



# EDGAR EVENTS

**Researching and sharing Edgar family  
history No. 29, June 2009**



## DNA Update

by James Edgar (Editor) ([jamesedgar@sasktel.net](mailto:jamesedgar@sasktel.net))



Well, Steve and I just returned from our Ireland trip, and we didn't get as many DNA tests as we were thinking would happen. Steve and I headed for the Emerald Isle with ten test kits and came away with only one confirmed test! That was from Michael Edgar of Lisburn. He's a keener!

This test will be a clincher, we hope — if we have the details right, Michael could be descended from the Saintfield and Ballynahinch Edgar ministers. We'll have to wait a couple more weeks, though, since I just mailed the kit off to Utah last week. Thanks to Juanita Edgar and Marian Morgan for the research they've done in connection to the Rev. Samuel Edgar (plural).

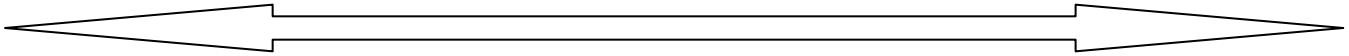
We also encountered something not experienced before — people who were nervous about putting their DNA details on the Web, for fear that the officials (read "police") would get them. Usually my powers of persuasion are "deadly at 100 paces," as SteveUK puts it, but not this time. I came away feeling quite defeated! Nonetheless, we have a few leads to follow up, plus I have a mailout going soon to numerous previously unknown Edgars in Scotland. It will be interesting to see the kind of results we get there.

Here's a big "Thank you!" to the generous donors who have kept the DNA Trust Fund topped up so we could continue doing random testing without any money worries. It is gratifying to know that we have such strong support for our stated goals!



Figure 1 Me and my new-found cousin, Dora Hanna – shop owner in Kilkeel

I won't bore you again with all the details of our trip, but note that our journal of this year's trip, in addition to some selected music videos from Bernard O'Hanlon's pub in Mullaghbawn, are posted on the Ancestry.com Web site for your enjoyment and for posterity...



One thing we didn't skimp on was stored photons — we snapped plenty of pictures, some of which are already posted on my Picasa site, but some others I'll be including in these newsletters. So, with that, here's another; the decrepit buildings at the old flax mill at Derrylecka, with rhododendrons in luscious bloom!



Figure 2 Derrylecka in the late spring – a bit soggy, but lovely looking. The site is one that we have traced back to Thomas Edgar, who named it in his 1852 will. In the will, he mentions his sister Charlotte Swale, whose grave record we found in St. Patrick's Church of Ireland, Newry.

**BURIALS IN PLOT CLAIMED.**

	Date	Age	Full Name	Resort No.	Depth	Officiating Clergyman
Died	1. 14 Mar 1857	62	Adam Swale, Derry Lacksa			
	2. 18 Aug 1876	70	Charlotte Swale Canal Street, Newry			Rev'd F. King
Grave 3	3. 1 Oct 1946	89	Mary Harriet Taylor, Derrywilligan	grand daughter	6ft	Rev'd H. R. Rogers
	4.					
	5.					
	6.					

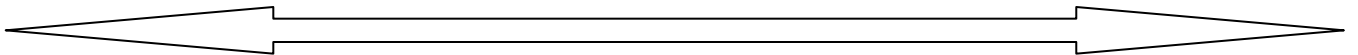
Registered Adam Swale (sic), Newry.  
RCB Request (from Mrs M. H. Taylor above)



Here am I ready to dig into a full “Ulster Breakfast” – what some people term a “heart attack on a plate”! Starting at the top left and going clockwise around the plate, we have white pudding, black pudding, mushrooms, beans, pork sausage, back bacon, and fried tomato, all surrounding fried eggs on fried corn bread. I warned our host, Joan McCreesh, that the portions last year were too large, and for her to cut back. Did I mention that there was cereal, fruit, juice, coffee, and toast? Leaving a part of the plate exposed is not Joan’s style — she’s not going to have anyone go hungry from her kitchen!! Nonetheless, the food was grand, and Joan is a delightful host.



**Figure 3 An Ulster Breakfast at our B&B “Mountainview”!**



# Martha (née Edgar) Henderson on Recollections of Living in Drummanmore 1998



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

On a grey May day with fairly persistent rain, my wife, Ros, and I were lucky enough to be visiting Kilkeel, County Down, Northern Ireland, and had been taken for a drive around our Edgar family history sites by Martha Henderson (my 2nd cousin, once removed) and her daughter Maud Ryan. Martha had been “found” some years previously after quite a deal of detective work by our Australian family, as we had no direct family contact — only the detail of birth “Drummanmore near Newry.” Martha now meets and greets members of our Australian Edgar family when they travel to Kilkeel, and as she is so very well informed, they leave with a good knowledge of early Edgar history as well as being amazed at the hospitality.

On that grey day, we were sitting outside the now empty old Edgar family farmhouse in Drummanmore. We were waiting for the rain to subside enough to get out of Martha’s car to look at the house and farm buildings. I had a video camera going so we started asking some questions and recorded the answers.

The following is an approximate transcript of the answers. They are not exact, as how can you write to show the Northern Irish accent, the laughs, asides, and other magic expressions?



Figure 4 Martha Henderson

## 1 Who lived here?

Arthur and Elizabeth lived here and brought up their six children (*Elizabeth, James, Mary, William, Ann and Robert*) including your Great Grandfather, William, who left from here to go to Australia. Arthur died in 1880 in October, he was my Great Grandfather and I do not know off-hand when Elizabeth died. (*It was Jan 1880, this is the only date Martha did not know off-hand.*) My Grandfather James, Grandmother Jane, their children, there was William, Henry, and someone else went to America (*Robert Henry's wife Mary Wilson*), Arthur, Martha, and Elizabeth Jane were reared here. When they all left home, my father Thomas married Ellen Boyd and they had eight boys and five girls. One boy died when he was 3½ yo, that left seven boys & five girls of us. The house was left by my father to my mother Ellen and she decided to leave it to my brother Gordon, who unfortunately died in 1987 13<sup>th</sup> May, and he left it to his son James. He built a new house in 1995. (*The old house had been empty for three years when we saw it, but, as Martha said, it has not gone downhill much.*)

## 2 How was it living in the house?

Well, there was 12 of us reared in there, 7 boys and 5 girls. Two bedrooms upstairs, one each for all boys and girls. One bedroom downstairs was for Mother & Father. It is the low room downstairs and it was there that Great Grandfather and Great Grandmother died. It (*the low back room*) was thatched in the early days; it was lovely, everyone was very happy, we had lamp light with oil and an open fire and lots of food. We baked bread every day except Sunday, there was 14 faces to be fed. Whoever got to the table first got their food and went to the stairs, and whoever got to the top was “posh.” There was a window up there, and with a knife, fork, and plate they were happy. The washing was done in the tub with a washboard and boiled

in the pot. Mother sewed, knitted, and everything — she looked after us all. We didn't miss any days from school; we were put out, whatever the weather, to go to school and that was it.

### 3 What was the farm?

There were cattle and sheep - it was mixed farming - there was a farm here and another further down the road. You worked hard; everyone worked hard. I worked in the fields many, many times; you worked six out of the seven after you left school. I was 15 when I left. I was to go on to High School but father said I was more useful at home, and there were 12 of us married away from here.

### 4 You gathered seaweed for fertiliser?

We brought the seaweed from the Mill Bay shore and from Cranfield Bay shore. You took your cutting hook, it grew on the rocks and you cut it off and made a sweep with a rope around it, and when the tide came in you had a boat to bring it to the shore. A carriage brought it home, and you spread it in the drills for the potatoes. We grew flax, hay, and oats, which were taken to the mill, and ground into meal which was for the making of bread. We had cows for milk, hens for the eggs, and pigs which one was killed and that was "done solid" in the tub, and you made your own bacon. You grew your own vegetables in the field, and you had everything you wanted, only you did not have your own tea and sugar. You made your own jam. You had both eating and cooking apples, black currants, gooseberries, and raspberries. I don't think there was much we missed out on. That was life on the farm.

### 5 What happened to the family?

When we married, none of us moved that far away. The five girls married five Roberts, but no one actually realised for many years as they were called Bobby, Robert, Bertie, Bob, and Robby, so no one took any notice. We all worked on the farm especially the boys. Arthur did his time as a joiner, and Stanley, he was the youngest, and he went off to England and did 37 years in Birmingham at Dunlop. James went to Newry and worked on the railways opening and closing the gates, and several other things, he then had a taxi service. Gordon stayed on the farm. Henry worked for a contractor. Willie went to England for a while but came back to Killeel. Mother was great and so was Father.

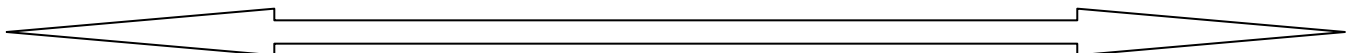
He cried when I was going to get married, he said he was going to miss me so much. I would take his breakfast to him in bed, shaved, and washed him.

Mother was the boss; somebody had to be when there were 12 around. Nobody got into trouble, no one went to court, no one did anything like that. Mother was very strict, and I was glad the parents we had were strict. I got married 1947 17<sup>th</sup> June.

The rain then eased and we were able to walk around the farm buildings and take photos, but the buildings meant a lot more after our chat. I was able to show the video at an Edgar family reunion in St. Arnaud, Victoria, Australia, in March 2001. The next most amazing thing was Maud Ryan was able to bring Martha to another Edgar reunion in St. Arnaud in March 2004. We had installed a plaque for William Edgar and Isabella Agnes Edgar (McMillan) at each of the reunions, so Martha was able to assist in the ceremony for her Great Uncle.



Figure 5 Willie Edgar, Martha's older brother



## Carryduff, Co. Down



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

Anyone who has seen Richard Edgar's "edgarwebsites" may have seen the record Richard has for Samuel Edgar b. 1821 at "Sheltered Farm, Carryduff." ([www.geocities.com/edgarwebsites/bits.htm](http://www.geocities.com/edgarwebsites/bits.htm))

Carryduff is a fairly new town (1820 or so) and is near Drumbo, which has a lot of older Edgar history.

Samuel's father was Robert, and he is also recorded at Carryduff. With the recent research that Juanita has been doing with the Edgar Ministers, the significance of the names has been increased for both of us. Juanita's son Norman and I have common DNA with an approximate link in 1650 or so. The link may precede my Edgars travelling to Ireland and be in Scotland. Juanita suspects the connection to the Ministers due to location and name sequences for both our families. The problem is, as usual, proving it! DNA would be ideal of course.

Last year I received an email from Michael Edgar enquiring about what we knew about the Edgars from Carryduff. Of course, I sent him all the available information we have and pointed him in the direction of Richard's Web site. Earlier this year he contacted me again and said he was descended from the Edgars at Sheltered Farm. Wow!! A real link to a known piece of Edgar heritage AND the opportunity to get some DNA to actually identify which family this is. Mike was more than willing to give a sample of his DNA which, as I write this, it is on its way to Utah.

What will happen when the results come through? This family will be identified and hopefully linked to another family. If Juanita is right, this may well be my family from Newry, which will answer many of my questions and enable her to forge the links to her family in the USA. It will also bring us a bit closer to identifying the family of the ministers of Ballynahinch.



Figure 6 Steve, Michael, and James Edgar

We're looking for information (records, photos, stories) from anyone who may have connections to the Edgar family in and around Drumbo and Carryduff. Please email, call, or drop me a line if you have any such information, as it would greatly assist us in putting the pieces of this puzzle together.

My home phone is 011270588737, address is:

STEVE EDGAR  
9 FAIRVIEW AVE WESTON  
CREWE CHS CW2 5LX  
ENGLAND



## Picture Gallery



Figure 7 Panoramic view of the Vale of Gloucester from a roadside lookout at Birdlip, while *en route* to Wales



Figure 8 "Let the Dance Begin" – stainless-steel sculpture at Strabane



Figure 9 Bogside in Londonderry – gable-end murals by the Bogside Artists are prominent



Figure 10 Richard and Steve pose on the streets of Londonderry, with the old city walls visible in the background