



Camrose

Roots and Shoots

Newsletter of the Camrose Branch of the Alberta Genealogical Society

Volume 1

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Welcome to the very first issue of what we hope will become a quarterly newsletter of branch happenings and information about tracing your ancestors! We need your input. For starters, we have submissions by three of our members, as well as a brief outline of our branch, some trivia and helpful hints.

Our meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month in the boardroom of Camrose Public Library at 7:30 P.M. New members and guests are always welcome. Genealogy is the fastest growing leisure time activity today!

Executive

President Sherran Dermott

Vice-president Norm Prestage

Secretary Diane Shields

Treasurer John Stoddart

Librarian Bev Webster

Newsletter committee:

Fay Carlson

Norm Prestage

Jack Cunningham

We are a branch of the Alberta Genealogical Society, based in Edmonton. Memberships run from January 1 to December 31. All members are entitled to receive each issue of "Relatively Speaking," the regular publication of the Society and all Camrose branch

members will receive this Newsletter. As this is our first issue, we are in the learning stage. We need and welcome any entries that may be of interest to our members.

Some Countries that our members are researching:

Canada, U.S.A., England, Scotland, Ireland, Germany, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Iceland, Africa, Australia, Poland, and Ukraine.

You know you're getting old.....when you visit your old home town, buy one of those "Our Town in Old Photos" books, open it up and there is your class photo from grade four.



"The linking of the generations, the historical lineage of family, the sharing of this love..... give purpose to life"

Useful web sites

<http://www.cpcug.org/user/jlacombe/terms.html>

This has a listing of old occupations, many

now archaic. Not a complete list, but helpful. Worth checking.

www.archive.ca/02/020153

This has the census for 1906 for Alberta, Sask., and Man. and links to homestead records.

www.sweggate.com

This is a site that has links to Scandinavia, births, census and parish records. Very complete.

<http://genealogicalstudies.com>

This site offers a free course on-line to get you started.

www.familysearch.org

Very useful to check out family names.

<http://digitalarkivet>

Site that will help you search Norway and past records.

paa@gov.ab.ca

The Provincial Archives in Edmonton are at 8555 Roper Road. There are volunteer staff who will assist you in looking for Alberta records, such as homestead papers. Ph. 780 427 1750.

Wetaskiwin now has a Family History Center, phone 780 352 7933. Their address is 5410 36th Ave. No mail requests.

On 26 of February, 2004, our local branch gave a course at the Camrose Library on, "Seeking Scandinavian Ancestors", as requested by the Camrose Library. Although there was a small attendance, all agreed that it was very helpful and interesting.

Fay Carlson

Genealogy Pox

Epidemiology: Warning! Mature adults are usually susceptible.

Symptoms: Chronic, insatiable compulsion to search for names, dates and places. Patient

has blank expression, sometimes utterly ignoring spouse and children. Perceived to have no desire for work of any kind, except feverishly looking for records at libraries and courthouses. Has an irresistible urge to write letters. Swears at the mailman when he doesn't leave mail. Often frequents strange places such as cemeteries and remote country areas. Makes secret early morning and/or weekend telephone calls. Hides phone bill from spouse. Mumbles to self. Has a strange far-away look in the eyes.

Treatment: Medication is useless. Disease is not fatal, however gets progressively worse. Patient should attend genealogy workshops, subscribe to genealogical magazines and be given a quiet corner in the house where he or she can be alone and not disturbed.

Warning: Patient is harmless, almost never violent. However, when you tell them everything, they always want to know more!

Prognosis: Guarded. There is no known cure. The usual nature of this disease is..... the sicker the patient gets, the more he or she enjoys it!

How Do You Live Your Dash?

I read of a man who stood to speak At the funeral of a friend,

He referred to the dates on her tombstone from the beginning to the end. He noted that first came her date of birth and spoke the following date with tears, (1934 — 1998).

But he said what mattered most of all was the dash between those years.

For the dash represents all the time

That she spent alive on earth...

And now only those who loved her

Know what that little line is worth.

For it matters not, how much we own;

The cars, the house, the cash,

What matters is how we live and love

And how we spend our dash.

So think about this long and hard...
Are there things you'd like to change?
For you never know how much time is left,
That can still be rearranged.
If we could slow down enough
To consider what's true and real,
And always try to understand
The way other people feel.
And be less quick to anger,
And show appreciation more
And love the people in our lives
Like we've never loved before.
If we treat each other with respect,
And more often wear a smile...
Remembering that this special dash
Might only last a little while.
So, when your eulogy's being read
With your life's actions to rehash...
Would you be proud of the things
they say
About how you spent your dash?

Author unknown.

Submitted by Diane Shields.

"Pearls From The Past"

Written by Fay Edenloff Carlson.

I am just starting on my journey to the past, but when I have uncovered new information, I feel like I have discovered gold! Genealogy is history, social studies, math, geography and English all rolled into one. Everyone has a past and history that is unique. I am researching the Ruggles family on my mother's side and the Edenloff family from father's family. Some information has been free, some costly. I have used the internet, the postal service, phone and personal visits as my tools.

My cousin, Sharon Fehr, compiled Ruggles history into a book, called, "Preachers, Politicians and other Storytellers". I

discovered that a niece of one of our direct ancestors, Bathsheba Ruggles Spooner, was tried, convicted and hanged for the murder of her husband, Joshua Spooner, in Massachusetts, U.S.A., in the year 1778. The three men she had hired to kill her husband were executed with her. She left three small children, the youngest three years old. She will go down in history as the last woman to be executed for murder in Massachusetts.

I have found Generals, Sergeants, Senators and lawyers. My current project is to prove the Ruggles connection to the Mayflower, so that I can become a member of the Mayflower Society.

One thrilling discovery was when I found Great-grandfather's 1876 homestead record from Minnesota. I was able to print a copy of that original record. My great-grandfather, Peter, left his family in Sweden in 1868, came to Minnesota, America, with his oldest son, Peter. He was 49 years old and his son was 19. Old Peter returned to Sweden, but left for America again in 1873. This time, he brought with him our Grandfather Nils, 20 years old, and Nil's sister, Dorethea, who was 14. Our Great-grandmother, Martha, stayed in Sweden, with the youngest, Sigrid, who was three years old when her father left the first time. These two never came to America!

I made contact with the relatives of Sigrid in Sweden. After I finished writing and printing a book about the family in 2003, I took it to Sweden. I met and stayed with the newly found relatives. What an incredible experience to be welcomed like this! I have been told that my visit has brought them closer to each other. Hopefully this connection will continue and grow.

I have lots to learn and know it takes time and patience, but it is worth it. Try to find out all that you can from all the older members of the family, before it is too late. Remember, when an old person dies, it is as if a library has burned down.

Finding Killymallagh

By Jack and Sheila Cunningham

On a visit to Ireland a few years ago, we made a tour by car to the northern part of the island, where we were able to locate, in the space of one day, the farm on which my Dad, Alexander Cunningham, was born. This was so quickly successful that the story is worth telling.

To start we had two pieces of information:

1. The birth registration for Alex. Which is shown below. "Killymalagh", is given as the residence of the parents; Alexander Cunningham and Mary Chambers. It is registered in the District of Glendermot in the County of Londonderry.

2. A description of the family farm at Killymallagh. This was part of a story that had been told by Alex when he was an old man remembering things he had seen before he was seven years old. Particularly significant was his mention of the "burns" near the farm, and especially, a waterfall on one of them.

When Alex was living in a retirement home¹ in Saskatoon, he wrote a number of stories of his past. These took the form of letters and were written as if he were back at the places being described². In one of them, the farm at Killymallagh is described in such detail that we were able to locate the site of it and identify many of the landmarks he talked about. The relevant letter is given next, in his words.

Letter From Derry:

I was born in Londonderry in the year 1865, March 26th. We had a beautiful farm of about 190 acres, Canadian measurement, a couple of miles from Derry, with a very large burn, or Creek running through the whole farm making a boundary on the north side of it and another

smaller burn called Gradys Glen (?) on the east side which continues around and down to connect with the large burn, surrounding the farm with water, especially in wet weather.

It was a beautiful farm. There were seven of us children (as we were before we started for Canada), 2 oldish boys 19 and 23, another 17 and one 15, me 7, David 1 and one girl (Dear Margaret!³). The older boys used to go down to the big burn which ran through and catch fish when they wished. I was down with John one day and watched him. He just watched till a big trout dashed under a stone and put his hand in after it and turned stone and fish both over together. We used to be so afraid of the witches and fairies that we would not go near where the witches and fairies were. The burn made such queer noises and was so high in the banks, and so gloomy and dark in places and was used to scare us. It was full of nut trees and eatable fruits. The larger burn was gloomy and mysterious as it passes along the bottom of the long brae, where it is enclosed in a long tunnel of rock and plunges down to the lower creek with a fall of about 38 ft. just before it leaves our farm. This big creek is called the McDermot Burn and comes from the mountains above the peat bogs and kilns. The main road from Derry passes up through the country and takes in all the little towns Lisniskie(?) Dunnaghadei(?), Killymallagh, Tirkevenny, Letterkenny, and others, and goes up to the Peat Bog so that the farmers can bring down all the peat they want and pile them in stacks at their houses for burning.

Our house was built of stone and had two large chimneys. Everyone could walk in around the peat fires and sit on the benches placed around the fire and get warm and dry. The meals were cooked with the aid of cranes swinging in and out as you wished over the fires and around the dances and parties we held in these large rooms and many a good and pleasant time passed. We had a beautiful large garden at the back of the house and a great blackthorn hedge all around

¹ The "Eventide Home", operated by the Salvation Army in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan in the 1940's and 50's.

² This proved to be such an excellent vehicle for recounting experiences that it is recommended to others trying to decide how to tell their stories.

³ Dad told me Margaret had died of typhoid fever before they left Ireland.

it, and planted with the prettiest flowers in it, lots of splendid cows and horses, poultry and all the other things. Looking from our house you could see Derry quite plainly and see the trains running alongside the River Foyle and the mountains at the back stretching away north to Lough Swilly and Scotland and south to Lough Erne and Killarney.

The old Stone Giant, called Finn MaCool, on

Our next step was at the Derry Central Library where a very helpful Librarian produced a book on names of Parishes and Town Lands. It listed Killymallaght⁴. Next she produced a still more detailed Ordinance Survey map (scale 1 Km to 1 cm)⁵. This map was so detailed that it even showed individual buildings. Both an "Upper Killymallaght" and a "Lower Killymallaght" are marked. They

No.	Date and Place of Birth.	Name (if any).	Sex.	Name and Surname and Dwelling Place of Father.	Name and Surname and Maiden Surname of Mother.	Rank or Profession of Father.	Signature, Qualification, and Residence of Informant.	When Registered.	Signature of Registrar.	Baptismal Name, if added after Registration of Birth, and Date.
313	Twenty-fifth March 1865 Killymallaght Clondermot	Alexander	Male	Alexander Cunningham Killymallaght	Mary Cunningham formerly Chamberlain	Farmer	Alexander Cunningham Father Killymallaght	Twenty-fifth April 1865	Houston Registrar	

top of the mountain is still looking towards Lough Swilly and the Grand Chair and Scotland, I suppose as he did when I seen him last, nearly 80 years ago, and the witches, banshees and fairies are still holding high carnival in the Witches Hole and fairy castles in the haunted fields, and the big raging torrent of a Burn which rushes past on stormy nights while the youngsters sit looking with fear in their every action and eyes around the big peat fire while the elders recite the terrible witches and fairies doings, as of old.

Alex. Cunningham, Saskatoon, 1949

We started our search at the Londonderry City Tourist Office, where a very knowledgeable and helpful man by the name of "Tom" told us there were only two waterfalls in the vicinity of Derry. One was to the south a few miles and the other was west, in Donegal. Tom did not know the name Killymallaght nor did he recognize the other names in Dad's letter, except for Letterkenny, which is a good sized town in Donegal, near where we were staying in a B & B at the time. He recommended a detailed map, Sheet 7 of the Ordinance Survey of Northern Ireland, showing Londonderry and its environs at a scale of 2 cm to 1 km. We purchased it.

are only a few houses each. A creek, called "Burn Gibbagh" is shown and a waterfall is marked. There is also another, smaller burn, joining it near the waterfall, all entirely consistent with the description given by Alex. The map has 10 metre elevation contour lines and their shape, at the location of the waterfall, is entirely consistent with a drop of 30 ft. or more, as described by Alex in his letter.

Following the roads shown on the maps we had obtained, we drove past the site the next day, and could see the banks of both burns and the location of the waterfall. A line of sight from the area, plotted on the contour map is consistent with the possibility of seeing the old city of Derry on its hill. The straight-line distance is about 7 km, which, we were told in Ireland, would be called a "couple" of

⁴ Killymallaght (the wood of the curses). Listed as on the S.W. boundary of the parish (Clondermot) and bounded on the N.E. by the burn Gibbagh & N.E. of Tirkeeveny. Area 571 acres.

⁵ We were told that Northern Ireland is perhaps the most surveyed land in the world. It was used by the British Army for the training of military surveyors because it has such varied terrain - and was available.

miles.

A number of towns are mentioned in the letter: Lisniskie(?) Dunnaghadei(?), Killymallagh, Tirkevenny and Letterkenny as being on the road from Derry. We did not locate the first one that he mentioned, but Donaghady, Killymallagh and Tirkevenny were all seen on signs on the road that goes past the area and leads into Derry. Letterkenny is not on this road, it is in Donegal. This mistake could easily be made under these circumstances.



The banks of the valley of the “burn” can be seen and the location of the waterfall can be inferred.

This part of Ireland, between the River Foyle and the Sperrin Mountains to the east, is quite hilly. The “mountains” are picturesque and rise up to about 400 metres (approx. 1,400 ft.). The land is crossed by several small rivers, or “burns” and is everywhere green and quite idyllic. Peat, which was once the principle source of fuel for heat and cooking, can still be found on the heights. “Derry”, Ireland’s third largest city, is not far away but the region is still, in the year 2000, quite rural in character. A picture of the area of the burn and the waterfall, taken from the road going past the farm is shown above.

At the time of our visit to the site, it was raining⁶ and it was not possible to go by foot to explore the banks of the burn so that we could actually see the waterfall. Even on a

⁶ It rained every one of the eight days we were in Ireland. There is a reason that it is called “The Emerald Isle”.

good day it would have been difficult, because of the thick hedgerows that border the road. As shown in the picture, the banks have the appearance of being quite steep. It is all quite consistent with Alex’s description of a waterfall of more than thirty feet. We are quite convinced that we found the farm described in his story.

Alexander Cunningham and Mary Chambers left Londonderry for the New World in the summer of 1872 aboard the S.S. Manitoban of the Allan Line. The ship’s Master was F. Archer. Alexander Sr. died⁷ only a few days out of port and was buried at sea. The new widow and her family arrived at the port of Quebec on Sept 21. The passenger list gives their names and ages: Mary, wife, 39, Robert, son 21, John, son 19, Mary Jane, spinster, 17, William, son 15, Samuel, child 10, Alexander, child, 7 and David, child, 1½. Alexander Sr. was said to be a mason⁸ on the passenger list although he was given as a tanner on his marriage registration. The family had intended to go to a farm at Meaford, Ontario, on the Georgian Bay, but now that had to be changed and they settled in Toronto to make the best of their difficult situation. The older boys looked for work and the younger ones were sent to school. Robert soon returned to Ireland to his previous job with the Irish Constabulary.

On arrival in Toronto they found temporary accommodation on Queen St. near Strachan Ave. Their first home in Toronto was at 37 Robinson Street, for “Widow Mary” is listed in the Toronto (Cherrier) Directory for 1873. This is just north of Queen and East of Bathurst and is in the neighbourhood in which the family would live for about forty years.

We have also researched their time in Toronto but that is another tale.

⁷ It is thought he died of Typhoid Fever but this is not documented.

⁸ “Mason” is slightly puzzling. It is possible that it refers to him being a member of the Masonic Lodge.