



EDGAR EVENTS

**Researching and sharing Edgar family
history No. 28, May 2009**



DNA Update

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



“Waiting” seems to be something us genealogists do much of the time. We wait for the 100 or so years to expire before the latest census record is released to the public; we wait for DNA test results back from the lab; we might even wait for the next issue of this newsletter!

Right now, some of us are waiting for the results from Ancestry.com after they decided (with some pressure from yours truly!) to re-analyze the test results from three Edgars — **Steve** in Crewe, England, **Donald** in Michigan, USA, and **Norman** in Georgia, USA. What exactly is this all about? Well, a few months ago, as a result of changes in worldwide DNA genealogical circles, Ancestry.com reassigned these Haplogroup “E3b” people to Haplogroup “H” and “H1” respectively. The problem we see with this reassignment is that E3b, ostensibly a family group from northern Greece (Macedonia), now has roots in India! [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Haplogroup_H_\(Y-DNA\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Haplogroup_H_(Y-DNA))

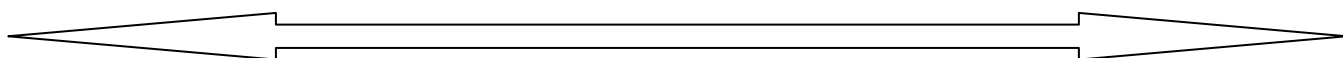
Are the results skewed somehow? Is the reassignment realistic? How does it affect the people who are suddenly shifted to another part of the globe, just when they thought they had it all figured out!! We await the results of the SNP test being conducted as I write these lines. See this site for a complete explanation of a “Deep SNP Test.” www.thegeneticgenealogist.com

Even more important is the answer to this question “How did the Haplogroup ‘H’ get to Northern Ireland several hundred years ago?” **SteveUK** can trace his ancestry back for 250 years or so. What we don’t know is how his people got there in the first place.

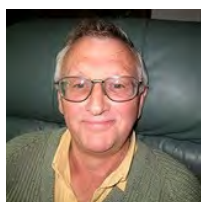
We have pondered this at length. If you haven’t read some of our early issues of Edgar Events, he and I met up over the Internet in 2003, when I responded to his query about Edgars in Newry, Northern Ireland, in the late 18th century. His ancestor, **Joseph Edgar**, and my ancestor, **Charles Edgar**, both lived within a few miles of each other in the same decade – we had to be cousins (or so it seemed)!! I decided in 2005 that I would fly over there, meet up with him at Manchester Airport, and we would strike out for Newry to find our connections.

That we couldn’t find any connections only sharpened our thrust to find a relationship. Butting our heads against the brickwall, we searched like this for two or more years, until my wife **Jodie** suggested we should both get our DNA tested — that would be the definitive answer to our searches. The rest, as they say, is history. The tests proved that we **aren’t** related, which is why we can’t find a connection! A negative is as good as a positive, though, because we now know not to go looking for something that isn’t there.

Arriving in England in 2005 is a story in itself: I knew very little about Steve, only that we thought we were cousins and were to meet in Manchester. The customs agent at Heathrow became quite annoyed with my responses to his repeated questions “What does this Steve Edgar do for a living?” Answer: “I dunno.” “Where does he live?” Answer: “I dunno.” “What does he look like?” Answer: “I dunno.” “What’s his phone number?” Answer: “I dunno.” Finally, I turned on my laptop computer to show the agent my various email conversations with Steve to prove that he really did exist and that we were to meet in Manchester. Looking back now, it was quite funny – like a scene from Monty Python!



The Edgar Farm House Drummanmore near Kilkeel, County Down, North Ireland.

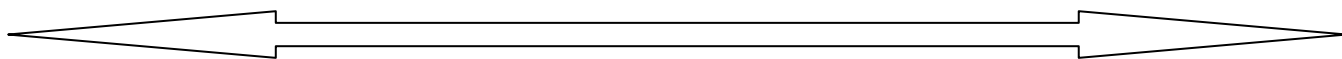


by Bill Edgar, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia (edgaraust@hotmail.com)

These are some photos of the Edgar farmhouse in Drummanmore. The house is not lived in now, but was obtained about 1830 after Arthur Edgar married Elizabeth Thompson. They worked the farm and raised their family in this house. James Edgar, son of Arthur, born 1834, married to Jane Fleming, seems to have run the farm but from another residence as Arthur, Elizabeth, and unmarried daughter, Elizabeth, were all living there until 1880. The farm and house was then used by Thomas Edgar, son of James & Jane, born 1880, and after he married Ellen Boyd in 1906 to raise their family. A real-estate artist, skilled at drawing from photos, did the house drawing. I will write more about life on this farm, as described by Martha Henderson (née Edgar) who grew up on the farm, at a later time.

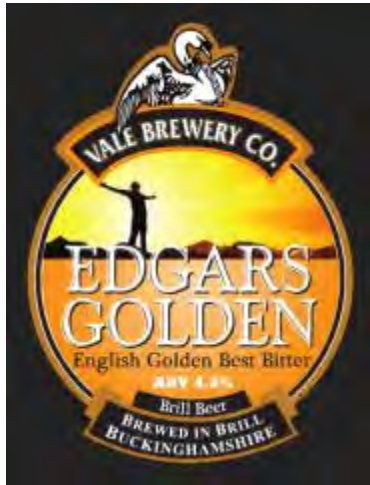


I have an idea that could help us to understand and know about each of our “Edgar families.” We all have photos taken after 1900, but what we need is to find about our early history. Early photos showing Edgar lifestyle, not just people, can help us all understand our history. Photos showing houses, farms, etc. from our early 1800s Edgar past, like mine, show our history. James wrote his family story on how they moved from County Down to Canada in volume one and two of our Events newsletter. If you have not yet read the story I recommend you read it and then think about what your family did. It may not be as much of an adventure as James’s story, but it always it always is a challenge to leave your home, especially to go overseas. I certainly would like to read about your family history, not just names, and I am sure most others in our group would as well.



Beer drinkers, rejoice! From deep in the heart of Buckinghamshire, we find the Vale Brewery Co. has created an English Golden Bitter appropriately named - you guessed it — Edgars Golden Ale! www.valebrewery.co.uk

I got the link to this brewery thanks to Richard Edgar of Belfast.



In the fine print on the Web page, we find:

“*Beer Notes:* Edgar is the name normally given to the Stevens family firstborn.”

This short Stevens family history is from their site:

Our History

Brewing in Haddenham, Buckinghamshire

Keen to run their own business, brothers Mark and Phil Stevens drew on their previous experiences with brewers such as Morrells and Allied Breweries and a love of traditional real ales to create Vale Brewery.

All beers were and still are brewed only with natural ingredients, Malted Barley, Hops, live yeast and water. No additional additives, preservatives or chemicals are added.

Initially situated in Haddenham, Buckinghamshire a large village in the Aylesbury Vale, Vale Brewery Co. was formed in January 1995 with their first brew available early March 1995.



The beer names initially were derived from local landmarks, Wychert is named after a form of wattling wall the village Haddenham is famous for and a Grumpling is the base stone on the Wychert walls.

Initially based in one unit on an industrial park, a second unit nearby was rented to house offices and a shop.

Sales in the local free trade developed well and by 2006 we owned four pubs.

The Move To Brill

The Haddenham site became too small to comfortably operate from and in 2007 we moved to Brill, to an even more rural location.

Brill is a rural location 9 miles from Haddenham. This provided the direct inspiration for Oxford Don J.R.R Tolkein's 'Bree', in his trilogy The Lord of the Rings. The rolling hill area described as 'The Shires' in 'Middle Earth' is based indirectly on the hill top site at Brill, the name of which amused Tolkein so much.

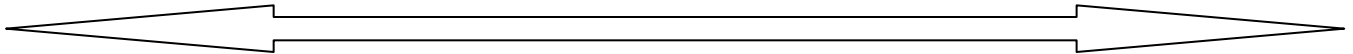
The name Brill is an odd mix of the Celtic "Bre" meaning "hill" and the saxon "hyll" meaning "hill" also. So a literal translation would be hill-hill. However, resisting the temptation to rename as the Hill-Hill Brewery or even the more obvious Brill Brewery, Vale will be maintaining the well established Vale Brewery Co. name. The most famous Brill landmark now is the hilltop windmill, which forms part of our new logo.

The Tramway Business Park now houses the brewery, brewery shop, storage and offices on one site with room for further expansion.

The Present

Although a larger brewery now, the philosophy remains true to the original plan, to produce consistent high quality real ales.

Brill brewed real ale is sold to local pubs, and farther a-field via distributors and via exchanges with other like minded breweries. Most beers are available bottle conditioned and a brewery shop sells minipins, polypins and bottles so bring back the age old tradition of a local brewery supplying locally hand crafted ales.



Picture time:

Following the 2006 St. Patrick's Day parade in Dublin, SteveUK, my brother, Steve, and I toured the Guinness brewery for a few hours. This ancient harp of Brian Boru is nestled in a glass display case — the epitome of everything Irish since the 16th century.



Surnames, middle names, and forenames

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



Any of you out there who have been trying to research their family history in Ireland will know the frustrations that exist in trying to find and corroborate names and dates of possible ancestors.

For a long time I have advocated the use of a wife's maiden name as distinct advantage. When a family has a tradition of calling their children with the same forenames as their ancestors, this family, along with its cousins, will have loads of children all sharing the same names, but all grouped around the same location. It ends up as a "muddy" mess of names and dates, with no clear outcome. But, if you can get a maiden name into the mix, it does help clarify the particular family.

I have 125 records of Samuel Edgars. Most have partial dates, birth, death, and marriage, *etc.* I glean the information from all sorts of sources. I do know that at least 50 percent of these Samuels are duplicates, but I don't know which ones. The only clue as to who is who, for certain, is their wife. If she has a known maiden name, she makes that particular Samuel unique; in fact, if I want to get to a particular family, I search for the wife, not the husband, on my database.

The tradition of family forenames goes back a long way in Ireland; I think that it is originally from Scotland. Usually the names were carried from the male side, but a lot came from the female line as well. In my own family, the name Hugh came from Hugh Burns, Jane Burns' father. Another came from Benjamin William James, father of Eliza James. I know of only three Benjamin William Edgars and they are unique, thanks to B.W. James! Significantly the father-in-law's forenames only ever became forenames. In a lot of families, the wife's maiden name was also incorporated as a middle name and could be used for one or more children. This is wonderful for finding a mother's maiden name. Robert Smyth Edgar for example – his mother was Roberta Smyth.

Juanita Edgar was bogged down in her research with Samuel Oliver Edgar and William Oliver Edgar. She trawled the Internet and has been frustrated in all her searches for an Oliver Edgar. Who was Oliver Edgar? Was he named after Oliver Cromwell? If so, that will date the origin to the 1650s, but there are no Oliver Edgars on record, so why was the name incorporated? The penny dropped when she looked for the surname Oliver in County Down, and guess what? The local area is full of them! The likelihood is that an Edgar married an Oliver, the children carried on the tradition. All she has to do now is find Miss Oliver and her marriage to Mr Edgar!



The north coast of Ireland, taken from the parking lot of the Halfway House Hotel at Ballygally, overlooking the North Channel toward Scotland.



Searching PRONI (Public Record Office of Northern Ireland)

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

Some time ago, **SteveUK** and I hired the services of a professional Family History Researcher, **D. Ian McClelland**, Ulster Ancestry. His extensive searches were firstly looking for records for **SteveUK**'s family in Co. Down and Co. Armagh. Secondly, **Mr. McClelland** was directed to look for records that might link our two Edgar families. His 22-page report left us with some tantalizing leads, but no firm connections between us. In his words, "The researcher could find no definitive documented link between the Edgars of Newry and the Edgars of Kilkeel, whereas in the Newry Edgars it was possible to do analysis to the client's family — yet this has not been found possible with the Edgars of Kilkeel. As a result, simply the facts are presented for the client without analysis."

Since then, of course, as noted above, we have the results of our DNA test, which proves there is no connection — no longer any need for supposition!

Nevertheless, we sought further evidence in the written records, beyond what **Mr. McClelland** had discovered, so we hired the services of **Jennifer Irwin**, of Historical Research Associates, Carrickfergus — see www.historicalresearchassociates.com

We knew not to look for any mutual connections, but I sought evidence of my gr-gr-grandparents' union, **Charles Edgar** and **Susan** (a.k.a. **Susannah**) **Cummings**, ostensibly married in Newry in 1795. The results were somewhat disappointing, but not a total loss — as I wrote earlier, a negative can be as good as a positive! I've copied the researcher's results here for your perusal — maybe you can find something in there for your own family. Steve's family are the ones noted in Keggill [Keggall] and at St. Patrick's Church of Ireland in Newry.

Dear James - I have been able to complete the following searches within the available budget. Not good news! As discussed, I examined the Newry Church registers in PRONI.

Mic1/47A Parish of Newry - Church of Ireland

Marriages 1784-1815 - noted:

1807 December 31st - W. Edgar of [blank] to Hester McMin daughter of Robert McMin

Burials 1824-1847 - noted:

1831 24th August - Eliza Jane Cummins aged 10months of this Parish

1832 7th May - Sarah Cummins aged 74yrs of this Parish

1834 2nd June - James Cummins aged 6months of this Parish

1841 24th May - M? /W? Edgar aged 76yrs of this Parish

1846 4th February - child of James Edgar

Baptisms have gaps - extant 1804-1814; 1817; 1819; 1822> not examined.

CR4/1/C/1 - Newry Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church

Baptisms and Marriages extant 1809

- issue of William Joseph Samuel George Robert and John Edgar recorded between 1809 and 1824 of Newry and Keggill

- I have noted details but these may already been known - if not let me know.

Marriages 1809-1824 - noted:

1813 July 6th - George Edgar to Elizabeth Irwin - Witness: John Edgar

1819 July 5th - Samuel Edgar to Mary Parks - Witness: John Wien

Young Communicants - October 1810 - Samuel Edgar

Newry Gravestone Inscriptions - St Patrick's - Church of Ireland - have been published - only one Edgar entry:

Erected by Joseph Edgar of Newry in memory of his beloved wife Jane who departed this life 20th August 1853 aged 66yrs

Also nine of her children.

[The Will of Joseph Edgar of Newry was proved in the Diocesan Court of Newry - 1857]

Searches in PRONI's Personal Names Index identified a reference to John and Margaret Edgar in relation to a 1715 Quaker Marriage Certificate in Clonduff Parish.

I have examined the records for Lurgan Meeting which survive from 1632 on microfilm in PRONI. [Ref: Mic16/29] for this entry.

Unfortunately John and Margt. Egger were only Witnesses at a marriage on 7th September 1714 between James Greer and Ann Wilson of the Parish of Clonduff.

I have also examined notes on Co Down families compiled by Rev D. Stewart *circa* 1938, which included these Edgar entries - no references were found to Charles or Susan Edgar.

Mic637/9 - notes on families in eastern part of Co Down compiled by Rev D. Stewart - 1938

Edgar

John Edgar & Isabella Graham

5th child John born 18.9.1782

6th child Jennett b 21.3.1785

7th child Isabella b 12.7.1787

8th child Rebecca b 16.2.1793

James Edgar & Mary Mossgrove

1st child - James b 26.4.1783

- Elizabeth b 7.9.1785

- Mary b 15.2.1788

- John b 20.8.1789

- Samuel b 1.5.1792

- William b 4.3.1795

- Mary b 12.3.1797

- Robert b 28.5.1800

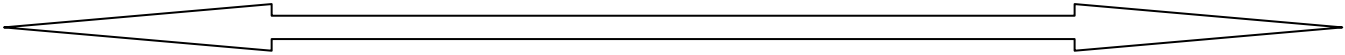
Robert Edgar & Mary Smith

4th child born 2.7.1784

Robert Edgar & Eliza Dunn
1st child Joseph born 9.10.1808

....In view of the extensive sources previously examined I feel that further research is unlikely to provide any additional information. I will continue to keep the surname "in mind" and should I uncover anything which I feel may relevant I will be in touch.

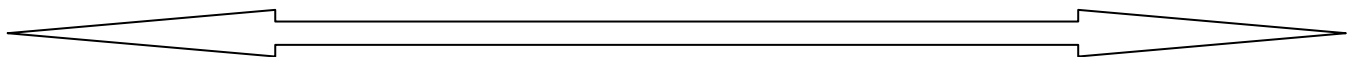
Regards
Jennifer



One more photo...



The green, green grass of the Emerald Isle.

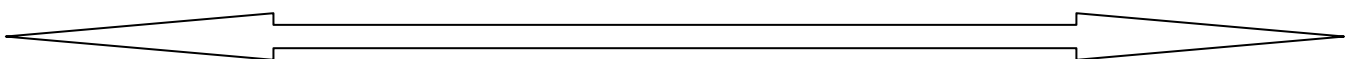


In response to the news that I've been selected to receive the Simon Newcomb Award this year from The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada (RASC) (www.rasc.ca/awards/newcomb.shtml), many people have asked me if my "Skies" articles are on-line anywhere, so they can read them, too.

I now have the current article on our Genealogy Web site [May skies](http://jameswd.sasktelwebsite.net/james.htm#Stories). Bookmark this link, for regular access to the "Monthly Skies Article."
<http://jameswd.sasktelwebsite.net/james.htm#Stories>

I'll update it as each new article comes out, plus keep the next month's article there – click the [Next Month's Skies](#) link.

James





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

What is [Skype](#)?

It's is an on-line communication method that allows users to talk and view each other over the Internet. You need a computer that has speakers, a microphone, and a video camera. Most modern laptops have these items built in. You can purchase the items separately from your local IT supplier for tower models or the gadget-deprived laptop. The Web camera isn't essential, but it is nice to see the person you're speaking with.

After the initial download and set up, you decide on your personal contact name and that's it! In less than five minutes!! And, the software has built-in tests and diagnostics to ensure that all is well. Several people can be in on the same conversation at once, but not with video — that can only function between two people.

You can search for other users from a worldwide directory.

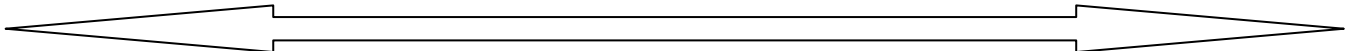
The point of this is that it allows international communication on a face-to-face basis FOR FREE! Using Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP), Skype lets you communicate over broadband Internet (not dial-up) connections to anywhere in the world – it's a great system that works simply and simply works.

I used to use it to communicate with James two or three years ago, but my computer was not able to support the software without problems. New Skype software and a more modern computer has solved the problem for me. After a "wake-up" call from Jodie, James's wife, I reloaded the system and it works well.

Wouldn't it would be nice if all of the other Edgar group members would also subscribe? We could then have face-to-face conversations, which to my mind are a lot better (and cheaper) than phone calls. Give it a try.

The Web site is www.skype.com. If you need help to set up, email me at the address given above.

Steve Edgar



Final note No 1.

Our contact at DNA.Ancestry.com, Darlene Odenwalder, has generously arranged for some test kits for Steve and me to take with us when we visit Ireland in mid-May. I leave Canada on May 13, returning on the 22nd. We have a packed schedule, wanting to visit Derry (Londonderry), Banbridge, Derrylecka, Kilkeel, Newry, Bessbrook, Camlough, the Ards Peninsula, Saintfield, and Belfast (plus any places I may have overlooked)!

James