

ROOTS AND SHOOTS

February 2013

Camrose Genealogical Society

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2013 CGS Executive

President

Janine Carroll

Treasurer

Sharon Olsen

Secretary

Adele Goa

Librarian

Bev Webster

Editor

Joan Conley

Murphy's Genealogical Laws

You finally find your great-grandparents' wedding records and discover that the bride's father was named John Smith.

President's Message

Becoming the President of the Camrose Branch is a humbling experience. Last September I was very fortunate to attend the AGS Board Retreat in Edmonton – the experience was enlightening. I consider myself very fortunate to be given the Branch's confidence to represent them at this level; I will do my best to be a good representative.

At the same meeting that I became President, members chose a new format for the monthly meetings. I am really looking forward to facilitating this change. I would like to thank outgoing executive members; it gives me confidence to know that they are available and happy to help me through my presidency. I would also like to recognize the incoming executive, Sharon Olsen, Treasurer; Adele Goa, Secretary; Bev Webster and Joan Conley who are continuing in positions of Branch Librarian and Branch Newsletter Editor, respectively.

It's going to be a great year, good family hunting to all.

Janine Carroll, Incoming President
AGS, Camrose Branch

Tidbits

From local newspaper The Camrose Canadian – Feb. 10, 1943:

“MARRIAGE POSTPONED”

“Mr. and Mrs. F. Erickson had a cable from Selma stating that due to the new regulation in England, forbidding nurses to marry within a year after arrival there, her marriage has been postponed until June.”

From the newspaper for the American Expeditionary Forces (extracted from <http://fold3.com>)

“It was 1918, nearly the end of the First World War, and the Yanks were in France supporting their allies under Major General John J. ‘Blackjack’ Pershing.” Page from the newspaper for the American Expeditionary Forces: “A league has been formed in the U.S.A. by girls who have fiancés among Pershing's men still in France. The purpose of the Fiance Investigation League is to investigate the rumors concerning the many marriages of Yanks to French mademoiselles and to take all necessary steps to lessen the danger to the American army from the wicked, matrimonially-inclined maidens on this side of the pond.” One of the soldiers was even enlisted to aid the society by conducting their investigations for them in the American Expeditionary Forces overseas.

Random Acts of Kindness Week is Feb. 11-17, 2013.

The Life and Times of Maurice Perry- Abt. 1815-1885

Maurice Perry was baptised at Weston-All Saints Church, Bath, Somerset on 05 July, 1818, a son of John Perry and Elizabeth Newman. John Perry worked as a Lime Burner. Lime was used in making building mortar, which was much in demand due to buildings springing up all over the country at that time. The principal task of the lime burner was heating chalk in a kiln to 1000 degrees C to make quicklime. A very dusty and dangerous occupation.

On the 11th of June, 1840, Maurice Perry married Charlotte Smith (1820-1867) at Bath Holy Trinity Church in Somerset. The couple had one son, George James Perry, born in 1846 in Bath.

On Jan. 29, 1847, Messrs. Treadwell, the Contractors, started work on the Bathampton Branch of a railway line from Bradford to Bathampton, near the city of Bath. Later that year there was an incident when some navvies got into a fight at Bathampton. The occupation of navvy is a shorter form for navigator and is used to describe labourers working on major civil engineering projects. These men worked with picks and shovels and helped build the canals and later the railways.

John Bailey, a Police Constable not in uniform, announced his status and ordered the men to stop fighting. They replied by hitting him so hard that he later died from his injuries. Maurice Perry was the only person involved to be recognised and he was arrested, tried in court in Bridgewater, Somerset, and sentenced to death for murder.

On 04 August, 1851, Charlotte Smith, wife of Maurice Perry, married Charles Plenty Book in Bath. The couple had three children. Charles Plenty Book, (1817-1896) is the G. G. Grandfather of my wife, Lesley Book. I believe that with Maurice Perry sentenced to death and deported, Charlotte was free to marry again?

Later the sentence was commuted to Transportation for life and he arrived in Freemantle, Western Australia on board the "Mermaid" from England on 13 May, 1851.

There is extensive and detailed information on the Internet about the voyage of the "Mermaid" in 1851, including lists of the crew and passengers, not forgetting the over 200 convicts on board. The description of Maurice Perry is as follows;

Maurice Perry- Occupation-Lime Burner- Married 1 child- 5 feet 11 inches-black hair, grey eyes- round face- fresh complexion-black whiskers- tattoo on right arm M P C S. This refers to his name and that of his wife, Charlotte Smith. Some of the other Transported criminals included a John Pearce who was given 15 years for "Firing a stack of Barley", and a gentleman who was sentenced to life in jail for "Burglary". "Stealing a handkerchief", netted one individual 7 years in jail and transportation to Australia.

Maurice Perry spent the rest of his years in a penal colony at or near Freemantle, Western Australia. He was found one morning in 1885, "dead in his bed" from records. His occupation is listed as Lime Burner and his age as 70 years. No information as to his father and mother is noted.

Regarding George James Perry (1846 - ?) son of Maurice and Charlotte - He appears with his mother Charlotte, in the 1861 Census of Bath, Age 16, a "helper in the business" (Coal Merchant) of his step-father Charles Plenty Book. He does not seem to have married and by 1891, he is listed as being in jail in Wandsworth, London. By 1911 his employment is listed as a Night Watchman. I have not been able to find a conclusive death record for him.

Sources include the Internet, Ancestry, FindMyPast, Newspaper Archives and the Church of the Latter Day Saints.

Submitted by John Stoddart

My Grandparents' Love Story

My maternal grandma Gladys May Barker Morris would be absolutely exasperated if she ever saw her name written that way. She referred to herself as Mrs. Gladys Morris and I remember her explaining to me that she only used her own name because she was a widow. While my grandfather was alive she was Mrs. John Morris. I'm not sure if this was widely recognized or just her proper etiquette but she was definitely the most "proper" lady in my life.

Gladys was born in 1903 in Victoria, BC. She was part of the horse and buggy generation and she lived another quarter century after watching man walk on the moon.

Her family moved to Alberta 'for the dry climate' after her father developed asthma. They settled at Carvel Corner and operated a large market garden, chiseled roughly out of prairie bush; their main market was Alberta Beach cottagers.

I am not sure about the actual romance involved, but in days of barn raising and barn dances, my grandparents encountered each other by chance at a community costume party. I remember my grandma telling me the story about this party long ago, and she became giggly.

The neighbor boy had married the year before and his new wife brought her younger brother John to the party. He was dressed as an Arabian knight. Gladys was dressed as an Indian princess; her thick dark braids long enough to sit on. They were obviously destined for each other and began courting shortly after. They married in 1924 in a simple ceremony in her parents' living room. This is but a fraction of their story, of course, a bit of their romance for our Valentine newsletter.

Submitted by Janine Carroll

A Valentine's Day story

Charlotte, Emily and Anne, the Bronte sisters had never received a Valentine's Day card. When their father's young curate the Rev. William Weightman discovered this, he decided to put matters right. He walked all the way from their home in Haworth to Bradford and back again – a distance of 20 miles – to post a Valentine card to each of the sisters. Mailing the cards from such a distance put Mr. Bronte off the scent!

Scraps

I look at my cupboard filled with scraps. What else could you call them? There are photos, lace, books, tickets, diaries, birthday books, letters, cards and the list goes on. Each of these items is a scrap of family history. Only a family historian can appreciate what each of these small items mean in the fascinating web of family.

Photographs

One photograph had only a last name on it. I knew that this name was not in my family tree. One of my contacts sent an internet address for a site that had scanned lots of old newspapers for Syracuse, New York. Here I was able to find my grandmother in many news items. On occasion there would be a listing of people she was associating with, and there was the name of the person in one photograph. Now the question came, was it an old boyfriend? Was it just one of the group of friends that she chummed around with as a teenager? The mystery remains.

I received all of the old negatives that were in my family. Gradually I have been able to scan them and turn them into positives. I have found such wonderful pictures hidden in those negatives. Imagine my excitement when a scan came up with horses and people. I worked with the negative to bring up the image to where I could recognize the people. There was my dad, grandfather, and 2 uncles. A work party but what were they doing? Other photos show logs that had been freshly cleaned and a log structure in the background. Was this a school raising? Were they helping a neighbour to clear land? Why have these photos surfaced now when the generations that could have told me the story are gone?

There is a photo within the collection that is sadly unnamed: a young lady beside a sod house. Who? Where? Wouldn't any family historian dearly love to have this photo?

Cards

In my bundle of cards there is one Christmas card that is absolutely beautiful. It is a glossy golden paper with the photograph of a hearth with a warm fire burning. The card came from Harry Sullivan, his sister Mildred, and his mother. It is addressed to my mother when she was a single teacher at Independent Valley. Did my Grandmother Sullivan in addressing this card play Cupid? In a time when my mother was in the forests of northern Alberta living in log houses I wonder what small part a beautiful card would have played in her decision to marry my father, Harry Sullivan.

Diaries

I open a small diary of my Grandfather Funnell when he was operating a garden market outside of Syracuse, New York. Within the book there is a small note that they took their son to a small village which they called the Hill to be baptized. The date is set on the note. How I wish that the diary would have continued on to list my mother's baptism.

I was fortunate enough to get my Grandmother Sullivan's birthday book. She faithfully kept the birth dates of all her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. I had a good portion of my family tree completed by taking each page and understanding its contents. On the last page she made some notes: Pres. Kennedy was shot today; they walked on the moon today. These small notes give me a glimpse into the heart and the mind of my grandmother.

Lace

When I visited my Grandmother one day, she gave me a small piece of lace. She had pinned a small scrap of paper on it, 'Eva Spoon'. The lace is now placed in a glass frame and behind it is a photograph of my great-grandmother Eva. This lace has special meaning for me as I know that she no doubt proudly wore it around her neck on many occasions. It is the only item I have that belonged to my great-grandmother. It is now golden with age but it is a part of the legacy of my family history.

Letters

1. A letter from June 15, 1879, "I'm yet in the land of the living and enjoying good health considering the journey of 280 miles in a wagon drawn by oxen." How adventurous for a single grandmother, Lucy, to leave Michigan for South Dakota by herself and to take up a homestead. Was her tenacity an example for my great grandmother Eva, Lucy's step granddaughter, to strike out and obtain a homestead in Montana as a single mom?
2. From a journal dated 1899 regarding a trip to Tennessee in a covered wagon by my great-great grandmother Sophia Holmes and her family, on October 12, "We pulled up stakes and having had a day of rest from the strains of traveling we were feeling better". As they journeyed farther, the more I could sense that they were uncomfortable. October 13, "In the morning we drove through Royal Center and when we arrived at Logansport we purchased a revolver..." October 31, "We drove into Elizabethtown and bought a lock and chain for the wagon and made camp a little way south from town". They were getting further away from their familiar territory and friends. Did something happen that caused them to desire a gun and to lock down their goods? So many questions will remain unanswered but the possibilities of a story are so exciting.
3. Transcript of a letter from the Civil War written in Savannah, Georgia, December 25, 1864 is of special interest. The writer states, "My shoes gave out and I have been barefoot for 3 weeks and a good many others are in the fix but the weather is very warm and we do not suffer with cold any". The last line in this letter states, "I tell you there was some cheering when we heard that Abe was elected". The patriotism of those ancestors who gave their time and in some cases their lives for their country and their belief in humanity is a source of pride for me.

These small scraps of information give a human-ness to the lives of our ancestors. They give a history of hard work, patriotism, and exciting adventures. These people are not just birth, marriage and death dates. They are warm feeling human beings each with a unique, exciting story told in the scraps. For me these "scraps" are worth gold.

Submitted by Sharon Sullivan-Olsen

Editor's Note: Please submit Articles and Queries to wayjo@telus.net

HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY!