



Anglo-Celtic Roots

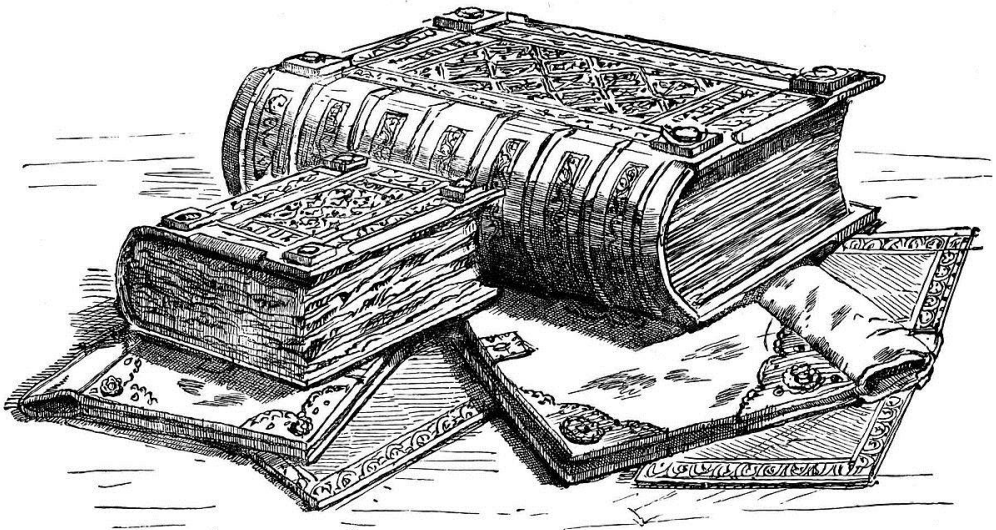
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What's in a Name?

Tracing the Origins of the Somers Family

We Shall Remember Them



Anglo-Celtic Roots

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Please include a brief biographical sketch and a passport-type photograph.

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Cover Illustration:

The Domesday Book: an engraving published in 1900. Great Domesday (the larger volume) and Little Domesday (the smaller volume), in their 1869 bindings, lying on their older "Tudor" bindings. (Source: The National Archives, Kew)

From the Editor:

An in-depth study of an ancient family name starts off this issue. Heather Boucher Ashe and Richard Flynn-Bourchier went back to the Domesday Book and used Y-DNA analysis to help track the history of their origins and their current family connections.

Jane Down tells of the steps she took and the sources used to reveal the story of her great-grandmother, Mary Jane Somers, and her family's history in both Canada and England.

We launch a new series, "We Shall Remember Them," featuring the stories of WW I soldiers who died while being treated at No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station (CCCS) during the war. BIFHSGO volunteers are researching the soldiers' lives using No. 1 CCCS records and their own investigations.

And we say farewell to Betty Warburton's stewardship of the Bookworm column, which she has contributed to ACR since 2003. Betty retired last year as BIFHSGO Librarian, and with the impending transfer of our holdings to Ottawa Branch OGS, she has decided to sign off the column. Our gratitude goes to Betty for her long and loyal contribution to ACR!



Jean Kitchen

From the President



As summer approaches thoughts of cemetery walks and air-conditioned research rooms dance through my head. It has been a hectic

spring for me and I am looking forward to a little time to catch my breath.

In June we will be saying good-bye to two of our directors who have contributed so much over the six years they have been on the Board.

Susan Davis (Communications) has led us through tumultuous changes from everything-on-paper to the latest in social media. She has overseen a large team of volunteers to coordinate our website, eNewsletter, ACR journal, online databases, Facebook and Twitter presence and more. She has contributed to the Board in many ways and has been a positive force of energy over her six-year tenure.

Marnie McCall (Treasurer) has not only ensured that BIFHSGO remained solvent but has provided much appreciated legal advice along the way. She navigated us smoothly through government-legislated changes to the governance of charitable organizations during the past two years and managed to make it understandable to the lay people amongst us.

I have appreciated the support and expert advice both Susan and Marnie have provided me over the two years I have been president. I wish them all the best as they pursue their own projects and thank them for their contributions to BIFHSGO.

There is no rest for our Conference Planning Committee. They are busily making plans for another stellar event to be held in early September. Our education team hopes to bring back James Thomson for a repeat of his very successful *Maps and Mapping* workshop as well as provide something new for next spring. Volunteers continue to index, research and write material for our databases and online materials and run the day-to-day activities of the organization. It is astonishing how many people it takes to operate a society the size of BIFHSGO. Fortunately we have wonderfully talented members who are willing to offer their time to make BIFHSGO the vibrant and successful entity it is—though we always need more!

I wish you all a relaxing and enjoyable summer and look forward to reconvening at the fall conference.



Barbara J. Tose

Family History Research

What's in a Name?



BY HEATHER BOUCHER ASHE AND RICHARD FLYNN-BOURCHIER
Heather has researched her Irish and Canadian Boucher family since 1970. Seeking new insights, she asked a male first cousin to submit a sample for Y-DNA analysis. The result was an almost perfect match with her new DNA cousin, Richard Flynn-Bourchier, a lecturer of Irish and British history at the Université de Sherbrooke

in Québec and the descendant of a Home Child. Heather and Richard believe they are third cousins twice-removed.

This paper explores the history of the name Boucher/Bourchier through time, in England and France, for almost a thousand years. Y-DNA analysis was used to help track the possible origin of our earliest-known ancestor, Oure de Berchères, who arrived in England with the invading forces of the Norman Conquest in 1066.

Richard's grandfather was a Home Child from England who didn't know his father's surname. Richard researched for years, then discovered that he and Heather's first cousin, Doug Boucher of Manotick, Ontario, were almost perfect Y-DNA matches.¹ It appears that Heather and Richard are third cousins twice-removed. He has appended the surname Bourchier to his own name, Flynn.

Heather descends from a Carleton County, Ontario, non-French family named Boucher. This name was never an easy one. Few people pronounce it correctly at first try, and may have difficulty even when told how the family pronounces it. Heather has heard Booker, Butcher, Bowker. Some variants include Booser, Bowser and Bousseres. The name has occasionally been confused with the French "bourse" (stock exchange) or "boursier" (speculator), and "Boursières," a commune in the Haut-Saone department, in Burgundy, France, as well as the French "boucher" (butcher). She has a Welsh friend named Boshier who thinks they are probably cousins.

Heather has been told more than once that she pronounces her name incorrectly: surely, it's

French and should be said “Boo-shay.” No, we say, it rhymes with Voucher, but with a “B.” And what about Bouchier? The correct pronunciation is Voucher with a “B.” The online pronunciation site howjsay.com says Bouchier is pronounced as Voucher or very similarly as “Voucher,” both with a “B.”

Heather joined the Facebook page “Proud to be Bouchier.” Most of the members in Canada, Britain, Australia, New Zealand and elsewhere express the same frustration with their name’s pronunciation. Most have been told the name is French; some thought it was German.

To be fair, there have been centuries of difficulties. Heather’s great-grandfather, John, emigrated from Ireland to Canada in 1819. He couldn’t read or write, so he brought the phonetic spelling, Boucher, to Canada and started the non-French family here. We know that because in 1861, the Nepean Township census-taker wrote his name as “Bowcher.”² In Ireland, John’s brother Henry (Richard’s great-great-great-grandfather) and the rest of his family spelled the name Bouchier.³

The English obviously had difficulty with this name. The original English ancestor of the Bouchier family, named Oure de Berchères, is accepted to have arrived in Brit-

ain with the Norman invasion.⁴ He did not bring a surname with him, simply a French place-name that took on various pronunciations and spellings over time. He and his history are described below.

In England, the family has a very eventful lineage, including William, 1st Earl of Eu, born 1374; his son Thomas, a medieval cardinal, Archbishop of Canterbury and Lord Chancellor of England, born c. 1404 (see *The War of the Roses*); Elizabeth, a descendant of King Edward III, born c. 1473; John Bouchier of Beningbrough, regicide of King Charles I, born 1595; and another Elizabeth, wife of Oliver Cromwell, Lord Protector of England, born 1598.⁵

The Domesday Book and Buckinghamshire

Following the Norman Conquest in 1066, William the Conqueror (who became King William I of England) granted estates to his supporters and knights, rewarding those who had been loyal to him and who could be expected to be loyal and/or valuable in future. In December 1085, William commissioned the Domesday Book to assess the value of English estates to determine how much he could expect to receive in taxes. The Book also recorded the names of persons who had held those estates prior to the 1066 invasion.

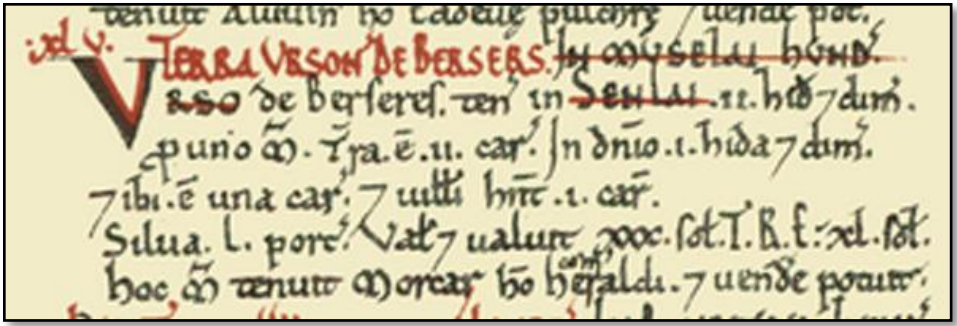


Figure 1: Domesday Book text

This provides an invaluable record of the transition from Anglo-Saxon to Norman. The Book was written in Medieval Latin (see Figure 1).⁶ Many of the Buckinghamshire estates had been held by Earl Harold (Godwinson), the last Anglo-Saxon king.⁷ He succeeded Edward the Confessor in January 1066 and died at the Battle of Hastings on 14 October 1066.

The Domesday Book records 15 Buckinghamshire estates (in 32 parcels) with total taxable value of 374 geld units. The 1086 owners included 42 lords and 25 tenants-in-chief, including William’s family members (two half-brothers); Anglo-Saxon and Norman nobility; Roman Catholic clergy who supported him and facilitated the

support of the Catholic Church in England; and King William himself.

Part of the Shenley (Brook End) estate in Buckinghamshire was granted to Urson (“Bear”) de Bersers (the Latinized name). The French version of the name, Oure de Berchères, is found on the Battle Abbey Roll in Dives-sur-Mer, Normandy, the list of 471 supposed “companions” of William on his English invasion.⁸ De Berchères is accepted to be the progenitor of the Bouchier family in England.

The Buckinghamshire estates were valuable, located near London and near roads established in Roman times. Their total taxable value in 1086 was 374 geld units. The Domesday Book entry for the Berchères estate is:

Shenley (Brook End)	
Hundred ⁹	Mursley
County	Buckinghamshire
Taxable units	Taxable value 2.5 geld units

Value	Value to lord in 1066, £2; in 1086, £1.5; in about 1070, £1.5
Households	2 villagers
Ploughland	2 ploughlands (land for). 1 lord's plough teams. 1 men's plough teams.
Other resources	1.5 lord's lands. Woodland, 50 pigs
Lord in 1066	Morcar <of Clifton> [Earl of Northumberland]
Overlord in 1066	Earl Harold [King Harold in 1066, succeeded Edward the Confessor, died at Battle of Hastings]
Lord in 1086	Urso de Berchères
Tenant-in-chief in 1086	Urso de Berchères

This estate was neither the smallest nor the largest in Buckinghamshire (the seven largest estates constituted 117 of the total 374 county geld unit value and were awarded to nobility). But, receiving his 2.5 geld unit estate demonstrates Oure de Berchères' loyalty and value to King William I. His land was of relatively poor quality and in the isolated north-east of the county. But it gave him a foothold in England.

The given name "Bear" suggests that de Berchères was a big, strong man and possibly a valuable warrior during the invasion. And how is this surname pronounced? The pronunciation website forvo.com says the two syllables sound like the English words bear and share, given equal emphasis. Thus, Bear-share. This is quite different from another French surname, Boucher, pronounced Boo-shay.

Other Bouchier Ancestors

There was considerable jockeying for power and land in England after the Conquest. Land and influence were consolidated within increasingly powerful families. In 1166, King Henry II decreed that a follow-up survey of England's wealth was needed (the Cartae Baronum).¹⁰ All tenants-in-chief (of the King's land) were required to report details of the sub-tenancies they had created on their lands before and after the death of Henry I (grandfather of Henry II, d. 1135).

Tenancies were reported in terms of knights' fees, the tenants' military obligations to the Crown for their grants of land from the king. The knight's fee was essentially the base unit of land valuation used in the feudal system.

Sylvester de Bursers, also reported to be a Bouchier ancestor,⁴ held a tenancy in the Honour of Clare (the

extensive holdings of Richard de Clare that spanned several counties) near Surrey.¹¹ Sylvester owed one-third of a knight's fee. A researcher of medieval history was commissioned to research this possibility at The National Archives (UK). She learned that Sylvester, a brother and father of William, came from Bures, a town on the Suffolk–Essex border, and was probably not a Berchères descendant.

In 1206, a knight with King John, named Nichol le Bursar (Latinized name), was recorded at Dover in a charter as being among many men who had given gifts to the Church of St Thomas (Becket) the Martyr at Brentwood, Essex.¹² This probably occurred prior to one of King John's expeditions to France after he lost considerable lands there.¹³ Brentwood is located 30 km from the centre of London and 52 km from Stansted, Halstead.

The dominant branch of the family became established in County Essex. A possible son or grandson of Nichol was Sir Robert Bourchier (Burser, Bourgchier), born about 1252,¹⁴ but little is known of him.

His son was Sir John Bourchier (aka Bousser, de Bousser, de Bosser), a Justice of the Court of Common Pleas about 1325 to 1350. He purchased an estate adjacent to the manor of Stansted in Halstead, Essex, in 1312 and later married Helen de Colchester, heiress of her father

Walter. John thus obtained the valuable Stanstead Hall estate.

John and Helen were parents of Sir Robert Bourchier, Knt, 1st Baron Bourchier, who also married a well-to-do heiress, Margaret, daughter of Sir Thomas Prayers. Robert (aka Boussier, Bourgcher, Bousser, Bourser) thus again increased the family's holdings and wealth significantly. He was the Essex Member of Parliament for several sessions and became the first lay chancellor of England in 1340.

Undoubtedly, there were other branches of this family that were not as successful as those in Essex, but their existence was not documented. As well, some may have adopted a phonetic spelling of this difficult name. A further complication is the similarity between the early family name and the occupation "burser" (financier). At this point, it is difficult or impossible to distinguish between the family name and that occupation.

Origin of Oure de Berchères

There are three small villages bearing the name Berchères in northern France: Berchères-les-Pierres, Berchères-sur-Vesgre and Berchères Saint Germain. Their populations have always been small. The villages are located close to each other, 5.1 km east of Chartres (which is on the River Eure, a southern tributary of the River Seine).

In the eighth to eleventh centuries, Vikings from Denmark and Norway invaded and settled coastal areas of Britain and northwest France, as well as areas accessible by their many rivers. In 858, they captured and burned Chartres. As a result, the city was rebuilt and fortified, so when the Vikings returned in 911, they were defeated.

The treaty of Saint-Clair-sur-Epte resulted, by which the Vikings were granted the area now called Upper Normandy, after the Norsemen (“Northmen”) who had colonized it.¹⁵ In return, the Vikings pledged their loyalty to the French King.

Eventually, the Norman territory would extend west beyond the River Seine to form the Duchy of Normandy. The Norman dukes created the most powerful, consolidated duchy in Western Europe between the years 980 and 1050. In 1035, the man who would become William the Conqueror became the Duke of Normandy.¹⁶

In 1066, an army assembled under the leadership of Duke William, prior to the invasion of England. It is thought that the Norman fighting force at the Battle of Hastings numbered about 10,000, while the population of Normandy may have been about 700,000 at that time; Normandy had been well-settled in the years after 911.

Most of the plaque names on the Battle Abbey Roll were descriptive, referring to the large number of (mostly) Normandy place-names (for example, Anquetil de Cherbourg, a man named Anquetil who came from Cherbourg) or the man’s appearance (Robert le Blond).

Chartres, France, was located close to the border between Normandy and the rest of France and accessible by water, as shown on the map (Figure 2). The proximity of Chartres and the Berchères villages would have ensured that their politics, language and possibly culture were heavily influenced by the Norman people.

Language

The French, English and Latin languages have evolved during the last millennium: spellings and pronunciations have melded, words have been shared. As demonstrated by the History television series *Vikings*, the French language in the year 900 (as spoken by the French nobility) sounded more like Latin than French. The pronunciation of the French word “Berchères” at the time of the Norman Conquest was probably very different from the “Bear-share” of today. Similarly, the English pronunciations (and spellings) of the name through the ages probably reflected the style of language current at the time.

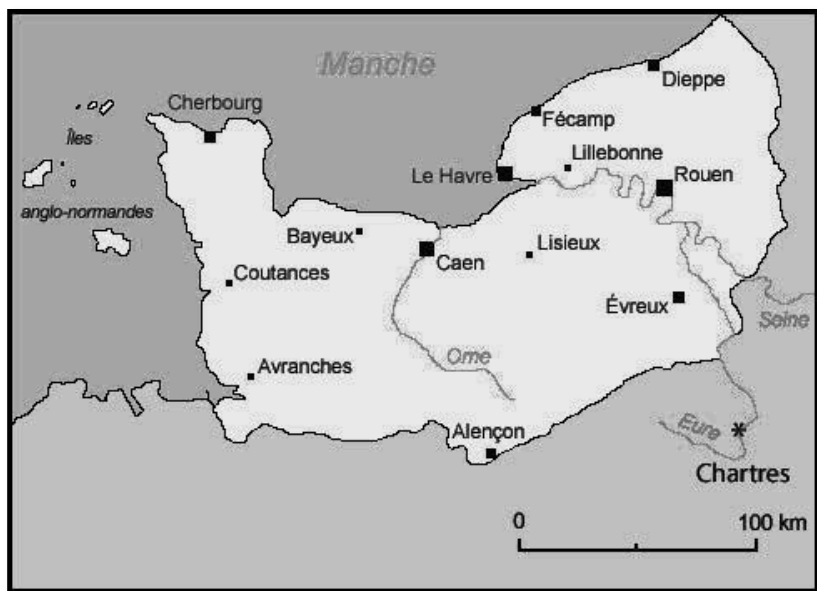


Figure 2: Normandy boundary

We can only now say that this was a non-English name that the English did their best to absorb.

Origin of the Bouchier Family

So, we can say that the name Bouchier is probably derived from the Berchères French place-names, and in that sense is truly French. However, in the first millennium there was a succession of European invasions and migrations, especially after the fall of the Roman Empire (about 400 AD). Between 300 and 500 AD, "Germanic" peoples (originally from Sweden) moved south and by 500 AD, one group, the "Franks," were in control of Western Europe. The historical area of Neustria loosely corresponds to present-day France.

Y-DNA analysis was invoked to provide some information regarding the Bouchier origin. Of course, it is highly uncertain that the Bouchier family line progressed through the past millennium without at least one "non-paternal event" wherein the Bouchier-Y-DNA connection was broken. However, it is interesting to assume that the connection remained intact.

Y-DNA is the portion of a man's DNA that follows the male line only, generation after generation. Richard's DNA analysis shows that we belong to the haplogroup U106. It is found mostly in Germany and surrounding countries: the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden and, of course, Britain.

So, what's in a name? Political maneuverings, foreign conquests, migrations and invasions, pronunciation challenges, *Facebook* cousins. The truth can easily be lost over the generations. It is not possible to know whether this pedigree is in fact totally accurate. But working through it was a very interesting investigation of medieval history, when we all had ancestors. Names can be misleading.

Reference Notes

¹ Family Tree DNA testing, matched at 36 of 37 locations.

² *The Norman People and Their Existing Descendants in the British Dominions and the United States of America* (London: Henry S. King & Co., 1874), 168.

³ 1861 Canadian Census, Nepean Township, Carleton County, page 8, line 14.

⁴ *For God or King, The History of Mountshannon, County Clare, 1742–1992*, Gerard Madden, ed. (Tuamgraney, County Clare, Ireland: East Clare Heritage, 1993).

⁵ “William Bouchier,” [1st Count of Eu]; “Thomas Bouchier,” [cardinal]; “Elizabeth Bouchier,” [died 1557]; “John Bouchier,” [regicide]; and “Elizabeth Cromwell,” *Wikipedia*, (www.wikipedia.org: accessed 21 Jan. 2016).

⁶ “Open Domesday,” (www.opendomesday.org); the image from the Domesday Book made available by Professor J.J.N. Palmer and George Slater.

⁷ “Harold Godwinson,” *Wikipedia*, (www.wikipedia.org: accessed 21 Jan. 2016).

⁸ “Battle Abbey Roll,” *Olive Tree Genealogy*, <http://www.olivetreegenealogy.com/misc/knights.shtml>.

⁹ “Hundreds” were administrative subdivisions of counties, having their own courts.

¹⁰ “The Cartae Baronum of 1166 and the Elephant,” *History of Law Blog*, (historyoflaw.co.uk/cartae-baronum-of-1166-and-the-elephant).

¹¹ The National Archives, *The Black Book of the Exchequer*, ed. Thomas Hearne, 1896; personal email from medieval historian.

¹² The National Archives, record series C 53, document reference number C 53/7, membrane 2, item number 12. Personal email from an historian at The National Archives, Kew, 15 March 2016.

¹³ “John, King of England,” *Wikipedia*, (www.wikipedia.org: accessed 29 Feb. 2016).

¹⁴ Sandra Alvarez, “The fortunes of war: the military career of John, second Lord Bouchier (d. 1400),” *De Re Militari, The Society for Medieval Military History*, (<http://deremilitari.org/2014/05/the-fortunes-of-war-the-military-career-of-john-second-lord-bouchier-d-1400/>).

¹⁵ “Treaty of Saint-Clair-sur-Epte,” *Wikipedia*, (www.wikipedia.org: accessed 21 Jan. 2016).

¹⁶ “Duchy of Normandy,” *Wikipedia*, (www.wikipedia.org: accessed 21 Jan. 2016).

Tracing the Origins of the Somers Family



BY JANE L. DOWN

Jane, a retired conservation scientist, is BIFHSGO's Program Director. She has presented talks, worked on conferences and indexing projects, written books and articles, and won a few genealogy contests. Jane became interested in genealogy in 1971 and has been researching her family history ever since.

Before 2001, I knew very little about my great-grandmother, Mary Jane Somers, and her Somers family. I didn't know her parents' names, where the family came from, when they came to Canada or where in Canada they settled, but today I know the answers to these questions and have a large binder full of information on them. Let's take a look at the steps I took to find the answers and the tools I used.

My Starting Information

There were five old photos of the Somers family that I inherited from my grandmother; fortunately, she identified everyone by writing on the back of the pictures. You can see Mary Jane in Figure 1, support-hose and all. I often wonder if she had any teeth. Figure 2 shows her gravestone in the Frome Cemetery, Elgin County, with all her burial flowers. The inscription says "Mary Jane Somers 1847-1933."

Another photo, taken in 1931, identified Mary Jane's brother, James. The back also said he went to Alpanie [sic], Michigan. The next photo was of Mary Jane's sister,



Tammie, who looked much like Mary Jane. On the back, it said Tammie's married name was "Keith." In the group shot (Figure 3), Grandma identified Mary Jane, her brother, Frank, his son, Wes, and Mary Jane's husband, Thomas Down.

I also had a Down family history that

Figure 1: Mary Jane Down nee Somers

Source, figures 1-3: author's collection

mentioned Mary Jane and Thomas's children—Wilbert (1873-1839, my grandfather), Amelia (1876-1967), Ida (1880-1897), Wesley (d. 1970) and Frank (1889-1890).¹ This history told of the departure of the Down family from England and



Figure 2: Mary Jane's grave and burial flowers their arrival at Port Hope, Upper Canada, in 1846.

There was another piece of information that I had, but didn't know it, and that was my father's middle name—Saward. I always wondered why they gave him that name. My father passed away in 1974 and I never asked him this question.

Vital Records

They say to start with what you know and work backwards, so in 2001 I started with my grandfather, Wilbert. The Down history said he was born in 1873. I wanted to find his birth record. As Ontario vital records were not online in 2001, I went to the Family History Center (FHC) to find it. The record was difficult to locate because his birth was not registered until 1933—60 years later, when his mother, Mary Jane, swore an oath that Wilbert was born 21 October 1873 in St Mary's, Perth County.²

While at the FHC, I searched for the marriage record of Mary Jane and Thomas, but could not find one. The early registers around 1870 are spotty because at first there was a charge, which was a real deterrent for registration.³ I was finding this out the hard way.

I could not search for Mary Jane's death record because it was not available at that time; death records are not released for 71 years.

The Ontario Cemetery Finding Aid

In 2001, the *Ontario Cemetery Finding Aid* was available online, so I did a search for Mary Jane's brothers and found a Frank Somers buried in St Mary's. That was interesting, because my grandfather was born in St Mary's. I ordered the cemetery transcript and found that this Frank died in 1921, aged 90. Could this be Mary Jane's brother?

The most interesting find from the transcript was for a "Tamson Somers wife of Enos Keat." Could this be Mary Jane's sister, Tammie, who Grandma said married a "Keith"? I think Grandma got the name slightly wrong. This Tamson died in 1931, aged 94. These Somers people were certainly long-lived.

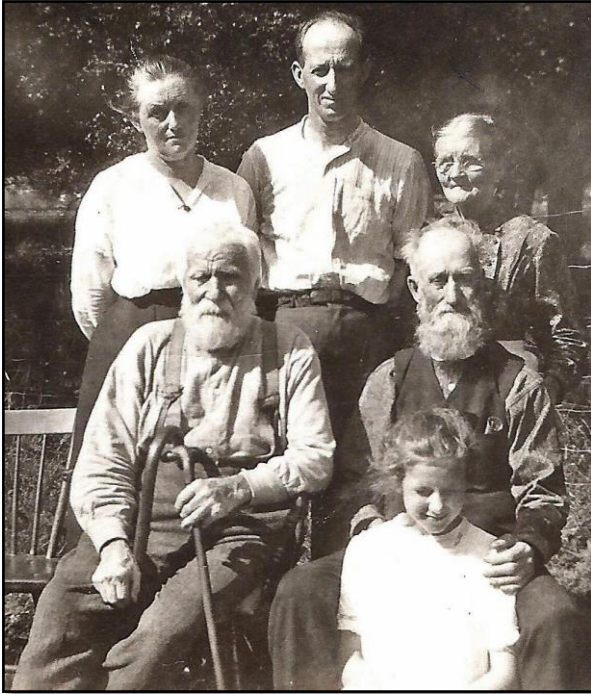


Figure 3: Back, L to R: Wes' wife, Wes, Mary Jane; Front, L to R: Thomas, Wes's daughter, Frank

1871 Census

Also available online at that time was the 1871 Canadian Census, which listed only the heads of households. I could not find a possible Thomas Down listed, so Thomas must not have been head of a household in 1871. Likely he and Mary Jane were married after 1871.

I could have manually searched the 1871 Census for St Mary's, my only lead to where Mary Jane might be in Ontario around that time, but I didn't do that. I was busy and left things there for a few years.

Finding *WorldConnect*

In 2004, I discovered *WorldConnect*, an online database hosted by *Rootsweb*. Genealogists put their family trees on this database with an email address. People like me send them an email if they find a possible family connection. I tried it for my Somers family and immediately saw a name that looked familiar—Saward Somers—my father's middle name!⁴

When I phoned my mother to tell her about finding this Saward Somers, it sparked a memory. She said "Oh yes, I remember now. Your Dad was named after his Uncle Saward Somers."

Now you must know that I have quizzed Mom umpteen times about the family history, but she never remembered where the name Saward came from until that moment. So it's a good idea to keep questioning those relatives who say they've told you absolutely everything.

WorldConnect was a gold mine of information on the Somers family (Figure 4), but no sources of information were given.⁵ It stated that

Mary Jane's parents were Jane Frank and John Somers and that John's parents were William and Tamson.

There were other siblings listed for Mary Jane besides Frank, Tamson and James, and details on these three agreed with what I already knew. The site also mentioned that Mary Jane's father John had two brothers, William Jr. and Joseph, who seemed to have gone from Darlington Township, Durham County, to Illinois at some point.

It said that John was born in Devonshire, England, and then settled in Darlington—which, by the way, was close to where Thomas and the Down family first settled in 1846. There was also a note on William Somers Sr.

This William Somers is buried next to his son John and John's wife Jane in Bowmanville, Ontario. A grandson, John Edgar Somers, remembers that there were also sisters. Unfortunately, he did not remember their names, only that they married men by the name of Tyler.

I wrote to Dawn Somers, the *World-Connect* contributor. She put me in touch with other Somers researchers and sent information on brothers John, William Jr. and Joseph. She told me that John stayed in Darlington, while William Jr. and Joseph went to Illinois.

The father, William Sr., died in Darlington and was buried in the Bowmanville Cemetery. The mother, Tamson, moved to Illinois after her husband's death. She was buried in Illinois.

FamilySearch

After this, I decided to check for Somers on *FamilySearch*. I found a record for William Jr. that said he was born in Somerset, England.⁶ That was strange, because Dawn's information said that brother John was born in Devonshire.

When I asked Dawn the source for this information, she told me that it was family lore. No one really knew if it was Devon or Somerset and no one had traced the family back to either county.

Darlington

Another avenue that I followed in 2004 was to investigate Darlington for Somers information. I found a book mentioning that John Somers had lived on various lots in Darlington and Clarke Townships, contributed to the Primitive Methodist Mission Fund, been a customer of Nairn Mills, been a Liberal, carried on a farming and threshing business, and was a "very exceptional man, full of energy and capacity for work."⁷

I particularly liked the last part.

William SOMERS (b. 22 May 1780 England; d. 23 Sep 1850 Bowmanville, Ont.)
married Tamson ? (b. abt 1775 England; m. England)

Children

1. **John SOMERS** (b. 19 Apr 1805 Devonshire, England; d. 2 Dec 1901 Blanshard Twp., Perth Co., Ont., buried Bowmanville Cemetery, Bowmanville, Ont.)
married Jane FRANK (b. 1809 England)

Children

- i. John Seward SOMERS (b. 17 Jul 1830 Darlington Twp., Durham Co., Ont.)
 - ii. Frank SOMERS (b. 7 Dec 1831 Darlington Twp., Durham Co., Ont.; d. 5 Dec 1921 Blanshard Twp., Perth Co. Ont.)
 - iii. Tamson SOMERS (b. Abt 1837 Darlington Twp., Durham Co., Ont.; d. 16 Nov 1931 St. Mary's, Ont.)
 - iv. Amelia I. SOMERS (b. 4 Mar 1841 Darlington Twp., Durham Co., Ont.)
 - v. Robert SOMERS (b. Dec 1844 Darlington Twp., Durham Co., Ont.)
 - vi. Matilda SOMERS (b. 1845 Darlington Twp., Durham Co., Ont.)
 - vii. **Mary Jane SOMERS** (b. 1846 Darlington Twp., Durham Co., Ont.)
 - viii. William Joseph SOMERS (b. 8 Jun 1849 Blanshard Twp., Perth Co., Ont.)
 - ix. James G. SOMERS (b. Jun 1852 Darlington Twp., Durham Co., ON; d. 1933 Lincoln, Alcona Co., MI)
2. **William SOMERS** (b. Jun 1816 England; d. 3 May 1887 Lindenwood, IL buried Lindenwood Cemetery)
married Harriet HAMLIN (b. Feb 1819 Ont.; m. 11 Mar 1841 Darlington Ont.)

Children

- i. Elizabeth SOMERS (b. 1842)
 - ii. Phoebe Ann SOMERS (b. 14 Jan 1846)
 - iii. Tamson SOMERS (b. 1847 Darlington, Ont.)
 - iv. Seward SOMERS (b. 20 May 1850)
 - v. Frank SOMERS (b. 1851)
 - vi. James SOMERS (b. Sep 1855)
 - vii. William Ryerson SOMERS (b. Jun 1858 Lindenwood, IL)
 - viii. Cornelius SOMERS (b. 1860 IL)
3. **Joseph SOMERS** (b. Abt 1821 England; d. 3 Dec 1889 in Creston, IL)
married Jamima DUNN (b. Abt 1823; m. Canada)

Children

- i. Tamson H. SOMERS (b. 11 Dec 1845)
- ii. Mary Ann SOMERS (b. Abt 1848)
- iii. Rhoda Jane SOMERS (b. 5 Sep 1853 Bowmanville, Durham Co. Ont.)
- iv. William J. SOMERS (b. 1855)
- v. Wesley A. SOMERS (b. Aft 1860)
- vi. Samuel J. SOMERS (b. Abt 1856)

Figure 4: WorldConnect SOMERS Family Chart

Source, figures 4–8: Dawn Somers, reproduced with permission

Archives of Ontario and United Church Archives

At this point, I went to the Archives of Ontario to see what they had. In the land records, I found those various lots in and around Darlington that John owned and also found him on a Belden Atlas map for Darlington.^{8, 9, 10} While in Toronto, I also visited the United Church Archives looking for Mary Jane's baptism. She was not listed in the Wesleyan Methodist Baptismal Register or any other record that I could find.

Bowmanville Cemetery

On the way home from Toronto to Ottawa, I stopped to visit the Somers graves in the Bowmanville Cemetery. The gravestones said John died 2 December 1901, aged 95 years, and that his wife Jane died 11 April 1862, aged 52 years. William Sr. died 23 September 1850, aged 70 years, 4 months and 1 day, which meant he was born 22 May 1780. There were poems on the gravestones, but nothing that mentioned where they came from in England.

Census Records

This was all very nice, but I still did not have any primary or even sec-

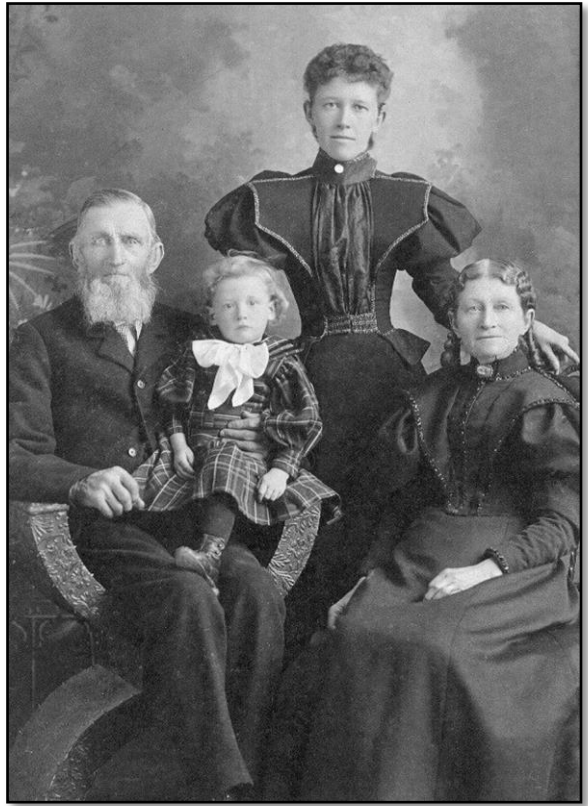


Figure 5: L to R: John Somers, Harold Dunseith, Maggie Dunseith nee Keat, Tamson Keat nee Somers

ondary documents (i.e. baptism, marriage, death, or census records, obituaries) that actually linked Mary Jane to this Somers family. On my summer vacation in 2009, I decided to try to find as many of these documents as I could, to prove the connection and also tell me where the family came from in England. I also wanted to follow the Tyler connection—the sisters of John Somers who married Tyler men. I started with the census records on *Ancestry*.

For Mary Jane, I found all her census records except for 1851 and 1871. She was with her parents (John and Jane) and siblings (Francis, Tamson, Amelia, Robert, William and James) in Darlington in the 1861 Census.¹¹ Ah! Finally! Some proof that she belonged to this Somers family. The information in this census agreed with that found on *WorldConnect*. Then in the 1881 Census I found Mary Jane in Usborne Township, Huron County, with her husband Thomas and their children.¹² By 1891, the family was in Southwold Township, Elgin County, and that was where they stayed.^{13, 14, 15} When the 1921 Census was released, I found Mary Jane in my grandfa-

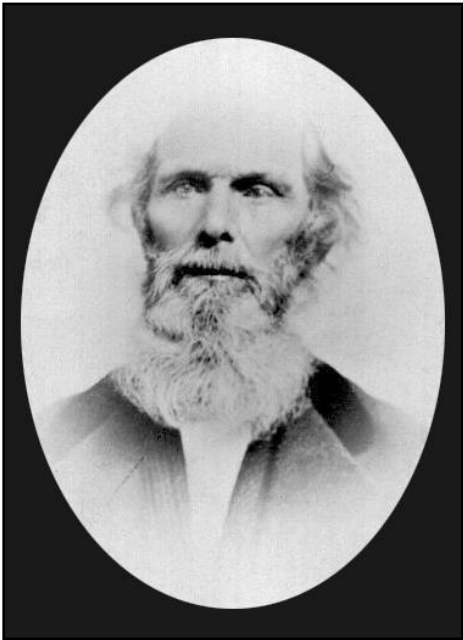


Figure 6: William Somers Jr.

ther's household after her husband died in 1918.¹⁶

For Mary Jane's father, John, I was not able to find him in the 1851 Census, likely because many of the pages are missing for Darlington. I did find him in 1861 living in Darlington with Jane and the children, as mentioned above. In the 1871 and 1881 censuses, I located John with his second wife, Hannah (later found to be Hannah Jackson), in Darlington.^{17, 18, 19} Sometime in the 1880s, John moved to St Mary's and started living with his son Frank.²⁰ In the 1901 Census, John (or someone) stated that he came to Canada in 1816.²¹ This was odd, because the census records for John's youngest brother, Joseph, said he was born in England in about 1822–1825, and John would only have been about 8 in 1816—too young to come alone. I think this immigration date is a bit off. In all these census records, it stated that John was born in 1807–1808 in England, but not where in England.

For William Jr., John's brother, I could not find him in the 1850/51 or 1860/61 census records for Ontario or Illinois. I did find him in Ogle County, Illinois, with his wife Harriet and their children in the 1870 and 1880 censuses.^{22, 23} The records only mentioned that William was born in England.

Next I found all the census records for Joseph.^{24, 25, 26, 27} He seemed to

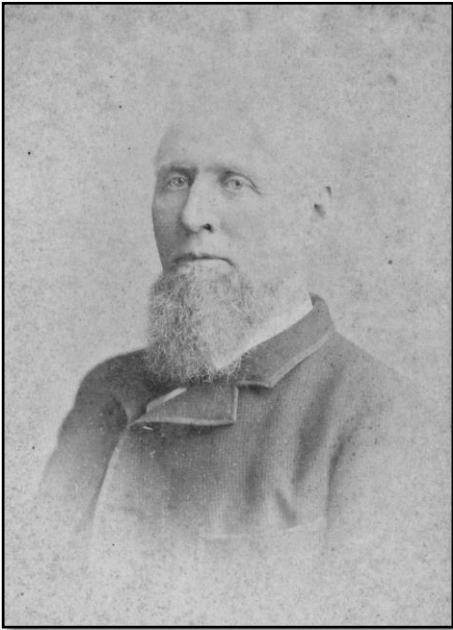


Figure 7: Joseph Somers

have immigrated to DeKalb, Illinois (close to Ogle County) in the 1860s with wife Jemima and children. Also, the census records said only that he was born in England, not where.

More on William Jr. and Joseph

I then searched the Upper Canada marriage registers. I found William Jr.'s 1841 marriage to Harriet Hamlin in Darlington and Joseph's 1843 marriage to Jemima Dun in Darlington.^{28, 29} On *Rootsweb* for Ogle County, I found a short biography of William Jr. that said he emigrated from Canada to Ogle County in 1847.³⁰ Then Dawn (who lives in Ogle County) made a special trip to the Lindenwood Cemetery and took pictures of William Jr. and mother

Tamson's gravestones for me. So nice!

Tax Assessment Rolls, Darlington

Next I went to Library and Archives Canada (LAC) and spent a day looking at Darlington tax assessment rolls from 1816 to 1848.³¹ I found a William Somers mentioned from 1825 until 1847. Now the family could have lived elsewhere for a time before moving to Darlington, but if they didn't, and taking into account the possible dates for Joseph's birth in England from various sources, I think the family came to Canada sometime between 1821 and 1825.

In the 1842 assessment rolls, there were two Williams mentioned—could this be father and son? John Somers started to show up in the rolls in 1829 and was there until 1848, when I stopped searching. There was also a Robert Somers listed. He was mentioned as early as 1820 and then more regularly each year from 1837 until 1842. John had a son Robert, but he was not born until 1844, so it was not him. Curious!

Obituaries

While at LAC, I examined three newspaper obituaries for John Somers.³² They said that John died in St Mary's and was carried back to Bowmanville for burial. No obituary mentioned John's origins, which was disappointing. One mentioned

that he was an Englishman who came to Canada at the age of 14. That meant he came to Canada around 1821–1822. The obituary also stated that he had farmed in Bowmanville for over 50 years and then moved to St Mary’s to live with his son for 20 years, and that he was “esteemed and respected by everyone who knew him. He was a kindly Christian man, whom to know was to like.” The obituary said that he had married “Miss Frank,” who died 40 years ago, and that his five sons, John in Bowmanville, Frank in Blanshard, and Robert, William and James in Michigan, and two daughters, Mrs Keat in St Mary’s and Mrs Down in St Thomas, survived him. This was further proof of the right Somers family.

While researching the newspapers, I found mention of John Somers and Calvin Tyler being the oldest first settlers of Darlington still living in 1894.³³ That was interesting, because supposedly a couple of John’s sisters married Tyler men. I wondered if Calvin Tyler was one of them.

In my search to find out where the Somers family came from in England, I tried to get obituaries for the other two brothers in Illinois. I asked Dawn if she could look them up for me, but she was not able to find anything because the newspapers had been lost in a fire years ago.

Devon or Somerset?

At this point, I decided to investigate the two English county leads for the Somers family—Devon and Somerset. Today the Devon records are all online at *Findmypast* (FMP), but in 2009, when I did this search, they were available for a small charge from the Devon Family History Society. I ordered all the Somers marriages. I was looking for a marriage of William and Tamson Somers before 1807–1808, when John was born. There was no William Somers who married a Tamson in that time-frame in Devon.

Then I tried Somerset marriages, which were indexed on FMP. I found one William Somers who married a Tamson Seward in Glastonbury in 1805.³⁴ Needless to say I was quite excited. I had seen the name spelled both ways in the Somers family—Seward and Saward. This was a name that kept coming up in all the family lines and was my father’s middle name. What were the chances that this was my William and Tamson?

Glastonbury Parish Records

I figured that if I searched the Glastonbury parish records and this William and Tamson had three sons with the right names (John, William, Joseph), baptized in the right years (1807–08, 1815–18, and 1822–25, respectively) and a couple of daughters (those daughters who married Tyler men) then that would be one

step closer to proving that this William and Tamson were mine. Plus I would be able to trace the family backwards in the records. So I ordered the Glastonbury records at the FHC.



Figure 8: Tamson Somers née Seward

When the records came in, I found that indeed this William and Tamson had three sons with the right names and baptism dates [John (1807), William (1815), and Joseph (1820)].³⁵ There were daughters available to marry those Tyler men [Hestor (1805), Harriott (1809), Rhoda (1813), and Amelia (1817)]. Also there was a brother, Robert (1811). Perhaps this was the Robert in the Darlington assessment rolls. The records stated that William Sr. was a yeoman.

I tried to go backwards and trace the Somers and Seward families in the Glastonbury records, as the marriage record said that William and Tamson were “from this parish.” However, the records from around 1780, when William and Tamson would have been baptized, were difficult to search. A note in the entries indicated that the curate’s record-keeping was “greatly imperfect.” He wrote everything in a little notebook, which was micro-filmed too, but he did not transfer over the records to the official parish register.

The next curate did that, and I know at least one record was missed, as I found it in the notebook and not in the official register; that was for one William Somers baptized 31 May 1780 to William and Phillis Somers.³⁶ This baptism agrees well with the date of birth given on William Sr.’s gravestone in Bowmanville (22 May 1780). I could find nothing conclusive for the Seward family in either the notebook or the parish register.

Then, to complicate matters, I realized that there were two William Somers in Glastonbury. One married Tamson Seward in 1805 and the other married someone else in 1807. So which William belonged to the baptismal record I found? I think the record belongs to my William Sr., because the baptismal date is so close to the date of birth given on his gravestone. But tracing the

family backwards is going to be difficult, due to the curate errors and these two Williams.

At this point, I was very keen to find a primary or even a secondary source here in Canada or the US mentioning that the family came from Somerset. Then I could feel more certain that this William and Tamson were mine. There was a lot of circumstantial evidence, but no factual source stating origin.

A Death Record for Mary Jane

While I was searching the Glastonbury records at the FHC in 2009, I looked up Mary Jane's death record, which was now available.³⁷ A very interesting document, it said she was born in Bowmanville, her father was John Summers and her mother Tamson Seward. My grandfather filled out the form, but got the mother wrong. Mary Jane's mother was Jane Frank, according to various other sources. Tamson Seward was her supposed grandmother. This piece of evidence was nonetheless reassuring.

The Tyler Connection

Next I decided to follow the Tyler lead. I started by looking for Tyler men in the Darlington censuses who married someone with the same name as one of the sisters—Hestor, Harriott, Rhoda or Amelia. I found that Calvin Tyler was married to a Harriett who was born about the right time as the one baptized in Glastonbury.

I wanted to know more about this Tyler family, so I went to *WorldConnect*. Sure enough, I found them there. It mentioned that Harriett's maiden name was indeed Somers. I wrote to the contributor for more information, but the email address was no longer valid. Calvin had brothers who could possibly have married another of the Somers sisters, but no other Somers sister was mentioned on *WorldConnect*.

At this point, I hired Ann Logan PLCGS, a professional researcher. I had three tasks for her: prove that Harriet Tyler was indeed Harriet Somers, find another sister married to a Tyler man, and find the church records for Mary Jane's marriage or baptism.

The researcher confirmed that Harriet Tyler was indeed Harriet Somers. She looked up the death records for Harriet Tyler's three sons, and on all three it said her maiden name was Somers.³⁸ I did try to look up an obituary for Harriet Tyler, but could not find one.

The researcher could find no record of another sister marrying a Tyler man. However, in January 2012, Dawn wrote to say that she had been contacted by people researching the Tyler family. They said that it was the sister named Rhoda who had married Phylo Tyler, a younger brother to Calvin Tyler. They sent information that confirmed this Somers/Tyler connection.

Rhoda seemed to have later married Colin Scott and moved to Crowel, Michigan. Perhaps Phylo died. I have not found an obituary or death record for Rhoda yet.

Baptism and Marriage Records for Mary Jane

The researcher could find no record of Mary Jane's baptism or marriage. She did find evidence that Mary Jane was a witness at her brother's wedding on 31 May 1872 in St Mary's, so she too might have been married in St Mary's around that time.³⁹

The researcher said there was a note in the St Mary's records stating that some returns were mislaid; she suggested I write to the United Church in St Mary's and ask them if they had a local record of the marriage.

I did one better than that. In 2011, I went on a road trip to St Mary's and searched the records at the St Mary's United Church and the St Mary's Museum and Archive. There were only a few registers at the church, but none for the time period of interest. They did not know what happened to the other registers.

The St Mary's Archive and the United Church Archive in Toronto do not have them. So I have no birth or marriage record for Mary Jane.

Other Somers Siblings

Meanwhile, I continued to search for information on the other Glastonbury Somers siblings, to see if I

could find a source that mentioned Somerset as their place of origin. I came across an Amealia Sumers who married William Pierce in 1838 in Darlington.⁴⁰ Amealia could be one of the Somers Glastonbury siblings, but I cannot find her in any census or any other record.

For Robert Somers, one of the brothers, I was unable to locate him in any census or find a grave for him. I went back to *WorldConnect*, found a good possibility for this Robert and wrote to the contributor, David Reynolds.

David said that a Robert James Somers was born in 1811 (right date) and died in 1841 as a result of a load of wood being upset on him. This agreed somewhat with the tax assessment rolls for Darlington, as Robert did not appear after 1842.

David said this Robert was married to Martha Porter in 1836 in Darlington. This information was taken from a Porter book written in 1952, but I have not been able to locate a copy. This could be our Robert. There was no obituary for Robert that I could find.

Finally Some Somerset References

At this point, I had found something on all the Somers Glastonbury siblings except for Hester, but I still had not found any source here in Canada that mentioned Somerset as their place of origin.

So I went back to LAC and looked up a local history book on Bowmanville written by J.B. Fairbairn in 1906.⁴¹

On page 93 it said:

Somersetshire England gave Darlington a very early pioneer in Mr. John Somers. I am told on good authority that he cut the first tree down near where he finally located. They were long lived people, the original one attained the great age of 96 years.

It goes on to talk about John's son, John, who was the same age as the author—the two went to school together so he would have known the family. I think this is a fairly good source.

And then in February 2012, Dawn sent me an obituary for Joseph Somers.⁴² It said that Joseph was born in Somersetshire, England, on 8 April 1820, which agrees well with his baptismal date in Glastonbury of 20 April 1820.

I will continue to search for more references placing the family in Somerset, but I am quite convinced that the Glastonbury William and Tamson Somers family is mine.

Photos of the Somers Family

While talking to Dawn, I asked her if she had any photos of the family and she sent me shots of the three brothers and the mother Tamson (Figures 5–8). Wonderful!

Final Thoughts

This project was really fun and is an example of how to trace the origins of a family when you start with very little.

Acknowledgement

I would like sincerely to thank Dawn Somers, Peg Somers, David Reynolds and Ann Logan for their valued assistance over the course of this project.

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We Shall Remember Them®

Private George William Burrows

Regimental number: 6109

1st Battalion, North Staffordshire Regiment

Born, March 1891; died, 1 May 1916

BY SHEILA DOHOO FAURE

This is the first in a new ACR series: biographies of World War I soldiers treated in No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station. Staffed by the Canadian Army Medical Corps, it was located just behind the lines in France and Belgium, and after the war, in Germany. Wounded soldiers from all Allied armies were treated there until being transferred to hospitals further behind the lines or in England. However, many did not survive and their deaths were recorded in journals maintained by the chaplains. One of BIFHSGO's ongoing volunteer projects is transcribing the No. 1 CCCS chaplains' records and posting them on the Society website along with the researched life stories of the soldiers who died there. Sheila Dohoo Faure has prepared many of the biographies.

Private George William Burrows was born in March 1891 and baptised on the 29th of that month in the parish of Wellington, Hanley, Staffordshire.¹ He was the eldest son of William and Emma Burrows of 106 Well Street, Hanley. His father was born in about 1868 in Somerset and his mother about a year later in Hanley.² His mother was probably the former Emma Turvey, who married Charles William Burrows in the summer of 1890.³

They had at least ten children:⁴ George, Joseph Frederick (born in 1892, but died in early 1893),⁵ Annie (born in 1893),⁶ Florrie (born in about 1897),⁷ Caroline Selina (born in 1898),⁸ Clement (born in 1901),⁹ Nellie (born in 1903),¹⁰ Lilly (born in 1905),¹¹ Harry (born in about

1908)¹² and Wilfred (born in 1910).¹³

In 1901, George's father was working as a general carter and the family was living at 11 Victor Street in Hanley.¹⁴ By 1911, the family had moved to 12 Milner Street and his father was a potter's labourer.¹⁵ George was not living with the family at that time.

George enlisted in the North Staffordshire Regiment and joined the theatre of war on 2 July 1915. His medal rolls index card suggests that he joined the theatre of war in the Balkans.¹⁶ However, the 1st Battalion of the North Staffordshire Regiment served in France from September 1914 until November 1918.¹⁷ Less than a year after going overseas he died at the age of 25.

In April 1916, the 1st Battalion of the North Staffordshire Regiment was stationed north of Wulverghem, Belgium.¹⁸ At 12:55 a.m. on 30 April a gas alarm was given. There was one wave of gas, probably chlorine, which lasted about 20 minutes. With winds blowing 10 miles per hour, the gas covered about 50 metres in 11 seconds. That did not give the men much time to adjust their helmets and many of the men were gassed. At 1:20 a.m. a German attack began. There was considerable confusion because of the suddenness of the attack and the fact that the men were still wearing their smoke helmets and, as a result, were partially blinded.

Although the battalion had to evacuate the area, the enemy was not able to advance and much of the area was reoccupied. A shortage of bombs prevented anything more than a steady advance of the battalion and the enemy was able to return to its own lines. The enemy had taken one man prisoner and killed or wounded a dozen more men.

Our losses from gas-poisoning were considerable chiefly owing to the speed with which the gas travelled over the short distance between the trenches. Smoke helmets when adjusted properly in time proved most effective. A large number of men suffered from after-effects being taken ill 12 to 24 hours after the gas had passed. Most of their cases, however, were only slight.¹⁹

Unfortunately this was not the case for George. He died of gas poisoning on 1 May 1916 at No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station.²⁰ The effects of the gas attacks were also felt at No. 1 CCCS, stationed near Bailleul,²¹ which was just about six miles from Wulverghem. Fifteen patients died the same day as George, many apparently from gas poisoning.²²

In April and June 1916, the 1st Battalion suffered well over 500 casualties in two serious gas attacks, while in the trenches north of Wulverghem.²³ George lost four comrades from his battalion in the few days at the end of April and beginning of May: Private Oliver Llewellyn Boon, Private James Morgan, Private Samuel Bertrem (Bert) Clewlow and Private Thomas Alfred Hulme. Most of his comrades had been poisoned by chlorine gas.

George was a member of the Church of England²⁴ and was buried in the Bailleul Communal Cemetery Extension, Nord (Plot II, Row D, Grave 119).²⁵ Bailleul is in France, close to the Belgian border. It was occupied on 14 October 1914 and became an important railhead, air depot and hospital centre. Several casualty clearing stations, including No. 1 Canadian, were quartered there for considerable periods.

Commonwealth burials at Bailleul began in April 1915. An extension was built and burials continued

until April 1918, and occurred again in September and after the Armistice, when soldiers' remains were brought in from the neighbouring battlefields.²⁶

His father, who was still living on Milner Street, received a letter notifying him of his son's death.²⁷ The monies owing to him from the army upon his death were sent to his mother.²⁸

George was awarded the British War Medal (for service overseas between 1914 and 1918), the Victory Medal (for service in an operational theatre) and the 1914–15 Star (for service in the war against Germany between 5 August 1914 and 31 December 1915).²⁹

Reference Notes

¹ "Staffordshire baptisms," *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 9 September 2015), entry for George William Burrows, Archive reference: D3726/1/3, Page: 114.

² "1911 England, Wales & Scotland Census," *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 9 September 2015), entry for William C. Burrows, District: Stoke upon Trent, Registration district number: 361, Sub-district: Hanley, Sub-district number: 1, Census reference: RG14PN16538 RG78PN1022 RD361 SD1 ED28 SN291, Piece number 16538, Page: -, Folio: -.

³ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Marriage Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 9 September 2015), entry for Charles William Burrows, Registration dis-

trict: Stoke upon Trent, Inferred county: Staffordshire, Volume: 6b, Page: 282.

⁴ "1911 England, Wales & Scotland Census," entry for William C. Burrows. The 1911 Census indicates that they had nine children, all of whom were still living. However, there is a baptismal record for a son, Joseph Frederick, who was born in 1892 and died before his first birthday.

⁵ "Staffordshire baptisms," *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 9 September 2015), entry for Joseph Frederick Burrows, Archive reference: D3726/1/3, Page: 126; "England & Wales, FreeBMD Death Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 18 September 2015), entry for Joseph Charles Burrows, Registration district: Stoke upon Trent, Inferred county: Staffordshire, Volume: 6b, Page: 117.

⁶ "Staffordshire baptisms," *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 9 September 2015), entry for Annie Burrows, Archive reference: D3726/1/3, Page: 165.

⁷ "1901 England Census," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 16 September 2015), entry for William Lowndes, Registration district: Stoke upon Trent, Sub-registration district: Hanley, ED, institution, or vessel: 10, Household schedule number: 270, Piece: 2600, Folio: 87, Page: 42. There is no evidence to indicate why the Burrow family was recorded as being "Lowndes" in this census. All the family details (names and ages) are consistent with this being the Burrows family.

- ⁸ "Staffordshire baptisms," *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 9 September 2015), entry for Annie Burrows, Archive reference: D3726/1/4, Page: 65.
- ⁹ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 9 September 2015), entry for Clement Burrows, Registration district: Stoke upon Trent, Inferred county: Staffordshire, Volume: 6b, Page: 172.
- ¹⁰ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 9 September 2015), entry for Nelly Burrows, Registration district: Stoke upon Trent, Inferred county: Staffordshire, Volume: 6b, Page: 213.
- ¹¹ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 9 September 2015), entry for Lilly Burrows, Registration district: Stoke upon Trent, Inferred county: Staffordshire, Volume: 6b, Page: 193.
- ¹² "1911 England, Wales & Scotland Census," entry for William C. Burrows.
- ¹³ "England & Wales, FreeBMD Birth Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 9 September 2015), entry for Wilfred Burrows, Registration district: Stoke upon Trent, Inferred county: Staffordshire, Volume: 6b, Page: 178.
- ¹⁴ "1901 England Census," entry for William Lowndes.
- ¹⁵ "1911 England, Wales & Scotland Census," entry for William C. Burrows.
- ¹⁶ "British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914–1920," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 5 August 2015), entry for George William Burrows.
- ¹⁷ "North Staffordshire Regiment," *Wikipedia* (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North_Staffordshire_Regiment/; accessed 16 August 2015).
- ¹⁸ "UK, WWI War Diaries (France, Belgium and Germany), 1914–1920," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 16 August 2015), Regiment or Unit: Prince of Wales's (North Staffordshire) Regiment, Sub Unit: 1st Battalion, Division: 24th Division, Diary dates: 1915 Nov - 1919 May, Piece description: Piece 2213/1: 1 Battalion North Staffordshire Regiment (1915 Nov–1919 May), Piece number: 2213.
- ¹⁹ Ibid.
- ²⁰ "Record of Deaths, 17 February 1916 - 10 February 1919, a record maintained at No. 1 CCCS," Library and Archives Canada, (records accessed 2013 and 2015), Record group 9, Series IIC10, Volume 4556, Record number 80.
- ²¹ "War Diaries of the First World War: 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station 1914/08/13-1919/03/31," *Library and Archives Canada* (http://data4.collectionscanada.gc.ca/netacgi/nph-brs?s1=casualty+clearing&s13=&s12=&l=20&s9=RG9&s7=9-52&Sect1=IMAGE&Sect2=THESOFF&Sect4=AND&Sect5=WARDPEN&Sect6=HITOFF&d=FIND&p=1&u=http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/archivianet/02015202_e.html&r=1&f=G; accessed 17 June 2015).

- ²² Ibid.
- ²³ "North Staffordshire Regiment." *Wikipedia* (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North_Staffordshire_Regiment/; accessed 16 August 2015).
- ²⁴ "Record of Deaths, 17 February 1916 - 10 February 1919, a record maintained at No. 1 CCCS," Record number 80.
- ²⁵ "Commonwealth War Graves Commission," (www.cwgc.org; accessed 9 September 2015), entry for Burrows, G.W., Service No: 6190.
- ²⁶ "Bailleul Communal Cemetery, Nord," Commonwealth War Graves Commission (www.cwgc.org; accessed 5 August 2015).
- ²⁷ "Record of Deaths, 17 February 1916 - 10 February 1919, a record maintained at No. 1 CCCS," Record number 80.
- ²⁸ "UK, Army Registers of Soldiers' Effects, 1901-1929," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 19 January 2015), entry for George William Burrows.
- ²⁹ "British Army WWI Medal Rolls Index Cards, 1914-1920," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk; accessed 9 September 2015), entry for George William Burrows.
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So You Don't Have Any Irish Relatives?

You can still help those who do, by volunteering at the BIFHSGO Fall Conference.

Help is needed for

- The Welcome Desk
- The Research Room
- The Marketplace
- Catering
- Signage
- Transportation for speakers and out-of-town attendees

You can take advantage of the vendors, enjoy the networking, and make the conference more successful by just giving a few hours of your time to this important event.

Contact Kathy Wallace at membership@bifhsgo.ca to find out how you can help!

Techniques and Resources

The Cream of the Crop

Top items from recent posts on the Anglo-Celtic Connections blog



BY JOHN D. REID

Who Do You Think You Are? Live

In April I spent two weeks in England, including three days at the Nation-

al Exhibition Centre in Birmingham at what is advertised as the world's largest family history show. There were more than 13,000 attendees. In three days one can only sample some of the many things available: hear the inside story from featured celebrities and researchers on the UK *Who Do You Think You Are* TV series, have a portrait sketch drawn for a donation to a charity, sit for a photo in a WW II Spitfire, have experts examine family heirlooms, consult a genealogical expert in a free 20-minute session, have a photo expert interpret old family photographs. It goes on: attend presentations at some of the larger company displays—*Ancestry*, *Findmypast*, *The Genealogist*; attend presentations organized by the Society of Genealogists in three separate areas; and as well, take in genetic genealogy presentations

organized by the International Society of Genetic Genealogy. That's in addition to consulting experts while finding out what's new and on sale at the various commercial, governmental and family history society stands. I took the opportunity of a special price to join the Guild of One-Name Studies. There are lots of networking opportunities with a Who's Who of British genealogy, including previous speakers at BIFHSGO conferences and events.

WDYTYA? Live will return to Birmingham next year, likely around the 8 April weekend, a week before Easter. That would be an excellent time to schedule your next U.K. visit. In the meantime, find some of the handouts from this year's WDYTYA events at www.sog.org.uk/learn/who-do-you-think-you-are-live-2014-speakers-handouts/ and some of the genetic genealogy presentations on YouTube at: www.youtube.com/channel/UC7HQSiSkiy7ujlkgQER1FYw/.

***The Genealogist* and TreeView**

Does the world need more genealogy software? Apparently the folks at *The Genealogist* see a gap in the

market and have filled it with their TreeView family history software, which works on PCs and Macs and has smartphone apps for IOS and Android. Released in February, it was selling for £39.95 at WDYT YA? Live and is available at www.treeview.co.uk.

I didn't need another such package, but the premium version included four months of a top-of-the-line Diamond subscription to *The Genealogist* database, www.thegenalogist.co.uk/, which I'd been wanting to try. It came bundled with a CD including Cassell's *Gazetteer of Great Britain and Ireland 1893*, the *Imperial Dictionary of Universal Biography* of 1870, and British landholder records from the 1870s.

The Genealogist, like *Ancestry* and *Findmypast*, offers access to the available censuses for England and Wales and civil registration indexes for births, deaths and marriages. Unlike the other two it has full keyword search capacity across all records, so for all the censuses you can search for occupation, address and birthplace as well as for name. You can also map the occurrence by county. There's a match capability that searches for records for the same person across the complete collection and attempts to find children of a marriage in the civil registration index. Records cover England, Wales and the Isle of Man, but not Scotland, Ireland or the

Channel Islands. I was told the data abstraction in their records is of high quality, as it's done by native English speakers, unlike with some other companies.

There are records not on other sites, the latest being the national tithe map collection for the early Victorian period. A simple search found an entry linked to a map showing the location of a house rented by my g-g-grandfather in rural Staffordshire.

Yorkshire Parish Records

Combining its three ridings, Yorkshire is the biggest and second most populous county in England. *Findmypast* has a recently updated collection of parish baptisms for 1538–1914 (4.4 million), banns for 1653–1930 (over half a million), marriages for 1539–1930 (2.3 million) and burial records for 1538–1989 (3.2 million). These are transcripts and images of the original records compiled from the East Riding Archives and Local Studies Service, the Borthwick Institute for Archives (University of York), the North Yorkshire County Record Office, the Teesside Archives, the Sheffield Archives and Local Studies Library, and the Doncaster Archives and Local Studies Library.

The Year Without A Summer

Wherever your ancestors were 200 years ago, in the U.K., Ireland, Western Europe, Eastern North America or elsewhere, they were dealing

with an exceptional climate anomaly. In April the previous year Mount Tambora had exploded, the largest eruption in at least 1,300 years, sending a veil of dust high in the atmosphere. Effects of another major volcanic eruption in 1809 had barely subsided.

Spectacular sunsets in paintings from the period record one of the more benign impacts. However, particles lofted into the stratosphere caused cold and wet weather, and famine and disease in Ireland, now overlooked because of the Potato Famine three decades later. Scotland experienced a high frequency of days with gale-force winds. In England July was miserable, the coldest in a record going back to 1659 and the fourth wettest in 250 years. Yields of many crops were disappointing. Famine conditions prevailed in Western Europe. History records that Mary Shelley conceived the novel *Frankenstein* while trying to sleep through a frigid early morning of 16 June 1816 in a villa on the shore of Lake Geneva.

At the time Ottawa had only a handful of settlers; it was decades until there were any official weather records. Snow was reported during the first half of June at Kingston, Montreal, Quebec City and places in New England, with the newspaper in Kingston speculating the cause might be sunspots. Crops were destroyed or set back. For more on the

situation in Canada see the article in *Canada's History* magazine at: <http://www.canadashistory.ca/Magazine/Online-Extension/Articles/1816-The-Year-Without-Summer>.

Federation of Women's Institutes of Ontario Digitization

As of 31 March, there is a free online platform to allow researchers to access the many documents the Women's Institutes (WI) of Ontario have created across the province since 1897, while the original documents remain within their communities. Funding for the project was provided through the Documentary Heritage Communities Program of Library and Archives Canada.

This is the start of the virtual archives. The jewel in the crown is the award-winning Tweedsmuir Community History Collections, which document the history of a community, from 10 branches. It is estimated that 1,300 Tweedsmuir Community History collections have been created, with about 1,000 collections not yet digitized, so there's plenty more, which will be released on an ongoing basis. Check out this virtual archive at <http://collections.fwio.on.ca/search/>.

Canadian National Digital Heritage Index

On 31 March the Canadian Research Knowledge Network (CRKN)

launched the *Canadian National Digital Heritage Index* (CNDHI), an index of digitized collections from across Canada with the goal of creating a single, current list of all Canadian digitization projects. This national index, the first of its kind in Canada, aims to increase the awareness of the digitized collections in institutions and libraries across the country, which will in turn increase the use and impact of those collections that are relevant and important to all Canadians.

According to the release, "Features of the tool include: simple and advanced searching and sorting by institution, location, language, and media type; downloadable list of search results; frequently updated with new records."

A search for keyword "local history" found 605 items, mainly from Canadian universities including, from the University of Calgary, the Our Roots collection of books containing local Canadian histories of major genealogical interest. This is already a useful tool, already better with additional content than when I first visited and with deeper search capability coming. Search from <http://cndhi-ipnpc.ca/>.

British Navy, Army and Air Force Lists

At the BIFHSGO May monthly meeting Roy Thomas spoke about his career Royal Navy surgeon relative, Michael Joseph Laffan. He made ref-

erence to the British Navy Lists, showing images taken from copies he'd consulted in the library at the Canadian War Museum. There are also copies at Library and Archives Canada and some online options.

Ancestry has an indexed collection, "UK, Navy Lists, 1888–1970," with Roy's relative listed in 79 issues from 1904 to 1927.

You can also take advantage of The National Library of Scotland digitization initiative, which now has 122 volumes free online, from 1914 to 1945. There's also a collection of the Army List from 1841 to 1946 and the Air Force List from 1919 to 1945. All are available on the *Internet Archive* texts National Library of Scotland page at <https://archive.org/details/nationallibraryofscotland>.

There are a few earlier Navy List issues, including March 1835, December 1848 and June 1856, digitized on the *Internet Archive* texts sourced from the University of Michigan library.

Summer Meetup

For the past few years members of BIFHSGO have been getting together over the summer at a weekend lunchtime meetup at the café at Westboro Beach. Dates are announced on my blog at www.anglo-celtic-connections.blogspot.com/. All BIFHSGO members, new and old, are welcome.

The Bookworm



BY BETTY WARBURTON

I have compiled lists of items about various locations in Ireland but never one dealing with the long and troubled history of the whole island. The Brian O'Regan Memorial Library has over one hundred histories of Ireland in its collection.

A single Bookworm column cannot do justice to all of them; therefore, I draw your attention to some of those that I consider interesting. Perhaps in your reading of them you will find answers to such questions as why your ancestor left the green fields of Ireland for the snows of Canada.

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Voices from the Dust - Ottawa's Rootstech

A **FREE** family history conference hosted by the
Ottawa Ontario Stake Family History Centre of
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

When: **Saturday the 18th of June 2016 1 pm to 5 pm**

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Enjoy displays from a wide variety of organizations, and free refreshments!



BIFHSGO News

Membership Report

BY KATHY WALLACE

New BIFHSGO Members 18 Feb 2016–17 May 2016		
Member No.	Name	Address
1789	Larry Meacoe	Nepean, ON
1790	Maureen Jones	Mississauga, ON
1791	Sharron Welby	Maberly, ON
1792	Ed Hogan	Ottawa, ON
1792	Helen McGuire	Ottawa, ON
1793	Nancy Boomgaart	Ottawa, ON
1794	Wayne Pickering	Arnprior, ON
1794	Denise Pickering	Arnprior, ON
1795	Heather Carmody	Ottawa, ON
1796	Dennis Brodie	Stittsville, ON
1796	Valerie Brodie	Stittsville, ON
1797	Kathy O'Hagan	Ottawa, ON
1798	Carolyn Hudson	Cornwall, ON
1799	Murray Sands	Ottawa, ON
1800	Brian Derrah	Ottawa, ON
1801	David McElrea	Ottawa, ON
1802	Suzanne Eakin	Ottawa, ON
1803	John Borris	North Gower, ON



Celebrate Your Anglo-Celtic Roots!

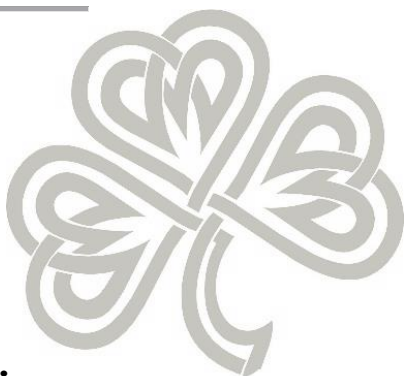
22nd Annual BIFHSGO

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Research Room—Marketplace

Something for everyone!

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Ben Franklin Place, 101 CentrepoinTE Drive, Ottawa

For registration information

**<http://conference.bifhsgo.ca>
conferenceregistrar@bifhsgo.ca
613-234-2520 (voicemail)**

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The Society

The British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa (BIFHSGO) is an independent, federally incorporated society and a registered charity (Reg. No. 89227 4044 RR0001). Our purpose is to encourage, carry on and facilitate research into, and publication of, family histories by people who have ancestors in the British Isles.

We have two objectives: to research, preserve, and disseminate Canadian and British Isles family and social history, and to promote genealogical research through a program of public education, showing how to conduct this research and preserve the findings in a readily accessible form.

We publish genealogical research findings and information on research resources and techniques, hold public meetings on family history, maintain a reference library, and participate in the activities of related organizations. Membership dues for 2015 are \$40 for individuals, \$50 for families, and \$40 for institutions. Members enjoy four issues of *Anglo-Celtic Roots*, ten family history meetings, members-only information on bifhsgo.ca, friendly advice from other members, and participation in special interest groups.

BIFHSGO Calendar of Events

Saturday Morning Meetings

The Chamber, Ben Franklin Place,
101 CentrepoinTE Drive, Ottawa

- Sept 2016** **The BIFHSGO 22nd Annual Family History Conference** on 9–11 September replaces the usual monthly meeting. This year’s featured themes are Irish Family History and DNA in Genealogy. Details are available at www.bifhsgo.ca.
- 8 Oct 2016** ***Did Lucy and Isaac Actually Marry? And the Importance of Dying in the Right Sequence***—After Henry Wimburn Sudell Sweetapple Horlock died in 2010, his widow wanted to find a relative to inherit family portraits spanning 350 years. In steps the genealogist, Brian Laurie-Beaumont, who tells us what happened next.
- 12 Nov 2016** ***First In, Last Out: But What Came between 1914 and 1919?***—After years of being unable to uncover details of her father’s wartime service, Irene Ip struck gold when she Googled “The Fifth Division” and was able to piece together his story.

Schedule

9:00–9:30	Before BIFHSGO Educational Sessions: check www.bifhsgo.ca for up-to-date information.
9:30	Discovery Tables
10:00–11:30	Meeting and Presentation
11:30–4:00	Writing Group

For information on meetings of other special interest groups (Scottish, Irish, DNA, Master Genealogist Users), check www.bifhsgo.ca.

Articles for *Anglo-Celtic Roots*

Articles and illustrations for publication are welcome. For advice on preparing manuscripts, please email the Editor, at acreditor@bifhsgo.ca, or check “Publications” at www.bifhsgo.ca. The deadline for submissions to the Fall issue is 29 July 2016.