



EDGAR EVENTS

**Researching and sharing Edgar family
history No. 88, May 2014**



DNA Update



by James Edgar (james@jamesedgar.ca)

We're still waiting for the return of kits to the lab from **Stephen Edgar** (of Gloversville, N.Y.) and **Antony Edgar** (of Hanover, N.H.). We know that **Antony** sent his, but we have no word yet from the lab that they have received it.... **Stewart Edgar** got his test results from Genebase.com—see below.

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We do have something to report, though, for the test from **Jon Edgar** of Levittown, Pennsylvania. This story gets a bit convoluted, so bear with me...

**Steve Edgar** of Oakville, Ontario, who we lovingly named **SteveTO** (Oakville is a suburb west of Toronto)(**SteveTO** is the grandfather of **Max** below), has long sought a connection to the **Edgars** in the USA. **Steve** was one of the very early DNA tests we completed when we started down this road in 2007. That was when we were getting our tests done through Relative Genetics. And, we discovered then that he and I were related—very distantly, but both in the same Haplogroup—we're cousins.

There are numerous tales of the **Edgars** arriving from Scotland, some of them sailors, some in industry, some involved in the sugar trade from Bermuda and Jamaica. We have tried for some time to get a DNA test from one of the **Edgar** males who descended from the New Jersey branch, so that we could verify that they are indeed related to **Steve**.

In Edgar Events #70, we published this little snippet:

*We heard from **David A. Edgar** of Tryon, North Carolina. **David** stumbled upon our newsletters and sent me an email. He is descended from a long line of **Edgars** who have been involved in the porcelain industry in the USA for many years, having discovered a deposit of kaolin on their land near Metuchin, New Jersey. Kaolin is one of the key ingredients in porcelain. You can read about his family at <http://edgarminerals.com/About-Us.html> and The History of Middlesex County, New Jersey <http://archive.org/details/historyofmiddles03wall> Fascinating!*

**David** and his wife **Robin** have written in emails that he is descended from the Keithock line of **Edgars**. **SteveTO** claims the same descendancy (so do I, or at least a distant ancestor, since **Steve** and I share similar DNA). We never did get **David** to test his DNA, but we've kept in touch over the past couple of years. You may recall that **Robin** tried to get some of us interested in an **Edgar Family Reunion** in North Carolina, near where they live. That didn't happen, but perhaps one day we will all get together.

That brings us to the letter we posted in last month's issue from **Susan Edgar Cullen**, where she asked about the **Edgar** tartan, explaining that she and her cousin are descended from the **Keithock Edgars**. She even gave us a brief outline of her ancestors:

Charles S. Edgar [Ed: should be Freeman Edgar - see below]

Iow Reynolds Edgar

David Raymond Edgar

Richard Ross Edgar

Me

Now, I happened to be staying at the home of **SteveTO** and his lovely wife, **Jo-Ann**, in late March while I was in Toronto for an astronomy board meeting. **Steve** was showing me a book that contains numerous letters exchanged between **Edgars** in the mid-1700s to late-1880s. Those letters are on **Richard Edgar's** site at <http://edgarfamily.angelfire.com/letters.htm> and I've created a new link to the book on our Genealogy page at [www.edgargen.ca/Letters\\_and\\_Genealogy\\_Of\\_Edgar\\_Family.pdf](http://www.edgargen.ca/Letters_and_Genealogy_Of_Edgar_Family.pdf)

Also in the second half of this book are pages of genealogy beginning with the **Edgars** in Canada, and then the **USA Edgars**. The cover itself is the Edgar Coat of Arms, shown here, a little worse for wear, but admirable, just the same:



*(We even have some **Edgars** interested in having this as their tattoo!)*

I photographed the pages and on my return home put them together as my own book. **Jodie** and I decided to enter the names into our computer program to see if we could connect **SteveTO** to these **Edgars** in the USA. We didn't get to it as soon as I got home, but we started picking away at the genealogy a couple of weeks ago. One of the great things about the Family Tree Maker software is that it "asks" if you want to merge two individuals who appear to be the same person. As we were putting in the data, we got to a place where we got asked something like "Is Alexander Edgar, son of David Edgar, the same as Alexander

Edgar, the brother of Thomas Edgar?” And, the answer was “Yes, of course!” **Alexander** is **SteveTO**’s ancestor and **Thomas** is the ancestor of all those Edgars in the USA—**Jon** and **Susan**, **David**, the founders of Edgar Minerals, the Edgars of Middlesex County, New Jersey, and so on. We also discovered that **Antony Edgar**, who we had lined up for a test (see the opening paragraph above), is a first cousin to **Susan** and **Jon**—we don’t need to test him at all!



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Getting back to the letter and short tree that **Susan** sent, where she mistakenly said she was descended from **Charles S. Edgar**, I did some further digging and find that **Charles Smith Edgar** married his cousin, **Frances Emily Edgar**, daughter of **Freeman Edgar** and **Sarah Elizabeth Martin**. **Frances Emily** is the sister of **Susan** and **Jon**’s great-grandfather, **low Edgar**, shown at left.

So, those I1s are all related, and, more importantly, we know how—we have the paper trail. I count myself in that group, too, except I don’t know how I’m related, just that I am. None of us I1 Edgars whose ancestors came to the Americas through Ireland will ever know, since there are no records to tell us when our Scottish ancestors went to Ireland, what their names were, and where they came from. No matter, this was a very important find, proving once again that Louis Pasteur was most correct when he wrote, “Chance favours the prepared mind.”

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## More on John Maxwell Edgar

**Ryan** and **Lindsay Edgar** of Victoria, B.C., the happy parents of the little lad we featured in last month’s issue (second newsletter #87, that is) have put together the nicest video of their wee bairn—**SteveTO**’s grandson. Go to thislink for a lovely tribute to **Max** and their dog.

[docs.google.com/file/d/0B2ledXlcrB9PNkNrRk9QZFJJSUk/edit?pli=1](https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B2ledXlcrB9PNkNrRk9QZFJJSUk/edit?pli=1)

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We have some further connections discovered just this past week. Recall that **Mark Edgar** of California, who we tested as an R1b, is descended from the **Edgars** who came to the USA from Scotland via the Philippines. **Mark's** cousins are **Debra Bocobo**, her sister **Susan Bell**, and another cousin **Veronica Velasquez** (I'm in contact with these all on Facebook, and there are more siblings, but I don't have those connections, yet!). We discovered that they are also related to **Kim Leeming**, who we had been in touch with years ago, but she and I hadn't conversed for some time. She re-connected with **SteveUK** recently, where she wrote:

Hi Steve, I saw the Edgar News 87, mentioning the "Edgar" Air Force & Navy Pilots. It made me think about my son "Scott" who also wants to be a pilot.

It's been several years since we've emailed, when you started the DNA testing. I asked about my son "Scott Leeming" participating in the DNA testing. You said he didn't think it would help, because the Paternal DNA needed to be an Edgar. Even though, Scott may not carry the Edgar name, I thought I'd share what an Edgar descendant is up to.

Scott is now 19 years-old and since his childhood, he has dreamed of becoming a pilot for the US Air Force. He's been driven his whole life to do whatever, it takes to make it happened. He's put in a lot of hard work and dedication in his studies. He has also been involved community service as a volunteer, through school and church activities, as well as becoming a Cadet for the Civil Air Patrol at age 14.

Scott's very athletic, he's been participating in a variety of sports activities; wrestling, baseball, soccer and basketball, since the age of 5 years-old. (At age 5, he placed 3rd in the Washington State Folk Style Wrestling Tournament. He had played on a Select Soccer team for several years, as well as played in the Little League & Big League All-Stars Baseball State Tournaments.

Scott took College courses his last two years of High School at the Community College, by participating in the Washington State "Running Start Program". This program allowed him not only receive his High School Diploma when he graduated, but has also received his 2-year Associate's Degree.

Not only does Scott have Edgar DNA, I'm convinced that he as the DNA of a "Pilot" from both sides of the family. His paternal grandfather (my dad) "David Gordon Edgar" was an Army Warrant Officer (CW3) Helicopter Pilot in Vietnam. Scott's maternal grandfather; John Child Leeming (born in England) was in the Royal Air Force (RAF) training to become a pilot to fly the Spitfire in WWII, when the ended. Scott's uncle; Walter Gordon Edgar pursed and his achieved his dream of flying, by getting his private pilot's license.

Scott is now attending Central Washington University. In order to make him a good candidate to be selected into the US Air Force ROTC Program, next year, in "Addition"

to his college courses to get his degree in Occupational Safety & Health Management, he is also taking the AFROTC General Military Course, which includes Leadership & Lab courses, physical training & community involvement.

If selected, Scott will participate in summer field-training exercises and will complete his Professional Officer Course his last two years of college, which will allow him to enter the US Air Force as an Officer, when he graduates.

Not everyone is selected into the AFROTC program and he knows this, it's very competitive. However, Scott is determine to try and give it his all. Even, if things don't work out as planned, he still plans on joining the military, when he graduates. I have no doubt, he'll become a pilot in the military or as a civilian.

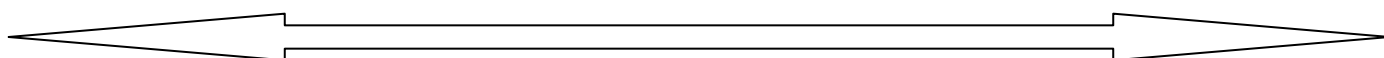
I think Scott is off to a good start in making his dream come true. I am so proud of him, I couldn't have asked for a better son and I feel so blessed to be his mother.

Sincerely,

Kim Edgar
Poulsbo WA

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There's more, because Kim told us of another **Edgar** online who has his own genealogy Web site at [www.edgarfamily.com](http://www.edgarfamily.com). **Scott Alexander Edgar** has the same gr-gr-grandfather as **Debra, Susan, Mark, and Veronica**—they're all third cousins!



## Pewter Badges



Looking for a solid pewter Edgar Crest? At \$18, plus shipping, they're a great way to say "I love my family!" (Pewter buttons also available.)

Email me [james@jamesedgar.ca](mailto:james@jamesedgar.ca)

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Calling all R1bs !



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

Quite some time ago Kim Edgar Leeming made contact with a query regarding her Edgar family origins, the family traced back to Walter Japp Edgar (middle names like Japp are a genealogists dream!) whose origins were in Salt Lake City, Utah. We did as much as we could but were baulked and could go no further. We suggested a DNA test to help.

Kim contacted me again last week and I had another go, with some success this time! (It is amazing how much new information goes onto the Internet—it always worth a revisit.) I found the family Web site of Scott Alexander Edgar with a connection to John Japp Edgar. Hmm, another Japp? Must be related?

A little more research found a connection to join them, George Beard Edgar, b. 1830, married to Isabella Japp in Fife, Scotland. George and Isabella had 11, maybe 13, children and all of them emigrated to Salt lake City in about 1860-1870.

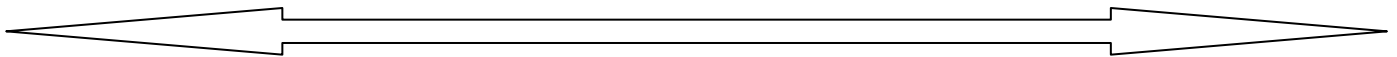
I was then contacted by Jodie and James about Mark Edgar, who had done a DNA test as an R1b, who was also related to this family.

All of this linked together with their common ancestor George Beard Edgar. When I delved a bit further, I found George B Edgar married to Isabella JOPP on my database. George B and George Beard were both born abt 1830; Isabella Jopp and Isabella Japp were both born in 1834. Must be the same persons!

This family then traces back to a David Edgar born abt 1632 in Scotland, with a son called Edward Edgare [sic] married to Margaret Gilchrist on 1658 February 22 in Dumfries, Scotland. There is a clear family tree down to George Beard Edgar. **This represents a wonderful opportunity for all you R1b Edgars to link into this tree and make the connections.**

Successes like this are the reason we started the project in the first place.

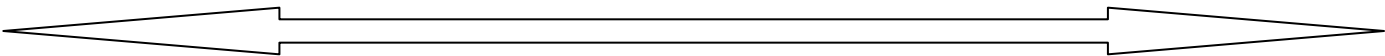
If you are an R1b Edgar, please send us your records and hopefully we will be able to link you into this family.



Incidentally, **SteveUK** says “Book your flight. We have family in Hawaii!” He has just found some of his own cousins, descended from Merrill Avery Edgar, living in Honolulu. ☺

Stewart Edgar, who we've mentioned previously, got his DNA test results from Genebase, which we've manually entered into our Ancestry.com database. Look who he's related to!

	MRCA	DYS19a	DYS19b	DYS385a	DYS385b	DYS388	DYS389I	DYS389II	DYS390	DYS391	DYS392	DYS393	DYS426	DYS437	DYS438	DYS439	DYS441	DYS442	DYS444	DYS445	DYS446	DYS447	DYS448	DYS449	DYS452	DYS454	DYS455	DYS456	DYS458	DYS459a	DYS459b	DYS460	DYS461	DYS462	DYS463	DYS464a	DYS464b	DYS464c	DYS464d	DYS464e	DYS464f	GGAA11B1	YCAIIa	YCAIIb	Y-GATA-A1	DYS635	Y-GATA-H		
stewart edgar																																																	
Paul Allen McCune	11																																																
Michael Liggett*	18																																																
Lloyd Michael Liggett	19																																																
Glenda Dickson*	22																																																
George Roland Edgar	23																																																
dina mcfalls*	25																																																
Jack Lynn Stitt	26																																																
James M. Edgar	27																																																
Michael Brian Edgar	29																																																
Harry James Edgar	29																																																
William Alexander Eager Jr	29																																																
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Judith Anne Lynn	29																																																
John McKee Edgar	29																																																
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Wayne Emerald Edgar	29																																																
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John Murray Edgar	29																																																
Michael Elder*	32																																																
Greg Hall	32																																																
Lorraine Walker	32																																																
Denise Gillespie*	34																																																
William John Mitchell	34																																																
Damon Pritchett	34																																																
William Neil Craig	34																																																
Robert Allen Edgar	34																																																



From **Fliss Wingrave** in the UK... she wrote (in part):

Hi James and Jodie

Hope you are both well and Spring is beginning to bloom over in Canada. I have come across the attached story in one of our daily newspapers and it caught my eye due to mentioning a Margaret Edgar and her daughter Isabella Edgar. I wonder if you would put it in the newsletter as see if

anyone knows who they were or is related to them. If not Jodie may be able to shed light on who they were. It's quite an interesting story, but I will let you read it to judge.

[...]

All the best

Fliss



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Can any of our Edgar Clan throw light on who Margaret Edgar from Scotland was and her four children, one named Isabella? Do you recognise them from your ancestors?

Fliss Wingrave ([flisswingrave@hotmail.com](mailto:flisswingrave@hotmail.com))

#### THE STORY OF THE 'WILLIAM BROWN' BOUND FOR AMERICA

*Extract from 'No Mercy' True Stories of Disaster, Survival and Brutality by Eleanor Learmonth and Jenny Tabakoff*

The William Brown set sail on the 13th March 1841 from Liverpool bound for Philadelphia. Its cargo was 599 tonnes, made up of salt, coal and china, along with 65 passengers, mostly Irish and Scottish families, as well as husbands and wives joining spouses who had already made the journey from the old world to the land of opportunity.

There was thick fog as the ship entered the ice field west of Nova Scotia on the night of April 19th, but rather than slowing down, the American captain, 48-year-old George Harris, kept the William Brown sailing at a brisk ten knots as he was under pressure to complete the voyage quickly by the owners. At 8:45 p.m., the crew on watch peered through the hazy darkness while the passengers relaxed below deck, there was a jolt and an ominous noise. The ship scraped along a flat ice floe. The crew were relieved that there was no damage and thought they had got away with it. Fifteen minutes later, there was a horrifying jolt and thunderous noise as the ship collided head on with a

massive iceberg. The iron bows crumpled and a gaping hole appeared in one side and water began pouring into the ship.

Many of the passengers were already in their beds and 12-year-old Owen Carr from Co. Tyrone was thrown from his bunk. The iceberg had catastrophically damaged the ship, and Captain Harris surveyed the damage and ordered his crew to lower the lifeboats. Like many boats at that time, there were too few lifeboats for all the crew and passengers. (*Familiar story here of a later time*). After Captain Harris had given the order to his crew to abandon ship, they launched the two boats on deck, one a longboat about 20 ft to 24 ft in length, which had only oars and no rudder, the other a “jollyboat,” rounder and smaller, but more seaworthy. Several passengers came up on deck to ask what had happened. Instead of telling them the truth, Captain Harris and his crew assured them all was well and returned them below deck. One male passenger, though, discovered the truth and shouted down the hatch that the ship was sinking and panic broke out. It was abundantly clear that there was not enough space in the boats for all 65 passengers, and Captain Harris seemed to feel no responsibility for his guests.

Panic ensued as the boats were launched and the jollyboat had just eight sailors and one female passenger when it was lowered to the sea. People stampeded to reach the other boat and those with young children or too slow were left on deck. Young Owen Carr was pushed into the freezing ocean by another passenger. Three female passengers managed to get into the longboat, but one of the crew ordered them out. However, they refused and remained in the boat whilst it was lowered to the sea. Another teenager, Sarah Carr, had raced below deck to grab some warm clothing, but when she came back the boat had been launched and she jumped and landed on a sailor. She too was ordered out of the boat but managed to remain. A Scottish woman, **Margaret Edgar**, had managed to get three of her daughters into the longboat, but the fourth, **Isabella**, had fallen on the slippery deck and failed to get in. Hearing her child’s pitiful cries for help among the screams of the other 31 passengers still on the sinking ship, Mrs Edgar cried out for someone to save her daughter. A Swedish sailor, Alexander Holmes, climbed back up a rope and found Isabella among the petrified huddle of passengers. He hoisted her on his shoulders and was about to carry her down the rope when he was accosted by a doctor’s wife from Ireland, travelling with her three young children. She offered Holmes as much money as he could earn in a month if he would save her life, even though she would be abandoning her children. Holmes refused and carried Isabella Edgar to the boat.

The two boats pulled further from the sinking ship, and around midnight the anguished cries of those left on the William Brown stopped and the freezing air was filled with an eerie silence. The ship sank soon after. There had been 20 children, 7 women and 4 men still on board. The captain never attempted to try to rescue anyone and the two boats were now alone in the Atlantic 250 miles from the Newfoundland coast. The First Mate Francis Rhodes was in charge of the longboat, which was greatly overcrowded with 32 passengers. The longboat was also leaking from the bung and rudder-less. Captain Harris in the jollyboat refused to take more people though there was plenty of room. Having given Rhodes a compass and chart, Harris sailed off in the jollyboat, with his crew and one passenger, heading for Newfoundland, leaving the sail-less, rudder-less longboat alone. Abandoned by his captain, Rhodes seemed to lose hope. That first day the passengers bailed as the crew rowed. Rain pelted down on the shivering passengers and Rhodes feared that waves would swamp the overcrowded boat.

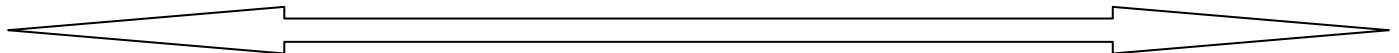
What followed next was like something out of a horror movie. A young man, Owen Riley was told to stand up. They grabbed hold of him and realising what was coming, Riley begged Margaret

Edgar – who was clearly a favourite of the crew – to help him. Unable to stop what was happening, Holmes pitched him overboard into the freezing water. The other passengers fell into a state of terror and became immobile with fear. The next victim, Scot James Todd, was pitched overboard without protest. James MacAvoy was next, followed by George Duffy, begging for his life.

The longboat was now 38 stone lighter. If it had been in danger of sinking, it certainly wasn't then, as the prosecutors argued at the subsequent trial. But the sailors, seemingly driven by a murderous lust, carried on killing. They seized Frank Askins, travelling with his two sisters. One sister cried that if they threw her brother over, they should throw her over after him. Unmoved, the sailors threw all three to their deaths. At the end of the spree, only two men were spared, at Holme's insistence, because they had their wives with them. At dawn the next day, the crew discovered two men hiding in the stern. They were dragged out and thrown into the sea. There had been 16 deaths.

Half an hour later, they caught sight of a ship and were hauled on board. Several days later Captain Harris's jollyboat was rescued. They were all taken to France, where the ships were headed. The French authorities showed no interest in prosecuting the crew, who scattered. But, when the passengers finally reached America and recounted their horrific tale, the authorities, under pressure from the Irish expat community, had to act. Alexander Holmes was the only sailor who could be found, so he was put on trial for murder, reduced to manslaughter on the high seas. No other members of the crew were tried for their role, not even Captain Harris, who abandoned 31 helpless passengers to an appalling death.

The case captivated the public in Britain and America. Would the crew have tried harder to save the passengers had they been wealthy, rather than mostly poor immigrants? How could Holmes, who had risked his life to save young Isabella Edgar, have turned within hours into the ruthless murderer of so many? Were the sailors justified in taking lives to save their own? The prosecution countered that the killings were neither necessary nor just.



Does anybody know about Herbie Edgar, WWII photographer in Belfast?

[www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-26818893](http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-26818893)

Who were his parents? Who else was he related to?

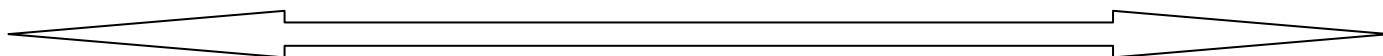


*Herbie Edgar*



## Picture time

This was sent from **Antony Edgar**, the Keithock Edgar coat of arms carved in wood. Note the initials at bottom, for **David Edgar** and **Katharine Forrester**, his distant ancestors. **David** and **Katharine** were the parents of **Alexander** and **Thomas**, recounted above. **David** was the builder of Keithock (see photo on the next page).





**Keithock**, near Brechin, north of Dundee, Scotland.

That's **SteveUK** at left speaking with the owner's housekeeper.

Photo taken when we visited the manor house in 2010. One day soon, I hope to go back.



Finally, **Jodie** has recently been reading (and recommends) a new book by Gregory Clark, *The Son Also Rises: Surnames and the History of Social Mobility*. From the jacket notes: While it has been argued that rigid class structures have eroded in favor of greater social equality, *The Son Also Rises* proves that movement on the social ladder has changed little over eight centuries... **Jodie** says it makes following the **Edgar** lines even more interesting!