this durability problem. Another material used was silver, but obviously at an higher price. (Silver also has the advantage of having an antiseptic quality.) Pewter utensils could stand being used and abused—they lasted longer and were easier to clean than

clayware. Silver was expensive, but pewter was relatively cheaper; it had the ability to be folded up, when damaged, sent to the manufacturer and recycled back into new tableware. Their very recyclability makes damaged pewter items uncommon; some are rare and fetch a high price.

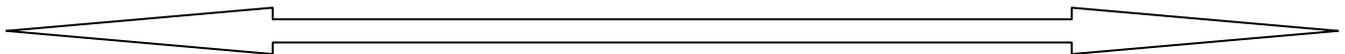
In the book "An account of the Surname (sic) Edgar," (see the Web site <http://tiny.cc/sNb8L>) there is a mention of a John Edgar in Edinburgh as a pewterer. After doing some research, I find he disappeared from this locality. His pewterwork is rare, turns up in various parts of the world, and can be quite valuable. I made contact with John Swindell of the Pewter Society and he gave me the following – *"Our information has been gleaned from Bristol trade directories, which indicate that Edgar & Son and Edgar & Co were active in pewtering between 1802 and 1844 with these businesses succeeding the original company of Preston Edgar (son of John Edgar), who is first recorded in 1776. In 1781 he was in St. Michaels, in 1792 in 'Park' and in 1812 in Temple St. Bristol The last entry is for a successor company P. Edgar and son, which operated from 1845 to 1860.*

Incidentally, there are three Edgars recorded as Pewterers in Edinburgh in the late 17th/early 18th centuries but there is no recorded link between these and Bristol."

So, in the late 1700s or early 1800s pewterers named Edgar turn up in Bristol and disappear from Edinburgh. It seems pretty obvious that it could be the same family.

They traded as "Edgar, Curtis and Co.," "Preston Edgar" and "Edgar and sons." Bristol would be an excellent location to make and sell pewter. The raw materials, tin and lead, come from Cornwall, and the sea trade was a good outlet for the finished items. It was exported and also used on board ship. No doubt the Edgars here are related somehow, but are they the same as the Edgars who disappeared from Edinburgh? It may well be that the Edgars in the Bristol area are all descended from this line.

Are there any Edgars out there with connections to Pewter or Bristol?



LATE BREAKING NEWS!!

Jim Edgar of Pine Mountain, Georgia, is in Haplogroup I1b! He's closely related to John Edgar of B.C. and Alfred Edgar of Argentina, plus related less directly to the other "I" Haplogroup Edgars on our project. Watch this space for more news as it arrives.

James Edgar, Editor

Connections to Yorkshire

by Steve Edgar of Weston, Crewe (banjos at edgarhome.fsnet.co.uk)



Over the years my family research has moved in fits and starts. There are periods of nothingness, and then all of a sudden a massive input which provides more, plus confirms data I already have.

The first if these involves James and me. For two years we tried to connect our families to no avail. We even paid for a genealogist to research the “connection,” still with no luck. It was only when we did a DNA test that we finally confirmed what we’re not related! This then opened up to new research for us both and, lo and behold, the connections started to flow. James and Steve (Kamloops) have found Mel, Jackie, Bill, and Steve (Toronto) - all *bona fide* relations. I found (not so much found — more like given, by Sharon Whitney and Jack Ruffer) a whole lot of potential relations in the U.S. of A. Jack had supplied the connection years earlier but my doggedness to prove a connection to James blinkered me. Finally DNA from Donald proved the link, and, as luck would have it, Norman came in with a match, too.

My ancestors Joseph (b. abt 1785) and Jane had 11 children. He was a ropemaker in Newry. The headstone in Newry says that Jane is buried there with nine of their children, which obviously meant that only two survived – my own ancestor Joseph Jr. (b. 1814), and his younger brother, Hugh. There are marriage records for them both. Hugh married Martha McCaul, daughter of a butcher, and Joseph Jr. married Elizabeth James, daughter of Benjamin William James, a furniture maker. (My grandfather, father, and my son all carry the name Benjamin.)



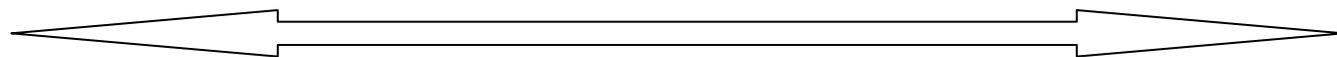
But there was a problem, a Robert Edgar (b. 1818) son of Joseph Edgar Sr., married Maria Livingstone in 1836 and had two children John and Jane. I first looked for more children to Joseph Sr., but this could not be. The headstone states 9 of 11 children. The answer was that Robert died 6 months before the birth of his son John and was then buried with his mother. No doubt Maria and the babies were brought up by Joseph Jr., or by Hugh. But the records dry up. I had no trace of the children or of their uncle Hugh. We can only guess how a family can survive these sorts of calamities, to lose 9 of 11 children?

Some of the frustrating things I do find are loose ends. I really hate them. When I use a search engine and I find an Edgar born in Newry, it really excites me to find a connection, and then frustrates me when I can't prove a link. The ones I really hate are

Edgars born in “Ireland.” It’s so ambiguous! I searched for John Edgar b 1840 and came up with a likely candidate, but he was born in just “Ireland.” I decided to search all the census records from 1901 backwards for this John. Magically one of them showed that he was from Newrey (sic) and he was a rope twister! That explains why the search on “Newry” never found him — spelt wrong! The rope twister bit clinched it. John married Elizabeth Keenan, had about 11 children, and adopted Arthur Keenan, Elizabeth’s nephew. He may well have changed his name to Edgar. John’s son, Joseph, married Jane Crowther (another Joseph and Jane!), and they had Lily Edgar in 1899. This is where all the records stop. They are all in the 1901 census. So my search for Edgars in Cleckheaton and Liversedge, W. Yorkshire in the 1900s is on the go.

Joseph (b. 1814) and Elizabeth also had a son Benjamin William Edgar; he married Margaret and moved to Selby and then Bradford, West Yorkshire. They had two children, Benjamin and Mary Anne. No other records exist.

There are quite a few Edgars living in West Yorkshire and all have been written to, but to date I have had only one reply, from **Bill Edgar**. He is not related to me but has an excellent history that takes him back to 1768 in Roughfirth, Galloway. His family over the years have lived in various locations in the UK; and some of his children live in Vancouver. Bill has volunteered for a DNA test and will be tested later this year. The results should be interesting.



Calling all Edgars!

If you are in the Kilkeel, Northern Ireland, area on this coming Friday, May 16, this is the place to be – the Edgars are gathering at the Kilmorey Arms for a night of getting to know each other, fun, and frolic! Don’t be bashful; come out and join us as we strengthen our family ties; locate yourself on the family tree!



Steve Edgar (Crewe) and I (**James Edgar**) will be there from about 8 p.m. onwards, so come along and meet us. If you live in the area, or even if you don’t live in the area, remember May 16. Be There!

PHOTO GALLERY

From my 2005 visit to Chester with Steve Edgar of Weston, England, this prominent sign struck us forcefully as we walked from where we parked the car to the city centre – Edgar's Field!! It marks the spot where various lesser kings of England pledged alliance to Edgar the Peaceful following his coronation at Bath in AD 973. See www.chestertourist.com/minerva.htm



The barred enclosure below is called Edgar's Cave; my hand rests on an ancient shrine to the Roman goddess, Minerva. The outcrop of sandstone was used as a quarry by the Romans, probably as a source of materials for the Amphitheatre in Chester city.

