



Anglo-Celtic Roots

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In This Issue

Who was Annabella Chatterton?

The Indomitable Frances Core

We Shall Remember Them:

Lance Corporal William

Thomas Bestford



— 1994-2024 —



Anglo-Celtic Roots

This journal is published quarterly in March, June, September and December by the British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa and sent free to members.

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The British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa acknowledges that its activities take place in the ancestral homeland of Indigenous peoples who have inhabited these lands for millennia. We acknowledge the enduring presence here of all First Nations, Métis and Inuit people. We recognize the importance of bringing awareness and understanding of our diverse nation's past to all, and we promote research and education programs that bring us together as Canadians.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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Cover Illustration:

Annabella Chatterton, date unknown.

Source: Author's collection.

From the Editor:

This, my last issue as editor, begins with the second-place winner of our recent writing competition. Carol Annett tells the story of her mother-in-law's paternal grandmother, who may have worked for a person of historical significance during a short absence from her hometown of New Carlisle, Quebec.

Ann Burns delves into the life of her maternal great-grandmother Frances Core and discovers a mystery. Ann attempts to solve the case of the mysterious husband.

Lance Corporal William Thomas Bestford served in the Royal Engineers (Northumbrian Field Company). He was stationed near Vierstraat when he was critically injured and taken to No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station at Bailleul, France.

Finally we have the last *Cream of the Crop* column from John Reid. John has been sharing his knowledge and finds with us in every issue since Winter 2011. I thank him sincerely for his regular contributions all these years; I know that they will be missed.

Barbara Tose



From the President



Christmas has come early this year! Paul Cripwell stepped forward in mid-November to take on the tasks of managing editor for our quarterly journal *Anglo-Celtic Roots* (ACR) and lead our dedicated team of editors and proofreaders. He immediately began work on the spring issue. We thank Paul and celebrate the continuation of our much-valued journal.

Thirty years ago, before the inaugural BIFHSGO Board had even convened a meeting of potential members, they prepared the initial issue of ACR, which was distributed to the interested folks who first gathered in January 1995.

Encouraging members to write their family histories and printing them quarterly has seen one of their major goals achieved, as ACR has been published ever since.

Many editors over the years have nurtured aspiring storytellers, guided their writing, tactfully suggested amendments, and painstakingly edited and laid out the final versions, producing a quality and at times award-winning

publication. Some of them still work with the team as editors or proofreaders, and we thank them for their continued dedication and generosity.

The recent BIFHSGO survey told us that members value ACR highly. I hope the team knows how much their work is appreciated.

With this issue Barbara Tose steps down, after having designed and laid out ACR for 11 years, as well as working as managing editor for the last five of those 11 years. We thank her for her leadership, her creativity, her generosity and her patience. We know she would like to spend more time on her own family stories—we'll watch for them in upcoming issues.

So, my Christmas wish has already come true—ACR will continue publication into the future. I wish you a happy and healthy holiday, and I look forward to hearing—and reading—more of your family history stories in 2025.

Dianne Brydon

Family History Research

Who was Annabella Chatterton?

BY CAROL ANNETT



Carol enjoys writing about her husband Richard's Gaspé ancestors. "Mary Imhoff: The War Bride on Our Family Tree," appeared in ACR's Spring 2021 issue; "Gaspé Fiddler: Bert Law" and "Felix Joseph Annett: Still Going Fishing" were published in 2023 by the Southern California Genealogical Society. Carol dedicates this piece to her late mother-in-law, Vel Annett, who told her about Annabella, and to her late father-in-law, Ken Annett, a Gaspé historian and genealogist. Carol, who coordinates the BIFHSGO writing group, encourages everyone to write down their family stories.

"Who's in these photos?" This question can uncover surprising stories about ancestors if you ask the right person. That's what happened when I posed the question to my mother-in-law, Velma Annett, who preferred to be called Vel. At least once a week, she would telephone my husband, Richard. If I answered, Vel chatted with me briefly before asking, "Is he there?" which was my cue to pass the phone to him.

One time she called while Richard was on a sailboat in the Atlantic Ocean. Since I had no news about him, our conversation might have ended abruptly. Instead, I asked her about a woman in some family photos.

"That's my grandmother, Annabella Chatterton," she answered. "What was she like?" I asked. "Annabella was wonderful," she said fondly. We talked several more times before Richard returned. Vel, whose memory was undimmed at 90 years of age, shared memories of her grandmother.

I have linked her fascinating recollections with background research to answer my original question—"Who's in these photos?"—and to tell the story of the life and times of Annabella Chatterton.



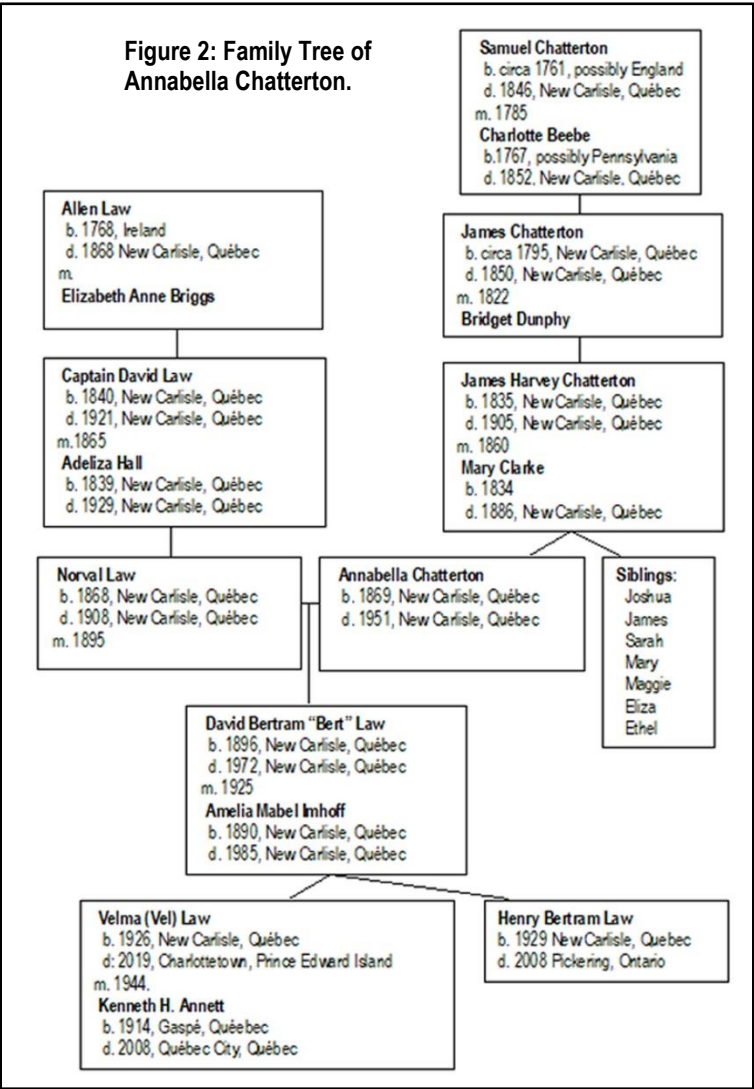
Figure 1: Map showing location of New Carlisle.

Source: Google Maps.

Loyalist Roots in Gaspé

Like Vel, Annabella was from New Carlisle (Figure 1), a historic seaside town on the Gaspé Peninsula in Quebec, well-known as the place where former Quebec Premier René Lévesque spent his childhood.¹ The town was founded in 1784 by Loyalists who fled the 13 Colonies around the time of the American Revolutionary War (1775–1783) and by discharged soldiers who settled there after the war.^{2,3}

Vel was proud of Annabella’s Loyalist origins, but she wasn’t interested in the genealogy. She left that to her late husband, Ken, a researcher specializing in the history of anglophones in the Gaspé. From Ken’s monograph, “The Beebe Family,” I learned that Annabella’s great-grand-mother, Charlotte Beebe, had Huguenot and Loyalist roots with connections in New England, England and France.



Charlotte Beebe was born in 1767, possibly in Pennsylvania. When war broke out, her father fought for the British side with Butler's Rangers. After his death in 1779, Charlotte's mother fled the American colony with her children. Around 1780, Charlotte's family arrived at the refugee camp for Loyalists at Machiche near Trois-Rivières on the St. Lawrence River.

In 1784, when Charlotte was about 17 years old, her family sailed downriver to the new Loyalist settlement at Petit Paspébiac, later called New Carlisle.

Annabella's great-grandfather, Samuel Chatterton, served in the British Army with the 31st Regiment of Foot during the Revolutionary War. After his regiment was disbanded, he accepted Governor Haldimand's offer of a land grant in Gaspé, drawing Lot 168, a parcel of 100 acres.

Tradition has it that the marriage of Samuel Chatterton and Charlotte Beebe was performed in 1785 by the Lieutenant Governor of the District of Gaspé, Nicholas Cox, before there were clergy in the area.⁴

By the time Samuel and Charlotte's great-granddaughter Annabella was born in 1869, Chattertons had been living in the New Carlisle area for decades⁵ (Figure 2). Annabella was the fourth of eight children born to Harvey Chatterton, a farmer and carpenter, and his wife, Mary Clarke. The family of ten appears in the 1881 Census of Canada, in which the youngest child, not yet baptized, was recorded as "Baby."⁶ Annabella would have cared for her younger sisters after her mother died in 1886.⁷

In 1891, 22-year-old Annabella was still living with her father and six of her siblings.⁸ She and a younger sister now had jobs as domestic servants. Sometime after the 1891 Census was recorded, Annabella made a bold change. She left New Carlisle to work in a big city.

One of the Barons

I was puzzled as to why one of our pictures of Annabella was a cabinet card portrait taken in the city of Montreal. "Lots of girls from New Carlisle went up to Montreal to work in those days," Vel explained. She thought that Annabella found a position through someone she knew.

"What did she do in Montreal?" I asked. Vel said that Annabella worked as a housekeeper in the home of a wealthy man. She was certain that Annabella said his name was Smith. "He was one of the barons," Vel added emphatically. "A lumber baron?" I asked dubiously. "Yes, I think so." A lumber baron in Montreal seemed unlikely to me, but a baron named Smith sounded familiar, for some reason.

I searched Google for “Lumber Baron Smith Montreal.” However, the lumber barons were based, as I expected, not in Montreal, but in Bytown, the future Ottawa. I searched again, omitting the word “lumber.” Now, the first person on the list was a baron of a different sort: Sir Donald Alexander Smith, 1st Baron Strathcona and Mount Royal. Whoa!

This “Mr. Smith” was definitely wealthy. Born in Scotland in 1820, Donald Alexander Smith entered the Hudson’s Bay Company as a clerk, rising to principal shareholder and governor of the company. His appointments and achievements in business and politics were numerous. He negotiated a peaceful solution during the first Riel uprising in 1870. He was a member of Parliament for Selkirk from 1871 to 1880. In 1873, he withdrew his support for Prime Minister Sir John A. Macdonald during the Pacific scandal. He was a member of Parliament for Montreal West from 1887 to 1896. He became president of the Bank of Montreal, chancellor of McGill University and Canada’s high commissioner in London.

Smith was a financier of the Canadian Pacific Railway. In 1885, he was given the honour of driving home the last spike, an event captured in one of the most iconic photographs in Canadian history (Figure 3). In 1886, he became Sir Donald A. Smith and in 1897 was raised to the peerage as 1st Baron Strathcona and Mount Royal.

A man of immense wealth, he was a renowned philanthropist, contributing generously to McGill University and the Royal Victoria Hospital in Montreal. Sir Donald A. Smith also funded Royal Victoria College, exclusively for women students, who were called “Donaldas” after their benefactor.⁹

When I told Vel that her grandmother might have worked for this notable Smith, she was unaware of him or his historical significance. I was the one who was flabbergasted and excited by the possibility of a connection. Could I prove that Annabella worked for Sir Donald A. Smith?

Annabella Chatterton and Sir Donald A. Smith in Montreal

The cabinet card portrait is our only record of Annabella in Montreal. The photographer, J. T. Lambly, at the corner of St. Lawrence and Vitre Streets, was in business from 1888 to 1892.¹⁰ Annabella wore a high-necked, long-

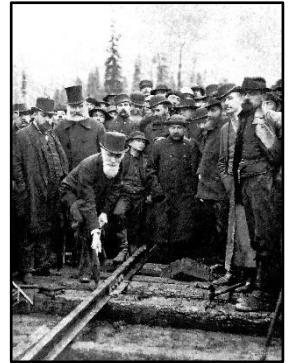


Figure 3: Donald A. Smith driving the last spike of the CPR, Craigellachie, BC, 1885.

Source: Alexander Ross/Library and Archives Canada/C-003693.



Figure 4: Annabella Chatterton, circa 1892.

Source: Author's collection.

the historic Golden Square Mile, where his neighbours were other wealthy Montrealers, such as CPR president William Van Horne and dry goods store owner James Ogilvy.

Smith engaged more domestic staff than his neighbours. The Census of 1891 notes that William Van Horne employed one cook and three maids and James Ogilvy had one general servant. Sir Donald A. Smith's household, however, included a dozen employees: a ladies' maid, two housemaids, a table maid, a table waiter, a kitchen maid, a cook, a laundress, three domestic servants and two coachmen.¹²

Annabella, who was in New Carlisle in the spring of 1891, could only have been employed by the Smiths in Montreal between the summer of 1891 and the summer of 1895. The Montreal city directory shows Sir Donald A. Smith residing at 1157 Dorchester Street over those years, when he was Member of Parliament for Montreal West.¹³

One story that stuck in Vel's memory concerned a certain errand Annabella did for the Smiths. She was regularly sent to the west island of Montreal, where wealthy families had homes in the country. The reason for the trip, Annabella told Vel, was to obtain fresh laid eggs from a farm.

sleeved Victorian street costume in dark fabric with a close-fitting bodice, velvet bib, collar and cuffs and a large bustle (Figure 4).

This was probably the way she was expected to dress as a housekeeper for a well-to-do employer, but it doesn't prove that she worked for Sir Donald Alexander Smith. I turned to historical accounts, census records and the Montreal city directory.

Vel's grandmother said that her employer lived on Dorchester Street (now called Boulevard René-Lévesque). Biographical accounts note that in 1876, Sir Donald Smith purchased a grand stone mansion at 1157 Dorchester on the corner of rue du Fort.¹¹ Lavishly renovated, Smith's three-storey mansion included a mahogany staircase, Italian tiled fireplaces, stained glass windows and a conservatory. The house was located in the southwest corner of

The expedition to procure the freshest eggs may actually be a clue linking Annabella to Sir Donald. In her biography of Lord Strathcona, Donna Macdonald goes into detail about Smith's unorthodox eating habits.¹⁴ He was unusually fond of simple foods like eggs and milk. He ate sparingly, skipping lunch to allow himself eleven uninterrupted hours for work. One visitor reported that Smith declined the dinner entrée served to his family and guests and requested a large bowl of soft-boiled eggs served with copious amounts of butter and a quart of milk.

Did Annabella Chatterton fetch fresh eggs from the country to satisfy the particular tastes of Sir Donald A. Smith?

Annabella told her young granddaughter, Vel, that she was employed in Montreal by a wealthy man named Smith living on Dorchester Street, who had a penchant for farm fresh eggs. He was, as Vel understood it, "one of the barons." These anecdotal details match known facts about Sir Donald A. Smith, who lived in Montreal when Annabella was there. Vel's memories and my research suggest that Annabella's employer might have been this eminent Smith, though I was unable to find direct evidence to back up the hunch.

Annabella departed Montreal just before Sir Donald Smith's appointment as high commissioner for Canada in London in 1896. In the summer of 1897, newspapers announced the appointment of Canada's new peer. He chose the names Strathcona and Mount Royal, honouring both his Scottish heritage and his connection to Montreal. Though he returned often to Montreal, Lord Strathcona was in London when he died in 1914.¹⁵

Wife, Mother, Widow and Grandmother

Meanwhile, on 24 July 1895 in New Carlisle, Quebec, Annabella Chatterton, 26, former housekeeper to a wealthy family named Smith in Montreal, had married Norval Law, 27, a farmer¹⁶ (Figure 5). Norval's Irish-born grandfather had been a police constable in New Carlisle. His father, David, was a sea captain and his mother was Adeliza née Hall¹⁷ (Figures 6).

One year after her marriage, Annabella gave birth to a son, baptized David Bertram. Bert would be her only child.¹⁸

Annabella and Norval enjoyed 13 years of marriage before Norval became ill. Annabella told Vel that her

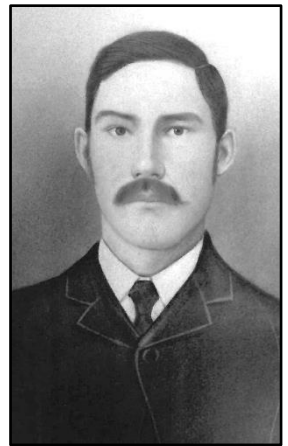


Figure 5: Norval Law.
Source: Author's collection.



Figure 6: Captain David and Adeliza Law.

Source: Author's collection.

husband journeyed to Montreal to see a specialist at the Royal Victoria Hospital where he was told his brain tumour was incurable. Norval Law died at the age of 40 in 1908.¹⁹

Now a widow and single parent, Annabella continued to live on the Law farm with her in-laws, David and Adeliza Law^{20,21} (Figure 7).

Bert attended school and worked on the farm. He grew into a fine man who enjoyed his dog, fishing and playing the fiddle. In July 1918, Bert was drafted into the Second Quebec Regiment, but he never went overseas.²² Two years after World War I ended, Annabella's father-in-law, Captain David Law, died and her 25-year-old son became the man of the family.²³



Figure 7:
(L to R) Two unknown girls, Captain David Law, Adeliza Law, Annabella Law, her brother, Josh Chatterton, and her son, Bert Law with dog; New Carlisle, circa 1909.

Source: Author's collection.

Bert continued farming and over the years took on positions as secretary-treasurer of various local boards as well as the role of returning officer for federal and provincial elections. Annabella's son became well-respected in the region.²⁴

In 1925, Bert Law married Mabel Imhoff, whose family had deep roots in New Carlisle.^{25,26} When Bert and Mabel's first child, Velma, was baptized in October 1926, the baby's grandmother, Annabella, signed as a witness²⁷ (Figure 8). The Law house was full of life now, with Adeliza, Annabella, Bert, Mabel and baby Velma—four generations under one roof.

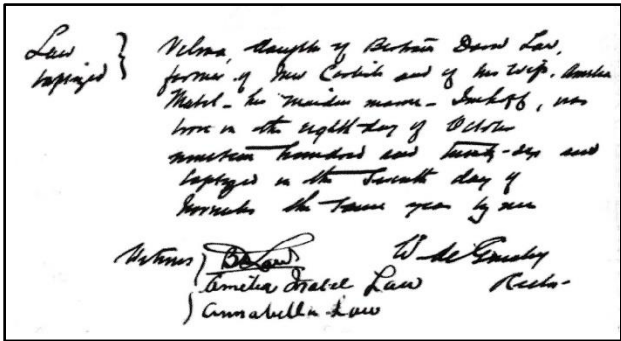


Figure 8: 1926 Baptism of Velma Law witnessed by Annabella Law.

Source: Drouin Collection, www.ancestry.ca.

Annabella's mother-in-law, the widow Adeliza Law, died in her 91st year in January 1929, a few months before the birth of Vel's brother.^{28,29} Now Annabella was the matriarch of the Law household. In the 1931 Census, "Bella" was living with her son, Bert, his wife, Mabel, and her grandchildren, Velma and Henry.³⁰

When she was growing up, Vel spent a lot of time with her live-in grandmother. "More than with my mother," she said. Annabella passed on to Vel an appreciation of art, quality furnishings, smart clothes, beautiful needlework, gourmet cooking, fine china and formal table settings. Vel attributed Annabella's refined skills and sophisticated tastes to those few years she worked as a housekeeper in the opulent home of a rich family. Vel loved her grandmother's fancy cooking, particularly a bread pudding baked with a layer of jam and a topping of meringue. She listened raptly to stories about the early life of grandmother and her family. Vel's Aunt Ethel, Annabella's youngest sister, went to Detroit where she was said to have worked as a private nurse for the wealthy Ford family.

Annabella allowed Vel into the parlour, which was normally off-limits to children. Thanks to her grandmother, Vel could identify people in the family photos on the parlour walls, including her grandfather, Norval, whom she never met.³¹

Life was disrupted for Vel and Annabella's family around 1939 because Bert rebuilt the farmhouse. Vel once told my husband that while the larger house with modernized plumbing, electricity and hardwood floors was being constructed, they cleaned out the chicken coop and slept there.

After they moved into the new house, World War II arrived virtually on Annabella's doorstep. In April 1942, newspapers reported that a twin-engine bomber of the Royal Air Force Ferry Command crashed near New Carlisle, killing the three crewmen.³² Annabella knew that the plane landed on her son Bert's property in the field beyond the orchard.

Six months later, a Nazi spy rowed ashore from a German U-boat. At a hotel in New Carlisle, he attracted suspicion by paying with out-of-date currency. News of the inept spy's capture was censored from the press until after the war, but local residents knew the story.^{33,34}

When the war ended, Annabella had an added reason to celebrate. Her granddaughter, Vel, married her beau, LAC Kenneth Annett, RCAF, in New Carlisle on 26 June 1945.³⁵ Perhaps Annabella had a hand in setting out the dainty sandwiches and the three-tiered wedding cake on a fine lace table cloth decorated with crystal bowls of lily-of-the-valley at the wedding reception in the Law home.³⁶

Great-grandmother

After a short honeymoon, Ken and Vel Annett left Gaspé for the Eastern Townships of Quebec, where Ken had a teaching job. Annabella said goodbye to the granddaughter who had lived with her since she was born. In the summers, Vel went "down home" on her own while Ken worked as an instructor at army cadet camps to supplement his teacher's salary.³⁷

In the summer of 1950, Ken and Vel, now with two sons, made their first family road trip to New Carlisle in a brand-new Austin sedan. When they arrived, 6-month-old Richard, who, Vel told me, had been tucked in a cardboard box in the back seat, was presented to his great-grandmother, Annabella.

The Annett family pilgrimage to New Carlisle was repeated every summer. But the last time Vel saw Annabella would have been in the summer of 1951 (Figure 9).



Figure 9: Four generations (L to R) Bert Law, his mother, Annabella Law, with her great-grandson, Christopher, and her granddaughter, Velma Annett, 1951.
Source: Author's collection.

Her beloved grandmother died the following winter on Christmas Day at the age of 82.³⁸ Vel regretted being unable to attend her funeral.

Postscript

In 2011, five years before Vel told me her memories of Annabella, my husband, Richard, and I visited Highgate Cemetery in London, England, where we saw monuments to historic figures, including Karl Marx, George Eliot and Christina Rossetti. In the West Cemetery, we came across a huge mausoleum in which a Canadian couple were buried—Donald Alexander Smith, 1st Baron Strathcona and Mount Royal, and his wife, Lady Strathcona (Figure 10). That's why, when Vel later told me that Annabella worked for a Smith who was "one of the barons," it sounded familiar.

Maybe Sir Donald Alexander Smith played a part in Annabella's story, maybe not. However, thanks to Vel's memories, which she related to me over the phone just three years before her own death in 2019, our photos of Annabella have a much larger story to tell.

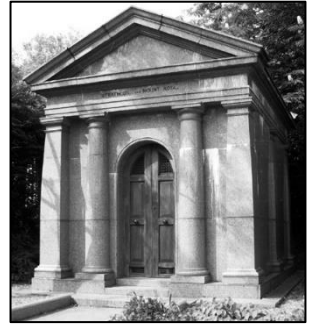


Figure 10: Mausoleum of Lord and Lady Strathcona, Highgate Cemetery, London, 2011.

Source: Author's collection.



Figure 11: Annabella Law, née Chatterton, New Carlisle, Quebec, 1951.

Source: Author's collection.

Who was Annabella Chatterton? She was a daughter, sister, wife, mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother (Figure 11) who raised a fine son as a widow. She was born two years after Canadian Confederation and during her lifetime her country fought in two world wars. She was a descendant of Loyalists and for most of her life she stayed in the same historic, English-speaking region of Quebec where her family had lived for generations. But for a few years, she left her hometown and worked in the mansion of a wealthy man in Montreal.

Spending time in this cultured milieu, so different from her modest Gaspé home, had a lasting effect on her tastes, her skills, and her bearing, and gave her plenty of stories to share with her only granddaughter, who thought she was wonderful.

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The Indomitable Frances Core



BY ANN BURNS

Ann started researching her family history in 2003 and joined BIFHSGO in 2006. On a 2011 trip to England, she met Sunderland cousins who obligingly showed her the area where Sunderland and Core ancestors once lived. Sadly, none of the original homes survive. Although Ann spends most of her research time and travel on Irish ancestors, Core and Sunderland family stories feature prominently in her recent writing, with help from some of Frances Core's other great-grandchildren.

My maternal great-grandmother, Frances Core, was born in Bradford, Yorkshire, England, during the reign of Queen Victoria. In stature, and sometimes demeanour, she resembled the Queen. The path of her life was strewn with tragedies and challenges that would daunt the less determined.

Family stories do not tell of a sweet grandmotherly type, although photographs make her appear like a smiling cherub. She was never spoken of fondly and had a bitterness about her. I know of her only from stories, as Gram Crawford, the final of the four surnames she had during her lifetime.



**Figure 1: Frances Core
1860–1930.**

Source: Author's collection.

And one of those surnames left us with questions. Let's step back in time to 1860.

According to the 1861 Census,¹ Frances was the third daughter in the household of William and Nanny (also known as Ann or Nancy) Core, née Holdsworth. William Core (age 27) and Nanny Holdsworth (age 34) were married on 26 October 1859 in Bradford.² William was a ne'er do well, an unfaithful husband, and Nanny an unfortunate woman whose life was a continuous struggle. The ups and downs that young Frances would later encounter began early in her life.

By the 1871 Census, Nanny Core was living with Ann E. Holdsworth, and Frances and Margaret Core.³ William was found to be living elsewhere (see below).

I was left with numerous questions: What had happened to Mary and Hannah? Did Frances' family really include two older sisters? Were William and Nanny Core the parents of the three girls—Mary, Hannah and Frances—listed with them in the 1861 Census? Who was Ann E. Holdsworth? Was Margaret another daughter of William and Frances or Frances and some other partner? Good old-fashioned research provided the answers.

Frances was baptised in St Peter's Cathedral, Bradford, on 9 September 1860, the legitimate daughter of William Core and Nanny Holdsworth.⁴ Hannah Elizabeth Holdsworth was baptized the same day and the record confirmed that she was the illegitimate daughter of Nanny Holdsworth.⁵ Hannah was also known at various stages in her life as Ann Elizabeth, Ann E. Hannah and Annie, which explains the Ann E. Holdsworth living with Nanny in 1871. Hannah reverted to her birth surname when William Core left the family and was, at that point, using Ann instead of Hannah.

Mary Elizabeth Holdsworth, born 8 October 1852, was baptized in Bradford on 23 January 1853,⁶ the daughter of Nanny Holdsworth, spinster. With no other Mary Holdsworth or Mary Core of the same age found in any records, it is likely that this is the Mary Core enumerated with the family in the 1861 Census. Mary was 8 years old in 1861 so would have been 18 in 1871, at which point she could have been married, living elsewhere or have died.

William remained with Nanny and the girls for less than 10 years, during which time he fathered two more daughters with Nanny: Amelia, born 26 August 1862⁷ and Margaret (listed in the 1871 Census with Nanny), born 19

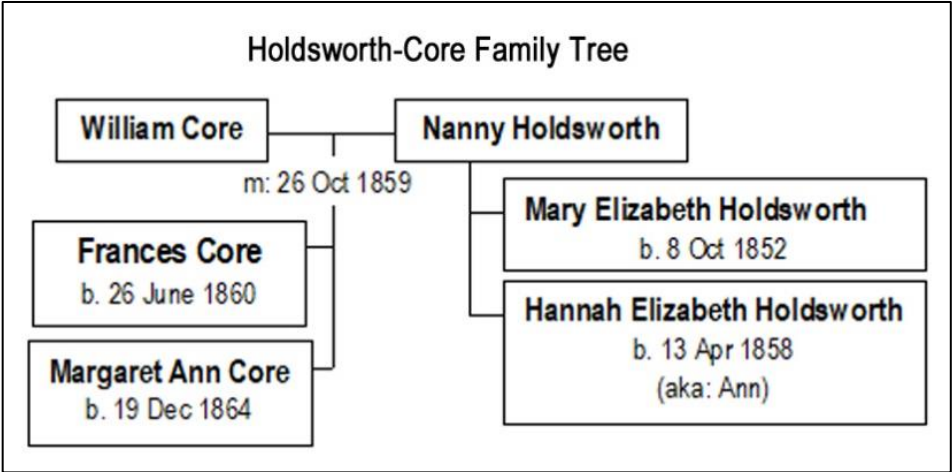


Figure 2: Holdsworth - Core Family Tree.

Source: Author.

December 1864 and baptized 19 March 1865 in Bradford.⁸ Amelia lived less than a year, dying in July 1863.⁹

In the 1871 Census, William was living with Henrietta Lumb and her—or their—two children.¹⁰ They married in 1884,¹¹ after Nanny's death, by which time he'd fathered several more children with Henrietta.¹² After their marriage, the children with the surname Lumb in the 1871 and 1881 censuses were known by the surname Core.

William was a labourer who changed occupations frequently. References found for William rarely had him doing the same unskilled job. The economy of Bradford was centred on the woollen industry, but he avoided the mills. When he abandoned the family, his departure certainly imposed financial hardship, but possibly little love was lost when he left. There is no information on how Nanny supported her daughters. The space on the census form for her occupation was usually blank.

By the time she was 11 years old, Frances was no longer in school and was working as a worsted spinner, the same occupation as her half-sister Annie.¹³ Were they supporting their mother? When she married, Frances' occupation was listed as millhand. Almost everyone without other skills could find a job in a factory, even at a tender age, especially if the family needed the paltry income that child labourers made.

Frances married James Sunderland in the parish church of St. Wilfred at Calverly, Yorkshire, on 28 July 1878.¹⁴ He was 23 and a carding overlooker in a woollen mill. She was 18. The family's prospects looked good, as James

was already a supervisor at a young age. Their first child, Ann, known as Annie, was born in February 1879,¹⁵ followed by Harry in September 1880.¹⁶

On 6 March 1880, an article in *The Leeds Times* recounted an indecent assault on Frances in her own home.¹⁷ The date of the incident was not given, but she was already the mother of Annie and pregnant with Harry. In court, her assailant, a former neighbour, claimed no memory of the incident because he was drunk. He pleaded guilty and was sent to prison for six months. Frances had managed to escape the worst of his advances when she fled to a neighbour's home, from where she summoned the police.

There is no information on the relationship between Frances and her mother, who died in Bradford on 14 April 1884, at the age of 58. Her passing was marked by a single line printed in *The Leeds Times* on 26 April 1884, in a list of the recent deaths in Bradford.¹⁸ It stated the date of death, her age and where she was living. There was no obituary, no mention of a funeral or even the place of burial. Summarizing a life so briefly is very sad.

By this time, with two young children, and having recently lost an infant, Frances would have enjoyed the help of family. Her younger sister Margaret married George Pownall in 1883.¹⁹ In 1885 they emigrated to Canada.²⁰

Frances was starting to lose her family, one after the other. Younger sister Margaret's departure followed on the heels of her mother's death. Older sister Annie had married William Barraclough about the time Frances gave birth to Harry and was busy looking after her own growing family.²¹

Frances' next child, Tom, was born on 24 January 1883.²² Sadly, Tom died of bronchitis three weeks before his first birthday.²³ Next came John (Jack). He was born on 16 December 1885.²⁴ A year later, Frances gave birth to twin girls, Minnie and Nelly.²⁵ Minnie had a hare lip and was intellectually delayed. Nelly, born a perfectly healthy infant, died of a fever six months later, in June of 1887.²⁶ Seven months after the passing of baby Nelly, Albert (Bert) was born in January 1888.²⁷

By the time she was 28, Frances had five living children and had lost her mother, two infants, and the company of her sisters. The future looked bleak.

Her situation soon worsened again. Frances' husband, James, died in October 1888.²⁸ Harry was 8 years old. Losing his father, who was only 33, had thrust Harry into a role which he fulfilled as best he could for the rest of his life, helping his mother and four remaining siblings, Annie (9), Jack (3), Minnie (almost 2), and Bert (9 months).

Frances was bereft, with no means to support her young family. They had enjoyed a comfortable but not privileged life as the family of a foreman. This was Victorian England and there was no widow's pension. James had spent most of his working life in the mill, and despite the cause of his death being specified as pneumonia, I wonder if it could have been some form of lung disease caused by inhaling small fibres and other toxins in the air.

With hope for a brighter future, Frances made a life-changing decision the next year to move her family to Ottawa, Canada, where her younger sister, Margaret and brother-in-law George Pownall, had settled four years earlier. Nothing is known of how Frances financed the journey.

They boarded the newly renovated steamship SS *Sarnia* in Liverpool and were accommodated in third class. According to a printed program now owned and shared with me by her grandson, during the voyage, Annie volunteered to sing at a charity performance on board, to raise money for the orphaned children of sailors lost at sea. The SS *Sarnia* docked in Montreal on 10 September 1889.²⁹ Frances and her young brood disembarked and travelled to Ottawa to begin life anew.

One week after their arrival, Frances did something that seems very odd in retrospect. One can only imagine her reasons, and none make sense. Frances married a man named Harry Raistrick.³⁰ The ceremony was performed in Ottawa by an Anglican minister, witnessed by her sister Margaret Pownall and Abraham Taylor.

Who was Abraham Taylor and where was Margaret's husband George? They must have known Mr. Taylor, identified in the 1891 Census as Frances' neighbour in Ottawa, and recruited him for the occasion.³¹ My theory, with nothing to back it up, is that George Pownall was occupied posing as the groom and hence unavailable as a witness.

The real Harry Raistrick, who had lived next door to Frances in Bradford and would have been well-known to the family there, was never found in any Canadian records. I believe that Frances had sought solace after being widowed so young, and by the time she arrived in Canada was five months pregnant. Her husband had died 11 months earlier. Mr. Raistrick, a butcher who was already married with children, may or may not have been the father, but he is a strong candidate.

A baby girl, named Serena, was born to Frances on 18 January 1890.³² Serena's birth, as the daughter of Harry Raickstack [*sic*], butcher, was registered 18 October 1890 by George Pownall. Serena, called Irene by the

family, had a second, attested birth certificate issued in 1958.³³ On that one her father was said to be James Sunderland, foreman in a woollen mill. That statement of birth was signed 'Irene Madill,' her married name then.

Did she even know of the original birth registration? Was it a dark family secret, revealed only when a search on ancestry.com turned up the truth? Was Harry Raistrick her biological father, or simply a neighbour about whom Frances knew enough family details to complete the required marriage registration?

Frances, however, continued to use the surname Sunderland and was listed as Frances Sunderland, widow of James, in the Ottawa City Directory for several years.³⁴ The mystery of that wedding remains unsolved.

Nobody in Ottawa need have known when her husband had died. Why did she undertake such a suspicious marriage? Why did she never use the surname Raistrick? Serena was always known as Irene Sunderland. So many questions remain unanswered.

Life was difficult for Frances with all those children to care for, and her income as a laundress was insufficient to support them all. The 1891 Canadian Census enumerated Frances living with Annie, Minnie, Bert and Serena.³⁵

Harry and Jack, shortly thereafter joined by Bert, were "inmates" of the Protestant Children's Home on Elgin Street.³⁶ An examination of the records of the orphanage in the fonds held in the Ottawa City Archives revealed only their dates of admission and discharge.³⁷ Harry was the eldest and was the first to leave, taking a job as a printer at the *Ottawa Tribune*.³⁸ Jack and Bert spent a few years in the orphanage, and even Serena spent a few months there. Minnie, requiring special care, always lived with her mother. The children's support at the orphanage was paid by the city.



Figure 3: Family photo of Frances circa 1895.
Source: Author's collection.

In the latter part of the 1890s, Frances met Alfred Burwell Crawford. He was a widower with two young sons, a house painter by occupation. I have been unable to find any record of a marriage, but Frances was legally married to Harry Raistrick, and there had been no divorce.

In May 1897, Frances again gave birth to twins, this time boys.³⁹ As in the case of her twin girls, one of them, Alfred, lived for only nine months and died of bronchitis. His twin, George, thrived.⁴⁰ After their birth, Frances used the surname Crawford. Alfred Sr.'s sons from his first marriage were cared for by their late mother's family.⁴¹



Figure 4: Sunderland-Crawford family, (L to R) Harry, Jack, Minnie, Frances, Irene, Alfred Crawford, Bert, Annie and young George Crawford seated on the floor.

Source: Author's collection.

Frances was widowed again when Alfred Crawford died in 1913.⁴² He had been partially paralyzed for two years and succumbed to "cardiac syncope." Frances relied on the support of her children, and she kept good track of which ones supported her.

Harry served in World War I, and \$20 per month of his pay allotment was sent directly to his mother.⁴³ He continued to contribute to Frances' support after the war. Unlike his brothers, Jack rarely earned a stable income⁴⁴ and

did not have any extra money for his mother, as he struggled to support his wife and daughters. Bert was regularly employed and also contributed. Minnie, of course, was dependent on others to meet her needs. Both Annie and Irene were married and living in Western Canada. It is not known if they persuaded their husbands to contribute a little when they could.

Her main support was eventually her youngest child, George. Both Frances and Minnie were living with him at the time of the 1921 Census.⁴⁵ When George enrolled in the Canadian Expeditionary Force in the spring of 1918, his mother was identified as his next of kin, and the forms indicated that he was her sole support.⁴⁶ Her address was changed at least once within his file.

Was Frances providing different addresses so that she received money from both Harry and George's army wages? Would it have mattered that both sons designated her to receive payments? This was long before computerization, and the half-brothers had enlisted at different times and places, and they had different surnames. Likely the payments went unnoticed. George had signed up in 1918 and his military career was short. He returned home unscathed and was demobilized in 1919 after only a year of service.

A family story, as related to me by one of Frances' granddaughters in 2009, tells us a little of Frances' disposition. It was Easter, sometime in the late 1920s. The grandchildren who lived in Ottawa were visiting that day. Harry's two children, Jack's two, and Bert's four were all there. On this occasion Frances doled out sweet treats to the children of the sons who financially supported her. As Jack could not help out at this time, his daughters did not get any candy.

It takes little imagination to picture that scene or what those little girls, who had no idea why, later thought of their grandmother. The teller of the tale always remained bitter following that experience.

Another family story, about the regard with which she was held by her in-laws, is from one summer at the cottage, as related to me by my mother. The cottage belonging to Harry Sunderland and his wife, Agnes "Aggie" McGrath, was raised about five feet off the ground. Aggie's outdoor kitchen was on one side of the large wraparound porch. Water had to be fetched from a nearby pump, warmed up on the wood stove, and poured into a pan to wash the dishes. Once the task was finished, the dirty dishwater was heaved over the porch railing.

One evening, Frances happened to walk through the path of that pan of flying dishwater. Aggie was the culprit, and one can only believe the entire

tableau was the result of poor timing. Knowing her mother-in-law quite well by this time, she could hardly have been blamed if the act had been on purpose.

Enraged and dripping wet, Frances made haste to complain to Minnie McGrath, Aggie's mother. Minnie asked if it was clean or dirty water. When told it was the used dishwater, Minnie apparently said, "At least it wasn't a waste of clean water." Clearly, Frances was not a favoured in-law.

Frances Core, aka Sunderland, aka Raistrick, aka Crawford, led a life full of ups and downs. She died in hospital on 9 February 1930.⁴⁷ The cause of death was pneumonia, a complication from the removal of her gall bladder, following an attack a little more than two weeks earlier. She was 69 years old. Frances' funeral was held at the home of her son Harry Sunderland, with a graveside service conducted at Beechwood Cemetery in Ottawa, where she now rests, still keeping the surname secret that she took to her grave.⁴⁸

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We Shall Remember Them[©]

BY HEATHER CARMODY

Heather is a long-term volunteer researching soldiers who died at No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station (CCCS). She has been a member of BIFHSGO since 2015 and began writing biographies the following year. She has also been a member of Ontario Ancestors (OGS) since 2010, researching her Irish and Scottish ancestors. In this biography, she describes the life and death of a soldier who was one of five sons to serve and two sons to die in the Great War.

Lance Corporal William Thomas Bestford[©]

Regimental number: 1242

1st/2nd (Northumbrian) Field Company, Royal Engineers

born: 8 January 1893–died: 21 July 1916

Lance Corporal William Thomas Bestford (Figure 1) was one of 704,803 soldiers from the British Isles who died in or because of the First World War.¹

William came from a mining family. His father and both his grandfathers worked in the coal mines.² He was born on 8 January 1893 in Bedlington, Northumberland, England,³ the third child of Thomas Bestford (1861–1947)⁴ and Elizabeth Ann (née Reed) (1861–1943).⁵

Both his parents were born in small Northumberland coal-mining villages about 2 km apart. Thomas, the son of Robert and Dorothy Bestford, was born in Bebside; Elizabeth Ann, the daughter of Luke and Mary Reed, in Cowpen.

In 1881, Thomas was working as a coal miner and living with his parents in Bedlington;⁶ Elizabeth



Figure 1: William Thomas Bestford.

Source: Courtesy of Joanne Clark.

Ann was a servant at Benridge Hall, Kirkley, Northumberland.⁷ Thomas and Elizabeth Ann married in the second quarter of 1889 in the district of Newcastle upon Tyne, Northumberland.⁸

The couple had six children. Robert (1889–1917)⁹ was the eldest, followed by Luke Reed (1891–1976),¹⁰ William Thomas (1893–1916),^{3,34} Adam (1894–1961),¹¹ George (1897–?),¹² and finally Thomas (1899–1978).¹³

In early April 1891, Thomas, Elizabeth and son Robert were living in a three-room dwelling at Furnace and Bank Top, Bedlington. Thomas was working as a coal miner.¹⁴

The family was still at that address three years later when William was born; however, Thomas was now working as a candle manufacturer.¹⁵ He was still in that trade in March 1901. The family, which had grown with the birth of three more sons, was residing in a three-room dwelling at Ironworks, Bedlington. Robert, Luke, William and Adam most likely attended school, while George and Thomas remained at home.¹⁶

During the next decade, William's father returned to working in the coal mines. In April 1911, 18-year-old William was working as a cartwright and living with his parents and four siblings in a six-room house at 36 St. Cuthbert's Road, Gateshead, Durham. Luke was employed by the North Eastern Railway, Adam worked at a bakery, and George and Thomas attended school.¹⁷ Robert, who was living at the Royal Hotel, Low Walker, was working as a barman.¹⁸

When war was declared on 4 August 1914, William was 21 years old; like many others at the time, he and his brothers were caught up in the patriotic fervour that swept the country.

During the course of the war, all the brothers except Luke served in the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) (Figure 2). George enlisted in the Northumberland Fusiliers in 1914. Robert, who was then employed by the North Eastern Railway and exempt from military service, enlisted in the Durham Light Infantry on 11 December 1915.

Thomas enlisted in the Royal Engineers and was at the Front by February 1917. William and Adam enlisted in the 1st/2nd (Northumbrian) Field Coy [Coy=Company], Royal Engineers (RE), Territorial Force (TF), at its headquarters at Barras Bridge, Newcastle upon Tyne, about 6 km from Gateshead, in September or October 1914.¹⁹

The 1st/2nd (Northumbrian) Field Company was a unit of the Northumbrian Divisional Engineers that provided engineering and technical support to the

Northumbrian Division (renumbered the 50th (Northumbrian) Division in May 1915).



Figure 2: (L to R) Robert, Thomas, (standing), George (sitting in front), and Adam Bestford.

Source: Courtesy of Joanne Clark.

Field Company, Royal Engineers), served on the Western Front with the 50th (Northumbrian) Division. The 2nd/2nd (Northumbrian) Field Company, RE, TF (later renumbered the 450th Field Company, Royal Engineers), served initially with the 63rd Division and from 16 September 1916 to March 1919 with the 15th (Indian) Division.²⁰

With the onset of the war, all units of the Northumbrian Division were mobilized and assigned to the Tyne defences. The war came to northeastern

On 4 August 1914, the Northumbrian Divisional Engineers comprised three units: the 1st (The Newcastle) Northumbrian Field Company, the 2nd (The Newcastle) Northumbrian Field Company, and the Northumbrian (The Newcastle) Divisional Telegraph Company.

On 31 August 1914, the Territorial Force was authorized to raise “2nd Line” units. As a result, the 2nd (The Newcastle) Northumbrian Field Company expanded into two companies. The 1st/2nd (Northumbrian) Field Company, RE, TF (later renumbered the 447th

England on 16 December 1914, when the German Navy shelled Scarborough, Whitby and Hartlepool, causing 592 civilian casualties.²¹ In early April 1915, the Northumbrian Division received orders to proceed to the Front.

On 16 April 1915, the 1st/2nd (Northumbrian) Field Company, RE, TF, travelled by train from Newcastle upon Tyne to Southampton, arriving at 3 a.m. on 17 April. The drivers and horses sailed on the SS *African Princess*; the officers and other ranks (ORs), including two sappers, Adam²² and William Bestford,²³ on the SS *La Marguerite*, docking at Le Havre, France, at 3 a.m. on 18 April.

The usual procedure for a division after it arrived in France or Flanders was to camp in a selected area for additional training before moving to the battlefield.²⁴ The Northumbrian Division did not have this introductory period.

The division's infantry battalions, based in the vicinity of Steenvoorde, France, were ordered into action at the Second Battle of Ypres, 22 April–25 May 1915, which was a series of four separate battles: the Battle of Gravenstafel Ridge, the Battle of St. Julien, the Battle of Frezenberg, and the Battle of Bellewaarde. It was at the Battle of St. Julien that the enemy first used poison gas.²⁵

The 1st/2nd (Northumbrian) Field Company was camped at Brandhoek, near Poperinge, Belgium. By 26 April, William and the others were working at night under constant shellfire to construct a new switch line passing through Hooge to join up with frontline trenches near Hill 60. In order to pass Ypres under the cover of darkness, the men left the camp at 7 p.m., walked the 9 km to the new defence line, and worked until 2 a.m. before returning.²⁶

During May and June, the field company was stationed near Steenvoorde helping to design and build the new frontline fortification around Ypres. There were casualties in the field company, mainly from shell and sniper fire, but some from poison gas. The losses in the infantry brigades were much higher. By 25 May, the 149th Brigade, 50th (Northumbrian) Division, for example, had lost 42 officers and 1,912 ORs, over two-thirds of its strength.²⁷

The field company remained in the Ypres Salient area until mid-July 1915. On 17 July at Dranouter, Belgium, the men had their first baths and change of clothing since arriving at the Front. The next day, the field company moved to Armentières, France, where it remained until 11 December 1915.

On 26 August at Armentières, Sapper William Thomas Bestford was promoted to lance corporal.²⁸ His duties would have included such projects as constructing a barrel bridge to cross the River Lys, installing concrete machine gun emplacements, and building or fortifying trenches. On 5 December 1915, he and Adam were granted leave.²⁹ Most likely they visited their family in Gateshead. Luke and his wife Margaret were expecting their first child, John Gilroy Bestford.³⁰

By the time William and Adam returned to the Front in mid-December, the 1st/2nd Field Company was once more stationed at Ypres, Belgium. It would remain in the Ypres Salient area until the end of July 1916. In April, it was located at Kemmel, in May, at La Clytte (a.k.a. De Klijte), in June, at Kemmel and in July, at Vierstraat.

With the assistance of work parties of infantry troops, the 1st/2nd Field Company designed and fortified existing trenches, built new ones, repaired roads, and constructed a trench tramway and an observation park near Vierstraat for the Royal Field Artillery. It also found and piped potable water to the trenches near Mount Kemmel. This work was accomplished mainly at night under constant danger from shell and sniper fire.

On 17 April, the men enjoyed a concert in a barn near Kemmel to celebrate the anniversary of the division's arrival in France. On 19 May, at La Clytte, a football competition was organized by the Division Command. The field company then held its own sports day, with the men competing in racing events.

On 26 June, some of the men took part in an unsuccessful raid on the enemy's trenches that was led by the 4th East Yorkshire Battalion. The sappers' role was to blow up the enemy's machine gun emplacements. In mid-July, the field company was stationed near Vierstraat, constructing a new communication trench, observation posts and concrete trench mortar emplacements.

On 19 July 1916, William was critically injured, although where and how was not recorded.³¹ William was taken to No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station (CCS) at Bailleul, France, about 13 km from Vierstraat.

A casualty clearing station was a medical unit behind the frontlines, usually located near transportation. Casualties who could not be adequately treated were stabilized before being transported to a field or military hospital.³²

William was either one of 355 injured men admitted on 19 July, or one of 446 from 20 July.³³ He was one of nine patients to die there on Friday, 21

July. His death was recorded by the No. 1 CCCS chaplain. His mother informed the community of William's death in the *Newcastle Journal* on 28 July 1916.³⁴

Earlier that month, she had reported that her son, Sergeant George Bestford, had been wounded.³⁵ George did recover and returned to the Front.

Lance Corporal William Thomas Bestford was buried at Bailleul Communal Cemetery Extension, Nord (Grave/Memorial Reference II. F. 47)³⁶ on 22 July.³⁷ 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 CCCS, were quartered there.

The earliest Commonwealth burials at Bailleul were made in April 1915. An extension was built and burials continued until April 1918; they occurred again in September and after the Armistice, when soldiers' remains were brought in from the neighbouring battlefields.

William's parents received his effects; included was the ring (Figure 3) that William was wearing in his photograph (Figure 1). It was later given to his brother Thomas.



Figure 3: William's ring.

Source: Courtesy of Joanne Clark.



William was posthumously awarded the 1914–15 Star (for serving in a theatre of war between 5 August 1914 and 31 December 1915), the Victory Medal (for service in an operational theatre), and the British War Medal (for service overseas between 1914 and 1918).³⁸ As next of kin, his father also received a memorial plaque and a parchment scroll.

In 1917, four of William's brothers were still serving in the BEF, which would have been a terrible worry for his parents. His older brother, Corporal Robert Bestford, was killed on 1 December 1917. His body was never identified. His name was later inscribed on Panel 10 of the Cambrai Memorial, Louverval, France.³⁹

Thomas and Elizabeth Ann must have celebrated the war's end on 11 November 1918 and eagerly awaited the safe return of their surviving sons. Adam, discharged from the 447 Field Company, RE, was home by late 1918. He married Lizzie J. Elliott in the 4th quarter of 1918.⁴⁰ Thomas, a 2nd Lieutenant in the 448 Field Company, RE (India Division), and George, a Lieutenant in 1st/4th Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry, were home most likely by late 1920 or 1921.⁴¹

They returned to a Britain that had lost its competitive advantage in basic industries such as textiles, coal, iron, steel and shipbuilding. There was mass unemployment, particularly in south Wales; in Northumberland, Durham, and west Cumberland, England; and in Clydeside, Scotland.⁴²

On 13 May 1921, George emigrated to South Africa, where he joined the South African police.⁴³ Thomas followed his brother on 21 July 1922, sailing on the HMS *Kinfauns Castle* to Durban, South Africa.⁴⁴ George remained in Africa, returning home for two months in 1929 to visit his parents.⁴⁵ In 1933, he married Doris Constance Smith in Umtata, Cape Province.⁴⁶ Thomas returned to England in 1932;⁴⁷ he married Greta E. Mallam there in 1935.⁴⁸

On the eve of another war in 1939, William's parents were living at 38 St. Cuthbert's Road, Gateshead. His father was a retired flour mill worker.⁴⁹ Luke, who was still working for North Eastern Railway, was also living with his family in Gateshead.⁵⁰ Adam and his family were living in Tynemouth, about 12 km from Gateshead, where Adam was bakery manager at the North Tyneside Cooperative Society.⁵¹

In 1945, George saw his family one more time. During the Second World War, he served with the 6th South African Brigade and was captured at Tobruk. After spending three years and four months as a prisoner of war, he was released from the prison camp at Lollar, Hesse, Germany, on 6 April 1945. Before his return to South Africa, he stayed with Adam and his family. Major George Bestford was awarded a DSO (Distinguished Service Order), which was presented to him by HRH King George VI in Pretoria during the Royal Tour of 1947.⁵²

Lance Corporal William Thomas Bestford's sacrifice was not forgotten. On 31 March 1926, his and Robert's names were listed in the *Roll of Gateshead Men who Fell in the Great War, Honour Book* (now located in the Gateshead Central Library).⁵³ Perhaps because Robert had no known grave, his parents had his name inscribed on William's gravestone at Bailleul.⁵⁴

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Techniques and Resources

The Cream of the Crop

Top items from recent posts on Canada's Anglo-Celtic-Connections blog at www.anglocelticconnections.ca



BY JOHN D. REID

England

A four-part podcast by Mark Hailwood (University of Bristol) for The History Association

(HA) presents research findings on life in an English village 400 years ago. Based substantially on witness statements in court cases, Hailwood addresses four topics: 1) Hard, Cold, Short?; 2) Working Life; 3) Isolated and Insular?; and 4) Close-knit

Communities? It turned out that life was more varied and not as dull and monotonous as respondents to a modern survey believed. The series is introduced at Hailwood's blog (<https://2024/07/16/what-would-life-have-been-like-in-english-villages-400-years-ago-new-podcast-series/>) and also at the HA website, where the podcast episodes can be accessed at <https://history.org.uk/podcasts/categories/433/podcast/703/everyday>

-life-in-a-17th-century-english-village-ep. These episodes are free—to access them you just need to register (log in) with an email address; HA membership is not required.

The London Topographic Society provides access to a collection of websites with a vast range of information about London. Well worth browsing, the websites (and how many there are) are categorized as Major Institution (5), Organizations with a sectional interest in London (9), and London Specific—organizations with a specific focus on historical aspects of London (28). (<https://londontop.soc.org/other-resources/related-institutions/>).

Family Tree Webinars (<https://familytreewebinars.com/>) is running a series of presentations on English counties. It started with “Introduction to County Research in England,” by Mia Bennett, followed by presentations on Cumberland and Westmorland, Kent, Cornwall, Birmingham and Buckinghamshire. The *Family Tree Webinars* library of over 2,300 presentations is the best deal going.

Wales

The National Library of Wales has a website at <https://peacepetition.library.wales/> with the names of over 240,000 of the 390,296 women who in 1923 signed the historic petition demanding world peace. Volunteers

have now transcribed names in a crowdsourcing project. Some 76,000 signatures have been verified and added to the new website, and another 3,511 entries were transcribed during *Who Do You Think You Are?* magazine’s “Transcription Tuesday Project” on 6 November. A user-friendly way of finding relatives and places of interest, users can search for names, houses, streets and places. Each woman’s signature can be seen by using the link to the original image.

Scotland

Around 180,000 records covering 1882 to 1899 from Barlinnie Prison in Glasgow have been added to the historical prison records at *Scotland’s People*. These include: Edinburgh Bridewell, 1798 to 1840; Edinburgh (Calton) Prison, 1841 to 1851; Largs Prison, 1843 to 1853; Perth convict journals (male), 1867 to 1879; Perth Prison registers (male), 1888 to 1897, 1902 to 1909 and 1913 to 1921; and Perth Prison registers (female), 1901 to 1916. You can search using some or all of: surname, forename, sex (male, female or both), age (an age range can be used, for example 20 to 30), year admitted (a year range can be used, for example 1880 to 1890), prison (a drop-down list of all prisons currently included in the index), country of birth (a drop-down list of All, Scotland, England, Wales, Ireland, Outside UK/Ireland or Not Recorded), and trial court

(the court from where the prisoner was committed), or a free-text field, ideally not to be used when searching for a named prisoner. The search form includes tips for each field with links to more detailed research guides where appropriate. You need to be registered with *Scotland's People* to search.

Ireland

During his presentation at the October BIFHSGO conference, John Grenham briefly touched on baronies, which were largely irrelevant by 1860 but valuable for earlier times. He has blogged about them at <https://www.johngrenham.com/blog/2024/09/11/all-singing-all-dancing-barony-maps/>. The blog post links to interactive maps where you can pick a county, see the barony boundaries, zoom in to see the civil parishes in each barony, and zoom in further to see townlands. John Grenham's website is an essential Irish resource.

Military

Late in October, *Ancestry* added "UK, Selected Smaller Units Service Records, 1921–1959", a 228,736-record database documenting British military personnel members who served in units such as the Army Air Corps, Royal Army Pay Corps, Intelligence Corps, and Royal Army Physical Training Corps. Of these records, 239 are for people born in Canada, most enlisted during the early years of WW II.

Each service member's packet potentially contains multiple documents, including attestation forms, statements of service, Royal Artillery B102 Tracer Cards, and Army Forms B103 Service and Casualty. You can find basic biographical information, such as birth and marriage dates, and specific military particulars such as service numbers, regiments and postings. Some sensitive documents have been omitted for privacy reasons.

Ancestry has also made available packages for 133,366 individuals in the collection, "UK, Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers Service Records, 1942–1959". Of these men (they were all men), 173 were born in Canada. Find attestation papers, statements of service, and tracer cards documenting postings, promotions and assignments. Medical and conduct information is not included. More records are expected to be added as they pass the 100-year threshold.

Maps

A recent addition to the *National Library of Scotland's* essential collection of online maps is a web resource showing the locations and details of over 15,000 mill sites mapped in 18th and 19th century Britain. You can browse and filter the mill records by survey date, map symbology, mill type and distance from rivers.

The mills were identified from county maps (1729–1836) and Military Survey of Scotland maps (1747–1755) as part of a Leverhulme Trust project. Find out more at <https://maps.nls.uk/projects/mills-of-britain/background/>.

Newspapers

Recent additions to *The British Newspaper Archive* and Newspapers.com are predominantly for the 21st century. Between them, they now provide excellent coverage of digitized and searchable newspapers well back into the 19th century for major British cities—Bristol, Cardiff, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Leeds, Liverpool, London, Manchester and Sheffield. *The British Newspaper Archive* has better coverage for local newspapers.

Publication

BIFHSGO is known to the larger community for ongoing home children research. A new book, *British Home Children to Canada—Three Sisters from Kensington and Chelsea Union* by Society member Gloria Tubman, includes information discovered through 30 years of researching three sisters who emigrated to Canada as British home children. Beyond being a deeply interesting true story of three specific children, this book will be helpful to those starting to research a British home child.

Handwriting Recognition

In the Summer 2024 issue of this journal (ACR), I covered the appearance of the *FamilySearch Labs* handwriting recognition system. Billed as an experiment on release at *RootsTech*, no Canadian or UK and Ireland records were involved. However, as I write in early November, Canada now has 22,499,164 items—11,506,639 of them predominantly court and property records for Ontario. The UK and Ireland has 6,037,893—of which 5,594,636 are for England, with wills being the largest component. The collection continues to grow spasmodically.

So Long: Happy Hunting

This column first appeared in the Winter 2011 issue of ACR, when Jean Kitchen was editor. Gordon Taylor, a past president, had been including a variety of resources in his column “The Printed Page,” which ended on his death. I’d found it valuable and something I could continue, drawing on my blog posts at *Canada’s Anglo-Celtic Connections*.

Much has changed since 2011. It has been intriguing to see the huge number of new resources becoming available on the web. The development of text and handwriting recognition has made possible the convenience of searchable access to many records, like census records, available within a few days after release,

not to mention newspapers and maps. Let's not forget the developments in DNA that produce those tantalizing ethnicities and turn strangers into cousins.

With Barbara Tose coming to the end of her editorship with this issue, it's timely to do some pruning. So this is my final column. My

sincere appreciation goes to ACR managing editors Jean Kitchen, Chris MacPhail and Barbara Tose, along with editorial assistant Christine Jackson and numerous proofreaders. Also, thanks to the many folks who have suggested resources that made their way into print. I wish you all Happy Hunting!

BIFHSGO News

Following the publication of our Summer edition, I received the following communication from member Charles Morton, who some of you will remember from the stories of his childhood in wartime Manchester that appeared in ACR from Spring 2017 to Spring 2019. He provides some Masonic lodge history tied to Viscount Field Marshall Allenby who was mentioned in the soldier's biography in the Summer 2024 issue:

Good evening Barbara,

I have been catching up on my reading and have just read the piece on Lt. Horace Allenby in the summer edition.

I was quite interested in the details on Viscount Field Marshal Allenby for a few reasons. Being of somewhat advanced years, I am the son of a First World War veteran who, after serving at Gallipoli in 1915, returned to Egypt with his unit, 8th Battalion Manchester Regiment, part of the 42nd (East Lancashire) Division and served under General Allenby.

In 1921, a group of Freemasons decided to form a new Masonic Lodge in Montreal. Several of these men were British First World War veterans (I recall one who had driven an armored car in the advance to Jerusalem) who thought Allenby would be a very fitting name for the new lodge; they accordingly wrote a letter to the Field Marshal asking for his permission to use his name. While not a Mason himself, Viscount Allenby not only agreed, but also made a very generous gesture.

Part of the furniture of a Masonic [lodge] consists of a stone called an ashlar. Allenby commissioned such a stone to be cut from the Mount of Olives, in this case a cube measuring about 18 inches on each surface. The stone was engraved and presented to the new lodge (Allenby Lodge No. 89 on the register of the Grand Lodge of Quebec) by Sir Arthur Currie.

On becoming a Mason myself in 1960, I joined Allenby Lodge and served as secretary for 22 years, when I left Montreal for Ontario. Although the original Allenby Lodge is now defunct, the Allenby Ashlar still remains in the Masonic Temple on Sherbrooke Street. If any of your readers are ever in the area of the Temple, I am sure they would be able to drop in and see it.

Best wishes, Charles Morton

Last Words

This issue brings to a close my contribution to *Anglo-Celtic Roots* (ACR) as managing editor and layout designer. Like many before me, I have been involved with ACR for many years, starting in 2013 with layout design for Editor Jean Kitchen. When she stepped down in 2019 and no one else came forward, I took on the managing editor's role, in addition to producing layout.

However, I could not have created each ACR without the people who have assisted me. For the past five years, Christine Jackson has been my very capable and helpful editor, assisting each author to hone their story into the well-written articles you read. When needed, Jean Kitchen has returned as a "guest editor." Christine and Jean were joined by Sheila Dohoo Faure, Anne Renwick and Marnie McCall in proofreading the final copy. Between them, they always managed to catch the little things—and sometimes the big things—that slip through in the production process. Thanks go to them all for their expertise, patience and friendship over the years.

Throughout my years with ACR and several before my time, John Reid has provided a quarterly column filled with his genealogical discoveries. From helpful websites to information on the latest technologies, John has covered it all. It is quite a feat to produce a column every quarter for 11 years—that's 44 columns! He has also been flexible, providing more—or less—material depending on the page count of each issue. John not only provided helpful information to our members but also eased the life of the editor who knew that they could rely on receiving at least one submission every quarter. Thank you, John, for your years of dedicated service!

Thank you, too, to the many authors with whom I have worked over the years. Without you there would be no ACR. I appreciate your willingness to share your stories with our members and your patience with the publication process. It has been a pleasure working with you and I hope you will continue to write and submit your stories to ACR for the illumination and pleasure of fellow members.

Finally, thank you to the BIFHSGO Board for their support in finding a new managing editor and to Paul Cripwell for coming forward to fill that role. I am happy to know that BIFHSGO will continue to provide a place for members to share their stories and research.

Barbara Tose

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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, and participate in the activities of related organizations.

Each year members enjoy four issues of *Anglo-Celtic Roots* (ACR) and ten family history meetings, plus members-only information on bifhsgo.ca, friendly advice from other members, and participation in special interest groups. Membership dues for 2024 (individuals or institutions) are \$50 (with electronic ACR) or \$60 (with printed ACR).

BIFHSGO Calendar of Events

Saturday Morning Meetings

In-person—Geneva Hall, Knox Presbyterian Church, 120 Lisgar St., Ottawa
Online—on Zoom, **registration required**

***11 January 2025**

9:00 a.m.–9:30 a.m.

How Valuable are Valuation Rolls?

Robert Urquhart will illustrate the value of Scotland's Valuation Rolls, 1855–1987.

10:00 a.m.–11:45 a.m.

The Time of Cholera

London's cholera epidemic of 1854 is best known as the story of Dr. John Snow, the Broad Street water pump and a map. But who were the people who died? **Alison Hare** describes her research and her discoveries while identifying the forgotten victims.

***8 February 2025**

9:00 a.m.–9:30 a.m.

Excel and Family History: How they can work together

Paul Cripwell

10:00 a.m.–11:45 a.m.

Ripped from the Headlines: Death on the Forest

A newspaper headline—*Manslaughter at the Races*—from July 1857 was an incredible find which helped **Marianne Rasmus** uncover a story that had been lost to family. She will share her research journey and the value of newspapers in family history.

†8 March 2025

9:00 a.m.–9:30 a.m.

Exploring the Official Government Newspapers: The Gazettes of the UK

Ken McKinlay

10:00 a.m.–11:45 a.m.

A Ginger Ale Company in Almonte and the Owner's Irish Roots

Dawn Kelly

***Zoom only meeting †Hybrid meeting**

Check our website at www.bifhsgo.ca for up-to-date information on our monthly meetings, education talks, and details of special interest group 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 Spring issue is 15 January 2025.