



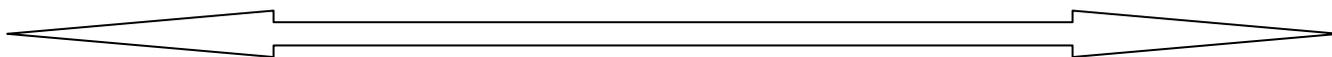
EDGAR EVENTS

**Researching and sharing Edgar family
history No. 20, September 2008**





Congratulations – even if it is to ourselves! We’ve reached two years of publication with this issue, in circulation since July 2006. Are we closer to our goal? I’m inclined to say an unequivocal “Yes!” Our goal was to further research, to understand and share Edgar genealogy – we’ve done that, in spades!!



DNA Update

by James Edgar (Editor) (jamesedgar@sasktel.net)

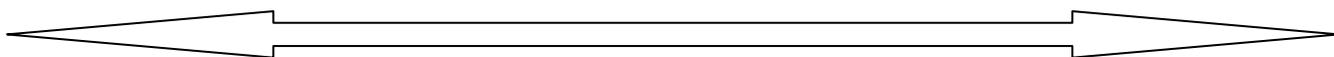


We have the potential for a couple more tests, plus Ancestry.com have just received the swabs from **Dr. Bill Edgar** in Yorkshire, England. The prospect of a new result always brings the opportunity to speculate. **Steve Edgar** of Crewe, in response to my conservative “I’ll bet a Guinness (or two) that he’s an I1b or an I,” says this, “Ah, come on.....you’ve backed both the favourites!! I’ll take the bet, I’m going for the rank outsider - E3b for 12,000 pints of Guinness!”

So, send in your best guess within the next couple of weeks. By then, we should have Dr. Bill’s results, and we’ll know for sure.

I still don’t have any responses from the four people I tried to contact on the Family Tree DNA site — I sent them all letters, but, alas, no answers. Here’s hoping they’ve been on vacation and out of reach of a computer! I also sent letters to about 20 Edgar males who show up on Ancestry.com, but who aren’t part of our project. I invited them to become part of our project, to share their stories, and possibly their DNA results. It’s hard to believe that there hasn’t been one response — not one!

On a different topic, I always feel it’s best to get my name out into the public, to make it easy for people to find me. You wouldn’t believe how many emails I get from people telling me how they found their name on my Web site, and how thrilling it is to see their family details, and how excited they are to share it with their parents or grandparents. I don’t subscribe to the notion that I should closet my details away, for fear they may be used maliciously. Jodie and I have been doing this for over 11 years now, and there’s not one instance we know of where some criminally minded person has “stolen” our details and used them in a harmful way.



by Steve Edgar of Weston, Crewe (steven-edgar@sky.com)



This is the second in a series about how the Edgars and other Protestant families got into Northern Ireland in the first place. This background can help explain the sectarian differences the north has experienced over the past 400 years.

See www.ulsterancestry.com/ulster-scots-2.html

The Ulster Plantations, part two.

King Charles I did not have time to react to the Irish rebellion. England's Parliament was, itself, rebelling against the king's authority. The English Civil War placed the Scots in Ulster in a difficult situation. They had, of course, sided with the English against the Irish when the war began. But the English Civil War forced them to choose sides between the King and the Parliament. They really didn't advocate the aims of either side, but because they had earlier taken the side of the Puritans the Royalists vented hostility on them. So, at first they sided with the Parliamentary Roundheads being led by Oliver Cromwell. The English Parliament had, in 1643, signed the Solemn League and Covenant with the Scottish Parliament, which, in effect, called for the unification of the two countries under the Presbyterian theology. A force of 26,000 Scottish men joined forces with Cromwell's Parliamentary Army and defeated the Royalists in the Battle of Marston Moor in 1644.



Oliver Cromwell

As the English Civil War progressed, and Oliver Cromwell's position, as not only the leader of the Parliamentary Army but a staunch advocate of Puritanism, solidified, it became increasingly apparent to the Scots that their hopes of establishing Presbyterianism as the official religion of England would fail. Then, in 1648, when the Presbyterian members of the English Parliament were ousted from the House of Commons, the Scots in Ulster switched their allegiance to the Cavaliers who rallied behind the exiled King Charles I. On 30 January, 1649 King Charles I was beheaded, and the Belfast Presbytery protested.

[Note: As Malachy McCourt asked in his *History of Ireland*, "Could one truly have a history of Ireland without giving this man (Oliver Cromwell) space in it? ... So, here you have it, your chapter on Cromwell: He out-Heroded Herod!" Ed.]

The king's beheading ignited a fuse that would prove destructive for Ireland and the Scots settled in Ulster. In Scotland, the eighteen year old heir to the Stuart monarchy, Charles II, was proclaimed king, and he was invited by the Catholics in Ireland to go there to establish his court. Cromwell sent an army under General George Monk with the overt design to secure Ireland under Parliamentary control. The underlying mission of the Parliamentary army was to wreak vengeance on the Irish Catholics who had started the rebellion, and who, it was believed (according to the exaggerated reports) had murdered all the Protestants in Ireland. When Monk failed to subdue the Royalist

sympathizers, including the Scots in Ulster, Cromwell himself led a force to the island in 1650.

Cromwell's expedition to Ireland had three purposes. First and foremost was the subjugation of the Catholics and Presbyterians who had rallied behind the Royalist banner. The second purpose was to remove anyone associated with the Irish rebellion. The third objective was to convert all of Ireland to the Puritan faith.

Cromwell's army swept through Ireland in a single campaign that lasted nine months and effectively crushed the opposition staged by both Catholic and Presbyterian Royalists. An estimate has been given that approximately 616,000 people died during the course of the campaign, some from famine and plague incidental to the actual warfare. The majority of those deaths, though, were native Irish. In addition to the casualties of war, Cromwell had many of the survivors, primarily native Irish, but also some English and Scot Royalists, deported to the West Indies. A large number of the residents of the Ulster settlement were slated to be deported, but Cromwell relented and allowed them to stay in Ireland. Many of their estates were confiscated and they were forced to move to the province of Connacht to the west of the Shannon River. Through sheer force, Oliver Cromwell brought an end to the Irish rebellion begun in 1641, and the Scots in Ulster experienced peace for the first time in a decade.

Oliver Cromwell did not carry out his intended religious conversion of Ireland. In fact, he made many allowances to the Presbyterian Scots in Ulster, which enabled them to flourish as part of the Protectorate Commonwealth. When, in 1660, the Stuart monarchy was restored, there was the possibility of Catholic persecution, but Charles II proved to be as lenient as Cromwell towards the Presbyterian Scots.

Ulster prospered throughout the latter part of the Seventeenth Century. Woolen manufacture had increased during the Protectorate period and there was a migration of English from the northern counties of England to Northern Ireland. A large number of Scots from the Lowlands fled to Ulster to escape what became known as "the killing times" in Scotland. Advocates of the Solemn League and Covenant had not been silenced by the Puritan Cromwellian Protectorate and became known as the Covenanters. King Charles II advocated the Covenant only in order to obtain the Covenanters' aid in his restoration to the throne of England. As soon as he was re-established as king in 1660, Charles II began to institute a series of restrictive measures that were aimed at stripping the Presbyterian ministers of their rights and privileges. The 1680s in Scotland saw increased conflict between the Covenanters and the governmental forces and many Scots migrated to Ulster where there was relative peace and quiet.

In addition to the Scots and English, there was a migration of Huguenots to Ireland in 1685 when the French government revoked the Edict of Nantes, which had protected religious liberties since 1598. The Huguenots were Protestants whose religious beliefs were similar to those of the Presbyterians in Scotland and Ulster, and for that reason they blended in easily with the Ulster Scots. The French immigrants brought with them improved methods of linen manufacture, which benefited the Ulster economy.

The peace which Ulster experienced from Cromwell's Protectorate government through the early 1680s ended when King James II came to the throne. James II was an ardent

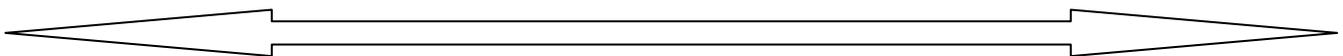
Catholic. He hated the Scots in general and the Presbyterians in particular. Between 1685 and 1688, James waged war on the Presbyterian Scots both in Scotland and in Ulster. In Ireland, a complete overhaul of the army was King James' first order of business. The regiments which were primarily Protestant were disbanded and Catholic Irishmen were enlisted to replace them. Even the English soldiers were removed from the army. Then a native Irishman by the name of Tyrconnel was named to the position of general and given the directive to rid Ireland of all English and Scottish Protestants. These actions led hundreds of families to leave Ulster. But King James' reign of terror was short-lived; unable to convert the whole of the British Isles to Catholicism, he had abdicated the throne and fled to the safety of France. William of Orange landed on the shores of England in November of 1688 to make a bid for the throne. James had, by that time, raised a Catholic army in France and with it he journeyed to Ireland to join forces with General Tyrconnel's Irishmen. The combined army headed northward to attack the province of Ulster.

The people of Ulster had received word of the possibility of attack and had taken measures to deal with it. The defences of the few fortified towns in the province were beefed up and the residents throughout the province made their way to those fortified towns. As they left their homesteads, they burned all of the buildings and destroyed whatever they could not carry with them. By the time James and Tyrconnel's army arrived at Ulster, there was nothing but desolation. One of the French officers with that army likened the countryside to the barren deserts of the Middle East.

The Irish/French Catholic army laid siege to the town of Londonderry on 18 April, 1689. James expected the town to fall quickly, but it held out for 105 days. The timely arrival of supply ships and the formation of an army composed of local residents ended the siege and forced the Catholic army to retreat.

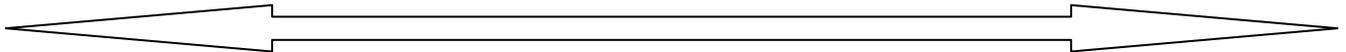
William of Orange's army crossed over to Ireland shortly after James' army retreated from Ulster. William led his army of ten thousand troops southward and confronted James' army near the Boyne River. The Battle of the Boyne took place during the 30th of June and the 1st of July, 1690 and ended in James' defeat. James promptly fled to France, and William and his wife Mary assumed the throne of England. William granted freedom of worship to the Irish and permitted any of them that wished to go to France to do so. It is estimated that approximately 11,000 took up the offer, and eventually formed the Irish Brigade of the French Army. Over the following fifty years more than 450,000 Irish migrated to France.

Under William and Mary, peace once more came to Ireland and Ulster began to prosper again. Most, if not all, of the native Irish families that had resided in the province of Ulster moved either southward or to France. Many of the families that had fled to Scotland began to return now and Ulster once more became predominantly Scottish.



More on this next month

Here's a picture I took just west of Newry in spring 2007 - "Bossy" was just as inquisitive as we were! The gorse was just beginning to burst forth.



In another vein, Steve of Crewe writes about "Fostering."

Friends, DNA, and Countrymen

For a long time now the DNA results are showing a lot of diverse "lines" for families. In fact there are so many that we may as well be named after a trade, such as Fletcher, or a particular location, such as Hill, etc. We have had the adoption, illegitimacy, and assumption ideas put forward, and these are perfectly valid, of course, as is the possibility that the name did come from separate sources — Edgars, McGreggors, and de Guerres — again valid ideas. There are still too many families to fit all the ideas.

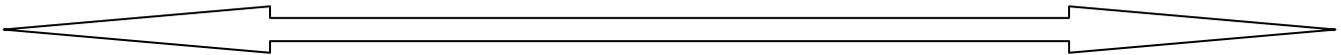
I have two sorts of relations; paper and DNA. The best ones are the paper relatives proven by DNA! The problem with DNA is that it is so definitive; it shows that you are related to someone and approximately when, but it leaves you with the question of how. In my own DNA group I have Donald, matched with DNA and paper to a common ancestor in 1780 or so, Norman matched in 1600 or so, and Steve AUS matched in 200

or so (yes 200!). This posed a problem, the name Edgar is Saxon; as a name it wasn't "invented" until AD 800 or 900, so how come we share the name before it was "invented"? The match in AD 200 falls in line with Richard's idea that my male ancestor was a Roman soldier from Greece (or wherever) serving in the area (Kebab shop on Hadrian's Wall theory), but the name?

The answer came from a book I was reading, "Clans & Tartans of Scotland" by Maria Constantino. (Not the most readable book, by the way, but the pictures are pretty!) We know that during the clan formation, the clan name was adopted by others, but the passage I read "*As with other tribal organisations clans were free to adopt or recruit new members. Marriages forged links with neighbouring tribes or clans, while fostering — the bringing up of the chief's children by favoured members of the clan (and in turn their children by others) — cemented incredibly strong ties. It was not unusual for foster brothers to willingly sacrifice themselves in the service of their chief. Another cohesive bond was in "Manrent." This was a bond contracted by the heads of satellite families, not related, who did not even live on the same estate but were affiliated to the clan.*" In effect anyone could be an Edgar for lots of reasons. It was a very strong "kinship" relationship within a group. It explains Steve AUS's 1800-year-old connection to me, his family and mine were in the area for 800 years or so, and simply got amalgamated into the Edgars.

What this does mean is that the Edgars are one family and are even stronger as a family than blood relatives. They volunteered to be Edgars! Being born an Edgar is not within your control, but choosing to be an Edgar forms a stronger bond within the group. Also, Edgars may well have chosen not to be an Edgar, or may have had their children "fostered" by another clan. I have a later than AD 1200 link to the McQueen clan; fostering is very likely the reason for the DNA links that until now have been a mystery.

Steve Edgar
Crewe UK



[And, Steve contributes one more article in the continuing saga of Harold Edgar, who died at age 20, in Belgium in 1918 - Ed.]

Edgars from Newry

I started with the detail from my family bible from Newry, Co. Down, about six years ago and became frustrated by the lack of information I could find. There is little or no information to be got from Ireland, in fact you are better off having your family migrate to another country- at least there is a chance of a record of their passage or settlement in their new country!

James Edgar and I, as you may be aware, share the same area of origin. Lack of records, and encouragement from James's wife, Jodie, pushed us into DNA testing and our research began to blossom, in fact we have a regular "herbaceous border" of Edgar families and information. The number of Edgar lines caused a bit of frustration but we are slowly getting to answer the question "who are the Edgars?"

My first breakthrough was a partially remembered email from Jack Ruffer in California. He and Sharon Whitney had a load of Edgars in their family that were descended from Samuel from Ireland. A bit of research proved fruitful, particularly matching their names in 1830 to my family names. Eight matches was good! A DNA test from Donald and the paper evidence has proven we are related.

Around this time, Mrs. Poirot (Jodie Edgar) was prowling the annals of the UK census and found Benjamin William Edgar in Yorkshire, Robert Edgar in Manchester and Sarah Maria Edgar living close to my g-grandfather Joseph in the late 1880s in Salford. This did cause some consternation as the dates of birth did not quite fit what was normally expected, their first child was either born to them in their teens or there was an extra generation. It turns out that Joseph 2nd did marry early and carried on producing children into his 50s.

With the new information I continued delving and tied up Robert Edgar's family who moved into Cleckheaton in Yorkshire. Things were going well and results have been coming in spasmodically.

Then came the next breakthrough. In Richard's article last month, he quoted Harold Edgar from Manchester as dying in France in 1914. He was born in 1898. He might have lied about his age to join up (as they did!) but 16 was pushing it a bit. So, out comes the magnifying glass and Mrs. Poirot is on the case! She found that the date of death was 1918 not 1914 and tied up that loose end. But, being the "Ace Sleuth" that she is, she didn't let this lie. An Edgar from Manchester? Sounds like Steve's family?..... A bit more detective work and she turns up the whole tribe of Edgars born in Newry, now living in England. John William Seaborn married two Edgar sisters in succession, and we've found a descendant of his, Jean, with whom I've made contact by phone, and Chris Seaborn, in Australia, by email! Wow a result! ... more names for the Christmas card list!!!

Jean has a copy of the distribution of funds from Sarah Maria Edgar's Will. She married a Fletcher and had a family of her own, but none of her children benefited from the Will.

All the beneficiaries are her nephews and nieces, my grandfather, Benjamin, being one of them! This was in 1935 and may indicate that her children had died.

Jean's family story is that Sarah Maria was wealthy and the family were expecting a healthy inheritance when she died, they got about £16 each (about £1600 (\$3200) in today's money). Jean said that Sarah Maria's housekeeper had fiddled her out of most of the money and that a Benjamin Edgar was so upset by the small amount he upped sticks and went back to Ireland! Her story is partially correct, Benjamin was my grandfather who stayed in Salford, Lancashire, and brought up my father, but his brother John went back to Ireland (well, that's my family story). Strange thing is that Jean and her family lived within half a mile of my family in the 1960s and we were unaware of each other!

Next - Benjamin William Edgar b 1837.

He was born in Newry the son of Joseph and Elizabeth Anne James. Elizabeth's father was....Benjamin William James! (I always wondered where my grandfather and father got their names from!) Sometime in the late 1800s BWE left Newry and travelled to Liverpool, met his wife-to-be, Margaret and travelled to Selby and then Bradford in W Yorkshire. He may have been the "pioneer" of my Edgars in Yorkshire, as a lot of other family members are to be found in Cleckheaton (don't you just love the Yorkshire names?!) 2 miles away. He then promptly disappears and no amount of research in the UK has been able to locate him.



UNTIL.....(pause for fanfare and a roll of drums) Ace Sleuth, Mrs. Poirot strikes again! With unerring accuracy she locates BWE and family in Philadelphia, with his second wife Hannah and more children. So, I have even more cousins in the good old US of A! Cue now for my other cousins, Sharon Whitney and Jack Ruffer, to find BWE's descendants. They were in the US 1900 census, but are there any descendants?

Thanks to Jodie for all her efforts in tying up my family history. Virtually all of my loose ends are tied up now. I have a clear knowledge of all of them up to 1901.

I have only one mystery left, Hugh, son of Joseph the first and Jane born in Newry in 1828 — he is still missing.

But hark, I hear the sound of a magnifying glass being polished in Saskatchewan; Mrs. Poirot is on the hunt.....