



EDGAR EVENTS

**Researching and sharing Edgar family
history No. 91, August 2014**



DNA Update



by James Edgar (james@jamesedgar.ca)

We have results for **Edward Edgar** of New Hampshire's DNA test. Interestingly, he's an R1b, but not related to any Edgars on the FTDNA database. There are four people named Mayberry who do show as related, so perhaps there's another family mixed in there.

James Eager, who had joined our group last month, has his results—

His most distant ancestor is **John Thurmond**, d. 1828, Sumner, Tennessee. This is interesting, because **James** is in Haplogroup J, of which we had only one other while testing at Ancestry.com. The interesting part is that Haplogroup J originates in the Middle East—the Fertile Crescent. This short article from Wikipedia tells about it:

J-M172

Main article: Haplogroup J-M172 (Y-DNA)

Haplogroup J-M172 [Phylogenetics 3] is found in the highest concentrations in the Caucasus and the Fertile Crescent/Iraq and is found throughout the Mediterranean (including the Italian, Balkan, Anatolian and Iberian peninsulas and North Africa).

The highest ever reported concentration of J-M172 was 72% in Northeastern Georgia. Other high reports include Ingush 32%, Cypriots 30-37%, Lebanese 30%, Assyrian, Mandeian and Arab Iraqis 29.7%, Syrians and Syriacs 22.5%, Kurds 24%-28%, Iranians 23%, Ashkenazi Jews 24%, Palestinian Arabs 16.8%-25%, Sephardic Jews 29% and North Indian Shia Muslim 18%, Chechens 26%, Balkars 24%, Yaghnobis 32%, Armenians 21-24%, and Azerbaijanis 24%-48%.

So, you might well ask, "How did he get to the USA?" Even better yet, if he's like the other J type we have, "How did he get to the UK before that?" There's obviously more here to explore—stay posted....

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We received this email just a few days ago, from **Kris Edgar** in Australia.

Hi Steve.

I was just browsing the net looking into my last name and I came across your site.

I actually had a 20 marker Y-DNA test completed through Genebase about 6 years ago. My Haplogroup was predicted to be R1b.

I have attached a picture with some more detailed results.

As far as I know my family migrated to Australia from Scotland sometime but I do not really know a lot about it.

If you would like any more information or if you have anything you think could be of interest to me please let me know.

Sincerely,  
Kris Edgar

And, we received this from **Stewart Edgar**'s uncle **Hugh** (readers may recall **Stewart** is in South Africa and has previously appeared in the newsletter a couple of times):

Hi James,

I was given your web-site by my nephew Stewart, and having done a little research in my family history, I thought I would get in touch, it maybe of interest to you, and perhaps other members of the Edgar Clan.

My Name is Hugh McNeil Edgar, (b 02/11/1937) Cumnock, Ayrshire.

I have attached part of my research into both paternal and maternal lines.

I have also added a couple of photos on of my father (Isaac Miller Edgar) in his army uniform and the other of my immediate family.



Back row; l to r. Hugh McNeil Edgar; Thomas Stewart Edgar (b 08/12/1934; d. 12/06/1992); Guthrie Edgar (b 08/08/1931; d 21/10/2005)  
Front row; l to r. Ann Collins Edgar (b 14/08/1946); Agnes Porteous Edgar (b 09/09/1936).

All dates are day/month/year.

Regards,  
Hugh Edgar.

I was doing some networking on Ancestry.com on Saturday, July 26, sending invitations to several people with **Edgar** interests. One of the responses was from **Glen** and **Pearl Edgar** of Eminence, Missouri. **Pearl** wrote that they had attended an **Edgar** reunion last May, and were looking forward to another one next year. They willingly shared their tree with us—more research... ☺

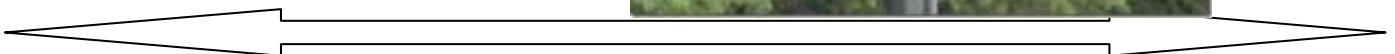
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Picture time

I took this shot of Mt. Baker (which is in Washington State) from the Dominion Astrophysical Observatory on Vancouver Island.



Bud Edgar, *The Comedy Cowboy* from Calgary, sent these photos from his recent visit to Turner Valley, Alberta. He says that Robert and George were the founder's sons, but the Town Hall has no information for whom Edgar Avenue is named.



Myth or Fact?



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

Ever since I started research into my origins, I have read the stories and listened to the rumours and myths surrounding the origins and events within the Edgar family over the years. The stories relate to:

- Robert the Bruce's best man?
- Who helped Robert the Bruce at Dumfries Abbey?
- The four Edgar brothers at the Battle of the Boyne
- Connections to James Edward Stuart and Bonnie Prince Charlie
- Our coats of Arms

The main contributor to these stories can be traced to J.H. Lawrence-Archer, 1823-1889. His mother was Mary Edgar, 1802-1831, the daughter of Alexander Edgar and Ann Gordon, who owned a sugar plantation in Trelawney, Jamaica. The parents were born in Edinburgh and look very likely to have been descendants of the Edgars of Wedderlie. The family left Jamaica in about 1833 when Britain abolished slavery.

Lawrence-Archer was a prodigious writer and numerous books are attributed to him. He looked to be a very thorough researcher. However, he did not have the benefit of the Internet and DNA to support his findings. It therefore seems reasonable to not wholly accept his findings on face value—they leave a small element of doubt open.

1) Robert the Bruce's best man.

On page 4 of the book *An Account of the Sirname Edgar* (hereafter referred as AAotSE), it states clearly that Richard Edgar was a witness. It doesn't give a source for this record. See below:

Towards the close of the thirteenth century an Edgar, Laird of Wedderlie, appears to have been married to a Countess of Home; and immediately afterwards, the fortune of this House seems to have reached the summit of its prosperity, in the reign of King Robert the Bruce, at whose marriage Richard Edgar was a witness. One of the latter's four sons was placed by David Bruce, at the head of the Clan McGowan; and Wedderlie itself seems to have been resigned to a younger brother,—probably the king's godson.

SIR RICHARD EDGAR, of Wedderlie, appears amongst the witnesses at the second marriage of King Robert the Bruce. He himself, subsequently, (as shown more fully elsewhere in this work) by his marriage with the elder of the two co-heiresses of Robert de Ros, Lord of Sanquhar, acquired a moiety of that barony, including the castle of Sanquhar, and thus established himself powerfully in Nithsdale and the adjacent country.*

and from the Edgar Society Newsletters 1938:

***Richard** Edgar, a witness at the second marriage of King Robert, the Bruce; appears to have been the first Edgar Laird of Wedderlie (Reg. Great Seal of Scotland, 1327), an estate formerly in the possession of the Polwarth family. He married Isabella, elder daughter and co-heiress of Robert de Rous, Lord of Sanquhar in Galloway. Isabella de Rous was a descendant of William the Lion, King of Scotland, and her children were thus nearly related to the competitors for the Scottish Crown. Richard and Isabella Edgar had issue five sons:*

Robert the Bruce, 1274-1329, was King of Scotland from 1306 until his death in 1329. His first wife was Isabella of Mar, his second was Elizabeth de Burgh, whom he married in 1302, before he took the throne. I can find no supporting evidence for or against Richard Edgar being the best man. Lawrence-Archer clearly states Edgar was a witness, I see no reason to doubt this.

2) Dumfries Abbey story

Taken from the Edgar Society Newsletter No. 4:

*In this manuscript from Lawrence-Archer, it would appear that the scholarly writer has taken **a short flight of fancy** and woven a most interesting and picturesque theory as to the possible circumstances that brought about the inclusion of the legend "Maun do it" in the armorial device of Edgar of Wedderlie.*

Lawrence-Archer, a painstaking and careful investigator, makes no claim to fact, but from the many authorities he quotes, he draws clever deductions and presents a convincing case and a fascinating picture with a ready appeal to the reader's imagination.

*He takes us back to that tragic incident, the slaughter of the Red Comyn, and quotes the crest and motto of the Kirkpatrick family, "a hand grasping a dagger with goutts of blood," and the motto "I make sure," and draws attention to the similarity between this heraldic device and that of Edgar of Wedderlie, remarking that there are "equal, if not superior grounds for attributing" the Edgar motto to this incident than that of Kirkpatrick. Space permits no lengthy quotation, but after painting out the circumstances in which Sir Richard Edgar stood at that time and his relationship with Bruce, he graphically describes what **may** have taken place at the slaughter of Sir John Comyn at the high altar of the church in Dumfries in February 1305-1306.*

"Hastening with his retainers on that cold morning in February 1306 to the castle of Loshmaben to ascertain the cause of the Bruce's sudden return from the English Court, we may readily picture the sombre Knight of Wedderlie, Lord of Nithsdale, in earnest consultation with the hero and his brother on the urgency of the occasion.... There stands the knight in his linked coat of mail, plated gauntlets and triangular shield suspended round his neck. It is sable and bears the white lion rampant of Dunbar with the legend "Salutem disponit Deus." His helmet of steel, conical and covered with a hood and collar of mail, does not yet bear a crest. From his hauberk downwards, his stalwart limbs are shod in flexible armour. On one side, secured by the knightly belt, is a long, broad falchion and on the other is a short dagger.

Deeply attentive to the Bruce's recital of his wrongs and account of the deceit of "Longshape" (the injustice of whose pretensions must have been so familiar) and while the illustrious brothers earnestly debated the question and yet hesitated to incur the peril of renouncing their enforced allegiance, the taciturn knight, deeply impressed with the importance of a

speedy decision, may have turned the scale by involuntarily clutching his dagger and muttering with deep emotion "Maun do it."

Or... Edgar, at first horror stricken and standing alone, may have been suddenly struck (since the deed could not be undone) with the duty of throwing all his energies into the cause of the future King, and already penitent friend, and, with the fierce exclamation "Maun dir it" (although abhorrent of murder), may have rushed into the church and joined the fray.

At all events, we know sufficient to be assured that, after the slaughter of the Red Comyn, Sir Richard Edgar was regarded with especial consideration by the Bruce."

The truth will never be known, but Lawrence-Archer says there is every reason to believe that the motto and crest of the family "originated during the heroic struggle of Robert the Bruce," and we are indebted to him for throwing much light on the age and probable origin of the armoury of the Edgars of Wedderlie.

This from Wikipedia:-

According to Barbour, Comyn betrayed his agreement with Bruce to King Edward I, and when Bruce arranged a meeting for 10 February 1306 with Comyn in the Chapel of Greyfriars Monastery in Dumfries and accused him of treachery, they came to blows. Bruce killed Comyn in Dumfries before the high altar. The Scotichronicon says that on being told that Comyn had survived the attack and was being treated, two of Bruce's supporters, Roger de Kirkpatrick uttering the words "I mak siccar ("I make sure") and John Lindsay, went back into the church and finished Bruce's work. Barbour however tells no such story. Regardless, for Bruce the 'die was cast' at the moment in Greyfriars and he had no alternative except to become king or a fugitive, Bruce asserted his claim to the Scottish crown and began his campaign by force for the independence of Scotland.

There is no mention in either account that Richard Edgar was physically present at the killing of the Red Comyn. In fact, the author of the work from the Society Newsletters describes clearly that Lawrence-Archer fanaticizes at what **MAY** have happened.

I don't doubt that Sir Richard Edgar had a very close affinity with Robert the Bruce and he may well have suggested, coaxed, or encouraged Bruce to go to the meeting, kill the Red Comyn, and take the throne. But, I'm not convinced that he was actually present. Had he have been there, then Lawrence-Archer would have clearly recorded it as so. I do believe that the advice given to Bruce by Edgar was very highly regarded and, as such, Edgar was rewarded.

Had Edgar been present, I'm sure that he would have joined in the melee with Roger de Kirkpatrick and Lindsay and stabbed Comyn as well. There is no blood on the Edgar knife, this fact must bear some significance.

3) Edgar brothers / McKee brothers

This oft-repeated story relates to the origins of the Edgars in Ireland. In fact, we now know that the Edgars in Ireland are not all the same family. All four DNA groups are represented in the province; they all, however, do have their origins in Scotland.

Our story goes that four Edgar brothers left their farms with a McKee to fight at the Battle of the Boyne in 1690. One family was rewarded with land near Saintfield and lived there with the

McKee; another two Edgars were rewarded with land elsewhere and the last Edgar stayed in the army.

From research that James and I have done on the McKee family in Killaney, Boardmills, in Co. Down, (near Saintfield) the McKees came from the Newton Stewart area. The reason we know this is that the McKees named their farms after locations near to Newton Stewart and the area is full of McKees in the graveyard and still living there.

The first record comes from a book written in the USA by Professor James McKee in 1892 :-

The fourth settled in Lisban, near Saintfield, County Down, with a fellow-soldier named Edgar, both of whom have many descendants in the neighborhood still, who have inter-married for several generations. This soldier-pioneer, whose name was probably Hugh, had settled, built his house, married, and possibly had some children born to him before the year 1700. On the Lisban road, going from Lough Henney to Saintfield, about half a mile after crossing the Belfast road, your attention will be attracted towards the right by an ivy-covered gable, which is all that remains standing of the original Edgar house. If you should go about a quarter of a mile farther on towards Saintfield, and turn to the left where the road from Tonaghmore to Carricknaveagh crosses the Lisban road, you will see the remains of the old McKee house, about a hundred feet from the crossroads, and on the left-hand side. The front wall is still standing, and is used as a fence between the road and the field. You are now on land once granted by the Crown to the pioneer for his services in the cause of the Protestant succession. If you are a "Logstown McKee," or a descendant of David McKee,

Extract from a History of the Family of David McKee, by Prof James McKee 1892

This second from Lawrence-Archer:[Neither version clearly states the terms of reference and there is no confirmation from living descendants nor reference to previous records.] The two stories have the same basic facts, modified by word of mouth over the years. I have been in contact with the McKee family from a modern researcher who has named Alexander and Grizel McKee from Penninghame and Minnigaf with a son Hugh McKee born in 1668. He had five

sons, four of whom moved out of the Killaney area, leaving John McKee in Killaney. John McKee's daughter, Margaret, 1723-1773, married John E. Edgar, son of Robert Edgar born around 1670 in Scotland.

Edgars in Ireland.

A BRANCH of the Scottish (Dumfries) Edgars is settled in Ireland. The family tradition is, that four Edgars, brothers, came to Ulster in the earlier part of the reign of William III., of whom one joined the army, and another settled near Castlewally, county Down, where his descendants remain, now spelling the name with a *phonetic* variation. A third settled in the district of Ards, and the fourth near Gilford, where they held several farms, and where the name has become localized.

Of this last branch there were two brothers, one of whom—the Presbyterian minister of Loughagony, was father of the Rev. Dr. S. O. Edgar, the author of a learned work on Popery; and the other, father of the Rev. — Edgar, Presbyterian Professor of Divinity at Belfast, and father of the late Rev. John Edgar, D.D., LL.D., Professor of Divinity at Belfast, Vice-President of Belfast College, an eminent leader in the Temperance movement and other salutary reforms. He died in 1866, aged sixty-nine.

Extract from An Account of the Surname Edgar by J H Lawrence-Archer 1873

Hugh McKee and Robert Edgar are the correct two names quoted as the “other one” in both the family stories; it appears this bit bears some truth. The McKees had many sons in the next generation, which might explain the four brothers—maybe?

The origin of the Edgars is “Robert Edgar from Scotland.”

Delma Edgar (wife of Steve Edgar) from Vancouver Island, British Columbia, sent me this a while ago:

*Frank Fox of Ballynahinch in a letter to Mrs. Henderson of Kilkeel (a correspondend of mine) stated that a Robert Edgar joined the army of King William III in Scotland. He embarked from Kirkcudbright with his friend, **Hugh McKee**, and fought at the Boyne (1690), and Aughrim (1691), under **General James Douglas**; and afterwards settled in Lisbane, near Saintfield. Some Edgar descendants were buried in the old Kilaney Graveyard at Loughinney.*

Again, no mention of four brothers, but their point of departure from Scotland is clear enough!

The reference to Loughinney (Lough Henny) is incorrect. The Old Killaney graveyard overlooks Bow Lough. I know this for fact as it took James and me some time searching Lough Henny with no result!

If I were forced to choose a version as being correct, I'd go with the McKee story (but that's based on opinion rather than fact).

4) connections to James Edward Stuart and Bonnie Prince Charlie

This is much simpler and easy to prove.

James Edgar was the secretary to James Edward Stuart 1688-1766, the *Old Pretender* to the English throne.



James Edward Stuart was the son of King James II. He, King James, was deposed in 1688 when William of Orange was crowned. James was the last Roman Catholic King of England. The Battle of the Boyne was fought between King James and William of Orange—the battle secured William as a Protestant King and also secured the Protestant power hold in Northern Ireland.

James Edgar, described as “the younger son of a poor Scottish Laird” was the principal secretary to James Edward Stuart for 50 years. James’ line is that of the Keithock Edgars of Brechin, Scotland.

This is a well-documented association and has numerous stories of their association in the book *Genealogical Collections Concerning the Scottish House of Edgar* published in 1873 by the Grampian Society.

A story from this book is that William Walpole, the Prime Minister of Britain, fearing an uprising, sought to bribe James Edgar into betraying the Old Pretender. The price kept going up until it reached £10,000. Once the money had been made accessible, James Edgar took the cash

and deposited it at the feet of his master, James Edward Stuart. He was so truly impressed with this act of loyalty that he bestowed many gifts to James Edgar. These gifts and other treasures are still in Edgar hands in Toronto.

The bribe of £10,000 has to be put into perspective. A working tradesman in 1700 earned about £1 per week. The equivalent now would be £500. In modern terms, this bribe would have been worth about £5 million.

I have pdf copies of the books by the Grampian Society, by J.H. Lawrence-Archer, and by the McKee family. Email me for a copy.

5) The Edgar coat of Arms.

From Lawrence-Archer's book on page 2, the coat of arms used by the Edgars is as below

"In the shire of Berwick," says Nisbet, "besides the Homes, there were other ancient families of different surnames, who carried lions rampant in variation of tinctures, from the old Earls of Dunbar and March; whether upon the account of descent from that eminent family, or, as vassals, carried lions in imitation of those of their patrons, I shall not be positive, as the Hepburns, Rentons, and of the name of Edgar who held their lands of the old Earls of Dunbar.

"The principal family of the name of Edgar there, is Edgar of Wadderlie, yet extant, who carried for their proper arms—*Sable*, a lion rampant *argent*."



The above translated gives a black shield with a silver lion (rampant) on it. The drawing style of the lion is irrelevant as is the angle of the shield.

The Homes referred to are of a family name pronounced "Hume."

This motif was inherited from the Earls of Dunbar and can therefore be attributed to the Edgars of Wedderlie.

† "The family of Cospatrick, a powerful Northumbrian nobleman, took refuge in Scotland after the death of Harold at Hastings, and in 1072 had extensive lands in the Merse and Lothian gifted them by Malcolm Canmore. They continued to be one of the most opulent and powerful Houses in the east of Scotland for a considerable period, as evinced by their donations, noted in the chartularies of Coldingham, Newbottle, Dryburgh, Kelso,

The Cospatrick family above are from Northumbria and are potentially either Viking or Saxon origin.

When Sir Richard Edgar married the daughter of Robert de Ros of Sanquar, he inherited the lands of Sanquar.

In consequence of this alliance, the Edgars quartered the arms of Ros of Sanquhar, namely *Asure*, † three water budgets, *or*, as might have been seen until a comparatively recent period, sculptured over the entrance to the manor house of Wedderlie,—but whether facing the Lammermoor, or the Moorfoot hills, is uncertain, owing to the alterations which have been made in the edifice.‡

The words “water budgets” from a heraldic dictionary **water bouget**, [boo-jit] noun 1. (formerly) a leather bag suspended at each end of a pole or yoke and used for carrying water.



Its heraldic symbol is at left. Not very obvious as a pole or yoke with leather bags used for carrying water!



This is the family crest for the Ros of Sanquhar family.

Translated from above, a silver ground with three water budgets in gold.



These two crests are taken from old documents, which now make sense.

“The Edgars quartered the arms of Ros of Sanquhar.”

The Edgar motif, being the lion, is shared with the water budgets of Ros of Sanquhar in a quartered pattern.



We now know the origins of the crest used by J.H. Lawrence-Archer. It is the crest of Sir Richard Edgar, who became the owner of the lands of Sanquhar.

There is now an obvious error in that Lawrence-Archer describes this crest as being the one above the door that was defaced when the last Edgar of Wedderlie left the premises.

If you look at this photograph that I took of the doorway at Wedderlie, at the bottom below the defacing, the Edgar lion is present, but the water budgets are not.

Whatever the symbol is, it's not a water budget!

I have looked at various heraldic Web sites and not been able to interpret it.

What it will be is the family crest of a woman who married an Edgar and resided in Wedderlie in 1691.

Guesses as to who she was on a postcard to me please!

The question is "Which is the crest that you can use as an Edgar?"



The crest at left is the oldest Edgar crest—the silver lion on a black background.

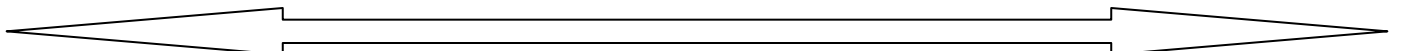
Unless you can clearly identify which particular Edgar line you are from, and identify that particular line, then it is the original and safest to use.

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### 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)



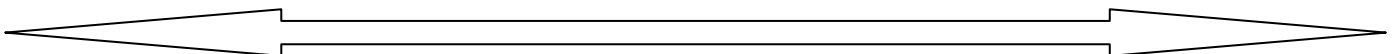
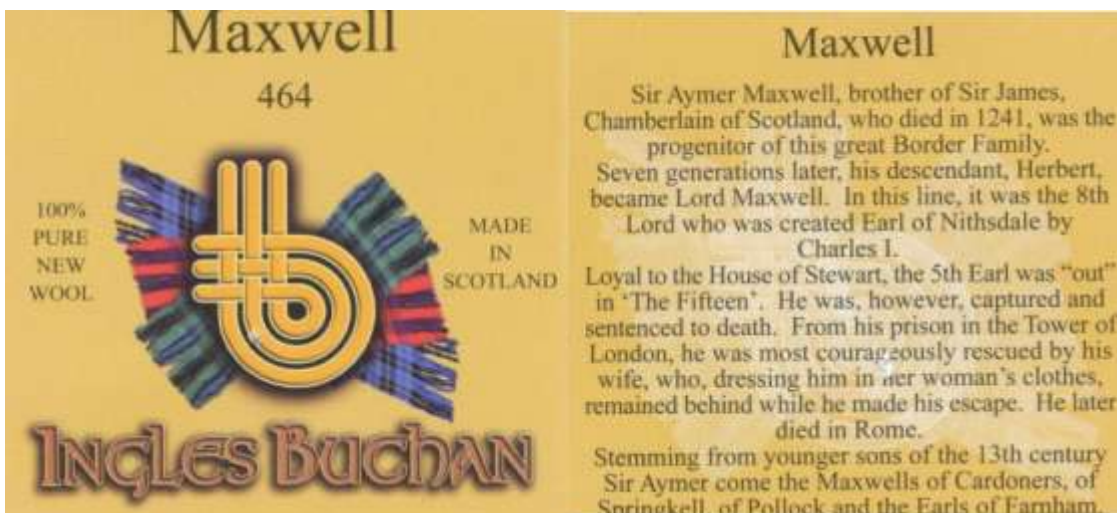




*"Kate" and "The Queen" help me celebrate my recent appointment to  
President of The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada  
In Victoria, B.C. — photo by Doug Montgomery, Vancouver*

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I ordered a scarf and tie combo from Scotland in the Maxwell tartan. This tag was on the apparel. Clan Maxwell is the parent clan; the Edgars are a sept of the clan (see <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sept>).



[Ed: This from **Richard** seems entirely appropriate, since August 4 commemorates 100 years since the outbreak of The Great War.]

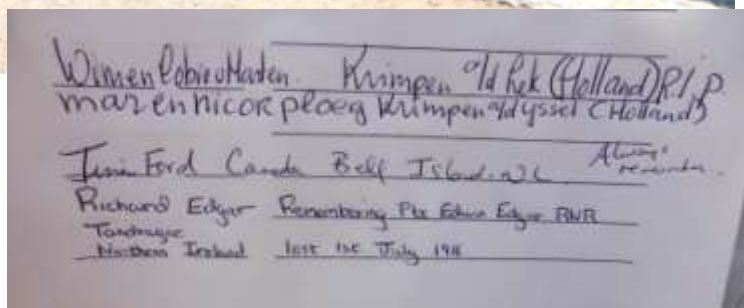
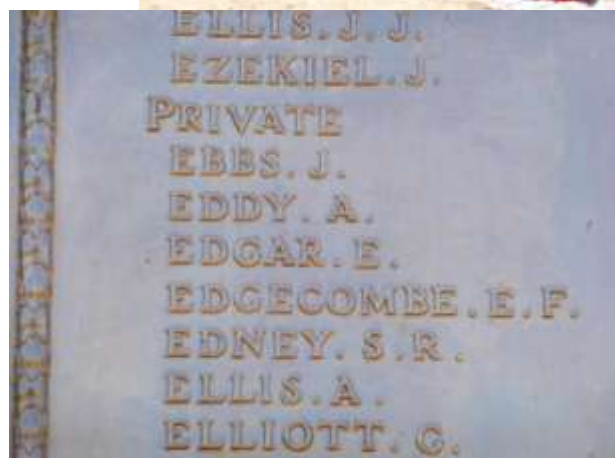


From Richard Edgar of Tandragee
(edgar888@yahoo.com)

James / Steve

Just a quick one as you both are posting "Canada Remembers" pictures. This year, as I have done for a number of years now, whenever I visit a war cemetery or memorial with an Edgar in it or on it, I always sign the visitor's book. See attached from the Newfoundland Memorial on the Somme.

Richard



I got this from Glen Wurden, a descendent of James S. Edgar (born April 1787, in Pennsylvania), sent because he knows I'm "into" astronomy:

You might like my new toy!

10-inch RCOS Ritchie-Chrétien [Optical System] on Titan mount....photo in the moonlight.

Glen A. Wurden



NGC 4565 is an edge-on spiral galaxy about 30 to 50 million light-years away in the constellation Coma Berenices.