



EDGAR EVENTS

**Researching and sharing Edgar family
history No. 66, July 2012**



DNA Update

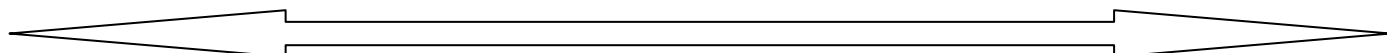


by James Edgar (jamesedgar@sasktel.net)

There is little to report DNA-wise this month, as one test kit for **CJ Edgar** from Moncton, New Brunswick, has just arrived at the lab. **Jack Edgar**'s kit is still waiting for him to get home – he's been aboard a ship for a few weeks! We'll keep you posted.

One bit of new information is that I contacted **Elizabeth Edgar** in Kingston, Jamaica, by telephone! She is now my Facebook friend, and she shared her two brothers' phone numbers in London. Her brother, **Winston Edgar**, has agreed to the test and the kit is on its way! We are on to a new and exciting chapter in our DNA testing (see **SteveUK**'s article below...). Plus, I had a nice phone chat with brothers, **Norrel** in Jamaica and **William** in London. It will be great one day to meet up with these newfound **Edgars**.

That said, let's start off the issue with a cool photo of butterflies in our back yard—they were after the sweet-scented nectar in our small-leaf lilac bush.



Edgars in Jamaica



by Steve Edgar (steven-edgar@sky.com)

Some while ago whilst I was trawling the internet I came across an Edgar born in Jamaica. I thought this unusual and decided to investigate further.

The earliest records found were from a baptismal: *Hannah the daughter of a slave negro woman called Daphney by Alexander Edgar was born on the 9th June and bapt. 7th July. Also, Elizabeth, daughter of a negro woman called Daphney by Alexander Edgar was born on 26th October 1736, bapt. 10 May 1737 both in Kingston, Jamaica.*

This set me on a quest to identify Alexander Edgar. From the dates of birth of Hannah and Elizabeth, Alexander Edgar must have been born in the late 1600s, up to about 1715 or so.

From an email received from James in Melville, there was an extract from a book, "Scots in Jamaica 1655-1855":

- *Alexander Edgar of Netherhouses, formerly Jamaica 1747*
- *Alexander Edgar born in Hamilton Lanarkshire first son of Alexander Hamilton (assume his surname to be Edgar) of Martha Brae (this is a location not a person) Jamaica, matriculated at Glasgow University in 1787, a planter in Trelawney, Cornwall Jamaica, a deed 1791*
- *Alexander Edgar in Jamaica, an inventory 1821*
- *Alexander Edgar, late in Jamaica, then Edinburgh 1839*
- *Archibald Edgar, in Jamaica, probate 1795*
- *Handiside Edgar physician in Trelawney and Montego Bay 1791, 1798, St James Cornwall 1814, his widow died in London 1819*
- *James Edgar a planter in St Marys 1779*
- *James Edgar a physician in Trelawney 1793*
- *James Edgar of Auchingramont Hamilton and St Georges, Jamaica testament 1811*
- *Mary Edgar 3rd daughter of Alexander of Wedderley wife of Dr James Henry Archer died Springmount 1831*
- *Thomas Edgar son of the late Archibald Edgar in Jamaica, at King College Aberdeen 1795*



Gleaning what I can from the above, it looks a though a Scottish Alexander Edgar set up in Jamaica circa 1720-1730. He owned black slaves and was having children by them. He married (I assume) and had legitimate children. His time in Jamaica was for profit. He had his legitimate children educated in Scotland and he retired, with the wealth he had accumulated, back to Scotland.

Trelawney, Jamaica

As to where they were from in Scotland from the above is anyone's guess, but there is a clue. The IGI (www.familysearch.org) shows :

- Handaside Edgar (I love unusual names, they make life so easy!) married to Mary Simpson in Trelawney on 06 March 1792
- James Handaside Edgar born 1816 Edinburgh to Alexander Edgar and Ann Gordon
- Kandaside [sic] Edgar, and Catalina had a child baptised 08 March 1792
- Handyside [sic] Edgar born 27 March 1754 to Alexander and Margaret Edgar in South Leith, Midlothian (South Leith is close to Edinburgh)

Given the clues above, I would think it safe to assume that Alexander was from Edinburgh and he is related to the Edgars of Wedderlie (he named his house Wedderley).

Odd thing is that Handaside married Mary Simpson on the 6th of March and had a child baptised 2 days later to what looks like a negro woman, Catalina!

When Alexander left Jamaica to retire in Edinburgh, he left legitimate and illegitimate children behind. Their original location was in Kingston, then they moved north to the Montego Bay/Trelawney area where they seem to settle around the Martha Brae location. Perhaps this is where "Wedderley" house is located?

During the later 1700s, evidence exists that there is a significant number of Edgars around the area and it's not always easy to identify who they are (I need to do some more research) and what their lineage is, but it does look like they're all descended from Alexander Edgar.

The Edgar family are certainly having children with their slaves as well as with their wives — from another baptismal record: *10th Feb 1792 Bap at Pembroke Hall a quadroon son of William Edgar named John William age 14 months, also a negro man belonging to the estate William Edgar age 30, also a negro man belonging to the estate named James Edgar age 25. A negro woman belonging to the estate named Kitty age 40. Sponsors William Edgar and James Pontious. St Thomas in the East Jamaica.* What is not identified here is who these people are. Are they imported Africans? Children of the estate owner? Or slaves bought in from another plantation? The date of 1792 would point (to my mind) to these being black descendants of Alexander Edgar.

A confirmation of this idea is a record from 1798: *Bap 15th April 1798 St Thomas in the East Jamaica bap in church 59 persons incl: Betsy Edgar, Archibald Edgar, James Edgar, Cath (?) William Edgar, belonging to Pembroke hall estate.* More slaves being baptised, these look like being named Edgar previously, but are now being baptised.

Descendants. I looked at the Jamaica phone book and found only 9 Edgars listed, which would seem to be a small number compared to the number that were around in the 1800s.

Between 1914 and 1923, Maud Edgar, British; Fanny Edgar, West Indian; Margaret Edgar, West Indian; Retinella Edgar, British African; Fanny Edgar, Jamaican British, left Jamaica and all arrived in New York, I would suppose there must have been many more Edgars leaving Jamaica as well. After the abolition of slavery in the West Indies, many of the ex-slaves chose new names. I don't suppose that bearing the name of a slave-owning family would have been very appealing to a newly freed slave family. So perhaps this is another reason for the lack of Edgars.



I have found a Tyrone Edgar, a British athlete who may well have origins in Jamaica. I'm hoping he will reply to my email request, and perhaps we could ask for a DNA test?

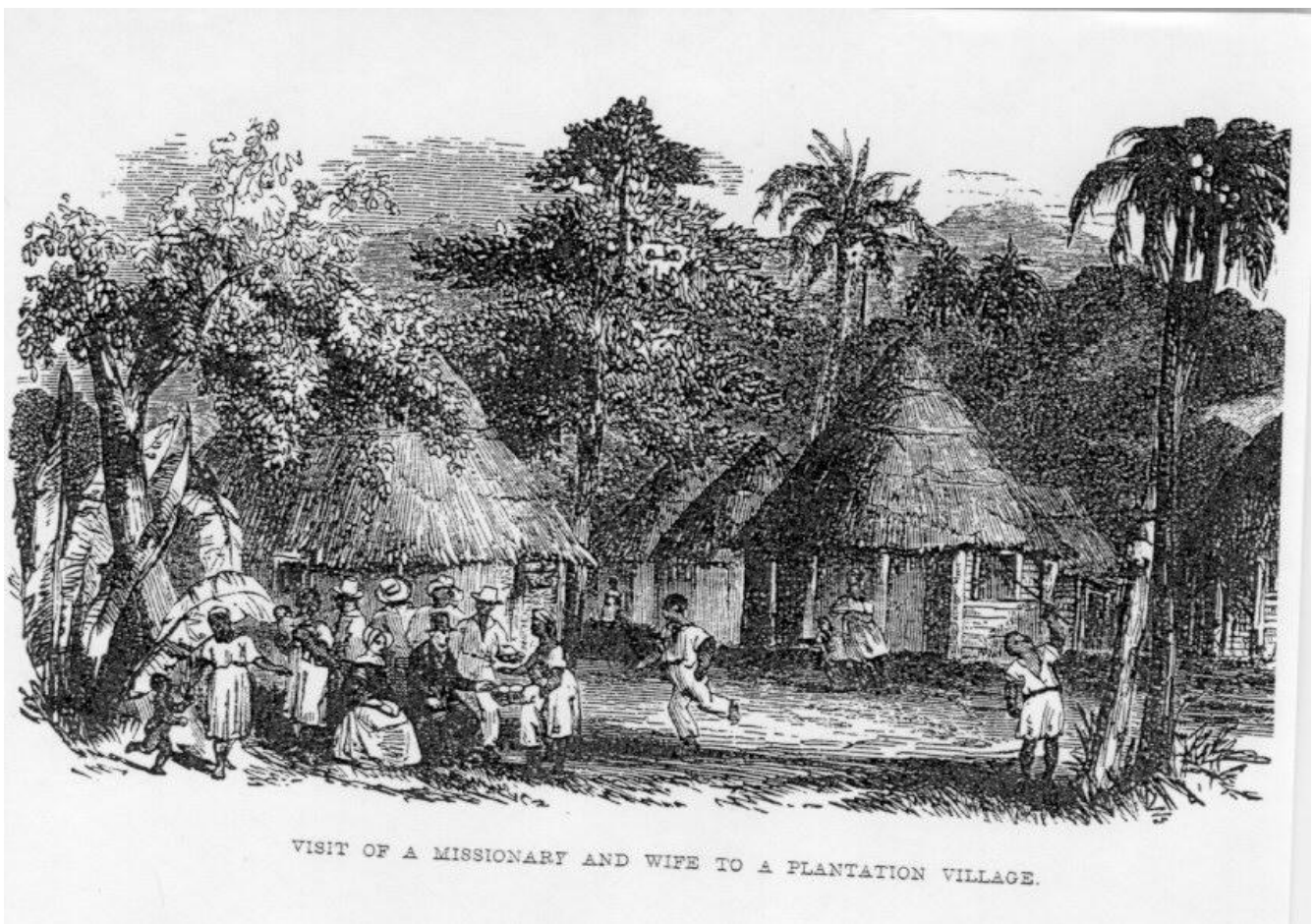
Tyrone Edgar

*James and I are willing to go to Jamaica to carry out some DNA testing, all we lack is the funding. \$50,000 should be enough for a month or two (can't rush these things!), and we are already on our way with a donation of \$1 from Juanita! Only \$49,999 to go! 😊

Here are a couple of links for further reading:

http://old.antislavery.org/breakingthesilence/slave_routes/slave_routes_jamaica.shtml

www.le-caribbean-islands.com/jamaica-history.html



From <http://jamaicanfamilysearch.com>

Edgars in Jamaica, Part 2

After further research, I can state categorically that the Edgar family in Jamaica from the early 1700s are the Edgars from Keithock. This is confirmed by references in Lawrence-Archer's book "An Account of the Sirname Edgar," published in the 1800s.



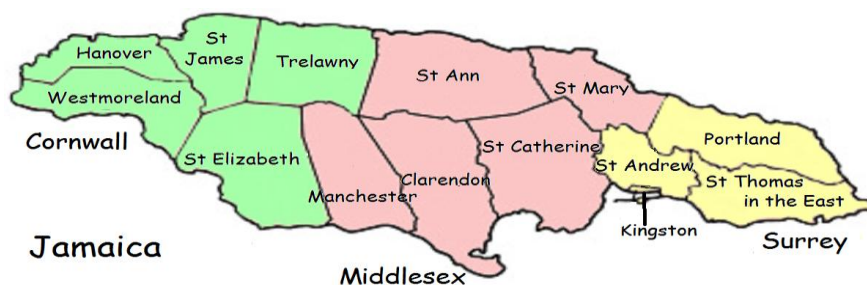
Alexander Edgar b. 1698 looks to be the first to settle in Jamaica with a plantation. He was not there for long, as his father had died and he had to return to Scotland to inherit the estate of Auchingramont. He married a cousin, Margaret Edgar in Scotland in 1742, and had children **Alexander abt. 1750**, Susan 1756, Charity abt. 1760, **Handaside 1754** and James abt. 1760.

Alexander Edgar, Portrait by Sir Henry Raeburn

His son Handaside is on record as qualifying as a Doctor in Edinburgh, living and dying in Jamaica in 1806. He married Mary Simpson in March 1792 and had seven children.

Another son, Alexander Edgar, married to Anne Gordon in July 1797, had 11 children, and had most of them baptised in Jamaica in 1810. Some may have been born in Scotland, some

in Jamaica. It is difficult to separate who was born where without accurate birth records. All of the above are from Trelawny, Cornwall, Jamaica.



In 1777, Archibald Edgar bought a plantation in St. Thomas in the East and is connected to two houses: Gloucester Mount and Pembroke Hall. I have not identified their actual locations within St. Thomas, nor have I established how he is related to Alexander and Handaside, but I believe they are from the same family.

After 1800, the records show births, baptisms, and marriages all over the Island, and it's not very clear as to who is who and how they are related.

Some time ago, I did an article on Preston Edgar, and Edgar and Son who were Pewter manufacturers in Bristol. They left Edinburgh in the late 1700s and set up shop in Bristol. The family of Preston Edgar is connected to the Edgars of Keithock and Jamaica, so it looks as though the business moved from Edinburgh to Bristol to secure pewter supply contracts to the Navy and to the West Indies.



James managed to contact by telephone Elizabeth Edgar in Jamaica. After a conversation with her, he got the names of her two brothers, Winston and William, who live in the London area here in the UK. I called Winston and had a chat, and he agreed to do a DNA test. This was quite serendipitous, as they had been talking about their family roots over the weekend.

Elizabeth Edgar, Jamaica

Elizabeth has a family tradition of being a descendant of John Edgar, which would fit with one of the descendants of either Handaside or Alexander.

If the test proves to be what we hope for, this will be an absolute clincher for confirmation of the Keithock DNA, and add yet another country to the world list of Edgar locations. We must just hope that the Edgar link is a continuation of the male line—fingers crossed!

As an aside.

- Sir Henry Raeburn painted a portrait of Elizabeth Edgar in Ipswich, Suffolk.
- When James Edgar was on his travels in the 1700s, he was advised to call in on the Edgars in Suffolk as they were likely to be related.
- Given that a lot of Edgars in Edinburgh were merchants and were trading with the Hanseatic League in Scandinavia and Northern Europe, with particular connections to Poland, it would fit that the Edgars of Suffolk are also of the same family.

It would also fit that the Suffolk Edgars moved to London or Bristol to create business opportunities trading across the Atlantic with the lucrative New World?

[Ed. Winston, William, and Elizabeth have several siblings (13 in the family!), one of whom is a brother, James (Jimmy) who died a few years ago. His son, **Courtney Edgar**, lives in Canada. We'll contact him when we get his phone details.]

Steve gathered the following list of Jamaica-born or living from various sources:

Maud Edgar from Jamaica age 46 arrived New York 30th Aug 1919 from Kingston, Jamaica
race British

Fanny Edgar age 49 arrived New York 1st July 1920 from Kingston, Jamaica race West Indian

Margaret Edgar 5 years 1 month arrived 1st July 1920 West Indian

Retinella Octiver Edgar age 22 from Jamaica arr New York 1st Aug 1923 British African

Fanny Edgar age 41 of Mandville, Jamaica arr 23rd July 1914 Jamaican British

Thomas Edgar Dob 1771 Jamaica 1851 census England age 70

Ann Edgar age 72 Jamaica 1851 census England

Skip Edgar age 40 1851 census England (dau) born in Jamaica

Bap 7th Dec 1810 Susannah Edgar dau of Alexander Edgar and Ann. bap Trelawny, Cornwall, Jamaica

Bap 7th Dec 1810 Alexander Edgar son of Alexander Edgar and Ann bap Trelawny, Cornwall, Jamaica

Bap 7th Dec 1810 Louisa Edgar dau of Alexander Edgar and Ann bap Trelawny, Cornwall, Jamaica

Bap 13th April 1799 Margaret Edgar dau of Alexander Edgar and Ann bap Trelawny, Cornwall, Jamaica

Bap 8th March 1792 Mary Edgar dau of Kandaside Edgar and Catalina bap Trelawny, Cornwall, Jamaica

Bap 7th Sept 1834 Jane Edgar dau of John Edgar and Nelly Catenach bap St George, Surrey, Jamaica

Marr. Handaside Edgar to Mary Simpson 6th March 1792 Trelawny, Cornwall, Jamaica

Marr. Alexander Esq Edgar to Ann Gordon 22nd July 1797 St James, Jamaica

Bap 12th Dec 1860 Mary Louisa Edgar born 28th Mar 1860 Montego Bay, Jamaica

Bap Helen Ann Edgar 11th July 1778 dau Archibald Edgar and Elizabeth, Gloucester, Mount St Thomas in the East, Jamaica

Bap Thomas Edgar 26th May 1781 age 8 months Gloucester, Mount St Thomas in the East, Jamaica

Bap (infant) Elizabeth Selina Edgar 29th Mar 1784 dau Mr & Mrs Edgar Gloucester, Mount St Thomas in the East, Jamaica

10th Feb 1792 Bap at Pembroke Hall a quadroon son of William Edgar named John William age 14 months also a negro man belonging to the estate William Edgar age 30 also a negro man belonging to the estate named James Edgar age 25. A negro woman belonging to the estate named Kitty age 40. Sponsors William Edgar and James Pontious. St Thomas in the East, Jamaica

27th March 1793 Bap Alexander Edgar born 3rd April 1792 son of Mr & Mrs Edgar Gloucester, Mount St Thomas in the East. Poss GF Alexander Farquharson and Alexander Kitchie

Bap 15th April 1798 St Thomas in the East Jamaica bap in church 59 persons incl: Betsy Edgar, Archibald Edgar, James Edgar, Cath (?) William Edgar, belonging to Pembroke hall estate

b. 18 Jul 1869, Clarendon, Frances Caroline Edgar(brown) Illegit. Father Alex Edgar and mother Louisa Townson

b. Feb 1874, Montpellier, Triphemia Adela Edgar (brown) Illegit. Father Alex Edgar, mother Louisa Tomlinson

b. 20 Nov 1862 George Edward Edgar. Father Alexander Edgar, mother Louisa Townsend

Bap. 29 Mar 1874, Jamaica. Alexander Edgar. Father Alexander and mother Catherine Dunn

Bap 24 April 1874. Margaret Watt Edgar. Illegit.

b. 20 Jan 1867 William Murphy Edgar. Manchester, Middlesex, Jamaica

Bap. 2 Dec 1758 Mary Edgar, mulatto woman, St Catherine Jamaica

Bap. 14 Sep 1859 William Alexander Edgar. Father Alex Edgar and Gracey Blyne. Manchester, Middlesex, Jamaica

b. 9 Jun 1735 Hannah Edgar. Kingston, Jamaica. father Alexander Edgar mother negro woman Daphney

b. 23 March 1923 Winstan Woodrow Edgar, mother Withel Edgar, Stonehenge, Orangehill, St James

Bap. Kingston 12 April 1757, Ann Hedger, a free negro woman aged about 30 yrs.

Bap. 22 Dec 1848 George Thompson Edgars, Harbour St, Kingston. No parents' names

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On a sad note, we have word from Kathryn Edgar in Kilkeel, Northern Ireland, that her granny, Nellie Edgar, passed away 2012 May 23 in Newry. Our condolences go out to the family. Steve and I visited Aunt Nellie in her home at the family farm, Drummanmore, in 2007, where I snapped her photo.

