

Camrose

Roots and Shoots

Newsletter of the Camrose Branch of the Alberta Genealogical Society

Volume 5 No. 2

Autumn, 2008

The Camrose Branch meets on the second Thursday of each month at 7:30 P.M. in the boardroom of Camrose Public Library. New members and guests are always welcome.

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 Alberta Genealogical Society and all Camrose branch members are entitled to receive this Newsletter. The Newsletters also go to the other branches of the Alberta Genealogical Society. Where possible, the Newsletters are distributed by e-mail.

In case you are not reading Roots and Shoots on-line:- The Alberta Genealogical Society website is: www.abgensoc.ca. The "Roots and Shoots" Newsletters are posted on the AGS Camrose Branch website which is: www.camrose.abgensoc.ca

Genealogy is said to be the fastest growing leisure time activity today!

Executive:

President	Fay Carlson
Vice-president	Sherran Dermott.
Secretary	Deb Trout
Treasurer	John Stoddart
Librarian	Bev Webster

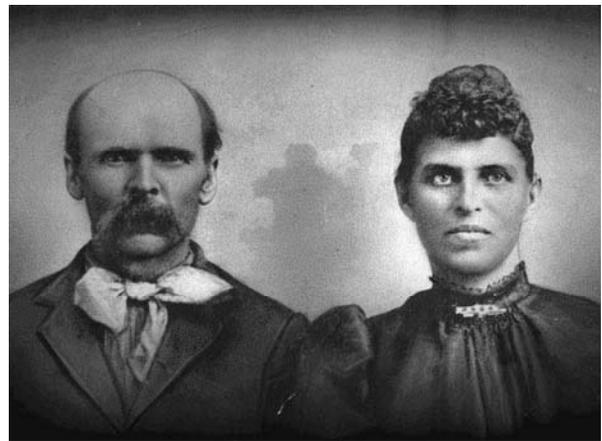
Newsletter Committee:

Fay Carlson	Norm Prestage
Jack Cunningham	

We are in the fifth year of our newsletter reporting on branch happenings. We are also trying to provide useful information about tracing your ancestors – we even add items we think might be of historical interest from time to time. To do all of these things we urgently need input. If you have an interesting story concerning your ancestors or their histories, please get in touch with a member of the Newsletter Committee.

A History of James and Olive Skinner

By Sharon Olsen



James and Olive Skinner

As a child I was fascinated by the stories that Grandma Nina Belle would tell me on a rainy day. There were stories of her father coming to the United States, wagon trains, forts, Indian raids and long dresses. There was a sense of adventure in each story and my childhood imagination was sparked into visualizing each of these events as I listened intently. How exciting her life must have been!

Over the past several years, I began to look into the history and stories of the Skinner Family. The internet was invaluable. I put a beginning of my family tree on "Ancestry" with my e-mail address attached. Before long I was in touch with many family members that I did not know existed. Events and details that I had never dreamed of would come to light and were being e-mailed to me daily.

In 1877 James and Olive Skinner and their three little girls; Phoebe, Estella and Emily, left their home in Spring Brook, Dunn County, Wisconsin and started a journey that found them settling in Washington Territory.

In 1877 Washington State, the Nez Percé, under Chief Joseph, were being pressured by the settlement of the west and were ordered to move to the Lapwai reservation. Conflicts between the army and the Nez Perce were breaking out. Finally the Nez Percé began a trek toward Canada and the protection of Sitting Bull. After a number of conflicts, their journey ended with the surrender by Chief Joseph to Colonel Miles in Bear Paw Mountains of Montana just a few miles short of Canada.

James Skinner was born in Pluckley, Kent, England March 15, 1837 to William and Anne Skinner, who were married in Pluckley, Kent, England in 1831. On May 1, 1848 William and Anne, with their seven children ranging from 3 years to 18 years, stepped off the ship called the "Independence" in the Port of New York, New York with some 244 others.

The Skinner family made their way from New York State to Wisconsin. In 1870, the William Skinner family is listed on the census in Spring Brook, Dunn County. It is here that James Skinner met and married Olive Jane Hoskin.

Olive Hoskin was born in Illinois in September 1854 to Duane Hoskin and Phoebe Hayward-Hoskin who were married in Black River, New York. Shortly after Duane and Phoebe were married, they moved to Illinois and later to Spring Brook bringing with them their 7 children.

On January 1, 1873, James Skinner and Olive Hoskin were married by Rev. R. Posten. James and Olive lived in Spring Brook until 1877. Then the James Skinner family were on the move. James and Olive with their three young children: Phoebe May born September 22, 1873, Eva Estella born January 13, 1875 and Emily Abby born August 10, 1876, decided to move west to the gold fields of California. Emily, their third child, learned to walk following behind the covered wagon. As they arrive in Washington Territory they realize they had found home.

The uncertainty of the situation between the government and natives in Asotin County, Washington Territory sent chills through the settlers in 1878. Fearful settlers banded together to build a stockade around a spring west of Anatone. While the stockade was used by the settlers no confrontation occurred.

James and Olive took a homestead on the NE section of 33 in Township 9 north of range 46 east of Willamette Meridian in Washington Territory. They improved their homestead and on December 9, 1890 Benjamin Harrison, President of the United States issued Homestead Certificate No. 1840 officially making the homestead Skinner property.

Cecil Rosetta was born April 14, 1879, followed by Leslie Duane March 19, 1881, Richard Raymond March 10, 1883, Cleveland in 1884, Willis James May 22, 1885 and Nina Belle August 31, 1888.

The 1900 census shows that Olive has had 12 children and only five remain alive. Eva Estella died before 1889, Phoebe May in 1892, the deaths of Willis James and Cleveland are not recorded. Olive died in 1907 and in 1909 James passed away at the age of 72. Typhoid fever took Leslie Duane, his wife Edna L Virgin-Skinner and their young son Elmer in 1911. James is buried at the Theon Cemetery, as recorded in the City of Lewiston Death Register. Nina Bell Skinner-Sullivan records that her mother Olive, Phoebe May, Eva Estella, Leslie Duane and Willis James are buried at the Theon Cemetery. Mrs Leslie Skinner is listed at the Theon Cemetery and I feel certain that Elmer is there

with his parents. (Theon church and its records were lost in a fire.)

Cecil Rosetta Skinner married Fabian Brooks and lived in the Clarkston area. Emily Abby married Clarence Taplin and farmed in the Anatone area. Richard Raymond married Elvira Newby. Nina Belle Skinner married Franklin George Sullivan and moved to Alberta Canada to take a homestead.

Grandmother Nina Belle told me stories of a peaceful time when the natives would travel from Nez Percé county to the Grande Round River to fish for salmon. They would pasture their horses on Skinner land and return with salmon for the Skinner family.



l - r: Second cousins: Joyce (Cecil) Carson, Lynne (Emily) Burrows, Shirley(Emily) Savage, Sharon (Nina) Olsen, holding (l-r) photos of Anne Skinner, William Skinner, James and Olive Skinner, Dwayne Hoskin and Phoebe Hoskin.

References:

1. Ships lists - 'Independence', May 1, 1848
2. 1841 census - Pluckley, Kent, England
3. 1850 USA census - Oneida County, NY p95B
4. 1860 USA census - Jefferson County, WI p288
5. 1870 USA census - Spring Brook, Dunn Co. WI p210
6. 1880 USA census - Spring Brook, Dunn Co. WI p311A
7. Obit for William Skinner - Dunn Co. News, 17 Sep 1881, p6 c5.
8. Obit for Anne Skinner - Dunn Co. News, 3 Nov 1883, 4:2
9. 1880 USA census - District 4, Columbia, Washington Page 167C
10. 1900 USA census - Concord Prct. Asotin Co., WA page 73a
11. Washington Territory census - Asotin County - 1885
12. Washington Territory census - Asotin County -

1887

13. Washington Territory census - Asotin County - 1889
14. History of Southeastern Washington - published 1906
15. Funeral Card - Phoebe May Skinner
16. Death Register, City of Lewiston, page 13 - James Skinner
17. Marriage Certificate - Nina Belle Skinner to Frank G Sullivan - State of Idaho No 1757
18. Marriage Registration - James Skinner to Olive Hoskin - Spring Brook, Jan 1, 1873, #02244
19. Information received from other Skinner family members
20. Obit Phoebe Ann Hayward-Hoskin-Fansler - Clarkston, Dec 9, 1915
21. Information from Nina Belle Skinner-Sullivan
22. Homestead documents from Alberta Provincial Archives.
23. "Chief Joseph's People and Their War", author Alvin M. Josephy, Jr., published by The Yellowstone Association for Natural Science, History & Education Inc., 1964

The Saskatchewan Genealogical Society is making it known that there is some information available on their website that they would like help in promoting - either by linking to their web site and/or inclusion in our newsletter. It follows:

“Our 40th Anniversary Showcase Genealogy Conference. Information will be updated as available.”

http://www.saskgenealogy.com/events/Conference_2009.htm

Women Pioneers of Saskatchewan:

http://www.saskgenealogy.com/general/Women_Pioneers.htm

Saskatchewan Pioneer(s) Certificate:

http://www.saskgenealogy.com/general/Sask_Pioneer_s.pdf

http://www.saskgenealogy.com/general/Pioneer_Application.pdf

“We thank you for your help in promoting these three items.

Lisa Warren,

Executive Assistant

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Web site: www.saskgenealogy.com”

Mission to Minnesota

by Fay Edenloff Carlson

My cousin Sharon Fehr, and I, both of us interested in family history, recently returned from a two week trip to Minnesota. The task we had set for ourselves was to uncover more facts about our ancestors, find graves, visit historical sites and try to visit the places they may have lived. This was our mission!

Our first picnic was at Fort Sisseton, where our Great-grandfather, Edward Ripley Ruggles had been custodian from 1889, the year it was closed, until 1893. The Fort had very few visitors that day and we were given a personal tour to some of the buildings that the general public does not see. The surgeon's house is where we were told that the Ruggles family would have lived. This is because he was not in the military. His position was appointed. There are not many Forts like this where so many buildings are still on the original site. The weekend before our visit the Annual Fort Sisseton Days had been held with plays, shootings and many re-enactments of early life at the Fort. The solitude that we enjoyed was a complete contrast to the throngs and crowds that had attended the previous weekend. This was one of our highlights.

Fort Sisseton was used for a time as a hunting lodge. Rich folk would come out and, if they wished, pay someone to hunt for them while they sat and played cards. We saw one displayed photo of excessive overkill!! Unbelievable!

The badlands of North Dakota were very impressive. The first photos on my CD show just that. Minnesota is so beautiful with all the different varieties of trees and abundance of birds. We heard song birds even in the cities. Among the sights; we counted antelope, deer, turtles, a snake, ring-neck pheasants, loons, eagles, cormorants, pelicans, wild turkeys, dead raccoons and skunks on the highway.

One great pastime was checking out the many antique stores in all the towns we visited. Some bargains were found, including

at the store in Herman, Minnesota. The sign read, "Buy some old photos and get your self some new instant ancestors." I picked four of these, one hundred year old gems, showing the styles and beauties of about 1900.

We travelled to Faribault, a city about an hours drive south of Minneapolis, and spent three nights there. Our Great-Great-Grandparents, Liberty and Catherine Ruggles had lived and died here. John and Minerva Passon, another set of Great-Great- Grandparents, lived here for many years but died in Osakis. The Rice County Historical Society helped us find out more about both men. John Passon was a millwright and the founder of several flour mills. We attended a lecture on the history of the flour mills given by Jeff Jarvis, an artist and writer, where we learned a bit more about the industry.

The area around Northfield and Faribault was called the mill capital of the world. There were 30-40 mills in five counties. Because of the huge amounts of flour ground, there was a need for barrels to store the flour. This led to a demand for coopers or barrel-makers. Faribault was home to many schools and many of the barrels were made by trainees from the School for the Deaf. We learned about the danger of fires at the mills from dust explosions.

The city held their Heritage days that weekend. "Recollections" was the name of the performance that we attended. It was an original musical, depicting memories of the past, played by local actors. One corner of the stage was the local café in the 1950s. Various people of all ages would come and recall events that had occurred in the city. The screen on the stage would show a historic photo, and others would depict that event in the costume of that time. It was very moving.

We searched in Oakridge cemetery for the Ruggles plot. What a thrill to find these graves! The main stone was over five feet high with the name Ruggles carved at the bottom. Liberty and Catherine Ripley Ruggles are buried here, but none of their children. One side of the monument lists Liberty's mother, Lydia Drown Ruggles, born 1796 and died 1885, plus Liberty's sister, Sarah and his brothers, Thomas and Spooner. There are three small flat stones, one for Liberty,

one for Catherine, one that lists Lydia, Sarah, Thomas and Spooner. Close by is a stone naming a nephew of Liberty, Edward Clark, son of L.B. and L.J. Clark. Lydia J. was a sister of Liberty. Sharon and I are still not clear whether this is a memorial or actual burial plot for the siblings of Liberty.

This cemetery was on top of a hill with many shade trees, some oak. It was looked after well and was very peaceful. We went back the next day with a picnic lunch to reconnect with these ancestors. This was another of our bonus days.

I had read in the paper that a choir from Oslo, Norway was performing at a local town of Kenyon that evening. Off we went for an amazing concert. There were 31 women and 9 men who gave us songs in English, including a medley of Johnny Cash songs, Norwegian folk songs, Abba songs and Edvard Greig. The nine year old son of the pianist played a violin solo and two girls gave us an impression of trolls dancing. Great treat!

Another event, that was memorable, was the Sunday service at the Episcopal Cathedral in Faribault. This historic building was completed in 1869 and is a marvel with all the stained glass windows and many original fixtures such as the pews, built out of Minnesota white pine by a local Civil War veteran. The service was a surprise to me as the processional group marched in dancing to "When The Saints Go Marching In". The band gave special music in that same class, well-played. Still, there was the form to the service that was very similar to Lutheran or Anglican, including a communion service and The Apostle's Creed. The sermon included more of the history of the church, which was fitting.

A special premium for me was to attend a Midsummer Festival in the city of Northfield that I had seen announced in the paper. This is the town where Jesse James tried to rob the bank, but was unsuccessful, ending his career of bank robbing. The historic town features the grand Archer House built in 1877 and still in use today.

We found the park where the "Sons Of Norway" had planned for the festival. Tables were set up with pails of willow branches, wild flowers and ribbons. Everyone was encouraged to make a wreath for their head, especially the women and girls. At one point, I counted 16 members of musicians, all ages and types of instruments, playing Scandinavian folk songs. We watched a parade of flags and the raising of the decorated Maypole. This was followed by dancing and singing around the pole. I introduced myself to one of the organizers, Judy Swanson. She informed me that she and her husband Steve, had lived in Camrose in 1980s, where he was teaching at Augustana. What a small world!



With the help of Stella Bender from the Osakis Historical Society, we tried to find the spot where John Passon had his sawmill and furniture factory. It was a guess, but we may never know for sure. We found the cemetery where our Great-Great Grandparents, Stuart and Catherine Duncan were buried, but not their graves.

Together, we visited the grave of:

One Great-Great-Great Grandmother Lydia Ruggles.

Two sets of Great-Great Grandparents, John Passon and Minerva.

Liberty Ruggles and Catherine.

Two of my Great-Grandfathers, Pehr Edenlof and Hans Olsen.

One set of our Great-Grandparents, E.R. Ruggles and Amy.

One of my favorite memories of this trip was our visit with Pete in the Veterans Department in Long Prairie. We showed him the photo of John

Passon's grave and gave him all the info I had collected about him. He told us that the War Department will install a marble upright military headstone on John's burial site. Sharon asked about the stars we had seen on some graves. He gave us a bronze star, with the initials, G.A. R. 1861-1865 with a rod to attach it. For those of you who don't know, G.A. R. stands for "Grand Army of the Republic", the Civil War. Sharon told him that we have a Great-Grandfather buried in Alberta that was also in the Civil War and there was no star on his grave. He gave us another star and the stand to put on James Burton Gray burial site at Lomond, Alberta.



The Ruggles Gravestone

We reconnected with our family history by visiting gravesites, archives and historical societies. To look through the heavy leather-bound books with the hand written records and see entries of ancestors is absolutely awe-inspiring! It truly was a trip of a lifetime.

We found some new facts and some "maybes". We both will be adding to the records we had, so expect details on some of the stories we collected.

This is my manner of giving honour to my ancestors.

Fay Edenloff Carlson.
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Report from the president

We opened our Fall season on September 11, with 9 members and 1 guest present.

Jack Cunningham, our Newsletter editor requested more items for publication.

Each one of our members have some unique and wonderful stories that they have uncovered in their family research. Please share them with us. Remember also, that our provincial magazine, "Relatively Speaking," can use stories too. My Mayflower seeking story was published by them in May, 2008.

My summer highlight was the trip that I took to Minnesota with my cousin. We visited graveyards, Historical Societies and places that our ancestors had lived. It was unforgettable! Read about it in this issue.

Wetaskiwin is hosting a Genealogy workshop October 18. I am sure that several of us will be attending. Deadline for registration is October 11, 2008.

Fay Carlson, President, Camrose Branch AGS



*Some Camrose Branch members at Founders Day
Alora Nelson, John Stoddart, Fay Carlson, Sharan Dermott and Bev Webster.*

The Newsletter Committee earnestly solicits contributions for the next Newsletter.