



# BRUCE BULLETIN

THE BRUCE COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

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<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1244653066363730>

and our Bruce County Genealogical Society page:

<https://brucecountygenealogicalsociety.ca/>

## Thoughts from the President

“There is a fine line between a packrat and a serious family historian.” How true is that statement!

I spent some time last week organizing photos that I promised myself years ago I would get to. They were in totes, drawers and cardboard boxes, many still in their original Kodak folders and complete with negatives alongside. Now to scan them before more time passes.

And then there is the hoard of binders, history books, maps, travel brochures, file folders, loose documents and notes that should make more sense than they do.

The Farmer’s Almanac suggests a cold and snowy winter which excites this packrat. With any luck at all I’ll be stuck at home looking out the windows as banks form, yet warm inside my home office as my piles of genealogical treasures become smaller and my computer files larger. One can always hope.

*Glenys*

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## BCGS EVENTS

November In Person Event

**BCGS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING POTLUCK**

**Date: November 6, 2023; Time: 11:30**

**Place: Bruce County Museum and Cultural Centre  
33 Victoria St N, Southampton, ON N0H 2L0**

**Please join us for a Members' Potluck + our AGM**

*With our Annual General Meeting just around the corner I would ask that you consider joining a great group of folks on the Executive Team as a Director At Large. Yes, it takes a bit of time to organize events for the year but we have fun doing it. Fresh ideas are always welcome. Your role would be to assist the Executive in making decisions on behalf of the membership of the Bruce County Genealogical Society.*

*We meet as an Executive either in person or via Zoom, three times per year in January, April and September. Our AGM is held in November. If you would like more information, please don't hesitate to contact me at [glenysjohnson07@gmail.com](mailto:glenysjohnson07@gmail.com)*

*Hope to see you at our 2023 Potluck Lunch AGM on November 6th in the Bruce County Museum and Cultural Centre at 11:30 a.m.*

**For the Public and Members in the Theatre**

**MORE THAN SOLDIERS – Life Stories of the Men of the 98th (Bruce) Anti-Tank Battery**

**Date: November 6, 2023; Time: 1:30pm**

**Presenter: Glenys Johnson**

A project that began five years ago to better understand Johnson's father's time in service during the Second World War, quickly morphed into an in-depth study of the 98<sup>th</sup> (Bruce) Anti-Tank Battery. To date, this research has resulted in a compilation of life-stories for most of the men who enlisted in July of 1940 and were given regimental numbers from A47000 to A47141.

These adventurous young men, and not all from Bruce County, made the trip to Port Elgin in order to serve their country.

They became forever friends, many attending Reunions of the Battery that began in 1946, with the final gathering held almost six decades later at the RCL Port Elgin Branch 340 on September 18, 2004. The presentation will highlight some history about the “**ANTI-TANKERS**” and include as many of the life-stories as time will allow.

**We will be recording at a later date and posting on a Member's Page on the Website.** For more information, Email: [BCGSWebinars@gmail.com](mailto:BCGSWebinars@gmail.com)



## January Webinar

### FamilySearch's Ontario Land Records with Ken McKinlay

In 2022 Ken showed us how to find where our kin resided in Ontario in his talk "Finding Them on the Ground in Ontario" and in 2023 he covered using OnLand to locate the land records in his presentation "OnLand from a Genealogy Perspective". He wraps up his Finding on the Ground series by exploring the various Ontario land records found on FamilySearch. However, these collections are not name indexed for easy use by genealogists. In this talk we learn how to use and navigate through the various FamilySearch collections such as Abstract Indexes, Land Record copy books, and Township Papers.



**Date:** January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 7pm ET

**To Register:** Click the link: [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_iHeFlnkdThiU5cqDQLyPyQ](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_iHeFlnkdThiU5cqDQLyPyQ)

**Any questions or help needed:** email [BCGSWebinars@gmail.com](mailto:BCGSWebinars@gmail.com)

## February Webinar

### Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre / the Archives with Heather Callaghan

Heather will start by showing us how to navigate the Research section of the website. Then dive into how to search the Online Collection focusing key terms, names and the Krug Collection. Then she will dive into how to research the Newspaper collection and just browse. Then lastly how to research Bruce Remembers.

There is a treasure trove of information that we can use for our family genealogy. Truly exciting.

**Date:** February 12, 2024 at 7pm ET

**To Register:** Click the link:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_VCuKChbwTEuWCs0h-27Nkw](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_VCuKChbwTEuWCs0h-27Nkw)

**Any questions or help needed:** email [BCGSWebinars@gmail.com](mailto:BCGSWebinars@gmail.com)



**Amy Gilpin, our speaker for the October webinar, ends her email this way:**

**God grant me the serenity to accept the ancestors I cannot find; the courage to find the ones I can; and the wisdom to document thoroughly.**

## Teeswater's Jennie (Fletcher) Hyslop (1890-1968): World's First Great Woman Swimmer

by Deb Sturdevant, Archivist, Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre

In recognition of October as Canada's Women's History month, we highlight one of Bruce County's outstanding historic women. Bruce County Museum Staff learned about Jennie (Fletcher) Hyslop (1890-1968) thanks to a donation of her photograph to the Museum. This led to a review of our resources to learn more about her.

In 1905, Jennie Fletcher set a swimming world record for women in the 100 yard freestyle while living in England. She held that record for seven years, during which time she broke it eleven times. She was the "Champion of England" from 1906-1909 and 1911-1912. Jennie was selected to participate in the 1908 Olympics, the first Olympics to advertise women's swimming competition; however, women's swimming events were cancelled that year, as some nations, such as the United States and Australia, refused to permit women to compete resulting an insufficient number of participants. She participated in the 1912 Sweden Olympics winning a gold medal in the 4x100 metre freestyle relay and a bronze medal in the individual 100-metre freestyle races.

Jennie was born in Leichestor, England, to a family of 11 children and worked in a clothing factory to help support her family. During a 1964 interview after the Tokyo Olympics, when comparing athletes of present to those 60 years earlier, she stated "We did not have the time or the training. We swam only after working hours and they were 12-hour days and 6-day weeks. ... We were told bathing suits were shocking and indecent and even when entering competition, we were covered with a floor length cloak until we entered the water." At that time, few girls were encouraged to swim; and when they did, their bodies were usually covered from their neck to just above the ankles in a swimsuit. Jennie and her colleagues, however, swam in sleeveless knee-length bathing suits.

Jennie married Henry Hill Hyslop while he was in England during the First World War, on leave and/or while recuperating following an injury. In 1919 they settled in Teeswater to be close to some of Henry's family who had emigrated from Scotland. There, they raised six children and Jennie lived in relative anonymity. She taught many young people how to swim at the mill dams in the 1930s and 1940s, most of whom likely did not know or understand her accomplishments. At the unveiling of a plaque in Leicester, England, her daughter Betty Smith indicated: "She was so modest and if her career was discussed, she'd say 'Oh, that was a long time ago and I did it because I just loved to swim.'" Jennie was the honoured guest when the first Teeswater swimming pool was opened by the Lions Club in 1950. She also served her community as a member of the Knox Presbyterian Church Women's Missionary Society.

She was entered as a member of the International Swimming Hall of Fame, in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, and was recognized as an "Honor Swimmer" in 1971, with the words "The World's First Great Woman Swimmer" inscribed above her photograph.

Although there are a number of online articles concerning her athletic accomplishments, it is thanks to Bruce County resources, such as local history books, and the BCGS surname collection, that we can appreciate all of Jennie's life accomplishments and community contributions. Many local history books may be accessed in the Research Room at the Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre or at local Bruce County library branches. A few local history books have also been digitized; links to those resources may be found in the Books section of [brucemuseum.ca/research/useful-links/](http://brucemuseum.ca/research/useful-links/).

### Resources:

"Champion swimmer finally honoured." BBC News, [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk\\_news/england/leicestershire/4094515.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/england/leicestershire/4094515.stm) December 14, 2004. Accessed November 4, 2022.

"Jennie Fletcher (GBR)". ISHOF.org. International Swimming Hall of Fame. <https://www.ishof.org/honoree/honoree-jennie-fletcher/>. Accessed November 4, 2022.

Keller-Marvin, Meg. "Happy Birthday to Honor Swimmer Jenny Fletcher, who was born in 1890" International Swimming Hall of Fame, <https://www.ishof.org/happy-birthday-to-honor-swimmer-jenny/>, March 19, 2021. Accessed September 14, 2023.

"Mrs. H. Hyslop" obituary [1968], Bruce County Genealogical Society surname collection. Print.

Teeswater Culross Historical Committee. "All Our Yesterdays, Volume 2: A History of the Municipalities of Teeswater and Culross." Teeswater Culross Historical Committee, 2008. Pages 225, 649-650. Print.



Jennie Fletcher, BCM&CC A2004.089.001



### Part two of Kerrstory, the search for parents of Samuel

After searching in vain for the parents of Samuel Kerr, my 3x great grandfather, I decided to see if his wife Margaret Earl could hold the key, as they had both been born in Ireland. Was it possible the two sets of parents might have known each other in “the old country” and emigrated together?

The offspring of Samuel and Margaret appeared to follow the Irish Naming Pattern, so my first theory was that Margaret’s mother was likely named Ann. I created Margaret Earl and her parents: Male Earl and Ann Mrs Earl on my “Unrelated” tree on Ancestry. I use this tree to explore potential relatives before transferring them to my ‘real’ tree once they are confirmed to be the right person. BINGO!! FindAGrave led me to a VERY promising mother, Ann HUNT Earl #238097974 and several potential siblings, but no Margaret.

Her death record confirmed Ann [Hunt] Earl had died 1879 in Lynden, Beverly Township, Wentworth County. This was the same location where Margaret and Samuel’s daughter Isabella Kerr had married Robert Strachan, raised four children and where the family was still living when Ann died. Moreover, in the 1881 Lynden census, Samuel and Margaret were living with Isabella and Robert Strachan. All this supported my theory that Margaret’s mother was Ann Hunt Earl.

The second item which seemed to support this theory had surfaced earlier when I was looking for Margaret’s husband Samuel Kerr in the 1851 East Flamborough Agricultural Census. Although I had not found Samuel, there was a Christopher Kerr who shared Conc 10 Lot 4 with 3 men named HUNT.

I set to work in earnest to track the potential siblings of Margaret [Earl] Kerr, still a theory, until I found Ann’s daughter Amanda had married a William Kerr. Two brothers married two sisters! (Or so I thought at the time)

I had taken a DNA test through Ancestry and in December 2020, DNA match Mike PLACE contacted me. He was a descendant of Amanda Earl and William Kerr. The two of us worked diligently with Land Records, 1840 census, FamilySearch, WikiTree, Ancestry and MyHeritage to track the two couples, as well as the other Earl siblings. I was confident enough in my theory, that I added Margaret to the FindAGrave of her mother, Ann [Hunt] Earl. Still no sign of the father of William and Samuel although we had located a potential uncle, James Kerr.

But the more we worked with Mike’s other DNA matches, the more it became obvious my Kerr DNA was a DNR (Do Not Resuscitate). As it turned out, the genes we shared were through the two sisters, and everything Mike and I had found on Kerr was linked to William but not to Samuel. They weren’t brothers, not even closely related.

Finding the parents of Samuel would have to go on the back burner again, until I found another source to explore. Stay tuned for Samuel’s part three.

Back to tracing Margaret [Earl] Kerr’s family. From FindAGrave 238097974 Ann [Hunt] Earl, born Cavan Ireland (like her siblings) 30 July 1795 daughter of James Hunt and Margaret Hunt. Married about 1817 in Ireland to Robert Earl jr. Robert was born in Parish of Carrigallen, Leitrim, Ireland and received a recommendation 30 April 1820 to emigrate to Canada (image 238 on C-1893)<sup>1</sup>

30 March **1823** Robert Earl leased Lot 20 Conc 2 of Beverly Twp, Halton, Gore District. This was the birth location of daughter Sarah Jane. 11 Aug 1824 son James Caesar Earl was born East Flamborough Twp Wentworth County and twins Ameltha /Amelthy and Amanda born 30 June 1826 “Heights of Dundas” also in Wentworth County. By 1830 Tax Assessment, on Lot 34 Conc 3 Beverly Twp (with James Hunt<sup>2</sup> on the other 100 acres), the adults and children would work out to be Robert HUNT and wife, Robert EARL and



*Margaret [Earl] Kerr age about 80, taken in Brantford.*



*The second photo, likely taken some time after 1883, was her sister Amanda [Earl] Kerr. Posted on Ancestry in 2015 by Nancy LaVeque.*

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/land/land-petitions-upper-canada-1763-1865/Pages/List.aspx?Surname=Earl&GivenName=Robert&>

<sup>2</sup> Although James Hunt had died in 1828, the land was still in his name until his widow Margaret died about 1862.

Ann, 3 sons (James, Ameltha and Robert) and 5 daughters (Margaret, Hannah<sup>3</sup>, Sarah, Amanda and one other daughter born after 1814). This is the property owned by **William Brown** in the Wentworth County Atlas.<sup>4</sup>

1844 Tax Assessment <sup>5</sup> places Robert Earl on the north side of Waterdown, 120 acres Conc 4 lot 7 East Flamborough shared with Ann's brothers Robert and John Hunt. The tax assessment for 1843 had placed Samuel Kerr and Margaret Earl family on a village lot, part of Conc 3 Lot 7 on the west side of Waterdown

1861 and 1871 census Robert and Ann Earls (sic) are living in a 1½ store frame house Conc 6 Lot 5 Britannia Road at James Snow Parkway, next to son James Caesar Earl. Since James continues to live there, this is likely where Robert Earl died 27 Oct 1876. His widow Ann [Hunt] Earl died 13 Aug 1879 in Lynden<sup>6</sup>, Beverly Twp Wentworth County. Her parents James and Margaret, and her brother John are buried a few minutes away in Copetown.

#### **Continued with the maternal HUNT line of Margaret [Earl] Kerr**

James Hunt married Margaret Hunt in Cavan Ireland about 1793 based on the birth of eldest daughter Ann [Hunt] Earl in 1795. Other known children born there include Jane 1798, John 1810, Robert 1811 and Eliza 1816. In the **1823** Tax assessment the family is on Lot 34 Conc 3 Beverly Twp, shared with son-in-law Robert Earl<sup>7</sup>. This location would be north of Hwy 5, between Westover Road and Middleton Road and bisected by Sodom Road. James Hunt died 29 Nov 1826 and is buried in Copetown, Beverly Twp. *This is almost 10 km away, why there? Was there no cemetery closer? Or was this a family graveyard? There is another James Hunt 1776 Co Cavan buried Copetown Cemetery died 26 Feb 1862. Perhaps a cousin. There are several early Land Petitions with the name Hunt.*

*Also see 1829 Beverly Twp Tax Assessment <sup>8</sup> for Moses D. Hunt on Lot 15 Conc 1 with 8 in family and Jeremiah S Hunt<sup>9</sup> with 4 in family, lot and concession not specified.*

**1829** Beverly Twp Tax assessment<sup>5</sup>, on image 51, James Hunt (45 acres cultivated<sup>5</sup> and 155 acres uncultivated) on Lot 35 C1 and Lot 34 conc 3, which is described as southeast angle of 34 middle and northeast angle of 35. There were 2 males under 16 and 2 over, 2 females under 16 and 2 over for a total of 8 in the household, one horse, 2 oxen and 4 milk cows. Since Robert and Margaret [Hunt] Earl shared the property, the number of persons included their family: 2 male under 16= James Caesar and Ameltha. The two female under 16=Sarah Jane and Amanda Earl. 2 Males over 16=Robert Earl and (unknown)<sup>10</sup>, 2 females over 16=Margaret [Hunt] Earl and her widowed mother Margaret Hunt. We know James' widow Margaret<sup>11</sup> continued to live on Lot 34 Conc 3 Beverly Twp<sup>12</sup>.

*Same 1829 Beverly Twp Tax assessment<sup>5</sup>, on image 53 is Robert Hunt family of 12 also on Lot 34 Conc 1. Who is this? Although Robert, the brother of Margaret [Hunt] Earl was only 18, as the eldest son he could have inherited the other 100 acres when his father died in 1826.*

**1839** William Hunt, son of John Hunt and Hannah [Robb] was born at **Waterdown**, East Flamborough. Wm was the grandson of James and Margaret. 1844 Wm's brother George was baptised **Waterdown**

**1840** Daughter Margaret [Earl] and her husband Samuel Kerr were living at **Waterdown**.

So many tantalizing hints, but I cannot draw any firm conclusion that Samuel Kerr's family, and that of his wife Margaret Earl, knew each other in Ireland. However, they surely knew each other in Waterdown area, so I will now concentrate on researching in that area.

<sup>3</sup> Irish naming pattern suggest the second daughter was named Hannah, born about 1821 between the births of Margaret 1819 and Sarah 1823

<sup>4</sup> The Tax assessment sometimes in the name of James (widow Margaret HUNT) and sometimes her children

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSLG-V31Y-P?cc=4130007>

<sup>6</sup> granddaughter Isabella, d/o Samuel and Margaret [Earl] was born 1845 in Waterdown, and 1866 married Robert Strachan at Lynden and lived there until at least 1871. Ann's sister Eliza [Hunt] Jameson died 2 July 1879 and is also buried Lynden

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSLG-VSH8-C?cc=4130007&personaUrl=%2Fark%3A%2F61903%2F1%3A1%3A6ZFV-NJMV>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSLG-VSCS-H?i=48&cc=4130007> See image 49 for description of columns, Hunt names on images 51/52

<sup>9</sup> Jeremiah S Hunt also on 1851 ag census conc 10 Lot 4 Flamborough East Wentworth County shared with Christopher Kerr, Philip Hunt and William Hunt. Jeremiah same property 1874 County Atlas.

<sup>10</sup> very likely 18-yr old Robert, (son of James and Margaret Hunt) with whom she lived in 1861. There is also a gap between their known children, possibly born 1798-1810, or 1811-1816

<sup>11</sup> It's believed that her maiden name may also have been Hunt.

<sup>12</sup> this is the same property William Brown owns in 1874 County Atlas and he was the informant at the 1875 death of Sarah [Stephenson] Hunt, widow of 'the other' James Hunt

## Researching Headstones in Mildmay Cemeteries\*

By Anne Goeden

In July of this year, our society visited two cemeteries in Mildmay for an interesting walk and talk about several of the people buried there. One interesting couple is a husband and wife who are buried in separate sides of the cemetery. John Fischer, who died on 1 February 1923, was a Catholic and is buried in Sacred Heart Cemetery. His wife, Barbara Russwurm, who died on the 16<sup>th</sup> of July 1932, is buried on the Protestant side of the cemetery, called St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Cemetery.

John Fischer was born about 1844 in Bavaria, Germany the son of Matthias Fischer and Margaratha Schmidt. John came to Canada with his family about 1847. The Fischers were living in Wellesley Township, Waterloo County in 1851, but by 1860 they had moved to Carrick Township. John and Barbara married about 1865 in Carrick Township and had three children: Catharina (1866), Valentin (1867), Christena (1868).

Barbara Russwurm was born on the 29<sup>th</sup> of September 1843, in Wellesley Township, Waterloo County. Her parents were Valentin Russwurm and Catharina Rossel who are buried in the Old Saint John's Lutheran cemetery which is located about 10 km north of Mildmay. I was interested to see if I could find a record of Valentin in church or civil records in France or Germany. There is a photo of his stone on the website, Canada's GenWeb Cemetery Project.

Luckily, the stone gives us a birthdate and a birthplace. According to the stone, Valentin was born on the 5th of January 1805 in Niederroedern, Alsace, and died on the 27<sup>th</sup> of June, 1875 aged 70 years, 5 months and 22 days. The civil records for France are online, and if you know the name of the parish you can browse through the registers. Using the google search engine, I determined that the town of Niederroedern is located about 42 km northeast of Strasbourg in the Bas Rhin (Lower Rhine) district. The website for the Bas Rhin Archives is:

<https://archives.bas-rhin.fr/registres-paroissiaux-et-documents-d-etat-civil/>

Enter the town that you wish to research in the *Votre commune* box and click on the *RECHERCHER* button. The registers for the town will be displayed on a bookshelf. In the case of Niederroedern, there are Catholic parish records from 1708 to 1789, and Protestant parish records from 1621 to 1790. The civil registrations are available from 1793 to 1922. After the French Revolution, the new Republic decided to create a new calendar which began on the autumnal equinox, the 22 September 1792. The months were named for seasons and events in



Nature. This calendar lasted until 1 January 1806, when the Gregorian calendar was restored. In order to look for Valentin's birth record in 1805, I had first to determine the Republican year, which turned out to be year XIII.

I found the birth registration of Johann Valentin Russwurm who was born on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the Pluiose month in the year XIII. His parents were Paul Russwurm, a farmer, and Magdalena Zimmer. I found a website that converts Republican dates to Gregorian dates.

#### **Date converter: Revolutionary calendar / Gregorian**

To convert a date in the Revolutionary calendar into the same one in the Gregorian calendar, or vice versa, please enter the desired date then click the button corresponding to your request.

Dates are accepted from 15 Vendemiaire year II (October 6, 1793), the date of entry into force of the Republican calendar by decree of the National Convention, to 10 Nivose year XIV (December 31, 1805), the last day of its use.

<b>Revolutionary date</b>			
Day <input type="text"/>	Month <input type="text"/>	Year <input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Convert to Gregorian date"/>
<b>Gregorian date</b>			
Day <input type="text"/>	Month <input type="text"/>	Year <input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Convert to Republican date"/>

<https://www.napoleon-empire.net/en/republican-calendar.php>

Using this website, I determined that Valentin was born on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of February 1805 (which is only one month different from the tombstone).

The registers for this time period were written in German, but by the time that Valentin married his first wife, Catherine Waelde on the 8<sup>th</sup> of February 1825, the records were in French. Both Valentin and Catherine were under the age of 21 and needed their parents' consent to the marriage.

After this, the facts are a little unclear, but Valentin made his way to North America and married his second wife, Catharina Rossel about 1839 in the United States. Catharina was also born in Alsace on the 21st October 1818 to Georg Rossel and Catharine Martin. Catharina and her parents and siblings were found on a passenger list for the ship *Charles Carroll* which sailed from Le Havre, France and arrived in New York City on the 26<sup>th</sup> of April 1838.

On the 1851 census, Valentin and Catharina were living in Wellesley Township, Waterloo County. (Catharina's brothers George and Jacob and her widowed mother are also on the same census page) Their oldest child, Catharine was age 11, born in the United States, with the rest of the children born in Ontario making their year of arrival in Canada about 1842. Catharina's sister, Barbara Rossel was also living with them. By 1861, Valentin and family were living in Carrick Township, Bruce County. Their children were Catharine (1840), Valentine (1842), Barbara (1843-1932), George (1847), Jacob (1848), Frederick (1851), John (1853), Henry (1855) and Adam (1857).

Valentin died on 27<sup>th</sup> of June 1875 in Carrick Township and Catharina died on 14<sup>th</sup> of April 1892.

***\*For our walks and Talks in Cemeteries every July, we try and find relatives who will tell us about their families. As well, some of our Executive actually do research. Anne, as usual, stepped up to the plate this year. Anne is a superb researcher with so many tips and tricks.***



## There is a Book in Everybody – Author: Gerard Walsh

I have been doing genealogical and historical research for more than twenty years. This intensified when I retired just over eight years ago. My research is mainly centered in Ireland. On the historical front I have published quite a few articles in various publications in Ireland.

### Writing Historical Articles

Three of my historical articles were published in the Tipperary Historical Journal – an annual academic publication. The articles were as follows:

- A Tipperary Settlement and Tragedy on the Canadian Frontier
- Fr. John Corcoran – A Tipperary Priest on the Canadian Frontier
- The Great Famine – A Family Perspective

I hope to complete the third article of a trilogy dealing with Tipperary people living on the Canadian frontier by 2025.

The first article is about the Donnelly massacre at Lucan. Subsequent to publication, this article was reviewed in the Irish Times newspaper (one on the main newspapers in Ireland). Also, one of the Ontario universities contacted the publishers in Tipperary about using it as part of their curriculum. Interestingly the folks in Ontario referred to me as “Processor Walsh” in their correspondence with the folks in Tipperary! I have been intrigued that the people at Lucan did not want a headstone to bear the word “murdered”. I should point out here that the most interesting headstone that I ever came across not only included the word “murder” but also named the murderers! The headstone is in

Tipperary. “Here lies the body of Andrew Coffee, who was murdered by Denis Ryan and his son 29<sup>th</sup> February 1755, aged 30 years”. I’m not sure if there were twenty nine days in February back then. However, it does appear that the people living in Tipperary were less sensitive about murder on headstones, than the people of Tipperary ancestry in Lucan!

The article on deals with his time as parish priest of Teeswater, Ontario (1877-1910). He was instrumental in building a lot of infrastructure for the Catholic Church in the region around Teeswater. Among his achievements was the erection of the church at Riversdale (located on HWY 9 between Bervie and Walkerton). This is one of the last wood-framed Catholic churches still in existence in this part of Ontario. But there will be more on Fr. Corcoran, later in this article.

My article on the Great Famine deals with the lack of memory of the Great Famine carried down through subsequent generations. I will deal with “memory” later in this

article.



Fr. Corcoran

### Writing Genealogical Articles

Starting about ten years ago I have written many long articles on various branches of my ancestry. These articles have been circulated to family members throughout Ireland, US, UK, and Australia. For this effort I got assistance from cousins at first, second, third, fourth and fifth level right around the globe. I had a good handle on the various records that are published online. My cousins filled in stories to add flesh to the records. I was also given access to an exceptional piece of detailed research (spread out over thirty pages) originating from Australia, dated around 1990. It was created by a third or fourth cousin. In spite of numerous enquiries over the past ten years, I still don’t know the author. In 1990 there were no online records. I still can’t figure out how an Australian could have done this research, half in Ireland and half in Australia. (There may be an obvious lesson here of a different kind. If you create something, be sure to identify yourself).

### Writing My First Book and My Great Grandmother’s Waist

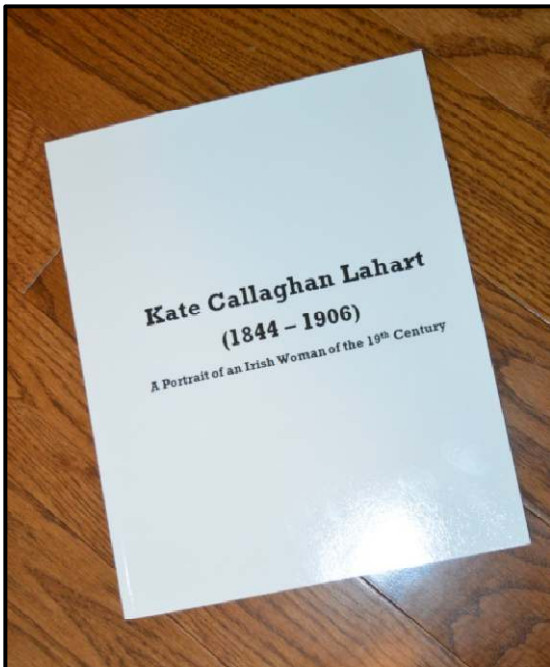
For quite some time I wondered if I should consign some of my material to a book. However, I had no idea how to write a book. I think it was May 2018; I attended an excellent session at the Bruce Museum on book writing put on by the Bruce County Genealogical Society. Every option on book writing was thoroughly discussed. One item got my attention. I think it was Anne Goeden who mentioned Blurb. I did some research on Blurb – a self-directed publishing entity. As an an experiment, I decided to expand one of my articles and create a book (in Blurb).

I chose an expanded article on my great-grandmother, Kate Callaghan Lahart. Why did I choose her as the subject of an article and subsequently a book? The main reason was a photograph. My mother had a photo that she said were her grandparents –Kate Callaghan and Pierce Lahart. I inherited this photo. This is the only photo of any of my great grandparents. I believe it was taken around 1890.

My mother wasn't big into genealogy. Hence, I wasn't sure if her information on the photo was correct. So in and around 2015, I embarked on a research project to authenticate the photo. I distributed the photo to every descendent of Kate and Pierce that I had connected with. I also distributed the photo to third cousins on that side of the family. I wanted them to search their collection of photos to see if the same photo turned up. It turned up naught. However, I got loads of comments on Kate's impressive waist. I do not come from a heavy set family. Everybody in my family is lean ....but not mean. Kate's waist became the major conversation point in the entire process. For starters photography was extremely rare in that rural area of Tipperary during that era. I did some research on photography in the 1890's. Apparently this was an era of experimentation in photography. They did lots of strange things in the 1890's, including staging formal photos of dead people. Apparently, they also manipulated photos – almost 100 years before 'Photoshop'. So, the consensus is that the photo has been manipulated. (The obvious question would be –who was the perpetrator?).



Kate Callaghan and Pierce Lahart



I was aware that during this entire process, I had failed to engage with several second cousins – who ironically grew up close to me in Tipperary. I eventually stumbled on another second cousin who was born close to me in Ireland, but was living just north of Detroit. Siobhan is a lovely lady with a huge interest in genealogy. I sent her my photo of our great grandparents. She immediately sent me a photo that her father said was Kate Callaghan Lahart. It was obvious that both photos of Kate matched – albeit Siobhan's photo was about fifteen years earlier than mine. Hence I had achieved authentication.

With that as my starting point I decided to write a short book about Kate Callaghan Lahart. This takes us back to Fr. Corcoran of Teeswater. Fr. Corcoran originally came from a place called Ballingarry in Tipperary, which was about 6 miles from Kate's home. In addition, Kate's mother-in-law was Alice Corcoran. I believe that Fr. Corcoran (Teeswater) was a distant cousin of Kate's husband (my gg grandfather).

In the 1870's Fr. John Corcoran's brother, Fr. William, served as a priest in the parish of Kate Callaghan Lahart. I assume that he baptized many of her children and possibly my own grandmother.

So I decided to create a book on Kate. I published through Blurb in 2019. The whole process came as a massive surprise to my cousins. As one cousin said "I don't believe that Kate could have imagined she would have ever been the subject of a book". I wholeheartedly agree.

The book was well received in the inner circle of relatives. It is filed at the Tipperary Historical Centre.

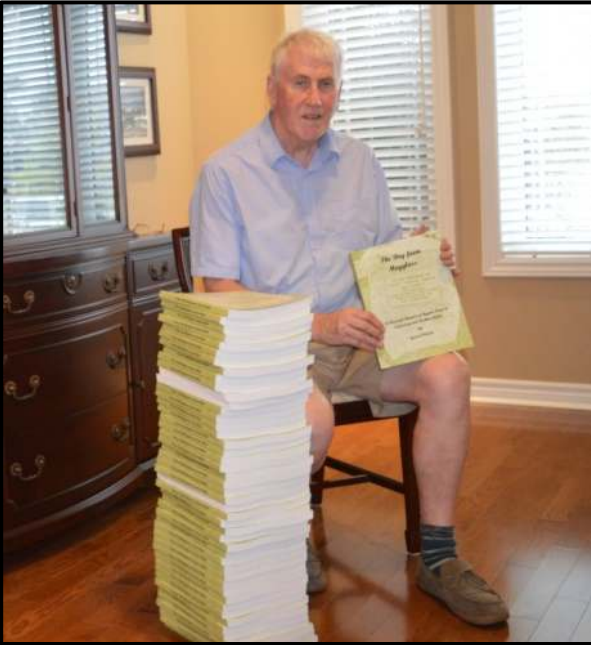
### **My Magnum Opus – "The Boy from Moyglass"**

Having experimented I decided to write a book that would incorporate all my research to date. The research was in two parts – (1) genealogical and (2) the story of our immediate family over the past seventy years. The later part was helped to a great extent by a trove of records that I inherited from my father. It quickly became apparent that both parts were incompatible. So I decided to proceed with part two which in essence is a memoir. I grew up in a small farming community in Tipperary called Moyglass. Hence the name.

Writing the book became a labour of love. It was also a highly emotional experience. It covers the period 1947 to 2001. I.e. From the date my father and mother first met to the date of my father's death. My mother had passed away twenty months before my father.

I got a lot of assistance from cousins and neighbours in Ireland. The book eventually grew to over 115,000 words on 230 pages (11x8). I committed the cardinal sin in publishing. I assumed the role of being my own editor. I contracted QWIK Print in Owen Sound for the printing. On top of being the author, publisher and editor, I then went ahead and assumed the role of distributor also.

The book is being distributed in Ireland, Canada, US, UK, Australia, and Portugal. The main vehicle for fund transfer was intended to be PayPal. Most folks were not familiar with PayPal so I had to set up alternative processes. Canada was easy due to Interac.



Gerard Walsh  
with his books

The next hurdle was the post office. The book weighed in at 0.77kg. They had difficulty with the Irish addresses. It didn't help that most people in Ireland still do not use postal codes. They were introduced in Ireland only ten years ago. So everybody in my orbit on that end had to figure out their postal code. Incidentally I also found a site online where I was able to verify the accuracy of the Irish postal codes. Having initially driven the poor postal workers into nervous breakdown territory, I think they have now settled down. It took about half an hour to get the first batch of books out. At the end of the half hour there was a large group of very irate customers lined up behind me all the way out the door. At one stage I turned around and apologized, and one woman in the middle replied, "I don't mind, I'm retired". Thankfully, that drew the ire of the mob in her direction. The postal worker told me not to apologize anymore!! In the future I only brought two books at a time.

One of the books is destined for a friend of mine called Steve, in Galway, Ireland. Years ago Steve told me the following story. Nora Barnacle, the future wife of the celebrated Irish novelist, James Joyce, used to work as a servant for Steve's grandparent, before she married James. Almost exactly 100 years ago, James Joyce published the well-known work, *Ulysses*. So Nora took it upon herself to send a signed copy of the first edition of the book to her previous employers – Steve's grandparents. They were not impressed and considered it smut. They immediately flung it in the fire. That book would have been worth a fortune today. I have cautioned Steve not to make the same mistake with my masterpiece.

### **Back to the Title of the Article**

From time to time in literary circles I have heard the phrase "There is a book in everybody". This is absolute garbage. I now have written two books and I can confirm that writing a book is not a trivial pursuit. I expect to publish my next book dealing entirely with genealogy next summer.

**Select a photo and provide a story for your family!**

By: *Ruth Anne Hollands Robinson*

Each week since January, 2019, I have been making an effort to write something about my family. The program I follow sends me a prompt - a word, an idea - and I can go wherever I want with it. Should I continue?

There are blanks. Sometimes, I have a great idea but no time to research it and write the story. Other times inspiration doesn't strike until much later or not at all.

So where do I go for ideas? While building a family tree for myself or my husband, I learn many interesting facts. I can read diaries, journals and scrapbooks and now old local newspapers.

Now and then, I simply say, "Read this story in Mum's Life History." Photo albums are a definite help. If you have a box of photos, choose one and go to it. Here is an example:



**Who?** Uncle Wes, Grandpa Pollock's brother, and Gyp, his sons' pony. He lived on the family homestead at the corner of Concession A (now Lake Range Drive) and Concession 8, of Huron Township. Grandpa's farm abutted the homestead.

**When?** Well, obviously in winter when there was enough snow for a sled. Probably the late '20s or early '30s. That's when Rex was the family dog.

**Where?** In the driveway opposite Grandpa's house. You can see the corner of the barn and the lane going back to the river.

**Why?** Maybe Uncle Wes just enjoyed a ride on a fine winter day. Maybe he wanted to discuss some farm or family business with Grandpa. They worked closely together.

**How?** Fast! Gyp was known for her speed. Tales were told of hanging on for dear life as the sleigh slid and went off in a wide arc when she made the turn into the driveway.

Now, see how these few details provide a story for my family? That's all it takes. Since my picture box is overflowing, I guess I must persevere.

**And you?** You can do this too. Think how much your efforts will be appreciated!

Published in the Kincardine Record January, 2023 -- <https://www.kincardinerecord.com/story.php?id=14245>



## Trooper Cummings Speaks

By Anne Duke Judd

written May, 2006, on the reconstruction of Port Elgin's lawn bowling green to Cenotaph Park.

I've stood silent here so long  
a hundred years  
only me in the market square.

They sent me to South Africa  
a battlefield  
nothing like the fields  
of my Saugeen Township home:  
no maples, no snow,  
no syrup, no sleighing,  
no river rolling by  
the east pasture,  
no rain blessing  
seeded ground.

Only heat  
and flies  
and horses dying.  
Agony of wounds  
to land and men  
to broken families,  
trampled crops,  
the sun unrelenting  
as the generals.

My death barely noticed  
except at home:  
on tall granite,  
my face looking down  
on all who pass,  
my twenty-five years  
stretched longer.

I liked the primroses every spring,  
the smoothing grass,  
healer of land's wounds.  
I watched the young  
swing on the fence—  
still a farmboy  
thinking of fences  
linking pasture to barn,  
not separating  
street and store.  
Church bells  
gone from the corner,  
dancers from the hall  
and jail cells too,  
such a changed neighbourhood!

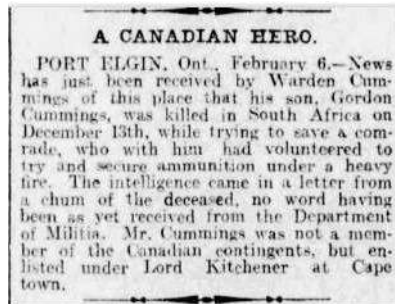
Still, always few at night  
while I keep my watch  
persistent as those pioneers  
who planted roots  
in Saugeen's sand.

What echoes now,  
this rumbling of machines  
ground trembling  
beside my position  
not from shells nor cannonfire  
earth blown away,  
twisted metal  
reaching from the sand.  
I miss the gentle click  
of bowls on green,  
the polite white-clad  
troops, soft-spoken  
in their tournaments.

Soon, they say,  
I will have comrades near,  
other ghosts from other wars  
and here  
we'll band  
perhaps in peace,  
our duty done,  
our lessons taught—  
but not yet learned.



Memorial for Gordon Cummings – Trooper Gordon Cummings of Kitchener's Horse, killed at the Battle of Nooitgedaght, South Africa, on December 13, 1900, while gallantly going to procure ammunition for his column. Son of Patrick and Barabara Cummings. Born in Saugeen Township Dec. 13 1875. This monument is located in Port Elgin, Ontario on the local lawn bowling greens.

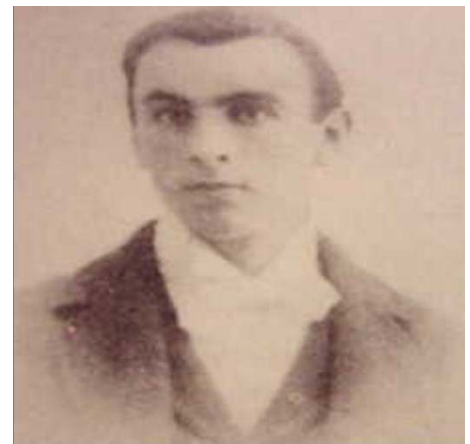


*Cummings was, unfortunately, not the only Bruce County person to die in the South African War.*

*Thanks goes to Audrey Underwood for her research into this gentleman.*

*Photos taken from this site:*

<https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/memorials/canadian-virtual-war-memorial/detail/80000554?Gordon%20Cummings>



## Honouring our veterans

By Jan Briggs-McGowan

People often refer to me as 'The Poppy Rock Lady', and when I tell them I have painted almost 700 poppy rocks to place on veteran graves, most of whom I have never met, the question often is, WHY??

My dad was an Army veteran, my daughter was a firefighter in the AirForce. My sister got as far as Basic Training until they realized that she couldn't march because she had been handicapped since birth with one leg shorter than the other. Then she married a veteran. Uncles, aunts, Dad's cousins all served in the military. You could say it's in my blood.

I also place the poppy rocks because I feel the families' sorrow when a loved one does not return from War, and they can never have a body to bury. My great-uncle Harmon Briggs was killed during WWI. As long as there were elders when we held family reunions, inevitably one of them, sometimes with tears in their eyes, would bring up the loss of their brother, or cousin, or uncle, Harmon.



Harmon was born 29 Oct 1887 in Flos Twp, Simcoe County, one of eight sons of Thomas Briggs and Mary Ellen Garrod. In June of 1901 the family homesteaded about 30km north of New Liskeard in what was called New Ontario, on North half of Lot 7, Concession 5 of Evantural Township. On 16 March 1916 Harmon signed up for WWI, #643024. He was 5'8", with grey eyes and dark brown hair. In the family picture, you see him in his uniform. His unit sailed 17 Oct 1916 for Bramshot, England. Less than a month later the company commander wrote to Thomas and Mary Ellen "Dear Friends, Harmon left yesterday for France...", and just two weeks after that, Harmon's service record shows he was hospitalized with Trench foot, very common in the wet muddy conditions. He was ill or wounded several times while in France, the longest period in hospital was about 6 weeks for a corneal ulcer of left eye. The very day that he returned to active duty in France, Harmon was "dangerously ill from GSW" Gun Shot Wounds to the spine and left leg. He died at Camiers, France that same day, 7 Oct 1918 and was buried at Etaples Military Cemetery, FindAGrave 30720402. It was just over 2 years since he'd left Canada for War.

And I know how families were affected even when their family member returns home from War. My dad was living with my grandfather Wilmot and his second wife Mable when he enlisted at Kingston in June 1939. Wilmot and Mable had moved south from Englehart area so they could be closer to her family. My dad was staying with them on the family farm on the 3rd of Innisfil just outside of Cookstown. He had worked in a restaurant and listed his occupation as Cook. When War was declared less than 3 months later Bob was a signalman with the Corps of Signals in Kingston, and in August 1941 he was sent for Cook's Training at Camp Borden. Dad's Service Record shows on 10 Jan 1944 he was entitled to wear the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with Ribbon and clasp. Less than 2 weeks later he was on board a ship sailing to Italy. Like so many others, my dad was severely affected by what he saw, and how could they not be? As early as Feb 1944 he was sent to the rear Field Dressing Station for about 2 weeks of complete rest. He didn't talk often about the War, but one of his clear and painful



Bob in England on left

memories was advancing upriver in Italy, the water dirty and foul smelling, then as they rounded a bend they realizing the muddy colour was actually blood from dead and dying Canadians in the water ahead of them. Oct 1944 at the Gothic Line he contacted jaundice, malaria, and flu and after about 2 months in hospital he was transferred to Avellino Holding Unit. There he was put in charge of about 50 men but was so ill, “shell shocked,” they called it, that he was unable to carry out his assigned duties and was relieved of all regimental duties during the remainder of his convalescence. Not all memories were bad. Dad also described one Christmas where he baked fresh bread for a shared Christmas meal, the Italians provided the oranges and the Germans provided the chickens, which he said “they probably stole from the Italians”. (He pronounced it like Eye-talians). In a letter dated Nov 13, 1945 my grandfather was advised of “the honor and distinction that has come to your son Corporal Clarence Robert Briggs through his being Mentioned in Despatches in recognition of gallant and distinguished services”. Other medals Dad was granted included the 1939-45 Star, Italy Star, Defence Medal, and Canadian Volunteer Service Medal and Clasp. Eventually my dad was transferred to

Allied Force Headquarters, continuing as a cook - a trade he followed after his Honourable Discharge in January 1946. My mother, my sister Maureen and I followed in Sept 1946 on board the Letitia.

After the War, we stayed for a while with his sister in Timmins until my dad found work as cook for the gold mines at nearby Dome Mines. He became a qualified Chef, and also held trades papers as a butcher. My dad only had grade eight education, but he was an avid reader and very bright in math. I remember when I got a calculator in high school, Dad challenged me to pick any three numbers, multiply them by any three numbers and he would have the answer before I got the results on the calculator, and he did! And he worked hard for the betterment of each place we lived, active in Lions Club and the Church, the curling club. When he left to cook at Giant Yellowknife Mine in NorthWest Territories, the South Porcupine Lions club wrote him a letter “You were one of [our] most active members and there is a feeling of great loss in your having to move away”. But like so many others who returned from War, Dad struggled with alcohol. We moved again and again, always to the next gold mine, eight moves before I was 17. At first Dad’s employers all gave him glowing references for the cleanliness and efficiency of his work, but then they started to add: “and he has never been known to drink on the job.”

I was very close to my dad, but I also know a little bit of what families sacrificed when veterans struggled with what we now know as PTSD.

So, I continue to honour local veterans and their families, with a ceremony from No Stone Left Alone (NSLA) a Canadian Charity. We know young people in Holland and other European countries honour and remember our veterans who were Killed in Action. NSLA encourages young people in Canada to remember and honour our veterans who came home. We place the poppies on their headstones to show our veterans, serving Members and their families how grateful we are for their service and sacrifice. If you know of a veteran buried in Brockton leave a message for me at Walkerton Legion 519-881-0821, or in Arran-Elderslie for Sharon Hope at Paisley Legion at 519-353-5444. I’ve just heard that Kincardine and Chesley Legions are eager to start a similar project. Lest We Forget

## Duncan Hugh Campbell, a Paisley Boy, Killed in South African War

*Researched by Lolly Fullerton*

When Anne Judd, who wrote the poem Trooper Cummings Speaks, told me that there were other people from Bruce County who died in what I have always called the Boer War, I wanted to find someone.

"When in Monday night's dailies it was seen by the list of casualties in the 2nd Canadian Mounted Rifles in the engagement at Klein Hart's River, Transvaal Colony, on March 31<sup>st</sup>, the name of **D.H. Campbell** was among the list of eleven killed, there was a general feeling of sorrow in Paisley and the stern reality of war was brought home to us as probably it has never been since the beginning of hostilities." **Paisley Advocate April 10<sup>th</sup>, 1902**

Duncan was born in Paisley Ontario on 7 June 1876 to Dougald Campbell and Ann McPhee. He moved to Chater, Manitoba when he was 24. In the early part of the winter of 1902, he enlisted in Mounted Rifles and died in his first engagement. "He was a quiet, unobtrusive young man, true and honest to the core, and had a host of friends here." **Paisley Advocate April 10<sup>th</sup>, 1902**

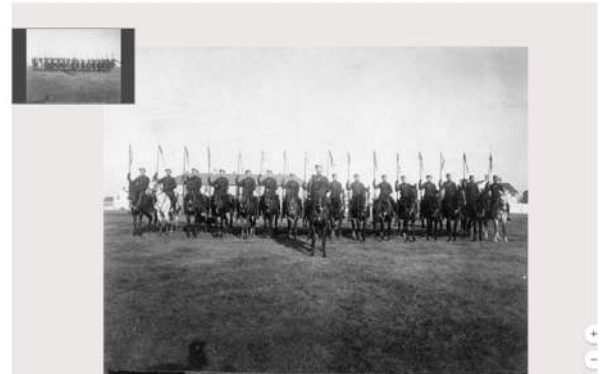
Letters From His Officers to his parents

Mr and Mrs Dougald Campbell received particulars of the death of their son, Shoeing Smith D. H. Campbell. Following are from the colonel of his regiment and captain of his squadron:

"Just a brief line to tell you how sorry myself and my regiment feel at the death of your son, Shoeing Smith, D. H. Campbell. He was shot through the body at the engagement at Boschbult on 21st March and died here on April 2nd. He did not suffer very much and his death was rather unexpected as the doctors hoped to pull him through. ... It may be of some consolation to you in your loss to know that during his soldiering with my regiment he proved himself to be a true soldier in the best sense of the word. If his mother is alive will you kindly convey to her and accept for yourself and family my deepest sympathy in your great loss. " (T. B. EVANS, Lt. Col., Commanding C. M. R., Witpoort Camp, April 6th, 1902.) **Paisley Advocate June 5<sup>th</sup>, 1902**

"It may console you to a certain extent to know that no man during the fight that day displayed greater coolness and courage, under one of the hottest shell and rifle fires experienced by any troops during the war. He was one of the first to the firing line and it was no doubt that owing to the heroic exertions displayed by him and his comrades, that we were able to drive off an overwhelming force of Boers who had surrounded our column as we were going into camp. His bravery shown that day was such as might be expected of one who was ever ready to perform any duty required of him. No one in the squadron was greater esteemed by his comrades and it was with the deepest grief that they bore him to his grave with the flag of his country covering him." (CAPT. R. G. EDWARD LECKIE, Commanding "A" Squadron, 2nd Canadians) **Paisley Advocate June 5<sup>th</sup>, 1902**

"Troop Front." Canadian Mounted Rifles with Second Contingent South Africa



***Thank you to the Bruce County Newspaper Digitization Project.***

<https://www.brucemuseum.ca/research/bruce-county-newspaper-digitization-project/>

To read about the battle: [https://www.warmuseum.ca/cwm/exhibitions/boer/battlehartsriver\\_e.html](https://www.warmuseum.ca/cwm/exhibitions/boer/battlehartsriver_e.html)

Read about the battle in the **Toronto World** April 7 1902 [https://www.canadiana.ca/view/ocihm.N\\_00367\\_19020407/1](https://www.canadiana.ca/view/ocihm.N_00367_19020407/1)

### ***Members ONLY Military Chats***

Join our military chat with Jan Briggs-McGowan, a few friends and new acquaintances. No agenda, so don't be shy! You can talk about your military ancestor or your latest project, ask a question, or share your exciting military find.

**Please register in advance for these meetings:**

**Nov 1 2023** To register: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMpdOGvrT0pEtY0t0ypB00EPSnxMbbQb3bA>

**Dec 6 2023** To register: [https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAqf-2prz4rE9338NU3kvtC2aQ-BO5R2U\\_Z](https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAqf-2prz4rE9338NU3kvtC2aQ-BO5R2U_Z)

**Jan 3 2024** To register: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZYvc-2hpjIqGtGiftGsNeT8at89apTqZHYN>

**Feb 7 2024** To register: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZYvc-ihRt0iE9zpRRDSsWiLGxG4Rz8zacvC>