



EDGAR EVENTS

**Researching and sharing Edgar family
history No. 27, April 2009**



DNA Update

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



There's little to report in this edition of our newsletter – no new tests waiting in the wings.

About two weeks ago, I did contact a new cousin of mine in Canada, Susan Tulusso. She's descended from my great-grandaunt, Eliza Ann (Elizabeth) Edgar, sister of my great-grandfather, James Edgar. We found her tree on Ancestry.com, proving that the system works as intended!

Corey David Edgar of Toronto has placed some photos of his family, plus his tree is now on our Edgar Family Group site at DNA.Ancestry.com. If you aren't already a member of our site, join up now – it's easy, painless, and costs nothing but your time.

As an aside, while Corey was trying to put his files on our site, we discovered what it means to be a "member" as opposed to "guest" status – guests can't upload anything! SteveUK and I were keeping as "members" those people who had contributed DNA test results, and everyone else was a "guest." So, change all that – I promptly changed everyone's status last weekend. There should be no reason why people are restricted from full access to all the files and features — everyone is a Member!

Thanks to all who sent files for the Edgar library. SteveUK will be placing them on the Web as he gets them indexed and sorted. Thanks too, to those people who continue to send me articles for the newsletter – all contributions are welcome!

Photo time...



Figure 1 Slane Castle, on the banks of the Boyne River

Edgar Surname Variations



by Steve Edgar of Weston, Crewe (steven-edgar@sky.com)

In our quest to find the origins of our Edgar family, our surname is obviously our major source of research. We do know that originally the Edgar and Edzer variations existed. The Scottish “g” and “z” were interchangeable, much like the “g” and “z” in Menzies/Mengies. There are also possible sources outside of Scotland. A couple more probable name sources have turned up, this time from Germanic ancestors — Oertger and Heidgers. These names and others may well have been Anglicised to Edgar either as a gradual evolutionary process, a mistake, or as a deliberate attempt to become un-German for whatever reason. For example, the British Royal Family were the House of Hanover or Saxe-Coburg Gotha until the middle of WWI in 1917, when they adopted the name “Windsor.” There were certainly many anti-German feelings in the UK at that time.

No doubt, someone out there is going to come across some of these unusual names in their research, I hope this is of some help.

Names so far

- Eggers – possibly Scandinavian
- De Guerre – French Huguenot
- Eggor (as from McGreggor) Scots/Irish
- Oetger- Germanic
- Heidgers- Germanic

There are of course the corruptions of Edgar (not yet DNA proven)

- Adair
- Agar
- Odger
- Eggar
- Eagar

It is even possible that the original foreign name may have been corrupted into a variation as well.

If anyone does find an odd origin for Edgar, please let us know.

More importantly, we need a DNA sample from one of these variants; it may well tie up some of the loose DNA origins we are still finding. With luck, one of you out there will actually find a family with a record to show the name change.

As an aside, the Haplogroup E3b has had some further research done by Ancestry.com. Three of us have now been changed from E3b to H. H group has its origins in the Indian subcontinent and may well have come into Europe via Romany Gypsies or by Indian traders. This blows the Kebab house on Hadrian’s Wall theory for Norman, Donald, and myself. It was a Curry House or even a Fortune Teller’s tent on Hadrian’s Wall! This is still a Roman “import” obviously.

It does answer the question as to the 2000-year-old match with Peter in Australia. It was always a point of confusion as to why we were related by name, 800 years before the name was invented? It would have been a huge coincidence for both our lines to adopt the same name after 800 years? Now that we are different origins, the adoption of the name by both parties does seem more plausible.



Arthur Edgar, Drummanmore, Co. Down, N.I.

by Bill Edgar, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia (edgaraust@hotmail.com)

Arthur Edgar born 1797 died 7 Oct 1880 in Drummanmore, Down, N.I.
NOTE – Arthur is Anglicised of Irish “Aughtry” with various spellings.

Will of Arthur Edgar written 3 July 1879

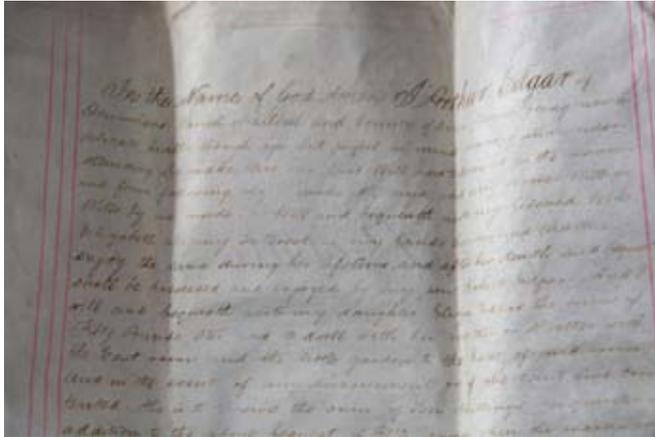


Figure 2 Your editor photographed the Will of Arthur Edgar in 2007, at the home of Nellie Edgar – Drummanmore!

In the Name of God Amen. I Arthur Edgar of Drummond Parish of Killeel and County of Down farmer being now in delicate health through age but perfect in mind memory and understanding Do make this my last Will and testament in the manner and form following viz I make Nil and void any former Will or Wills by me made: I Will and bequeath unto my beloved Wife Elizabeth all my Interest in my lands houses and chattels to enjoy the same during her lifetime and after her death said bequest shall be possessed and enjoyed by my son Robert Edgar.

And I will and bequeath unto my daughter Eliza Edgar the sum of Fifty Pounds ster and to dwell with her Mother or Brother with the East room and the little garden to the East of said room, and in the event of any disagreement or if she can't live contented she is to receive the sum of Ten Shillings per quarter in addition to the above bequest of Fifty Pounds, when she marries or removes also bed & bedding. I Will and bequeath unto my grand Daughter Eliza Sloane the sum of Twenty Five Pounds to be lodged in the Bank in her name 12 months after my decease. I also further allow that my Daughter Eliza in case she lives separate two hundred of meal and forty hundred of potatoes yearly to be received by her at the proper times of the year this last bequest is providing she can't live as before mentioned with her Mother or Brother agreeably. I bequeath unto my son James Edgar the sum of Ten Pounds all the above bequests to be paid by my wife or son Robert who may be liable. I nominate and appoint Thomas Girvan, Drummond and Robert Thompson, Corcreaghan to be the executors of this my last will and testament. Signed, Sealed and delivered by the testator in the presence of Witnesses selected by the testator who with the testator witness for each other this third day of July One Thousand Eight hundred and Seventy Nine. “his mark”

Arthur X Edgar

James Graham Thomas Girvan

NOTES ON WILL:

Wife Elizabeth Edgar nee Thompson, her relative an executor.

Eliza was his eldest daughter who remained unmarried and died 1916.

James was the eldest son but was to receive only Ten Pounds, almost an afterthought.

Robert was the youngest son born 23/4/1842 died 1912 aged 70 and never married.

William, the son who went to Australia, was not mentioned; neither were daughters Mary and Ann. Mary's daughter Eliza Sloane did receive a bequest.

Thomas, son of James, lived in and ran the farm, married Ellen Boyd 1906.

PROBATE ISSUED 30 Oct 1900

In the High Court of Justice in Ireland
Queen's Bench Division (Probate)

Be it Known that on the 30th October 1900
the last Will, a copy of which is hereunto
annexed, of Arthur Edgar, late of
Drummanmore, in the County of Down,
Farmer, deceased, who died on or about
the 7th day of October 1880 was proved
and registered in the Principal Registry of
the said Division, and that the

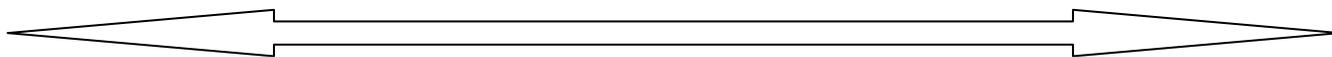


administration of the personal estate of the said deceased was granted by the aforesaid
Court to Thomas Gervin of Drummanmore aforesaid and Robert Thompson of
Corcreaghan both in said County of Down, Farmers, the executors named in the said
Will they having first sworn faithfully to administer the same.

And it is hereby certified that the Affidavit for the Commissioners of Inland Revenue has
been delivered, duly stamped and the amount of the gross value of the Estate as shewn
by the Account is Pounds 460 and Sixteen Shillings.

Henry Warren, Registrar
Stamped Nine Pounds.

R. B. Wray, Solicitor



The Black Sheep



by Richard Edgar, Tandragee (edgar888@yahoo.com)

I have heard many people say, "family history research is a dangerous
thing, you never know what dark secrets you might uncover." The Edgar
family in County Armagh, Northern Ireland is no different and this is the
story of the black sheep of the family.

The last woman to be hanged in Ireland was executed on Wednesday, 19th July 1815,
at Armagh jail. She was Mrs Jane Mulholland and she was hanged in front of the jail
alongside Robert Edgar. Both had been convicted of murdering Mrs. Mulholland's
husband after the two of them began a clandestine love affair. Mr. Reid Mulholland was
beaten to death with a hatchet as he lay sleeping in his bed at his home, near the
village of Hamiltonsbawn, Co. Armagh, Northern Ireland.



The map above shows the small country area in County Armagh stretching from Hamiltonsbawn via Aghory to Tandragee. I was born and raised in the village of Laurelvale in the top right of the map; I now live just in off the Portadown Road on the edge of Tandragee. My family originally come from Aghory where we still attend the Presbyterian Church situated half way between Milltown and Teemore. The village of Hamiltonsbawn is just over two miles from Aghory. I have not been able yet to prove a direct link between Robert Edgar and my own family, but the fact is he lived too close for comfort, so I cannot rule out a link.

As anyone researching Irish ancestors will know official records are not easy to find; a lot of the census records and other official documents were lost in the fire at The Customs House in Dublin in 1921. Sadly, if your ancestor was a good, honest, law-abiding citizen, it is very difficult to find information on them, but if they were a bad apple like Robert Edgar, the sands of time have not forgotten them. I have been able to find newspaper reports and official court records that detail the crime of murder committed by Robert Edgar.

This is the story of those terrible events of 200 years ago. Mr. Reid Mulholland lived with his wife Jane in the village of Hamiltonsbawn, Co. Armagh; his bedridden father lived in the house next door.



Armagh Jail (no longer in use)

On the night of the 13th February 1815, Mr Mulholland had returned home from business in Belfast; feeling weary after a long day, he went off to bed. His wife Jane did not join him; she waited up, and later, Robert Edgar, who lived close by, joined her in the house — Robert and Jane had been having a secret love affair. Robert and Jane then went to the bedroom where Mr. Mulholland was asleep in bed. Robert began to beat Mr. Mulholland with a hatchet, knocking him out of bed. Robert Edgar then took out a knife and cut Reid Mulholland's throat. He proceeded to pick Mr. Mulholland's body up and drag it to the bed, leaving him lying dead on top of the bed. Robert then proceeded to calmly collect his weapons, some money, and clean himself before making his escape. Jane Mulholland waited until she was sure that Robert Edgar had made good his escape, then she then ran screaming into the street crying out that two robbers had attacked her husband.

Some people in the small community of Hamiltonsbawn knew of Jane Mulholland's affair with Robert Edgar; it did not take long for suspicion to fall on the two lovers. A neighbour, a Mrs. Ann Cully, reported to the police that Robert Edgar had borrowed a hatchet from her not long before the killing, which led the police to conduct a search of Robert Edgar's home, and it was here that they found the murder weapon as well as a gun that had been stolen from Mr. Mulholland.

At first, despite the evidence they already had against Robert Edgar, the police attempted to get Jane Mulholland to testify against him. She refused, even turning down an offer of immunity from prosecution if she did so. Robert and Jane had been advised by their lawyer that, if they held strongly to their "not guilty" plea and said nothing else, they would not be convicted. Eventually Jane Mulholland cracked under the mounting police pressure and confessed that both she and Robert Edgar had, after a long period of planning, committed this crime, pointing out that she had not taken part in the actual killing herself, and described in detail how it was Robert Edgar who had carried out the murder.

In the end, Jane Mulholland's testimony was in vain, as both she and Robert Edgar were charged with the murder of Reid Mulholland. The total brutality and callous nature of this murder only came into the public domain when evidence was being given against the two accused at their court trial. The jury was told how the two accused had planned this murder down to the smallest detail; they were also told that Robert Edgar had visited Reid Mulholland's father in the days before the murder. During these visits, Robert would sit at the old man's bedside and read the bible to him. The police investigation also uncovered the fact that Jane Mulholland had asked Robert Edgar to shave her dead husband's head before his burial. The judge, Hon. Baron McClelland chastised Mulholland not just for the murder but also on her infidelity.

After seven hours of deliberation, the jury returned a guilty verdict for both of the defendants. The judge in his closing comments stated, "It is not the purpose of distressing or afflicting your minds that I have thus addressed you both. To me it has proved a painful task, but it is for the purpose of impressing you with the enormity of your guilt, in the sight of God to lead you to seek that mercy in another world, which the injured laws of your country deny you in this. Your time in life is now very short, for the law of this land, holding such a crime as yours in the utmost abhorrence, appoints the sentence of death to be carried into execution with the space of 48 hours after the prisoner has been found guilty. You therefore, the day after tomorrow, shall be lopped off from society as a withered injurious branch. Go prostrate yourself before the throne

of God's grace and ask forgiveness through the merits and death of our Lord Jesus Christ, the only redeemer."



On Wednesday, 19th July 1815, Jane Mulholland and Robert Edgar were executed in front of Armagh jail. In the moments before their execution, they both made full confessions admitting their guilt in the murder of Reid Mulholland. After the execution, their bodies were given to local doctors to be used for dissection and medical experiments.

The story of Robert Edgar illustrates that you never know what skeletons you may uncover, and how many black sheep there might be lurking in all of our pasts.

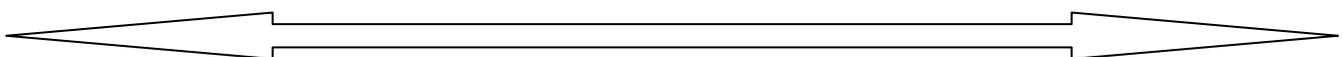
Now that I have scared everyone off with my horror story on the Edgar family in County Armagh, I must reassure you that we are not all evil. Here is a more positive piece for all of you who are looking for ancestors from County Armagh.

One of the most famous men to come from the town of Portadown in County Armagh was Sir Robert Hart. This man played a major role in helping expand the British Empire in the 1800s; he also helped set up the Chinese postal service and stock exchange. If any of you ever visit Portadown you will find in the Edgarstown area of Portadown the "Sir Robert Hart Memorial School," this is my mother's old school. But it is not Robert Hart we are interested in — it is his mother, the piece below is taken from the Web site "The Harts of Lisburn."

"Henry Hart (1806-1875) the father of Sir Robert Hart married Ann Edgar in 1834 who was the daughter of a farmer, John Edgar in Ballybreagh in County Armagh. She became the Proprietor of the Mandeville Arms, the main hotel in Portadown. The Edgars were of Scotch origin and had come to Ireland with Edward Bruce, "The Ruthless Pillager," between 1315 and 1318. John Edgar's father Thomas Edgar had married Mary Bruce, a descendant of the Scotch Robert Bruce. Mary Bruce's dowry consisted of the lands of Miltown, Bavin, Sheeptown, and Derrylacky in County Down."

The Ballybreagh Road joins onto the Aghory Road, the very area my Edgar ancestors lived. Once again, I have not yet been able to prove a direct link to the family of John Edgar of Ballybreagh, but, as before, there is a chance this may be one of my ancestors. I am making this assumption based only on geography.

So, if your Edgar ancestor comes from County Armagh, you may well have a famous or infamous member on your family tree. Who knows? — you might even have both!



WILLIAM EDGAR born 1836, Drummanmore, near Kilkeel, N.I.



by Bill Edgar, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia (edgaraust@hotmail.com)

Obituary from St. Arnaud, Victoria, Australia newspaper.

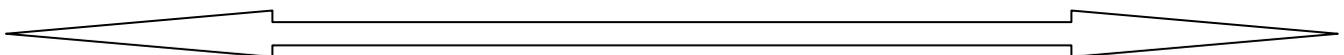
Died July 1912. The Late Mr. William Edgar



Another of the old residents of St. Arnaud, Mr. Wm Edgar, has died at the age of 76 yrs. Deceased, who was born in Newry, County Down, Ireland, came to Australia when only a young man landing in Adelaide in 1850s. He remained there only a few months, and then moved to Victoria when the diggings were observing attractions. He subsequently tried his luck in New Zealand, where there was a gold rush at Molyneaux. Not meeting with much success he returned to Melbourne, and later moved northwards and arriving in this district in the 1870s. After working at sawmills at Charlton and Avoca forests, he finally settled in St. Arnaud where he married Agnes Isabel, daughter of the late Mr. & Mrs. McMillan. Mr. Edgar followed the occupation as a civil engineer, and carried out several works including bridge building and section of the main drain for the borough council. He was a founder of

the Orange Lodge, St. Arnaud, though later through failing health he was unable to attend meetings as often as desired. He was always an inspiration to the brethren of No. 103 when able to be present. He had held honoured position of W.M. of the Royal Black Receptory. During the last few weeks there were indications that the end was close at hand. A widow and five sons are left. Mrs. Edgar has not been at all well for some time. Two sons are in Western Australia, one in Benalla, and the two youngest, Henry and George, are in St. Arnaud. The funeral took place at St. Arnaud, the burial service at the Presbyterian Church was read by Mr. W.J. Meirish (missionary) and that of the Orange institution by Brother H.E. Davies (chaplain). A number of wreaths were sent by sympathizing friends including No. 32 ladies, as a mark of esteem in which he was held. Two tablets (one from R.B.P. No. 700 and Kara Kara No. 103 were placed on the grave).

The New Zealand reference is Port Molyneaux on Saddle Hill at Molyneux Bay, at the mouth of Clutha River; the nearby city now is Dunedin in the Province of Otago. On visiting the site found the town Molyneux Bay was destroyed by a flood in 1878. Gold was discovered at Gabriel's Gully, Otago, in 1861. It is written that 14,000 men landed in Otago in one month seeking gold. The ratio of the local population was 1 woman to 100 men. On examination of a list of the first 6,000 mining licences issued in Otago, no William Edgar recorded. His son Stewart wrote in 1977 "That he understood William ran away to sea at an early age and became a ship's carpenter. However, the gold rush found him trying his luck in Australia and New Zealand, but eventually he came back to Australia at the newer area then producing gold in 1870s around St. Arnaud, Vic. He founded the Orange Lodges in St. Arnaud and Cope Cope. He then set up as a civil engineer and built most of the road bridges in the area." We know from Rate records he did saw milling as well as mining, contracting, and labouring. The contracting seems to be work for the Borough Council, constructing storm water drains, lined with wood, and probably the bridges over the drains and perhaps local rivers. His expertise as a ship's carpenter would qualify him for this type of work.



That brings us to the final bit – Bill Edgar’s father, like mine, was a finishing carpenter, Bill has sent us some pictures of the tools his father made, plus the storage chest he built. Beautiful craftsmanship!

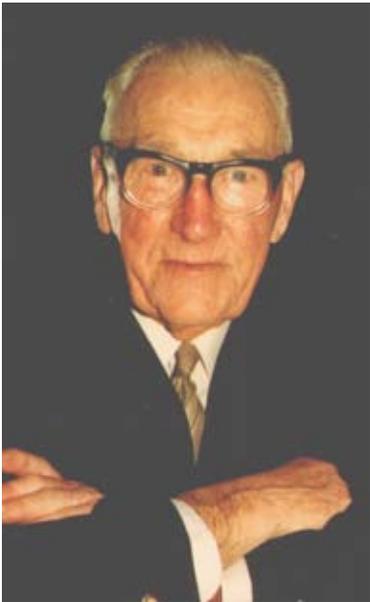


Figure 4 Angus Edgar



Figure 3 The interior of the tool chest made by Angus William James Edgar



Figure 5 The exterior – note the dovetail joints.



Figure 6 All of the handmade tools that Angus created

