



Anglo-Celtic Roots

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In This Issue

The Queen's Coachman: Our Only Claim to Fame!

The Aftermath of the Christmas Blitz

We Shall Remember Them

Report on the BIFHSGO 2017

Annual General Meeting



Anglo-Celtic Roots

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A Smiling Queen Victoria

Source: http://2.bp.blogspot.com/-ho9azexw55o/UQmmkPdh3jI/AAAAAAB4g/-gsdw6rJXrk/s1600/queen_victoria_smiling.jpg

From the Editor

In this issue Christine Jackson reprises her award-winning talk at the BIFHSGO February 2017 meeting, where she described her great-great-uncle Edwin's career, in which he rose to become Queen Victoria's coachman.

Charles Morton gives us another first-person account: a follow-up to the vivid description of his family's losses during the 1940 Manchester Blitz that appeared in the Spring 2017 issue.

In the latest WW I biography, Sheila Dohoo Faure describes the life and family of Sapper William Victor Demery, who survived the war only to die of influenza.

For those who missed the June Annual General Meeting, we provide a summary of the meeting. The official minutes of the AGM will be published in the Spring 2018 issue of *Anglo-Celtic Roots*.



Jean Kitchen

From the President



September already! Where has the year gone? This one seems to have flown by faster than ever. It certainly has been a busy year for our Society.

Our Pub Night at the OGS Conference in June was a great success. The place was packed, conversations were non-stop, the quiz was informative, challenging, yet fun, and the music made it all feel like a real British pub experience. Check out some photos of the event on pages 39 and 40. I'd like to thank everyone, too many to mention here, who helped us organize the event, including those members who submitted their photographs of Britain for our slide show. The event was such a success and we had so much fun that we are considering doing it again sometime—perhaps for our 2018 conference.

Many of our members had lead roles in organizing and running the OGS conference this year. Of particular note are Jane Down, Andrea Harding, Pam Cooper, Mary-Lou Simac, Ken McKinlay and Doug Hoddinott, although I know there were many, many others who volunteered. I would like to say thank you to all our members who contributed to their genealogical community in June. I am proud that we have so many active members

who enjoy contributing their time and talents to creating an event for everyone.

Our own conference committee is now in the last stages of organizing our fall conference, which is only a few weeks away. I am looking forward to talks by Celia Heritage, Paul Milner and James F.S. Thomson, as well as well-known local speakers. I hope you will find the program of interest and will join us for our 23rd Annual Conference. Registration online is still available!

Glenn Wright, Jane Down and Willis Burwell have spent time this summer reviewing our archives, which have been housed for many years at Willis' home. They have worked quickly and efficiently to sort, discard and relocate what we need to keep to a new location. This was very important and vital work and I would like to thank all three for their efforts. Thanks also go to Willis for his years of service as our "archivist," housing everything under one roof.

I hope your summer has been equally busy and enjoyable and you are ready to participate in another excellent year of BIFHSGO activities.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Barbara J. Tose". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Barbara J. Tose

The Queen's Coachman: Our Only Claim to Fame!©

BY CHRISTINE JACKSON



As a child, Christine Jackson heard that the brother of one of her great-grandmothers (her great-great-uncle Edwin Miller) had provided her working-class family with probably their only connection to the aristocracy: he had actually been Queen Victoria's state coachman! Coming from long lines of Sussex agricultural labourers, she naturally wanted to reconstruct Edwin's life and discover how he came to occupy such a lofty position. This article is based on the presentation Christine gave to BIFHSGO on 11 February 2017, which won her our annual "Best Talk" award.

You could say that Edwin Miller was an agricultural labourer (ag lab) who made good. My research confirmed that he did indeed become Queen Victoria's state coachman—a position he held from 1890 until his retirement in 1898 at the age of 62, by which time he had spent 40 years as a royal servant, working with the horses in the Royal Stables at Windsor, the Hampton Court Stud, and the Royal Mews in London.

In this pre-automobile period, and when Edwin was at the peak of his career, his position in the Royal Household made him sufficiently newsworthy to attract the attention of newspapers throughout Britain and around the world. They reported on his humane method of

training horses, his appearance before the Queen to receive a faithful service medal, and his involvement in Queen Victoria's elaborate gold and diamond jubilee processions. They covered a holiday visit, the many gifts he had received from foreign and British royalty, and reminiscences of his career high points.

Even in the early years of the 20th century, some years after his retirement and when the number of motorized vehicles on the roads of Britain was increasing dramatically, the late Queen's former coachman remained newsworthy—for the court-awarded compensation he received following the expropriation of his Central London pub for road improvements, his death in

1907, and his burial in one of London's big private cemeteries.

The following is an account of what I uncovered as I reconstructed Edwin Miller's life.

The Search Begins

When I decided to find out more about my ancestors' only claim to fame, my fundamental question was: how did Edwin Miller, the son of a poor agricultural labourer from Sussex, work his way up to become Queen Victoria's chief coachman?

My immediate family had nothing in the way of mementoes, diaries or other documentation about Edwin, but back in the 1980s a cousin of my father had given me some faint photocopies of newspaper clippings about Edwin's retirement and a poor copy-of-a-copy of a colour photo of Edwin in his state coachman's livery, most likely taken on his appointment in 1890 (Figure 1).

Newspapers were to become my primary source of information about Edwin's life. Much to my delight, I found that in the late 1890s two of the major London dailies—the *Telegraph* and the *Daily Mail*—had conducted lengthy interviews with Edwin. Their reports contained actual or paraphrased quotes from him about his career, including the comment that he was 62 years old when he retired. That gave me a birth year of 1836 and a

starting point with which to trace his family history.



Figure 1:
Edwin Miller in
state livery,
ca. 1890
Source: author

Unfortunately, Edwin had been born one year before the start of civil registration, so I looked first for him and his family in the 1841 Census. Although the census does not give relationships between people, I found Edwin, aged 5, living with what was evidently his family at Park Gate Farm in my ancestral parish of Ringmer, just three miles from Lewes, the county town of East Sussex.

The 1851 Census at *Findmypast* and civil registrations at *FreeBMD* provided further details for Edwin's parents—William and Charlotte Miller—and their six children, with William described as an ag lab (what else?!). All the family were

born in Ringmer except for Charlotte, who came from the adjacent parish of Laughton. Edwin was the second child and my great-grandmother Mary was the fourth. With a little extra online research I took the Millers back a few more generations to a marriage in 1721 in the nearby parish of Buxted, where I ground to a halt (Figure 2).

As for Edwin, I had no luck finding a baptism or birth record for him anywhere in the *FamilySearch*, *Ancestry* and *Findmypast* databases, but came up trumps in the Sussex Family History Group's online *Data Archive*. There I found the dates of both the births and baptisms of Edwin (1836) and his older brother William (1833), transcribed from the

register of the nonconformist Jireh Chapel in Lewes. This opened up an intriguing field of research into which I had not previously delved—that of religious nonconformity, although I knew that historically it had been strong in this part of Sussex. In the Church of England parish register for Ringmer I found the baptism of William Sr. in 1808, but I could not find a record of Charlotte's birth or baptism anywhere, nor baptisms for any of Edwin's younger siblings, including Mary. This leads me to suspect that Charlotte's family may have been nonconformist. It is known that some nonconformist churches stopped keeping records after civil registration was introduced (1837) and that some records have been lost.

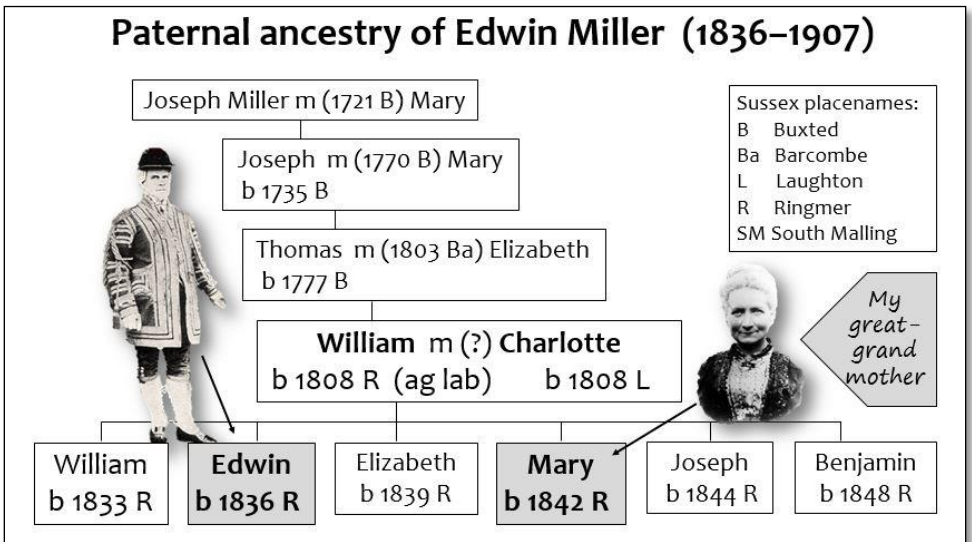


Figure 2: Edwin's paternal ancestry
 Source: author

Wondering what may have prompted Edwin to escape his ag lab background, I found that times were tough in 1830s England when he was born. The Agricultural Revolution was well underway and agricultural labourers everywhere were increasingly finding themselves put out of work by innovations like threshing machines. By 1839, the perennial heavy winter unemployment in Ringmer meant that free coal and twice-weekly soup were provided to two-thirds of the entire population of the parish that winter. The Miller family was obviously struggling, as William Sr. appeared on *A List of Persons who have Soup and Coal* of January 1839.

Elsewhere in Sussex, the railway from London arrived in Brighton in 1841, opening up the town and the coastline to development of all sorts, as well as making it a convenient weekend destination for Londoners wanting a break. In 1846, a new world of possibilities unfolded for the rural people of East Sussex when Lewes and Brighton were linked by rail. By the 1850s Brighton was a fast-growing seaside resort attracting holidaymakers and workers alike to the service industries there.

As Edwin's childhood experience had been one of intermittent poverty and hunger with few prospects for employment in his home village, it therefore came as no surprise

when I found him in the 1851 Census, aged 15, living in Brighton and working there as a "pot boy," serving drinks (in pots/tankards) in a tavern. Edwin's older brother William worked as a porter at an inn only a few streets away. If they did indeed have a strict nonconformist upbringing, it had not been enough to prevent the boys from making a deal with the devil drink!

From Pot Boy to Groom

While Edwin had obviously shaken off his ag lab shackles by 1851, there was still no evidence of horses in his life nor hints of how he might have become a groom. Hoping to pin things down a bit, I wrote to the Royal Archives at Windsor Castle asking if they could tell me anything about Edwin's career in the Queen's service. They sent me a sampling of photocopied records, showing that Edwin entered the Queen's service on 8 February 1859. Only a year later, *Findmypast* added the royal servant records to its database; there I found the dates of his promotions, the wages and pay increases he received, the dates he was paid, and the amount of his pension along with the address to which it was paid. Now I knew there were eight years unaccounted for in Edwin's early life—1851 to 1859—during which he transitioned from a pot boy in a Brighton pub to a groom in the Royal Household.

In his newspaper interviews, Edwin said he was employed as a groom by Sir Henry Ashley before he went to work for the Queen. So my next questions were, how did Edwin become a groom for Sir Henry Ashley? and, of course, who was Sir Henry Ashley? Perhaps Edwin attended the Brighton race meets (Figure 3) and he became interested in horses there, perhaps getting a tip about a job with Sir Henry. But while I eventually discovered who the Ashleys were, I don't believe I'll ever know how Edwin obtained his groom's position with them, which is what really set him up for his career in the Royal Household.



Figure 3: The New Race Stand, Brighton, 1852, by S. Alken

Source: <http://www.mybrightonandhove.org.uk/>

As for Sir Henry Ashley, I found him in the 1841 and 1851 censuses, living with his wife and two daughters in Windsor, Berkshire. He had a groom, so I knew he maintained a carriage. Windsor Castle, of course, is home to the Royal Family, while the nearby Ascot racecourse has always had close connections with

the royals. Sir Henry's death announcement, which I found in the *British Newspaper Archive* at findmypast.co.uk, told me he was a son of the sixth Earl of Shaftesbury and that he had been a member of Parliament for 16 years.

After Sir Henry's death, Lady Ashley moved into Central London, where she apparently had no use for a carriage of her own. Edwin Miller was the Ashleys' groom when Sir Henry died, but within two months he was working for the Queen and, according to Edwin, it was Lady Ashley who got him his job in the Queen's service. The Ashleys would have

moved in high society in Windsor, so I assumed that Lady Ashley had asked one of her male contacts to help out, as it seems likely that an influential man would carry more weight with the Crown Equerry—the

man responsible for overseeing the Royal Stables.

Indeed, a difficult-to-read note on one of the Royal Household pay lists includes the very name of the person who had recommended Edwin. Using the 1851 British Army Worldwide Index at *Findmypast*,

I identified that person as Colonel the Hon. Alexander Hood of the Scots Fusilier Guards, 1st Viscount Bridport, who was based in Windsor. He was also one of the Queen's equerries, well-placed to recommend Edwin for a job in the Royal Stables.

And so it was that on 8 February 1859 Edwin started work as a "weekly helper" in the Royal Stables—that is, someone being paid weekly wages as opposed to being a salaried employee.

Early Days in the Royal Stables

To learn about Edwin's early career in the Queen's service, I had to rely on the newspaper accounts. In the very beginning, Edwin worked as a groom at Windsor, where he helped care for 35 saddle horses used by the royal family. In 1859–60 he accompanied Albert, the Prince Consort, to the big military training base at nearby Aldershot, to look after Albert's chargers, or war horses, as well as the Prince of Wales' horses, also stabled there. Following Albert's death in 1861, Edwin was transferred to the Royal Stables (the Mews) at Buckingham Palace as an assistant coachman.

Edwin obtained gradual promotions at the Royal Stables. Queen Victoria famously retreated from public view for decades after losing her husband. So on many state occasions the Prince and Princess of Wales represented her, and Edwin

always drove them. He commented on the extreme kindness they showed him.

Edwin's Personal Life

Having been transferred to Central London, Edwin appears in the 1861 Census living at No. 1 Buckingham Street, very close to Charing Cross. He was enumerated as a married man employed as a groom, with a wife, Maria, listed as a housemaid, and their infant daughter, Emily. The Westminster parish marriage register, available at *Findmypast*, records their marriage on 31 July 1859, just five months after Edwin started work in the Royal Household. His wife, Maria Walklett, the daughter of a cooper, was born in Ashbury, Berkshire, and had been listed in the 1851 Census as a domestic servant for a dissenting minister in Dorset. They had married in Edwin's parish church, the impressive St. Margaret's, adjacent to Westminster Abbey.

Both Edwin and his queen suffered family tragedies in the same decade. Maria died of consumption in December 1868 at the age of 35 at her parents' home in Ashbury, Berkshire, leaving Edwin with two small children to raise: Emily and Edwin William, aged 8 and 6. The Royal Archives told me that Emily was on the 1866 list of pupils attending the Royal Mews School, having entered it in May 1865 when she would have been only 4. It seems Maria's

illness may have made it difficult for her to care for the children.

Not surprisingly, Edwin was remarried at St. Margaret's Church only 11 months after Maria's death, in November 1869. His bride, Elizabeth Jane Collins, was a butcher's daughter and a housemaid in her home village of Winkfield, Berkshire, just outside Windsor. It seems likely that Edwin had met her and her family 10 years before, when he was based at Windsor. Both bride and groom gave as their place of residence the address of what was then a posh hotel across the road from the Royal Mews and Buckingham Palace.

Edwin and Elizabeth had one child together, a son, Arthur Ernest, born in November 1870 at the Royal Stud House in the Home Park of Hampton Court Palace. This explained the family's whereabouts in the 1870s. The Stud House was the official residence of the Crown Equerry, Colonel Sir George Ashley Maude, who had overall management of the Royal Stables and the Royal Stud. For nearly 12 years around this time Edwin's duties included driving Sir George's carriage, so Edwin and his wife probably had quarters in the Stud House.

Moving On Up

The 1870s and 1880s saw Edwin slowly moving up in rank in the Royal Mews, although it was 18

years before he was appointed as an "Established Helper" (a salaried groom) in January 1877—no longer paid by the week. Two years after that he was made an assistant coachman and in 1883 became one of the six full coachmen, earning an annual salary of approximately £44,000 in today's money, or about CA\$70,000—not bad!

During the last 30 years of his employment, Edwin was entrusted with breaking in all the young horses bred for the Queen's carriages. As the *The Evening Journal* (Ottawa) remarked in its report on his 1898 retirement:

Miller is said to have introduced a humane rule in the Queen's stables. Time was when the temper of the stallions was not of the best. They showed a disposition to crush their grooms against the stable walls; but good treatment has changed all that, and the 300 horses which are sometimes to be found in Buckingham Palace stables are in their disposition quietness itself. "Cut horses about, especially entire horses," says Miller, "and you make vicious brutes of them. I have always gone upon a kinder plan, and I have not found it to fail."

One of his training techniques for getting inexperienced carriage horses accustomed to the noise of cheering crowds and the sound of military bands was to send the resident employees' children into the stables with their toy drums and

trumpets. Edwin's training methods were considered the main reason why Queen Victoria never had a carriage accident during her reign.

Being appointed a royal coachman came with some pretty good benefits. First, the livery. In the only two photos I have of Edwin, he is wearing two different suits of livery, both accompanied by white wigs under his hats. The Royal Household pay lists indicate that the coachmen each received an extra yearly allowance of £2. 17s. for wigs; it was presumably for cleaning and replacing them, but perhaps also for wig powder? Edwin actually wore four different types of livery, depending on the formality of the occasion. The full state livery, which even today remains much the same as it was in Victorian times, was described in 1892 in this way:

The full state livery is a very gorgeous affair and costs an enormous sum of money. All the seams of the scarlet coat as well as the facing and the pocket flaps and the sleeves are covered with thick gold embroidery. The buckles of the shoes are of silver gilt, while the head is adorned with a white wig and a three-cornered hat similar to those worn in the 18th century at the courts of Kings Louis XIV and XV of France. These suits of state livery cost as much as \$1,000.

And this really interesting observation: "When these state liveries are

renewed, however, the old garments become the perquisites of the wearer, who derives a considerable sum from the sale of the gold lace with which they are adorned." Definitely a "perk," I would say, and surely not one enjoyed by today's royal coachmen!

The 1881 and 1891 censuses both have Edwin and his family living in the Royal Mews on the grounds of Buckingham Palace. As is the case today, coachmen, grooms and other staff lived in flats above the carriage houses and stables (Figure 4). I have not come across anything indicating that Royal Household employees paid rent for their accommodation in the Royal Mews, so it was probably a "grace and favour" arrangement and built into their pay.

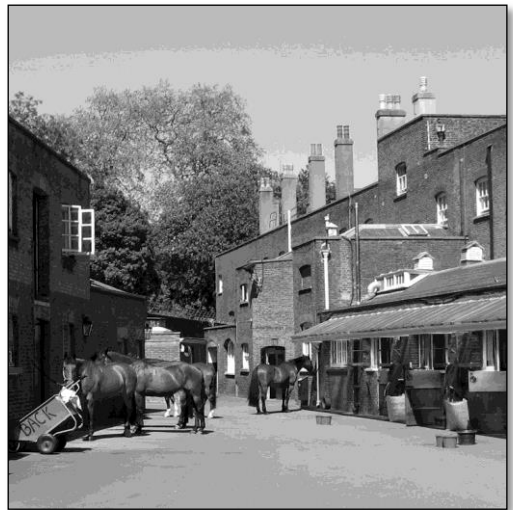


Figure 4: The Royal Mews (back), London
Source: Glenn Wright

Edwin's Career Peaks

The late 1870s and 1880s must have seen Edwin coming into his own. He was in his 40s and seemingly secure in his job. His daughter Emily married in 1879, leaving his two sons at home, although in 1881 the elder, Edwin William, at 19 was working as a solicitor's clerk. Edwin Sr. must have accumulated some savings by now, as in 1881 he bought two adjoining estate cottages from the Lord of the Manor in Barcombe parish, which adjoins his Sussex home parish of Ringmer.

He evidently rented them out, as the 1891 Census indicates two families living there, the head of one having been born in Hampton Wick, the parish closest to Hampton Court; this suggests Edwin probably knew his tenant when he was working at the Royal Stud House. Edwin sold the cottages in 1897, a year before he retired—perhaps to raise funds to help buy the pub in Central London to which he retired.

A coachman's status was indicated by which members of the Royal Household he drove. Edwin said that his proudest day was the first of January 1890, when he was

appointed state coachman. He was based at Buckingham Palace but actually drove the Queen only for state purposes, which was not very often. This was because she had her own favourite coachman who drove her on her private estates and on Continental holidays. However, in July 1893 Edwin drove the Queen in the marriage procession of her grandson Prince George, Duke of York, and Princess Mary of Teck (later King George V and Queen Mary). Bringing up the rear of the procession, Edwin was driving the Queen in the so-called Irish Coach, which was and still is most often used when the monarch opens Parliament (Figure 5).



Figure 5: The Irish Coach

Source: "Queen Elizabeth II parliament 2013," YouTube.com

He said the happiest moment of his career came in July of 1895, when he was invited to appear in person before the Queen at Windsor to receive his Royal Household Faithful Service Medal.

Newspapers reported that the Queen enquired as to his health and treated him most graciously. The medal was inscribed on the back: “To Mr Edwin Miller, State Coachman, for Faithful Services to The Queen during 36 Years. 1895.”

Besides the Prince and Princess of Wales, Edwin also frequently drove visiting crowned heads of state in London and other VIPs, many of whom gave him souvenirs as thanks for a job well done. Although he had an accident-free career, he did admit to having had some anxious moments, one of which he described this way:

It is no light task to take a State coach drawn by stallions (entire horses) down a slope like St. James’s Street. The State coach weighs 4 tons, it has no brake, not even a drag. To keep the horses in proper check with bands playing, banners waving, and people cheering, needs the exercise of all one’s steady care and cool nerve.

Luckily his skill and nerve never failed him. He said the worst thing that ever happened to him was when a “crazy fellow” managed to rush through the gateway at Buckingham Palace and point an empty pistol at Her Majesty.

As for the souvenirs he received from the VIPs he drove:

I’ve got mementoes given me by the Royalties I’ve driven. They never forget a servant, any of them. I’ve got a medal from the Queen for

36 years’ faithful service—another with a clasp for her (Golden) Jubilee and Diamond Jubilee, others given me by the King of Siam and the present Emperor of Germany, scarf pins from the Czar (of Russia), King of Portugal, Crown Prince of Bulgaria, and the Duke of Connaught. Nearly all the members of our Royal Family have given me their signed photographs, or some other expression of their thoughtfulness.

As the reporter commented: “But perhaps, next to the gift of the Queen, there is nothing he cherishes more than a pied pheasant which the Prince Consort brought down in Windsor Forest in the early days.” Edwin had stuffed and mounted the bird and made its casing himself.

Not surprisingly, Edwin had only good things to say about his employers:

Of the members of the Royal Household with whom I’ve come into contact, I’ve nothing but praise. They have always treated me with more than kindness—especially Sir Henry Ponsonby (the Queen’s long-time private secretary) and (masters of the horse) the Duke of Westminster and the Duke of Portland. Her Majesty?—well, there’s not a kinder or more gracious lady living [Figure 6]. Tired as she was after the Diamond Jubilee procession, she sent to inquire about me when she returned to the Palace.

Edwin’s Greatest State Event
For Edwin, the greatest state event he took part in was the Queen’s

Diamond Jubilee procession of 22 June 1897. The event marked Victoria's 60-year reign but was equally designed to showcase her role as head of the British Empire, which, in 1897, was at its zenith. Three million people visited London for the celebrations; more than a million began taking their places along the parade route the week before the Jubilee procession. On the day, security was provided by some 50,000 troops and police lining both sides of the six-mile route. The enormous procession was led by a Captain Ames, the tallest man in the British Army, on horseback. Troops from all over the Empire marched, along with artillery, cavalry, military bands and endless mounted VIPs. A number of film clips can be found on *YouTube*—even though the films are silent, you can sense the excitement and noise in the crowds.

To emphasize the imperial aspect of the celebration, the prime ministers of the British dominions were guests of honour. Canada's Prime Minister, Wilfrid Laurier, had been knighted by the Queen the very day before the procession and on the big day, the Canadian cavalry and mounted police rode five abreast at the head of the colonial section of the procession, in front of Sir Wilfrid and his wife Lady Zoë in an open carriage; behind the Lauriers came the other colonial premiers, two or more to a carriage. The press generally agreed that Laurier



Figure 6: A smiling Queen Victoria

Source: http://2.bp.blogspot.com/-ho9aze xw55o/UQmmkPdh3jl/AAAAAAAAAB4g/-gsd w6rJXrk/s1600/queen_victoria_smiling.jpg

received the loudest ovation of all the premiers.

Besides the procession of the colonial premiers, a further procession of 17 state carriages conveyed foreign envoys, members of the Royal Household, foreign royalty and the extended British royal family—the last carriage being that of the Queen herself. It was an open landau drawn by eight cream-coloured horses with postilion riders, walking grooms and no actual coachman. The Queen herself captured the essence of the occasion, when she wrote in her journal afterwards:

A never to be forgotten day. No one ever, I believe, has met with such an ovation as was given to me passing through those six miles of streets . . .

The crowds were quite indescribable, and their enthusiasm truly marvelous and deeply touching. The cheering was quite deafening and every face seemed to be filled with real joy. I was much moved and gratified.

The Jubilee, beyond all doubt. Never was there such a time of tremendous pressure. I had no thought of bed; and we had many an anxious moment. People little know of what has to be done in connection with such pageants. It is no light task preparing eight creams (that is the

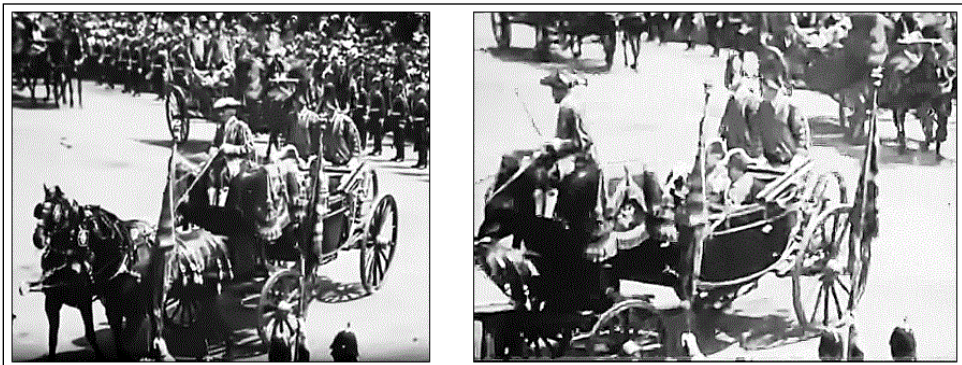


Figure 7: Edwin driving, Queen's Jubilee procession, 1897

Source: "Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee (1897) – extract," British Film Institute Archive, YouTube.com

As the Queen's carriage was drawn by horses with postilion riders, I wondered what the state coachman's role was in that impressive procession. The newspapers gave me the answer: Edwin had been driving the first of those 17 state carriages, in order to set the pace and to regulate the distances between carriages. I was even able to find on YouTube a film clip of what I believe to be Edwin driving that carriage and regulating the pace of those behind (Figure 7). When asked on his retirement what had been his greatest State experience, Edwin said:

horses drawing the Queen's carriage) and six blacks, all entire horses, for the excitements of such a day. You never know what entire horses may do, or when they may start bellowing, but I cannot describe to you my gladness when we got back to the Palace. The horses had gone through it all, never once opening their mouths . . . Yes, glad wasn't the word for it; and you may be sure I was proud when Sir Arthur Bigge (the Queen's Private Secretary) told us that the Queen had said that she had never known the creams to go so nicely.

Retirement

The year after the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, Edwin took a few days holiday in Redruth, Cornwall, where a local newspaper thought his presence in the town was important enough to record, referring to him as "a distinguished visitor." The following month, September 1898, he retired at the age of 62. This was when he gave those informative interviews to the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Daily Mail*.

The *Daily Mail* reporter had found him in shirt sleeves and collarless, when he was installing his "lares and penates" (personal and household effects) in his new house in Pimlico. In the only personal description of him that I have yet found, the reporter described him as having "a shrewdly kind face with good-humoured laughing brown eyes," while the *Daily Telegraph* reporter described him as "singularly modest."

The 1901 Census recorded him as a licensed victualler "working at home," with his wife Elizabeth and two servants near the legal quarter of London, close to the western boundary of the City of London. It sounds as though he had achieved what was probably a lifelong ambition—to run a pub of his own! However, by December 1902 Edwin was in court suing the London County Council for compensation for the Council's compulsory

purchase of his pub—The Crooked Billet—for the Holborn to Strand road improvements.

Pleading that Edwin had used his savings from a long life of service to the Queen to buy the pub, his barrister claimed £4,000 for the property, £6,000 for the business and a few hundred pounds for the fittings, for a total of £10,400.

The jury was obviously not inclined to sympathize with Edwin and awarded him only £6,100. However, using the calculator at Measuring-Worth.com, the least amount that could be worth today would be a healthy £600,000.

It seems that, after the pub was expropriated in 1902, Edwin and his wife Elizabeth moved to a house in Hugh Street in Pimlico, where his niece (and my great-aunt) Mary from Ringmer was already living. Edwin had other family in London. Edwin William was also running a pub, called The Man in The Moon, near his father's, and Arthur was a married bedstead fitter with three children, also living in Central London.

Sadly, Emily had died in 1889 aged only 29, but she had left six children, all of whom were to figure later in Edwin's will.

Edwin pops up again in 1905, when he witnessed the marriage of his niece Mary to Charles Oliver New, who lived on a neighbouring street

in Pimlico. Edwin probably gave her away, as she chose not to marry in her home parish, where her parents were still living.

In 1906 he made his will, leaving specific legacies only to his younger son and two nieces, one being Mary, who received twice as much as the other beneficiaries. What he referred to as his “jewels, medals and trinkets” he left to his nine grandchildren, while the income from the rest of his real and personal estate, which he placed with trustees, was to go to his wife Elizabeth, who would survive him by 21 years.

In March 1907, Edwin died, aged 70, a couple of hours after suffering a stroke at home in Hugh Street. Edwin Jr. was present at his death. He was buried in Nunhead Cemetery, one of London’s so-called “Magnificent Seven” cemeteries.

Located south of the River Thames in SE London, this cemetery of 52 acres has long been full and closed to burials, and has been declared a nature reserve. The Victorian section is so overgrown and the gravestones so unsafe that it has been designated a conservation area and members of the public are prohibited from exploring it for themselves.

Having identified the grave number and location on *Deceased Online*, I had to pay the local council (Southwark) to search for Edwin and

Elizabeth’s grave, take photos and make a report on the gravesite for me.

They found a headstone inscribed:

In loving memory of Edwin Miller
who died March 14th 1907
aged 71 years
Thy will be done

Sadly, his wife Elizabeth is not commemorated on the headstone, although she was buried in the same grave in 1928.

Concluding Remarks

In undertaking this research, the first thing that struck me was that Edwin’s life paralleled the breathtaking Victorian era of change—new technology, new knowledge, new opportunities, new wealth, new politics, new literature, and new attitudes. British society had not changed so extensively in such a short time for 300 years.

More importantly for Edwin, whose career was then coming to an end, Britain in 1895 saw its first motor car and by the end of that year 14 or 15 cars were thought to be on Britain’s roads; a figure which, by the year 1900, had increased dramatically to seven or eight hundred! In 1898 Edwin had said he was retiring reluctantly, but the times were a-changing in the transportation world and he must have seen what was coming.

The Queen was aging and still in the horse-drawn age. It is said that she

never encountered a motor car and that she intensely disliked the new invention, on one occasion saying:

I hope you will never allow one of those horrible machines to be used in my stables. I am told they smell exceedingly nasty, and are shaky and disagreeable conveyances altogether.

Thus the private motoring age in Britain really began with her son Edward VII, a motoring enthusiast who ascended the throne in 1901. And it was indeed in the Royal Stables that his cars were kept.

And what did I learn about Edwin the person? First, his economic status: at probate, the value of Edwin's effects in today's money amounted to at least £306,000 (or over half a million Canadian dollars). That's a lot of money, so he had done very well indeed for a humble ag lab from rural Sussex.

During my research, I couldn't help noticing that the press only ever quoted him talking about his career, the famous people he had met and how gracious they were, and the expensive gifts they had given him.

Naturally he was proud of his own success, especially considering his humble origins, but it is disappointing that I never once found a mention of his own family—or, if he did mention them, the reporters or their editors chose not to publish such comments. One is left with the

impression that he was perhaps more devoted to his sovereign and her family than to his own. And one last thing—he was known for his humane treatment of horses but I didn't find out whether or not he even liked them!

As far as I'm aware, no one in my immediate family knew any of Edwin's direct descendants. I never met the one person who may have known some of them, my great-aunt Polly, Edwin's niece Mary, who died in 1937 before I was born. As yet I have been unable to find any of his family.

To add to that sense of family disconnection, I discovered a few years ago that Edwin's four medals, of which he was so proud, and which were to have been left to his nine grandchildren, were sold in 2008 by an auction house in London for about \$2,500.

They had been in the collection of a noted UK medal collector for I don't know how many years. But I do know that the collector himself lived on Hugh Street in London—and I'm sure that when the medals were in his possession he had no idea that the original owner of the medals had lived and died on the same street some 90 years before.

No references are included as they are too numerous; for details contact the author at jackson_cf@yahoo.com.

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The Aftermath of the Christmas Blitz



BY CHARLES MORTON

The story of the Morton family's losses in the 1940 Manchester Blitz was told in the Spring 2017 issue of Anglo-Celtic Roots. Here Charles provides more details of the bombing and describes how the family coped after family members were killed and their home was destroyed.

In the weeks and months following the raid, I was able to piece together a variety of facts about some of the circumstances that night. I found that the house had been hit by what was known as a "land mine" launched by parachute from one of the aircraft in one of the last waves to pass over the city. Because of this, although the aircraft had gone, we were unaware of the lethal missile silently drifting down, which had lulled my dad and grandmother into believing that immediate danger had ended.

So-called land mines were, I was told, actually magnetic sea mines originally designed and used against shipping by detonating when a ship passed over its magnetic field. After the Germans enjoyed early and spectacular successes with these, the British learned to demagnetize ships by passing a degaussing coil around their hulls, thus neutralizing the effectiveness of the mine but leaving the Germans with a large supply of useless but still lethal weapons on hand.

With Teutonic thoroughness, the Germans found a new and deadly recycling use for the weapon by using them as a form of parachuted bomb. Several feet long and packed with 1000 kilogrammes (2200 lb.) of high explosive, the now aerial mine was to be dropped by parachute, designed to detonate on the first contact with a solid object.

While conventional bombs were deadly enough, they carried less explosive, usually penetrating a building or burying in the ground before exploding, thereby cushioning the effect to some extent. The land mine, however, detonated on contact with the first object it touched, often a roof or a chimney, and rather than destroy within a limited radius as a bomb would, created an extremely wide area of blast damage.

The one that had hit us completely flattened a row of eight terraced houses, killing 14 inhabitants, and also collapsed a nurses' residence on York Place, where some nurses had died. The houses in adjoining

March, April, May and June streets were rendered uninhabitable, most beyond repair, and some windows within a quarter-mile radius were blown out. Long after the raid, one of my old friends from May Street gave me a piece of a blue silk cord that had been part of the parachute.

Oddly, while our neighbours heard a tremendous explosion, we in the house, directly under the detonation, heard nothing other than the sound of the building collapsing. The same was true of the two earlier bombs that had hit the row of houses. It seems “you never hear the one that hits you,” a saying I had heard many times, was true!

In more recent years, I have heard many criticisms of RAF Bomber Command for what is referred to as the indiscriminate bombing of Germany later in the war, ignoring the fact that as early as 1940, long before the serious bombing of Germany commenced, the enemy was intent on indiscriminately destroying British cities.

In my particular experience, the closest large buildings to my home were the Manchester Royal Infirmary and adjoining nurse’s residence, and the fact that the mine was dropped by parachute to cause destruction wherever the wind carried it rather than being aimed at a specific target speaks little for German concern for civilians, even in the early stages of the war.

These two raids on Manchester caused the largest fire in England since the Great Fire of London in 1666, only to be surpassed the following year by a great fire raid on London.

Of our neighbours, there were various stories. I was told that right after the explosion, fires broke out in the rubble and neighbours called on Mr. Tipping, our neighbourhood air raid warden, for assistance and direction in dealing with these. As our official warden, Mr. Tipping had been issued with a stirrup pump, a small hand-operated device with an attached hose that could be used with a pail of water to pour on incendiary bombs or small fires. Mr. Tipping, in earlier days always there to make sure that no lights showed in windows, nor cigarettes glowed in the dark, threw both the pump and bucket out of his house and shouted that he had his own family to look after.

I also heard that a soldier who was home on leave was at his bedroom window on May Street and saw the mine descending on its parachute. Assuming that it was a German airman who had bailed out from his plane he grabbed his rifle to run out and capture the man when he landed. Luckily for him, the mine exploded just as he reached the bottom of the stairs, and although it blew him halfway back up the stairs, he would most certainly have been

killed by the blast had he reached the street.

When the mine exploded, the eight collapsed houses caught fire and burned until the fire service arrived. This was not immediate, however, because the fire engines that extinguished the blaze were in transit from Birmingham, which they had left when it became apparent that the main target for the night was Manchester. As Belle was being uncovered in the rubble, a single aircraft, possibly a reconnaissance plane or maybe one of our own, passed overhead. One of the Birmingham firemen took off his steel helmet and placed it on her head.

My mother found out that my grandmother's house on Sydney Street had also received considerable damage from a bomb during the same night, and in the following days my grandfather had wasted little time in removing anything of value, including most of the furniture, before any of his children were able to.

For several days after the raid, Mum still had no inkling as to the fate or whereabouts of her husband and mother. As bodies were recovered from various "incident" sites, they were removed to temporary morgues. Mum's younger brother Eddy undertook the grim job of searching for them and was having little success until he saw on a fresh

casualty list that the body of a man aged approximately 36 years old was awaiting identification at the morgue established at Victoria Baths on High Street. Although there was a 10-year difference in the age, Dad being 46, Eddy hurried around; indeed, it was my father.



Figure 1: Charles and Nellie Morton
Source: author

Eddy told us that there was not a mark on him apart from a red mark across his forehead, which an attendant said was probably caused by the blast. Later, Uncle Eddy found and identified his mother at the same place, although in her case there was some mutilation; a large gold locket which she had been wearing was crushed flat.

After years of neglect, I have heard that in recent times, the Victoria Baths have been restored to their former Victorian splendour. I wonder how many people who use the facilities today know that it was once a mortuary, and that the tiled pool areas once contained so many dead?

While I was in Barnes Convalescent Home in Cheadle, just beyond the city limits, visits to see me were few. Not only was Cheadle difficult to reach by public transport, but the family was busy trying to find a place to live, Kitty's house being too small for so many.

The Family is Relocated

Soon, Mum was allocated a nice council house, 112 Erwood Road in Burnage, complete with a front and back lawn and garden, and we were the beneficiaries of one of those wartime shows of spirit in the shape of a wonderful gift from dad's old army friend, Mr. Draycott. Being handicapped by the loss of one of his legs in the Great War, and seeing his rented house on May Street damaged beyond repair, Mr. Draycott and his wife accepted an invitation from their son and daughter-in-law to live with them permanently. Mr. Draycott sought Mum out and told her that she could

have his entire houseful of furniture that he would no longer need; not only free, but his son would help to move it to the new house.



Figure 2: Victoria Baths

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Victoria_Baths#/media/File:VictoriaBaths.jpg

When I left Barnes, I went straight to the new house and was delighted to be able to move freely about my own house again. In the coming weeks, however, we came to recognize the best and worst points of the house.

The best was in the form of an Anderson shelter in the back garden. The Anderson was placed well away from the house and, with the bottom half dug into the ground and the top half covered in a heavy layer of earth, provided as much security as could be asked for. Inside, the previous tenants had left steel and chicken wire bunks and a bench, meagre but welcome comfort.

The worst point was that immediately opposite the house, there was

a huge field, beyond which was the massive Fairey Aviation Company complex. Fully engaged in producing planes for the Air Force and Fleet Air Arm, the factory made a prime target for the Luftwaffe; the field in front was studded with high piles of stones to prevent glider landings in the event of invasion and the roof of the factory contained several light anti-aircraft guns.

It was something of a shock, therefore, when we experienced our first air raid in our new home. The constant noise of the factory's guns severely rattled our already strained nerves, but the real shock came when we saw what appeared to be hundreds of twinkling lights on the field; incendiary bombs! Courage was one thing, but foolishness was another, and Mum lost no time in requesting the city authorities to locate us elsewhere.

The authorities obligingly provided us with another house, 122 Yew Tree Road in Fallowfield, coincidentally across the road from the Taylor family who had sheltered my mother and sisters immediately after the air raid.

One of the things I enjoyed while living in Burnage was the length of time it took to go to school; being so far away compared to Chorlton-on-Medlock meant having to start on my way much earlier and required a long walk to reach the No. 37 tram in Levenshulme.

The No. 37 must have had one the longest routes in the city, running from Levenshulme through the city centre out to the Southern Cemetery in



Figure 3: Charles Morton, about age 5

Source: author

Chorlton-cum-Hardy. The tram

itself would be almost empty when I boarded. There was a long curved seat on the upper deck, which was ideal for writing any unfinished homework, and its front or rear windows provided a wonderful view along the route.

Unfortunately, my spell in the Infirmary and at Barnes meant that I had fallen seriously behind in my school work. For the remainder of my years at high school, there were a few subjects that I was unable to completely master as a result of this; lessons travelled at a fast pace.

When I first returned to school, I was informed that, along with the sons of men serving in the armed forces, I would henceforth receive free the meals in the school dining



Figure 4: Manchester High School for Boys, ca. 1939

Source: author

room that I had previously had to buy. I immediately recalled my wish of years ago about my dad being dead so that I could receive free dinners, so I never once availed myself of the privilege!

On my way to school on the first day of my return, I was suddenly aware that apart from my mother, for whom I must assume a responsibility, I was now on my own without the backing of my father or the encouragement of my grandmother, a sobering realization after all that had happened.

This was brought home to me a few weeks later when my mother bought me a Welsh sheepdog, which we named Bruce. In those days, dogs were generally allowed out without a leash and I would let Bruce out for a good run now and then before leaving for school. It happened that Bruce chose to run

the length of the block through neighbours' back gardens, the last of which belonged to a Mr. Lamb, whose hobby was his flower garden.

One evening, Mr. Lamb presented himself at our front door to advise my mother that if she didn't get rid of Bruce, he would see to it himself, with the result that Bruce disappeared one day while I was at school. I was told that he had been given

to a farmer with lots of land but always had doubts about this. I know how my dad would have handled Mr. Lamb and his bullying manner!

The Blitz Changed Everything

After the Blitz in 1940, our lives had changed forever. The absence of a father and husband had a drastic impact on our household, which, coupled with the war, altered things completely.

Belle married Joe Armstrong in 1941, shortly before he was posted to Egypt, and she was allowed to leave the army, finding work with the American Red Cross in their Manchester headquarters as a switchboard operator after the arrival of the first American troops in 1942. Later, my mother found work at the same place; in addition to her wages, she received numerous perks in the form of American cigarettes (a very scarce and sought-

after commodity) and items from the Army Post Exchange (known as the "PX"). These included canned goods of food not seen since peacetime, chocolate and candy, all donated by the American servicemen for whom she would do small jobs like sewing rank or unit insignia on uniforms.



Figure 5: Isabella Morton

Source: author

Later, through her connection with the Red Cross, we had four soldiers billeted in our home: two army postal workers, a railway engineer, and a combat artist, all of whom had regular duties in Manchester and chose a home environment rather than the hotel in the city centre that was an alternative option open to them. One of these, Jimmy Pielli of New York City, used to drive me to school in his Jeep; on occasion he

even took me to the Oxford Café on Oxford Road just beyond Whitworth Street for a steak with an egg on the side. This was food unavailable to the average diner and was only produced after Private Pielli laid a couple of pound notes on the table.

When I was almost 13, I managed to convince the recruiting officer that I was 14 and joined the Army Cadet Force. In 1940, the Manchester High School for Girls was preparing to move from its location in Dover Street to modern premises in Fallowfield, close to Platt Fields Park and a 10-minute walk from my own new home. However, on the same night that my home was destroyed, another land mine hit the new school premises, heavily damaging the various buildings and making them unusable. As a result, the students had to remain at their old school and the various purpose-built buildings at the new location became the new home of the army cadets and Home Guard units, where the principles of street fighting, camouflage techniques, map reading, drill and shooting were taught.

In 1941 and 1942, the threat of German invasion still existed and these subjects were taken very seriously. At a young age, I became very proficient as an infantry soldier and enjoyed all of it.

At school, the war effort included spending the entire summer vacation at agricultural camps, in tents, with meals prepared by senior boys (usually boy scouts). We boys worked five days a week, nine hours a day, picking peas or potatoes; gruelling work for city boys, at minimal rates of pay.

After a six-week backbreaking stint at Rainford Camp, near St. Helen's, I received my pay which, after deductions for meals, amounted to a total of 12 shillings, or 2 shillings a week—about 50 cents in the currency of the day. As another job replacing servicemen, I spent Christmas holidays working at the Central Post Office parcel sorting building on Moreton Street, sorting the Christmas rush and collecting parcels from commercial businesses, a rather enjoyable and lucrative period.

When air raid activity had abated to a point where air raids had diminished to the occasional nights, Doris' ARP station was disbanded and Doris was obliged, like most women, to join one of the services. She chose the Women's Land Army and was stationed at a beautiful little village in Mid-Wales, Builth Wells, where she and about 20 other Land Girls operated farm machinery that local farmers had never seen or used. While in Builth Wells, she met and was later married in Manchester to a Canadian soldier, Jack Fraser, and



Figure 6: Doris Morton

Source: author

at the end of the war went to live in Montreal. A couple of years later, my mother joined her and took up a new life.

My mother's adopted sister, Mary, joined the Women's Auxiliary Air Force and became a parachute packer at a Bomber Command station. She met and married an airman named Partington, who became the projector operator at the Odeon, Leicester Square, after the war and went on to become a TV producer.

As for myself, I joined the Merchant Navy in 1945 and enjoyed an eventful life at sea. In 1952, I married Ivy Mattison and gave up my seafaring life to come to Canada in 1954.

All the rest became separate stories.

We Shall Remember Them[©]

BY SHEILA DOHOO FAURE

The BIFHSGO website contains a database of World War I soldiers who died at No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station. Volunteer Sheila Dohoo Faure, who is coordinating the research project, prepared this biography of a soldier who died there. To help with this research, contact her via Sheila@faure.ca.

Sapper William Victor Demery[©]

Regimental number: 657921

**2nd Divisional Pontoon Bridging Transport Unit,
Canadian Engineers, Canadian Expeditionary Force**

Wilhelm (William) Victor Sagne was born on 3 December 1890 in Magnetawan, Ontario—60 kilometres northeast of Parry Sound—and was baptized at the Ontario Lutheran Church in Magnetawan on 21 September 1891.¹ His mother, Louisa Sagne, was born about 1864 in St. Imier, near Berne in Switzerland.² The baptismal certificate indicates that his father was “unknown.”

Louisa and her parents, Jules and Juliana (Wulhamier) Sagne (both born in Switzerland in about 1830)³ had been pioneers in the Magnetawan area.

The Sagne family was part of a larger settlement of Swiss immigrants to the area in the mid- to late- 1870s.

The initiative for Swiss settlement in northern Ontario came from Baroness Elise de Koerber, who recruited immigrants on behalf of the Canadian government, particularly in the Bern, Liestal, and Saanen areas.

Swiss agriculturalists had explored the Nipissing region to find suitable

land. By the end of 1875 the baroness had sent some four hundred immigrants to Canada. Some of them settled in the Magnetawan area, where they formed a small Swiss colony. . . . Mme de Koerber had hoped to create two concentrations of Swiss, one for the French-speaking at Doe Lake and the other for German speakers at Magnetawan. . . .

The hardships of settlement discouraged many, and by 1881 only about 200 Swiss remained in this region. . . . The name of the location on the Magnetawan River where the Sagne family settled became known as Poverty Bay, a reflection of the ‘hardscrabble’ existence many of the settlers experienced.⁴

Louisa Sagne married William Demery in the early 1890’s at Bis-cotasing Station/Michipicoton Station in northern Ontario.⁵ William was born in about 1857 in Ontario, the son of Francis and Caroline Demery.⁶ In 1894, William and Louisa had a son, Orville George

Demara, who was born on 22 September 1894 in Bracebridge, Ontario.⁷



Figure 1: Mary and William Demery

Source: Family

Less than a year later, Louisa died. She drowned accidentally on 17 June 1895, at the age of 31,⁸ leaving behind William Sr., a labourer in Bracebridge, and two sons. In 1901, young William was living with his grandmother Julia, then a widow, in Croft Township, near Parry Sound. No trace has been found of where William Sr. was living between 1895 and 1911, when he was listed on the census as living with his parents in Bracebridge.⁹ His son Orville was living with his paternal uncle and aunt in Scugog, Ontario, in 1901.¹⁰

In 1909, William, who was then a railway conductor, married Mary Elizabeth Paul, who was born on 15 September 1883 in Ontario.¹¹ They married on Mary's 21st birthday—15 September 1909—in Ahmic Harbour, Ontario. Mary had two children prior to her marriage to William: Myrtle Octave (born on

20 May 1905)¹² and Dave (born on 20 February 1908).¹³ She and William had five more children: Nella Louise (born on 19 September 1910), Irene Mae (born on 6 August 1912), Effie Inez (born on 25 December 1913), Paul William (born on 27 May 1915) and Jean Carolyn (born on 5 January 1917).¹⁴

William enlisted, at the age of 26, in the Canadian Expeditionary Force on 24 April 1916 in Burks Falls, Ontario.¹⁵ He was a lumberman, 5' 5" tall and had a medium complexion and brown hair and eyes. He embarked with the 162nd (Parry Sound) Battalion for Europe from Halifax on 1 November 1916—two months before the birth of his last child. He arrived in Liverpool on 11 November and two weeks later he transferred to the 2nd Pioneer Battalion. On 29 November he went to the Western Front.

On 28 August 1917, he was admitted to the 5th and then the 10th Canadian Field Ambulance with an inflammation of the connective tissue in his left leg. He recovered and rejoined his unit on 15 September. In mid-December of that year he had two weeks leave.

In June 1918 he joined the 2nd Divisional Pontoon Bridging Transport Unit of the Canadian Engineers. These units were formed when the Canadian Engineers were reorganized in 1918 and were relatively small units.

Each unit “was composed of three officers and 69 other ranks and each was equipped with six pontoons, three trestle wagons and 225 feet of ‘medium bridge.’ They performed both bridging and field park duties.”¹⁶

In January 1919, the unit was stationed in Troisdort, about 15 kilometres north-east of Bonn, Germany. The men were involved mainly in exercising and grooming the animals and caring for equipment—bridges and wagons.¹⁷

On 15 January, William was admitted to the 14th Canadian Field Ambulance with pyrexia (fever) of unknown origin. Two days later, when he was admitted to No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station, the diagnosis was changed to bronchial pneumonia. He died a week later and the cause of death was identified at the time as influenza.¹⁸ He was buried in Popplesdorfer Cemetery (Grave 5, Plot B, Row A), with the Canadian chaplain, W. Fisher, presiding.

His death clearly marked the men of this small unit. Both his death and funeral were noted in the unit’s war

diaries—exceptional for an ordinary soldier. On 24 January, the diary notes “Word in by late runner of death of T/VR Demery W. V. from pneumonia, Bonn 1st Cdn CCS, arranging for funeral.”¹⁹ The next day “2 officers & 40 O.R.s [Other Ranks] attend funeral of T/VR Demery W. V. at Bonn. This is first funeral of the unit since formation.”²⁰



Figure 2: Postcard William sent to Mary
Source: Family

His wife Mary, as his next of kin, was notified of his death. At some later point, his body was exhumed and interred in Brussels Town Cemetery (Grave Reference: Plot X, Row 9, Grave 11).

After the war, Mary and their five children were living in the townships of Spence and Croft, near Parry Sound.²¹ She continued to live in the Parry Sound area until her death in 1963.²²



Figure 3: Last known photo of Sapper Demery
Source: Family

William's brother Orville also enlisted in the Great War. He was living in Toronto when he enlisted in the 216th Overseas Battalion

(Regimental number: 273392) on 7 April 1916, at the age of 22.²³ He was a cook and was married—he had wed Ottoline McDonagh (age 17) in Gravenhurst, Ontario, on 15 October 1913.²⁴ When Orville enlisted, Ottoline was living in Scugog. However, he was discharged on 18 November as “not likely to become an efficient soldier.” No specific information was found to explain why Orville was discharged. However, recruits had to be at least 5' 5" tall²⁵ and Orville did not meet this requirement—he was just 5' tall. His conduct and character during his very short service was cited as “good.” He died in 1960 and is buried in Bracebridge United Cemetery in Bracebridge.²⁶

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Reference Notes

- ¹ Family source. William's attestation form and the 1901 Census give an 1888 birthdate, but it is assumed that the baptismal certificate is correct.
- ² Family source.
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- ⁴ “A Little Sketch of the Life of William Victor Demery,” by Andrew Houser, family source.
- ⁵ Family source.
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- ⁹ "1911 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 12 January 2017), entry for William Demery, Province: Ontario, District: Muskoka, District number: 98, Sub-district: Bracebridge, Sub-district number: 19.
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- ¹² "Ontario, Canada, Births, 1869–1913," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 12 January 2017), entry for Myrtle Octave Paul. Myrtle was brought up by her maternal grandparents after William and Mary married. (Family source; "1901 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 12 January 2017), entry for Myrtle O Paul, Province: Ontario, District: Perry [sic] Sound, District number: 108, Sub-district: 10 - Croft Township, Ahmic Harbor, Sub-district number: 10).
- ¹³ Family source; "1921 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 3 January 2017), entry for Mary Demares [sic], Province or territory: Ontario, District: Parry Sound, District number: 114, Sub-district: Spence and Croft (Townships), Sub-district number: 10, City, town or village: Spence & Croft.
- ¹⁴ Family source.
- ¹⁵ "Service Files of the First World War, 1914–1918 - CEF," *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/first-world-war-1914-1918-cef/Pages/search.aspx>: accessed 23 December 2017) entry for Demery, William Victor, Reference: RG 150 Accession 1992-93/166, Box 2280 - 29, Item number: 346307, Digitized service file - PDF format: B2280-S029. Unless otherwise noted, all information about his service comes from this source.
- ¹⁶ "Guide to Sources Relating to Units of the Canadian Expeditionary Force: Pontoon Bridging Transport Units, Canadian Engineers," *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/obj/005/f2/005-1142.29.007-e.pdf>: accessed 3 January 2017).

- 17 "War Diaries—2nd Pontoon Bridging and Transport Unit, Canadian Engineers," *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca>: accessed 3 January 2017), File: RG9-III-D-3. Volume/box number: 5007, File number: 701, Copied container no: T-10855.
- 18 "No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station," *British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa* (www.bifhsgo.ca: accessed 16 December 2017), entry for Demery, W. Later, a death certificate provided to the family identified broncho-pneumonia as the cause of death.
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- 23 "Service Files of the First World War, 1914–1918 - CEF," *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/first-world-war-1914-1918-cef/Pages/search.aspx>: accessed 23 December 2017) entry for Demara, Orville, Reference: RG 150 Accession 1992-93/166, Box 2280 - 29, Item number: 346307, Digitized service file - PDF format: B2280-S029. Unless otherwise noted, all information about Orville's military career comes from this source.
- 24 "Ontario, Canada, Marriages, 1801–1928," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.co.uk: accessed 7 January 2017), entry for Orville George Demara.
- 25 "The Canadian Great War Soldier," *Historica Canada* (<http://www.the-canadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/the-canadian-great-war-soldier/>: accessed 12 June 2017).
- 26 *Northern Ontario Gravemarker Gallery* (<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~murrayp/>: accessed 12 January 2017), entry for Orville Demara.

Certificates of Recognition AGM 2017



Glenn Wright
Best "Before
BIFHSGO" Talk



Christine Jackson
Best BIFHSGO
Talk



Terry Findley
Best ACR
Article

Techniques and Resources

The Cream of the Crop

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



BY JOHN D. REID

First World War Commemoration

Perhaps this rainy summer (706 mm in Ottawa from

April through July, twice normal) has caused you to think of the muddy fields of Flanders. As I write this on the centenary of the first day of the Third Battle of Ypres, I'm remembering it took the life of my great-uncle T/2Lt Edward Cohen. The battle, known as Passchendaele, the epitome of the horror of war to a generation in Britain, continued into November.

Earlier in July, on the 125th Anniversary of his birth, an English Heritage Blue Plaque was placed on the house at 447 Bexhill Road, Hastings, where British Home Child Claude Nunney was born. He served with the 38th Battalion of the Canadian Expeditionary Force, was killed on 18 September 1918 and was awarded the Victoria Cross.

The Canadian War Museum has some timely exhibits worth spending a few hours visiting. For details

see <www.warmuseum.ca/>. Did you know the museum has a research centre with an amazing collection of publications? Recently I found five quite rare books there on naval aspects of the Second World War written in England by a distant relative. While visiting, it's also worth checking out the used books for sale by the Museum's Friends organization.

Military

Taken from reference AIR 79 at The (UK) National Archives, *Ancestry* has added "UK, Royal Air Force Airmen Records, 1918-1940" with 616,118 partially transcribed records. Typically you find name, gender, age, birthdate, birthplace, service date, service number, mother (name), next of kin (name), and relation to airman. There are links to original images, available with a subscription to *Ancestry's* FOLD 3 website.

These are two-page service files; those I examined showed only service into the early 1920s. Included were six with a birthplace of Ottawa: Langford James Gannon (not Cannon as transcribed), Raoul Law-

rence Esmonde, Maynard Stansfield (not Stausfield as transcribed) Fel-lowes, John Paul Laframboise, William Ernest Short, and Samuel Le Roy Switzer.

Other military sites worth checking for these men are the CEF service files from Library and Archives Canada, and the Royal Flying Corps, prior to the formation of the Royal Air Force, <www.airhistory.org.uk/rfc/home.html/>.

British Newspaper Archive

The BNA project to digitize 40 million pages of newspapers from the British Library collection recently passed the half-way mark. Coverage is especially good for Scotland and Ireland. For every 100 people in the population there are 46 pages available for Scotland, 41 for Ireland (combined), 27 for England and 12 for Wales. The low coverage for Wales is likely because the National Library of Wales has done such a good job digitizing their newspapers and making them freely available at <http://newspapers.library.wales/>.

A reminder that you can search the BNA <<http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/>> using the BIFHSGO subscription at the City of Ottawa Archives and, with a somewhat limited search capability, through a *Findmypast* subscription. Here's a hint for those with a *Findmypast* subscription. Use the more refined search capability of the BNA

without charge. If you identify an article of interest note the details in the snippet. Then see if you can access the same page using that information in a *Findmypast* newspaper search. For more on using the BNA I recommend the recent webinar "Making the Most of The British Newspaper Archive" archived on *YouTube* at <www.youtube.com/watch?v=FYTGMa2z0I0/>.

DNA Testing

Some of the genetic genealogy services present at the OGS conference were mentioned in the last column. The DNA world is evolving fast. Market leader AncestryDNA passed five million DNA-tested clients in early August. The chances of finding an identifiable relative mount every day.

Also providing leadership is British company Living DNA. Three months ago I wrote they do not yet provide DNA matches with other clients nor have a facility for transferring results to other parties. That's no longer true, along with other changes. Their admixture results, called Family Views, were for a standard level of confidence from global, regional and sub-regional geographic divisions. Now they've added complete and cautious confidence levels. The most noticeable difference in my results are for the sub-regional level, where the cautious confidence level for my Great Britain and Ireland admixture collapses from 13 to

5 regions. The aggregation is more consistent with my record-based genealogy. They are expanding the reference database, including the addition of 1200 samples from an Ireland research project.

Living DNA has added the ability to download your complete data, which you can then upload to *Gedmatch*. Due imminently is the ability to upload your data from other companies. According to British genetic genealogy expert Debbie Kennett the company will start beta-testing client matching in September.

From Scotland

In June *FamilySearch* added 302,522 records of “Scotland Church Records and Kirk Session Records, 1658–1919.” These are from registers of baptisms, marriages, and burials originally filmed at the National Archives of Scotland. There are no images available.

From the National Library of Scotland come high-resolution zoomable images of over 160,000 maps of Scotland, England, Wales and beyond. Especially good are the Ordnance Survey maps at 6 and 25 inches to the mile from as early as 1840. For Scotland there are a variety of specialised maps, such as estate maps, soil maps and coastal charts. They also have First World War trench maps.

Wiltshire Records Online

Ancestry has added to its collection of county parish records with data and images of originals from about 300 Church of England Wiltshire parishes, from Aldbourne to Yatton Keynell, including six parishes from Winterbourne. There are 266,558 baptisms, marriages and burials, 1538–1812; 965,717 marriages and banns, 1754–1916; 1,753,821 births and baptisms, 1813–1916; and 377,867 deaths and burials, 1813–1916.

Findmypast also has Wiltshire parish records, but only transcripts. Unique to them is a 130,000-person index for “Wiltshire Wills and Probate Index 1530–1881,” providing name, year, type (distinguishes whether administration bond, inventory, or will), place, county, country, and occupation, along with a link to a site where you can buy the complete probate document.

Some of the marriage transcripts at *Findmypast* come from the old Phillimore-published marriage transcripts <<https://archive.org/search.php?query=phillimore%20wiltshire>> at the *Internet Archive*, which is also the basis of most Wiltshire parish records at *The Genealogist*.

Tour Beechwood Cemetery

The cemetery offers a free Guided Annual Historical Walking Tour,

which this year will occur on Sunday 10 September. Themed for the 150th anniversary costumed actors perform vignettes about some of the individuals featured on the tour. If you can't make that event you can always visit the gravesites of notable people at your own pace using the guide at <www.beechwoodottawa.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/fondationcimetiirebeechwood_selfguided_tour_pamphlet_gr een_bilingual.pdf>.

**Historical Society of Ottawa
2017-18 Program**

Do you need more history in your life? The Historical Society of Ottawa has a speaker program open to all and free for occasional attendance.

- 29 Sept 2017: Al Uhryniw — Ottawa's Pioneer Radio

- 27 Oct 2017: John D. Reid — Ottawa's Weather History
- 24 Nov 2017: Ian McKercher— 1930s Ottawa & Birth of the Bank of Canada
- 26 Jan 2018: Dave Allston — Death, Illness & Squalor: Cave Creek & Primitive West Ottawa
- 23 Feb 2018: J. Andrew Ross— The Story of How the First Ottawa Senators Went South
- 30 March 2018: Dan Mackay— Lillian Freiman: The Poppy Lady
- 27 April 2018: Randy Boswell— Ottawa's Original Renaissance Man: Dr. Edward Van Cortlandt

Find a summary of each presentation at <<http://hsottawa.ncf.ca/current.html>>. Meetings usually start at 1:00 pm in the lounge of the Routhier Community Centre, 172 Guigues Street at Cumberland Street.



23rd Annual Family History Conference
England, Wales, and Research Methodology

Featured Speakers:
Celia Heritage, Paul Milner, James F.S. Thomson
Whiteside Lecturer: Glenn Wright

There is still time to register. Don't Miss Out — Do It NOW!

Information and Online Registration: conference.bifhsgo.ca
Queries: conference@bifhsgo.ca
613-226-8096

Report on the BIFHSGO 2017 Annual General Meeting

BY MARY-LOU SIMAC

This report on our 23rd AGM complements those of the President and Directors delivered to members in advance of the 2017 AGM. A draft of the official AGM minutes will appear in the Spring 2018 *Anglo-Celtic Roots*.

The meeting was held on 10 June 2017 in The Chamber at Ben Franklin Place, 101 Centrepointe Drive, Ottawa, Ontario. Quorum was exceeded.

Summary of Directors' Reports

The meeting was called to order by the president, Barbara Tose, and the Minutes of the 2016 AGM were approved. A summary of the President and Directors' Reports was presented by the president, noting highlights of the past year, including solid attendance at monthly meetings (averaging 150 people per meeting) as well as a steady membership of around 550 members annually.

Two new research databases were made available this year on the BIFHSGO website: "Lancashire Diaries" and "Canadian Militia 1907." BIFHSGO funds were directed to the

OGS Ottawa Branch Library to purchase a subscription to *The British Newspaper Archive* and to the Ottawa Public Library for the purchase of genealogy-related books.

Barbara also highlighted the continuing partnerships with the City of Ottawa Archives and the Ottawa Public Library for our annual conference and other mutually beneficial opportunities.

She acknowledged the participation of many BIFHSGO members in the organizing of the OGS annual conference (16–18 June 2017) and the sold-out BIFHSGO pub night (15 June), which was the opening evening event for the conference. This has delayed some BIFHSGO initiatives such as workshops.

However, another workshop with the Ulster Historical Society is already booked for March 2018 and other topics are being discussed for the coming year.

Barbara thanked all of the BIFHSGO members who contributed to the OGS conference and added that she

looks forward to welcoming them back to work on BIFHSGO events in the fall.

The president noted in particular the very significant contributions of the two retiring Board members: Jane Down and Dave Cross. Jane first came onto the Board in 2009, and served the society as Program Director for the maximum term allowable (eight years). Dave has served two terms (four years) as Director of Research.

Financial Statements, Auditor's Report, Appointment of Public Accountant for 2017

Treasurer Marianne Rasmus presented highlights of her financial report, which was circulated to members prior to the meeting. She reviewed the society's financial position. There were no questions from the floor.

A motion to appoint McCay Duff LLP the Public Accountant for 2017 was proposed by Marianne Rasmus and seconded by Barbara Tose. The motion passed.

Awards and Presentations

Barbara Tose presented three Certificates of Recognition:

- Best Presentation by a Member at a Monthly Meeting: Christine Jackson, for her talk, "The Queen's Coachman—Our Only Claim to Fame," given at the February 2017 meeting;

- Best "Before BIFHSGO" Talk by a Member at a Monthly Meeting: Glenn Wright, for his talk, "Canadians on Vimy Ridge 1917: A Short Guide to Resources and Research," given at the April 2017 meeting; and
- Best *Anglo-Celtic Roots* Article for 2016: Terry Findley, for his article in the Winter 2016 issue, entitled "The Cutler with a Social Conscience."

Gail Dever was nominated for the BIFHSGO Hall of Fame for her wide-ranging work on behalf of BIFHSGO and genealogy in general. She was unable to attend the AGM, so her award will be presented to her in the fall.

Election of Board of Directors

Glenn Wright presented the report of the Nominations Committee. Two members, as noted above, are leaving the Board this year. Lisa-Dawn Crawley had agreed prior to the AGM to stand for a position on the Board.

There were no other nominations from the floor and Lisa-Dawn was appointed to the Board as Director at Large. She will also continue in her role as e-Newsletter editor, and as a member of the social media team.

Other Business

In other business, David Jeanes promoted the Heritage Ottawa walking tours.

Book Review

BY GLORIA F. TUBMAN

Great Canadian Expectations: The Middlemore Experience

By Patricia Roberts-Pichette

Softcover, ISBN 978-1-77240-046-5

Global Heritage Press, c/o Globalgenealogy.com, Carleton Place, ON
Index, Appendices, Tables, Lists, Chapter End Notes

This book has much to offer about the history of the evolution of social policies regarding children in Canada, the British Home Children movement, the Middlemore receiving and distribution homes in Canada, the other juvenile emigration agencies, and the conditions in Birmingham, England that impacted the lives of the 5,199 children collectively known as “Middlemore” children who came to Canada between 1873 and 1932.

With Home Children, the date of immigration is important. This is the first book to discuss how changes in the British and Canadian government laws and policies with respect to children affected this migration initiative. The legislation for Britain, Canada, Ontario/Upper Canada/Canada West, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island specific to child immigration, welfare, and education is covered. A chronological presentation of these changes provides the reader with the evolution of social policies about child welfare and education.

The author also makes another point and a major one, which is that the Middlemore agency (aka Children’s Emigration Homes), within the context of the times, has a much better record than some other agencies in terms of caring for and monitoring the children so that the Canadian families who received them did not exploit them for their own economic gain.

The persons and organizations that had a voice in the child migration initiative are identified, as well as the role they played: supporters, detractors, government officials, representatives of the settling agencies, and other individuals. For those interested in the history of British Home Children, this book is the first to offer comprehensive information throughout time about those who were instrumental in changes to the child welfare laws and policies, especially in Canada.

The author provides a comprehensive overview of the child migration scheme, of Birmingham life in the 1870s, and of John Throgmorton

Middlemore's personal life before concentrating on the Middlemore children's homes in Birmingham and the logistics settling children in Ontario and the Maritime provinces. The material for this book was obtained from the archived records of the organization, the governments of Britain and Canada, newspapers of the time, letters that the children wrote, and personal communications the author has had with Middlemore family members and descendants of Middlemore Home Children. Information about the children and quotes from their letters are interspersed throughout the book.

The end notes for each chapter provide much more contextual

information. The appendices offer information on what support was available to the poor children of Birmingham, background on each Middlemore party that came to Canada, descriptions of the institutions that also sent children through the Children's Emigration Homes, and a comparison of the policies of the Children's Emigration Homes with those of other juvenile emigration agencies.

This book should be a reference source for any person interested in British Home Children and/or the development of social policies for children in Canada. It is available through Global Genealogy at <http://globalgenealogy.com>.

British Pub Night—15 June 2017



A good time was had by all!

Membership Report

BY KATHY WALLACE

New BIFHSGO Members 16 May 2017–6 Aug 2017

Member No.	Name	Address
1449	Lorri Busch	Whitby, ON
1521	Margaret Morris	Rosses Point, Co: Sligo, Ireland
1871	Alice McNair	Powell River, BC
1872	Barbara Monk	Odessa, ON
1873	Cathy Enright	Nepean, ON
1874	Marg McIntyre	Wakefield, QC
1875	Ann Scrimger	Ottawa, ON
1876	Ann McCotter	Ottawa, ON

More British Pub Night



BIFHSGO Board of Directors 2017–2018

President	Barbara Tose	613-729-1015
Recording Secretary	Gillian Leitch	819-777-8480
Treasurer	Marianne Rasmus	613-834-9694
Research & Projects	Vacant	
Membership	Kathy Wallace	613-746-6796
Communications	Anne Moralejo	819-837-8627
Publicity	Mary-Lou Simac	613-837-8256
Director at Large	Lisa-Dawn Crawley	613-875-3410
Programs/Education	Andrea Harding	613-857-0719
Past President	Glenn Wright	613-521-2929

Associate Directors 2017–2018

<i>Anglo-Celtic Roots</i> Editor	Jean Kitchen
E-newsletter Editor	Lisa-Dawn Crawley
Web Manager	Gail Dever
Photographer	Dena Palamedes
Publication Sales	Brian Chamberlain
Queries	Sheila Dohoo Faure
Voicemail	Ann Adams
Conference 2017	Duncan Monkhouse, Brian Le Conte
Public Accountant	McCay Duff LLP

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, and participate in the activities of related organizations.

Membership dues for 2017 are \$45 for individuals, \$55 for families, and \$45 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

- 14 Oct 2017** *Untangling a Parish to Find Family*—Susan Davis has been researching her Irish Catholic ancestors, including those in Quebec’s Saint-Sylvestre Parish, which in 1852 was home to 1,059 Irish-born and 44 British-born immigrants, along with their 1,048 French-speaking neighbours.
- 18 Nov 2017** *Not So Quiet on the Western Front: The Grants of Formby in the Great War*—Tara Grant’s grandfather and his three brothers all served with the British army during WWI. By combining their service records with their regimental war diaries and newspapers she followed their military careers through the four years of the Great War.
- 9 Dec 2017** *Great Moments in Genealogy*—BIFHSGO members Matthew Harding, John McConkey, Sharon and Jeff Moor, and Brenda Turner will describe the exciting discoveries they made while researching their ancestors. For details, go to www.bifhsgo.ca/meetings.

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 (12:30 in November)

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

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. The deadline for submissions to the Winter issue is 28 October 2017.