

Bruce Bulletin

Bruce County
Genealogical Society
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Upcoming Meetings and Other Events

Date: September 28, 2018 @ 7 pm
Place: Bruce County Museum and Cultural Centre
Topic: British Home Children
Presenter: Allan Thompson

Date: October 15, 2018 @ 7 pm
Place: Bruce County Museum and Cultural Centre
Topic: Colonsay
Presenter: Glenys Johnson

Date: November 19, 2018 @ 12 noon
Place: Bruce County Museum and Cultural Centre
Topic: Annual Meeting
Presenter: TBA

Highlights of Previous Meetings

July: We had a splendid turnout for our walk and talk. **Eva Wilkins** told about her Cooper relatives; **Marilyn Johnson** spoke about Abe Wylds, the Gemmels, Don McLay, and Dr J.B. Tindal; **Sandra MacDonald** about her mother in law Hazel MacDonald; **Diane Simpson** about her relatives - Ken MacKay and Annie MacLeod, Henry Culbert & Margaret Wall, and George Swalwell, Elizabeth Grice and William Swalwell;

Glenys Johnston told a story about Thomas Yemen and Jane Jamieson Welsh; and **Lolly Fullerton** talked about William Roy Irwin and Israel Jeater. Fascinating history lesson about a few of the amazing people in the Ripley-Huron Cemetery. The sign at the entrance to Ripley Cemetery reads: "It is a history of the people of this township, a perpetual record of yesterday, and a sanctuary of peace and quiet today. A cemetery exists because every life is worth loving and remembering." We certainly found this to be true.

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George Henry Fry (Grandpa Fry)

Contributed by Glenys Johnson

2018 is a time of celebration in Kincardine, my home town, as another Old Boys & Girls Reunion was planned to bring us all home for a weekend of memories in August. What better time then for me to tell you about my grandfather, a well-known member of the community for many years.

George Henry Fry was born on December 9th, 1892, in Newport, on the Isle of Wight, England to William Henry and Caroline Elizabeth (Harley) Fry. He married his neighbour Emma Grimes, the daughter of George & Kate (Sprake) Grimes, on November 12th, 1910. Grandpa & Grandma moved into 4 Pittfield Terrace (where Aunt Kate was born in 1911) in Carisbrooke, Grandma's home prior to their wedding. Grandpa had lived next door prior to the wedding, at Pitt House or Pitt Cottage, a wonderful hidden gem that I had the pleasure of discovering on a trip to the Isle of Wight in 2007. The house had been renamed Pit Villa. Close to Pitt Cottage is what used to be referred to as the Virginia Tea Gardens, located at the foot of the Carisbrooke Castle. The castle was home to Princess Beatrice when she visited the Isle. The Virginia Tea Gardens where my Great Grandmother, Hannah Elizabeth (Downer) Fry lived. Her home, turned enterprise, was her way of putting food on the table for her large family of 10 children after the death of her husband George. It is known and noted in the Carisbrooke Castle that Princess Beatrice frequented the Tea Gardens enjoying a lovely cup of tea with "Old Mrs. Fry".

Grandpa, a coal car man in Carisbrooke, left the Isle of Wight in 1913 with his unmarried brother William Alfred "Bill" bound for Bruce County. They crossed the pond aboard the S.S.

Ascania. The ship was headed for the USA where 42 adults and 15 children would disembark. The remainder of the passengers, 1065 adults and 288 children under the age of 14 landed in Quebec at 7:40 a.m. on May 24th after 11 days at sea. The Ascania continued to bring immigrants to Canada until she was wrecked on June 13, 1918, 20 miles east of Cape Ray, Newfoundland.

After train travel, the young men ended up in Ripley where they were fed by a very generous lady and sent on their way. Uncle Bill must have seen something he liked in Ripley because he would eventually make the village his home and the location for his Barber Shop.

On September 24th, 1914 George Henry Fry enlisted in the 3rd Brigade of the Canadian Overseas Expeditionary Force in Valcartier, Quebec, but not before he established his mailing address in Kincardine as P.O. Box 132. That Box # remained in the family and at some point, in time, it became the very one that my parents used.

Having had previous military experience in the 5th Hants Heritage Battery and a passion for a soldier's uniform, I truly believe Grandpa felt it his duty to serve. If a war was about to happen, Grandpa was going to be part of it and by immigrating first to Canada he would have a safe home in Canada to raise his family in after the war. Life had not been easy in England for many years and a new start in a new country seemed hopeful. Why he chose Kincardine, Ontario I don't know, but that is where his journey ended.

There is not one picture of Grandpa in uniform that he isn't standing proud in his duties. He would go on to serve in Britain and France with the 1st Brigade of the Canadian Field Artillery as Sergeant Major. Medals and Decorations records from October 21st, 1918 state the following.

“For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. During the three and a half years he has served at the front, rising by merit, force of character from driver to battery sergeant major, his example of coolness in action, untiring zeal and devotion to duty, has set a high standard to the battery, and has been of the greatest assistance to his officers.” This passion for his commitment to his country won George the Distinguished Conduct Medal.

Grandma Fry, needing help as a young mother to Aunt Kate, after Grandpa’s departure, left Carisbrooke for Freshwater where she would remain with the Grimes family at East Afton Cottage, until the war’s end.

Sergeant Major Fry was discharged from his duties to his country on July 4th, 1919 in Quebec City. Journeying back to Canada with him were Grandma Fry (Emma), my Aunt Kate and Uncle George born during the war. It would seem that Grandpa Fry had leave to Freshwater during his time overseas.

Upon his return to Kincardine, Grandpa took a job at the Salt Block on Kincardine’s harbour-front until it closed. He spent many years employed at the Circle Bar Knitting Co. as a Stationary or Power Engineer. He was responsible for the safe operation, care and maintenance of the boiler that provided energy for the factory. If you attended the bus tour to Kincardine a number of years ago, you will remember my story about the Erie Belle and the horrible consequences of not operating a boiler as designed. Grandpa took his job very seriously understanding his responsibility to the safety of his co-workers. He also worked for a time at the Kincardine Dairy.

George and Emma must have loved their new life in Kincardine, perhaps expressing their thoughts to George’s parents, who in November of 1919, immigrated to Kincardine

with all of their adult children except Uncle Ern who was enlisted in the Royal Navy. Ern stayed in England, visiting his family from time to time in Kincardine.

George and Emma raised a family of six children. Aunt Kate, Uncle George born in 1915 at East Afton Cottage, my Dad, Kenneth in 1920 (first sonborn in Canada), Uncle Doug in 1922, Uncle Laurie in 1925 and Uncle Ralph in 1926 all in Kincardine. Life was simple at the Fry household. They lived on the south side of town, as did my great grandparents, William and Carolyn. Grandma stayed home with her children while Grandpa provided a modest living for his family. They remained “south-siders”, close to the Chickie School (which I, like my Dad, attended)), until 1945 when the high costs of rent and heat, forced Grandma & Grandpa and Aunt Kate to move to Princess Street. Rent dropped in half to \$12.50 per month. The boys, Uncle Doug, Uncle Laurie and Dad, were still in service overseas.

Too old to serve at the front and much to his dismay, Grandpa served for a time to instruct the boys of the 21st Regiment of the Royal Canadian Army at Petawawa, returning home before the move to Princess St.

For a while Grandma was without all of her boys. Although George Jr. never enlisted, he had little time to be with his mother because he was married and raising a young family of his own. Grandma was known to be a very unhappy woman and rightly so. Her biggest fear was that someday the word would come that one or more of her sons had been killed. Youngest son Ralph, although in uniform, was not overseas when Grandma wrote to my Dad on May 14, 1945 in these words “with a lighter heart and mind than I have had for some months and I thank my maker for bringing this awful war to an end after five years and son whoever says that their prayers don’t get answered don’t know what they are saying

because I know mine have been answered for sparing all of you three boys to come home to me, with all of your limbs.”

Emma talks in that same letter about a celebration held at Kincardine’s Skating Rink on V.E. day, at which George more than celebrated the end of the war, no doubt thankful too that his boys would soon be home. Grandma said, “Your Dad was feeling good both of the days. It was two o’clock the first night and the other one was quarter to six in the morning.”Parades were held and an Effigy of Hitler was hung in what I think was Victoria Park and burned no doubt to the sounds of joyous shouts of relief. Emma’s letters were signed “God Bless You Son”and scribed with 18 x’s of love.



Grandpa and Grandma Fry

Grandma and Grandma lost the Princess St. house to fire and many of their possessions with it. Emma passed away in 1956 after which time Grandpa went to live with Uncle Ralph on Durham Street.

As kids we visited Grandpa and Uncle Ralph after attending church at Knox Presbyterian. Dad would already be there because spending an hour in a pew was not something he wanted to do. When he did attend he sat at the rear of the church, perhaps for a quick exit, avoiding the minister’s inquiry as to where he was most Sundays. But my mother, sister and I knew he was there because we could hear his wonderful voice bellowing out the hymns.

Grandpa Fry passed away in 1966. His Obituary notes his 28 years as a member of the Kincardine Fire Department and his membership to the McDonald Branch of the Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 183 of which he was the first President.

I remember Grandpa as the stoic man he would have been as Sergeant Major Fry, seldom smiling or speaking but always gentle to his grandkids. I believe his quiet nature was due to his modest upbringings but most certainly due in great part to his time at the front. My father’s nature was very much the same. Grandpa commanded a presence even as a small man of 5’ 7”, which we children knew to respect. Must have been the Englishman in him.



George Henry Fry (1892-1966)

**Duncan McTavish 1794-1879 and
Elizabeth Husband 1819 -1878**

submitted by Lolly Fullerton

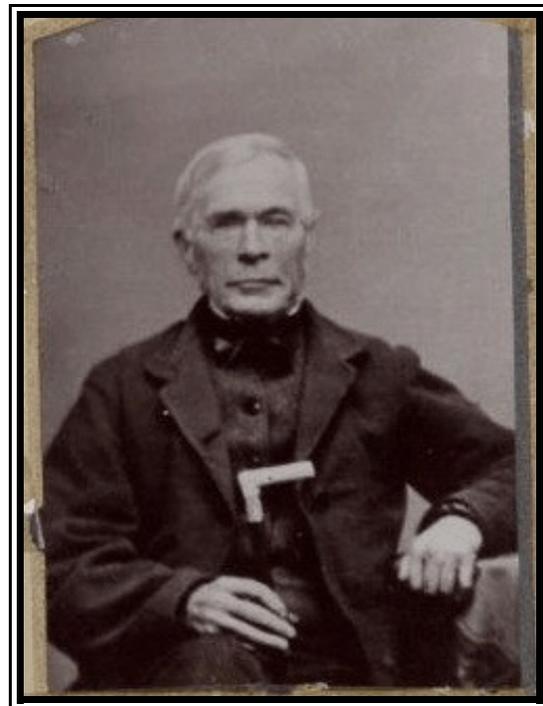
Organizing the Ripley-Huron Cemetery has been such fun for me. When I began, I thought I would have to choose all the headstones. I started to look and saw a record of this stone in the Bruce Grey Ripley Cemetery records - Duncan McTavish was one of the first Settlers in Huron. Well, there was no image of this stone on any cemetery website, so I phoned Mike Fair in the Ripley Cemetery office, but he didn't know of the stone.



Fortunately, I found this stone when I was in the cemetery checking the stones we would choose for the walk and talk. So, I went on ancestry and found out so much – thanks to Diana McTavish and Heather McTavish Taylor. Actually, this stone is a memorial as the people here were buried in McKenzie / North Lochalsh Cemetery, so no wonder Mike didn't have a record. Diana sent me Duncan McTavish a book written by the grandson of

Duncan McTavish and Elizabeth Husband. Heather has looked up so much more information on all the McTavishes.

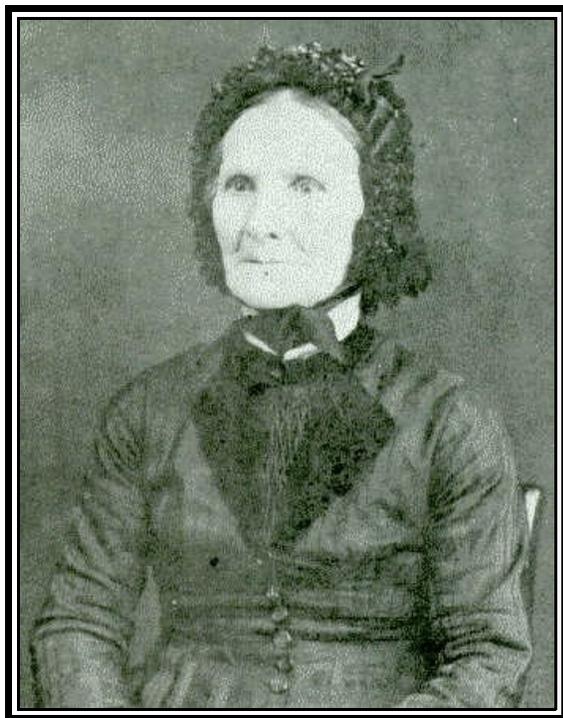
Here is a section from the book: “The year in which this family came to Canada is not known but it is known two other brothers came with Duncan at the time. He belonged to a family of twenty-four. His father was married twice and each wife bore him twelve children. They settled first in the Township that is now Milton, later moving to Huron Township.” Heather has found evidence that they arrived in 1852. It was in this year that some two hundred families took up land in Huron. We do know that in the spring of 1853, they came to live on Lot 17, Concession 2, which was to be their home for the rest of their days and the home of their youngest son.



Duncan McTavish (1794-1879)

“Duncan McTavish was a butler to a Scottish Lord. He played the bagpipes and carried the drinks. The story has come down across the years that he first met his wife while performing at some Scottish games in Ireland. Her father took a great fancy to this Highland piper and invited him to his home. When he started to play the pipes, Elizabeth, then a mere child, got frightened and hid under the table--and thus this romance began. “It is said that his pipes were a very beautiful set, mounted in ivory. He once loaned them to a friend to play at a wedding. The friend undertook to play on horseback. The horse became frightened, threw his rider off and broke the pipes beyond repair, which, no doubt, accounts for the fact that there were no more pipers in that family.”

If you are related to any McTavish, check out Diana McTavish and Heather McTavish Taylor’s Ancestry trees. I’m unable to thank them enough for their stories and their help.



Elizabeth Husband (1819-1878)

News from the Bruce County Archives

Ann-Marie Collins, Archivist

Sue Schlorff, Archival Assistant



1850s Journeys to Bruce County

After discovering the basics of birth, marriage, death, occupation and place of residence, many genealogists begin to imagine the experiences of their ancestors. At the Bruce County Archives, we are frequently asked how the original settlers would have travelled to the area, eventually arriving at empty plots of land, shanties, or log homes. The earliest visitors to Bruce County walked through dense forests, sailed lakes, and paddled rivers and streams, often using multiple modes of travel to reach their intended destinations.

For example, in 1854 Doretine Boyle, wife Elizabeth, and infant Mary left Middlesex County en route to Concession 10 of Kinloss Township, just east of County Road 1 between Holyrood and Kinlough. They began in a lumber wagon, with Elizabeth’s brother, Johnny. Upon arrival in Goderich, they loaded their furniture onto a schooner to be shipped to Kincardine. The ship was also boarding passengers, but due to fear and unfamiliarity, Elizabeth refused to board (Cox, p. 11). Even hardy pioneer explorers have their limits; having grown up inland, she had never seen a ship! Her fears were not unfounded. Mrs. John Reekie describes her family’s lake travel experience when high winds forced an attempt to reach shore, even before reaching Bruce County after leaving Goderich: “As we went plunging through the foaming breakers, the

boldest held his breath ... When we struck the beach, our little craft went to pieces, and it was with no little difficulty that the women and children were rescued. How thankful we were, though wet and dripping, to find ourselves once more on solid land.” (Robertson, p. 57)

The next day, they all walked over 15 km, to stay the night at a tavern in Pine River. The walking was too much for some, and after setting out on foot again the next day, headed for Kincardine, they were met by a boat dispatched to their assistance by the men who had walked through to Kincardine the night before. Despite their stormy experience, another boat ride was preferable to more walking on rough footpaths or rocky shoreline! The shoreline was described by Provincial Land Surveyor M.C. Schofield who went for a "tramp" in 1850 from Kincardine to Southampton (outside of his employment, "desirous of seeing the country") who expressed that walking seemed easiest along the beach, "except for the mile of various sized boulders upon which it was most difficult to walk or step from one to the next; still worse, I found miles of pebbles or gravel, about as laborious to walk on as hard peas.” (Robertson, p. 50)

Getting back to the Boyle family, after turning away from the schooner in Kincardine, they gathered back in the lumber wagon and bumped along, struggling among stumps, kilometer after kilometer, for the rest of the day. At Dungannon, the road turned into a blazed trail, possibly made by a survey team marking trees with an axe. There, the journey ended for Johnny and the lumber wagon. After a night's rest, the others began the long walk. Dorentine carried an axe and rifle to fend off

animals if necessary, while Elizabeth carried the three-month old child. They followed the higher ridges to avoid bogs and marshes. The future sites of Belfast, Lucknow and Holyrood were bypassed and they arrived at a house and clearing near present-day Kinlough. After staying the night with kindly strangers, they journeyed to the shanty Dorentine had previously constructed at Kinloss Township, concession 10, lot 4.

Dorentine would likely then have travelled to pick up their belongings in Kincardine, via the Durham Road (County Road 9) on which construction began in 1851 from Lake Huron to Riversdale. According to one observer in 1850s, "There is only one mud hole on the road, but it extends from Walkerton to Kincardine.” (Robertson, p. 71). Current residents often comment that winter is their least favourite time of year for travel; however, in the mid-19th century, travel through snow (or mud) was easier by sleigh than travelling other times of year by wagon.

Before the roads reached through the interior of the County, many settlers navigated rivers to the site of their future homesteads. Many reached Hanover or Walkerton by road or trail, and then built a scow or raft, sometimes carrying people, animals and all their belongings to locations along the Saugeen River all the way to Southampton (or "Saugeen" as it was then known). One sighting included a raft with a cow and her calf on one end, and baggage, a cooking stove, and a woman preparing breakfast on the other. The smoke steamed from the elevated pipe, giving the moving raft the appearance of a "rustic steamer in motion." (Robertson, p. 54). The rivers were not always safer than the lake. The Fuller, Gilbert and Philips families (four men,

two women and five children) were trapped on/in fast-flowing water for about a day after their scow, heavily laden with household goods, provisions and tools hit a rock midstream, causing the heavy items to slide down to one end, pinning that end to the bottom. The light items floated off, alerting shanty-dwellers downstream, including the Kennedy brothers, William Gowanlock and James Rowan, who built a raft to rescue them and then put them up for the night.

Rivers and lakes were also used for shopping trips, but this generally involved having to travel one of the directions up river which would be very difficult due to the rapids which required towing and pulling, with one man wading in the water with the rope over his shoulders, and the other assisted by pushing with the long pole (Robertson, p. 53).

Roads gradually improved and expanded. For a long time, the only gravel road in the County was that running from Goderich to Southampton, and was then known as "The Gravel Road." By the 1870s, railways and stage coaches also transported new residents to areas in Bruce County, thereby offering more and easier travel options!

Sources:

Cox, Benson. "Benson Cox's Story of His Home Farm." Bruce County Historical Society Yearbook, 1986, p. 10-19.

Hilborn, Robin R. "The Bruce." Bruce County historical Society, 2018.

Robertson, Norman. "The History of the County of Bruce and of the minor municipalities therein." Toronto: William Briggs, 1906.

Bruce County Archives Hours

Summer hours are in effect until the end of October 2018. The Research Room is open Monday to Saturday 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Please check brucemuseum.ca for holiday hours and call ahead if you are planning to view items stored in the archival storage area. The Bruce County Archives is part of the Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre, 33 Victoria Street, Southampton, Ontario, 519-797-2080, ext. 129.

**Bruce County Genealogical Society-
2018**

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Newsletter

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