



Ancestry

The Nanaimo Family History Society Quarterly Journal
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President's Message by Ron Blank

Hello again. Hope you had a fabulous summer! Linda and I managed a memory lane trip to Newfoundland. We combined some tourism and visited two of Linda's early childhood homes on the east coast. We also managed to visit family and friends near Corner Brook. Did you make any improvements to your family tree and find an AHA moment? Talk to Maureen Wooten about sharing your event. Will this be something to add to our Christmas Social?

Now that summer is over, indoor genealogy pursuits should be back in perspective. Let's get digging!!

Everyone either knows or should know about Cyndi's List. (If not check it out!) Cyndi Ingles's website has over 300,000 links to everything genealogical. Cyndi will be giving three ninety minute presentations and also doing a fourth session with questions and answers at Beban Social Centre on October 11 beginning at 10 a.m. HEY! \$50 for members (non-members \$60) for roughly six hours of instruction? That's an amazing value! Pre-register as seating is limited.

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Save the Date!

NFHS Conference — A Day With Cyndi	October 11, 2014
Nanaimo FHS October Meeting	October 20, 2014
Nanaimo FHS November Meeting	November 17, 2014

Perhaps the greatest social service that can be rendered by anybody to the country and mankind is to bring up a family.

George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950)
Irish critic, playwright, and essayist

President’s Message continued from page 1

Here's a shout-out to my son-in-law Roger Hubbard (aka sledge hammer magic man) and to Den Otto (designer extraordinaire) for helping place our two highway signs promoting Cyndi’s event. Did you see them? We tried to re-use old signs modified to today's wording and with minimal cost. See page seventeen of this journal for more information about our seminar.

One issue has continued over the summer. Thanks to the continuing work of Arleen Hoffman, our library was left in great shape. The trouble is Arleen has moved to Port Alberni to be closer to family, and thus we need a librarian to maintain our facility. Duties include cataloguing new acquisitions and maintaining our library. This is not an onerous task and likely involves less than two hours per week. Talk to me please.

I discovered Marilyn Marshall has amazing persuasive powers. Husband David volunteered to assist Bud Pennington with maintaining our computers when Bud is unavailable. Thanks for stepping up, David! Bud not only keeps our computers running, he also maintains our website. Thanks to Bud for his continuing help to our society. Does anyone have a person in mind for the library?

Janis Nelson also needs volunteers to staff our library. Hours are from 1 to 4 on Tuesday and Thursdays and from 11 to 3 on Saturdays. Remember that volunteers get a key and can do their library research at any time

Thanks for listening,

NFHS LIBRARY HOURS

Tuesday and Thursday 1 – 4 p.m.
Saturday 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Our library is free to use by all Nanaimo Family History Society members. A \$5.00 drop-in fee is charged for non-members, but drop-in fees can be applied to a full membership.

The library is located at 3999 Victoria Avenue, Nanaimo.

FAMILY HISTORY JOURNALS AND NEWSLETTERS

Did you know that our library has a newsletter exchange with many family history societies from around the world? After a newsletter is forwarded to the library, each is printed and is placed in a box by the cupboard for about a month. Have a look on your next library visit, as one of these newsletters may have information pertaining to your family history!

A New Brunswick Family and the First World War — The McMillan Family

by NFHS member, Linda Tissington



With the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand June 28, 1914 and the mobilization of troops from many European countries there was concern around the world.

In Jacquet River,

New Brunswick these activities must have seemed very remote, but between 1914 and 1916 as more and more of the world became involved in the Great War, **William R. and Maggie McMillan** must have become more and more concerned for their two sons, **Robert and Evan**.

ROBERT EARNSHAW MCMILLAN

Robert, after graduating from Mount Allison University, had gone to Superior, Wisconsin where his uncle Archibald McMillan was seriously ill with an infected leg. His uncle was then the Chief Grain Inspector for Wisconsin at the head of Lake Superior Grain Elevators. When Robert returned home, he learned that his younger brother, Evan, had applied to officer training, but his enlistment was delayed due to a small hernia operation. Robert then took over the papers and began army training to become a lieutenant in the 132nd North Shore Battalion in Campbellton.



Robert decided to become a pilot before Canada had an air force. He joined the British Royal Naval Air Service. This was only a few years after the flight of the first powered aircraft by the Wright Brothers. In 1917, I wonder how much was known about flight and how many people knew enough to train these pilots? Robert's first letters to his cousin Edith Clarke described an almost idyllic ocean voyage. On January 27th and 28th, 1917, he described life on board ship:

I am in a place I had not much idea of a week and a half ago. It seems almost as if we were in England already: a little English money mixed in with the Canadian, new surroundings, and all English waiters etc. You sit down to a meal, your waiter comes along in a very humble way and asks you "would you try the soup please?" You answer "yes" and he says "Thank

You". And so on with the other courses. Of course we have quite a choice too. In the other courses we get dishes such as pigs feet, rabbits, egg plant, and other such.

It looks to me now as if all this seasickness talk was bash. Of course we may get it bad yet. Last night when we first struck the swell several of us got a slight dizzy feeling but I got over mine in a few minutes and in the evening was feeling great. Some of them were a little sick before turning in at night, but nobody wanted to die; we all had a good sleep, and everybody is in great shape this morning, but of course it may not last.

There are two other transports with us, and a French cruiser. All are traveling along in a diamond formation, the cruiser ahead, us behind, the two other transports on the flanks. Last night after dinner, there was a song service in the dining salon. The songs were on a YMCA folder (not the religious kind). One of them was "Every nice girl loves a soldier." The original has "sailor is it not?" Anyway when the song started up some of our fellows changed the words back to sailor and of course the soldiers retaliated in kind and we had a sort of competition. Our members are about even, but WE had both sides of the salon, so we must have made the best showing. I do not know how much sailor there is about any of our bunch, but anyway the "navy is there" in name at least. And that is quite sufficient to start an argument.

We are a sort of "free lance" crew on this ship. While others must parade, take PT and attend to duties, we enjoy ourselves exactly as we please, no parades, no commanding but lots of servants to work for us or leave us alone, as we wish. Can you beat it? This sure is the life —if we don't get sick.

Although the journey was monotonous, Robert was pleased not to have any seasickness. The worst trouble on board was being compelled to carry life belts at all times, even to meals and during physical training. At night all windows and port holes were covered so that there was no light betraying their presence to hostile vessels. This made Robert feel as if there must be a war going on, and was perhaps his first real realization of what he was heading into.

Robert speaks of the first daily newspaper that was printed on the ship. The day's news was on the two centre pages while the rest was filled with pictures and articles of travel that might have been done any time. They had afternoon tea at four o'clock, tea and biscuits served by English stewards in the lounge rooms, or library, wherever they happened to be. "Some class, eh what?"

McMillan Family continues page 4

McMillans continued from page 3

On March 28th 1917, Robert wrote of his time in London. He trained at the Crystal Palace which was used for student pilots. The climate was not noticeably better. Robert had a great view from the window of their club in the Crystal Palace, but he notes that he had not been able to see it yet due to the fog, “tho’ they wouldn’t call it that here.” After a short description of London he states that the next day he was going to the real centre “what the natives call going up west.” That is the area around Regent St., Trafalgar Square, and so on. There he planned to buy a few things and settle accounts before leaving England for France. He had his last inoculation and so had an afternoon and following day free.

This is certainly a great service I am in. I am really having a splendid time, war or no war. Here I have been in London for six weeks or eight, and except for three weeks of squad drill, the work has been what I most enjoy, such as engines, basics of flight and construction of machines, also engineering sketching, etc. Also, we have lots of leave and time to ourselves as this afternoon and tomorrow. A couple of weeks ago we went to Greenwich to have our throats swabbed — nice job NOT — but we saw a little more of London. One of my lecturers told me yesterday that I couldn’t write. Rather insulting, he was, don’t you think so?

Over here we have all sorts of funny English customs shoved on us. You see, it is an English service, and though there are a lot of Canadians here, the senior officers are English, so that in this respect it is much worse than in some Canadian infantry or artillery branch. For instance, we don’t find any Canadian papers or periodicals in the mess or club, and all waiters in the mess are English. They say thank you if you speak to them at all. For instance if you refuse some dish, they will say thank you just the same as if you had accepted it. If they put a dish down in front of you, even if you don’t speak at all, they will say thank you and even when they are taking your dirty dishes away.

After lunch at noon we always get our tea, not at the mess table, but in our hands in the club afterwards. Then we always have afternoon tea at four o’clock, then dinner at 7.30. I am really beginning to get quite attached to this afternoon tea idea, and want it even when free in the city. Everybody seems to want it here, and they get it, too, judging from the appearance of hotels and restaurants at that hour. It seems a funny habit though. Then the English always want to use an awful lot of implements to eat with. Here we always have to use both fork and spoon with desserts or “sweets” as it is usually called. In Canada you don’t see this done very much. It is really a rather nice way to work it, but hard on the dishwasher.

They may try to laugh at Canadians here, but really they seem to have quite a bit of respect for them. Last night I happened to be talking to one of the English PTO’s who said he had joined as a Canadian because you got in so much easier.

We have so much praise here in general that we don’t know how much of it we can believe. The people here are beginning to get pretty well used to Canadians now, trying to copy their slang etc. but they are not yet quite sure of what we really are. My address for a few weeks more will be British Flying School Vendome, France.

After his short course, Robert went to southern France for winter training. Soon afterwards, he was sent to the front and wrote his mother that they had been told the average fighter’s time was seldom more than 2 or 3 weeks. Before three weeks had passed, the admiralty telegram arrived at the McMillan’s home in Jacquet River stating Robert was “reported missing in action.”

The month of April 1917 was known as “Bloody April” by the Royal Flying Corps (RFC). The RFC suffered particularly severe losses — about three times as many as the Imperial German Army Air Service (*Luftstreitkräfte*) over the same period — but continued its primary role in support of the ground offensive.

Flight Sub-Lieutenant Robert McMillan had left Bailleau in his Sopwith Triplane N5490 (part of *Black Flight*) on September 19, 1917. (Of Nanaimo interest, Robert’s flight commander was local pilot **Raymond Collishaw** who flew the *Black Maria*.) Robert was last seen in combat with enemy aircraft southwest of Douai at 6:00 p.m. and then seen to glide down. He was forced to land east of the front lines and taken as a prisoner of war. The combat claim was made by Vzfw F. Kosmahl of Jasta 26 at 5:55 p.m. over Passchendaele.

McMillan Family continues page 5



“Sopwith Triplanes” by Terry Jones shows Collingshaw’s *Black Maria* in the foreground.

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About four months later, the Red Cross discovered that Robert was being held in an old German castle at "Holtzmindon on the Rhine." He had shared boxes of food sent to other prisoners by the Red Cross until he was located. Afterwards, the Red Cross sent perishable items like butter, cheese and canned meat from Canada. Maggie sent a box of food from home every two weeks. Packages were shipped by mail with cloth covering sewed on the outside according to postal directions.

Near the end of the war the prisoners at Holtzmindon had devised an escape route, but only one or two prisoners were able to escape at one time. Robert was to be one of the next to escape when peace was declared. Robert was repatriated to England on December 14, 1918.

DONALD EVAN McMILLAN

While at Mount Allison University. Evan's friends enlisted, and his **Clarke** cousins were among them.



There was much pressure from the general public for young men to enlist. Although **Ray Clarke** was born in 1898, he felt the stigma of the "White feather." The white feather, a symbol of cowardice, was used during the First World War to coerce men into enlisting. Before his 19th birthday, he tried to enlist, but his mother was able to stop it.

On his 19th birthday he re-enlisted and was sent overseas. Evan applied for Officer Training in 1916, but this training was delayed due to a small hernia operation.

During his training as a pilot, Evan was first at Burwash Hall, then at South Residence both in Toronto, and then at Long Branch, Armour Heights, and Leaside. Flying began at Armour Heights in July, 1917, before construction of the support facilities was fully completed.

RFC cadets selected for flying training at Armour Heights were chosen from thousands of Canadian applicants. After instruction in ground school, the

fledgling pilots received a minimum of ten hours solo flying time on the Curtiss JN-4 Canuck, before moving on to advanced training at Camp Borden. In return for winter training in Texas, the RFC also agreed to train 300 American pilots in Canada, many of them being trained at Armour Heights. The first fatality occurred in August 1917, when two aircraft being flown by American cadets on solos collided overhead and crashed to the ground.

Mail appears to have been sporadic. Evan had written home asking for some money, but hadn't received anything from home when he wrote to his father, W.R. McMillan on December 21st, 1917:

Dear Father,

I have had no more word from home yet but will write again to see if I can find out what is the matter. I have had no definite word from Robert yet and do not know yet what his address is, or if there is any possibility of writing him. Also I do not know if you sent that money I asked for, maybe you think I have been wanting too many things, but there is one thing, I will not ask much longer. At present I have a clear income of three to four dollars a week, out of that I have to buy all the stuff I want. It used to cost 60 cents for a trip to town but now since the snow came a car costs fifty cents each way.

I have not been able to get leave at Xmas though I used every possible method of trying. The best I can get is four days at New Year's which would allow me only part of a day at home.

We are promised ten days on getting through the course and while I would like very much to see everybody there I don't think I likely will. Another fellow has invited me home with him and I think probably I will go. If I went home, I would not be back in time and that would mean that I would get a few days detention and have my next leave cut down. I may be there though I don't know yet. I think this will be all for now.

As ever, Evan

If there is any news or any message you want to get here quickly, wire. I don't think letters are coming through at all. I don't get them from anywhere.

Evan

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The next communication the McMillan family had was the dreaded wire from the Great North Western Telegraph Company. It came from Camp Leaside via Toronto to W.R. McMillan, Jacquet River on January 21, 1918.

Deeply regret to inform you that your son Canadian Cadet D. E. McMillan 152030 accidentally met his death in a collision in the air at Armour Heights this morning.

Signed,

Officer Commanding Royal Flying Corp North Toronto.

William responded by wire:

Send remains Cadet D. Evan McMillan to Jacquet River, NB If necessary I will wire you cash to pay costs. Wire us what you are doing.

A number of letters went back and forth about having the personal belongings of Evan shipped home. First they didn't arrive when expected, and then some things were missing. Looking at the inventory of belongings actually sent makes one aware of how sparse a person's belongings were at that time. Keeping in mind he would have been wearing a set of clothes at the time of his death his inventory was small (some items were missing): Sam Browne belt, camera and films loaned by his sister, pocket money.

Another problem was discovered. William had sent money to Evan by mail on December 3, 1917. It had never arrived and that is why Evan was flying — to get money for a trip home before going to Texas as his course was finished. It was on this trip that Evan was killed.

After Evan's death, a last letter home was received:

I had my first accident today. At Armour Heights, where I landed, there was only a small space where the snow was not deep. I circled around a couple of times, and having picked on this as the best spot, came down and made a beautiful landing. Before I lost speed altogether I started to "taxi" in to the hangers, and just as I turned on the engine the wheels caught in the snow and tipped the "Bus" up on her nose. Of course the propeller was broken. So I will not now be able to say that I got through without breaking anything. But I cannot complain for I have a far better record than most. After I got a new propeller fitted, I came back to Leaside, reported, and went over for my second trip. When I reached here, I found

two other Leaside machines standing on their noses. I remained there for dinner, saw all my old friends and started back about 2.30. There was just a little strip to "take off" in beside the hangers and I had to take off across the wind. As I left the ground I was pointed so that one wing would just nicely meet the corner of the hangers. So I waited till I got a little elevation and banked steeply so that the wing just passed over the corner as I turned away with about ten feet clearance. I straightened out of the bank and nosed down towards the ground to get up speed, then "Zumped" up about one hundred feet and as I did so banked over to the left climbing all the time and circled the hangers on a steep bank about one hundred and fifty feet up, waved good-bye to the bunch and came back home.

Take off was a bit showy, though I did it, at least the first part, for safety. It is only what some of the officers are doing all the time, but since I did it fairly well anybody would give me credit for being able to fly the machine and not being afraid of it. The other day a fellow got into something of the same fix over here. He found himself pointed towards a building that he could not get over, so he zumped up and tried to turn at the same time. Of course, with his nose in the air as it was, he lost flying speed and side slipped to the ground. The machine was "washed out" (broken beyond repair) and he was lucky to have escaped uninjured.

This is Saturday night and there are very few around. I might have gone to town too, but somehow did not have the inclination. I have not been in since coming back as have not ordered my uniform.

I finished 90 Squadron today and have been posted to 91. To get through 90 means to have done eighteen hours solo, and passed four tests. Instructors Test: circle aerodrome twice and land. Then go up to 3500 feet, turn four figure eights and land with the engine off. Altitude Test: go up 8000 feet and remain [?] hours. On that test I got above the clouds and in half an hour I only saw a little bit of ground once, so was pretty nearly lost. I had to steer by my compass. When I got down below the clouds, I did not know where I was, and as it was a misty day I could not see the city, lake, or any other landmark that I knew. I steered south towards the lake, and since my gasoline was about empty, I was looking for a nice field to land in when I saw a railway that I knew and followed it in. Photograph test: I got six out of eight. Cross Country Test: the two flights to Armour Heights that I mentioned before. So, though it was a bumpy day, I passed on my first trial.

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McMillan Family continued from page 6

The rest of the time is filled in with formations. I think that there is a fixed number (five) that one must do. I was in eight and was leader in six of them. I have not done anything in 91 yet. I was figuring on getting through by Sunday, and getting home leave from Monday to Saturday when the next bunch leaves for Texas, but tomorrow is Sunday. I am not likely to get through until Monday.

From appearances tonight it is likely to be cold. I froze my face twice in the same place, but not badly either time. I had a rather bad cold a few days ago, but am getting fairly well over it now.

Tribute was paid to Evan by one of his fellow cadets in training. **George E. Dowler** wrote on March 9, 1918 from Hicks, Texas:

Dear Mr. McMillan,
I roomed with your son at Burwash Hall and next to him at South Residence in Toronto, and knew him at Long Branch and Armour Heights and Leaside, and am writing to offer you my sincere sympathy for his death.

This letter is very delayed. I was unable to write for three weeks after the accident and have hesitated since, for I don't know what to say. But on Wednesday next we leave for Toronto to get our commissions, and Mac won't be with us. So I'm doing what I can for him anyway. You will see that he is not forgotten here.

When I came here an old man said to me. "It should make a difference to you fellows in the flying corps. You'll be killed —but this won't make any difference to you, I suppose —but it would help your friends to know that you had done something first.

Well, Mac did something first. It is empty talk for me to say simply "I'm sorry, but if I write of Mac you may understand me better, and at the same time you will understand the something that he did.

He always acted as a gentleman. We used to be inclined to rush for meals. There would be some noisy ones in the door, some funny ones behind, and the ones with an idea of behavior clear and waiting. I remember one evening seeing Mac there and saying to myself "Yes —you're behind the bunch here, but when the front is not so crowded you're there alright. You were one of the few who got out early from the school of Military Aeronautics. And you'll get flying first —and we're going to Germany. You'll be there too, and some of those noisy ones will give you room, too."

Well, I thought a lot more than I can write —I thought of writing to my brother's younger boys—I'm getting leave and will see them and will tell them. For I was

quite right. When it is a question of hard work or trouble Mac was there first and stayed until it was done. He used to carry meals down to the hospital for the hurt boys — I didn't know of it 'til afterwards.

At Leaside we were talking of formation flying once, and the troubles of a leader. Mac said, "I have been in six formations and led five of them and then he went on to tell us of the job. I don't know of anyone else who was good enough to have been picked for leader five times out of six. And I saw him come in the time he was Number Two. He reported the leader down in a field and saw the officer off to help him. Number Three came in soon after. "Say, I lost the leader. I couldn't chase him. He was doing nose dives and S turns and everything else. How long did you follow him?" Mac said, and it was rather prophetic, "To the bitter end, boy."

The end was bitter. I think it always must be. But death came to him very quickly. He was so good a pilot that he must have been hit very suddenly with no chance or he would have got away. And although the machines had not far to fall, he was gone before they hit the earth. Our Captain, Captain McLean, got very badly burned getting Mac out, but he was too late.

Well Sir, I realize that anything I say can't amount to much but still, I want you to understand that Mac lived and died like a gentleman, and that I hope to do as well. I can't hope to do better.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
George E Dowler

On a whim, I checked to find what happened to **George Dowler** and discovered that he had been killed in action in Belgium on November 10, 1918. How sad to

think that this young man lost his life like so many others, and just before the cease of fire the next day, November 11. He was the last Canadian airman killed in the Great War. **George Dowler, the son of James and Alice E. Dowler** of Veteran, Alberta rests at Monbliart Communal Cemetery. At the Dowler family plot in Banff there is a plaque commemorating George that reads, simply, "Sleeps in Flanders Fields."



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KATHERINE McMILLAN

In 1917, Robert and Evan's sister, 16 year old Katherine was in her first year at Dalhousie University in Halifax. The **Halifax Explosion** occurred on Thursday, December 6, 1917, when the city of Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, was devastated by the huge detonation of the SS *Mont-Blanc*, a French cargo ship, fully loaded with wartime explosives, which accidentally collided with a Norwegian ship, the SS *Imo* in "The Narrows" section of the Halifax harbour.

About 2,000 people were killed by debris, fires, or collapsed buildings and it is estimated that over 9,000 people were injured. This is still the world's largest man-made accidental explosion. Most of the devastation from the explosion was closer to the harbour, but it was felt up the hill at Dalhousie and there was also damage. Many of the windows were blown out and people were injured from flying glass. Many of the students went to the aid of those injured in the other parts of Halifax. By February, the Carnegie Corporation had agreed to finance the repairs of Dalhousie University.

As soon as possible, Katherine returned home to Jacquet River. By this time her brother Robert had been reported "missing in action" and then discovered as a prisoner of war. In January of 1918 her only other

brother, Evan, was killed in an air collision while training as a pilot in Ontario. Can you imagine a mother's distress? One son killed, one son prisoner of war and a daughter involved in the Halifax explosion all within a few months? There was absolutely nothing she could do for Evan or even Robert, BUT she could request that Katherine change universities and enroll at Mount Allison in Sackville, New Brunswick and she did! Another daughter, Helen was finishing a BA at Mount Allison and Sackville was considered a much safer place as it was inland with not as much war activity. Katherine agreed to make the change and completed her BA in 1921.

WILLIAM AND MAGGIE

During the war there were still 3 girls at home. Edith and May were 14 and 12 when the war ended. Gwendolyn was born in 1914 just as the war began. William, their father was actively involved in both his lumber business and his large store. In addition to all these responsibilities, both William and Maggie knit socks to send to the boys overseas, and after learning that Robert was being held as prisoner of war in Germany, Maggie packed a box of food every second week and sent it off without fail.



Please help us honour your ancestors who served in the First World War. Our tribute to these people will continue into the winter edition of Ancestry. We would like to include both short biographies such as those on the next page as well as longer articles such as that about the McMillan family on pages three to eight. Don't forget to include picture(s) if you have them!

Honouring NFHS Ancestors Who Fell in the First World War



July 28, 2014 marked the one hundreth anniversary of the beginning of World War 1. To honour those who fell during the First World War, AncesTree has invited members of Nanaimo Family History Society to include a tribute to relatives who were casualties during this “war to end all wars.” If you would like to contribute to these tributes or if you have a longer story that relates to an ancestor’s war experiences, please put pen to paper or fingers to keyboard and submit your stories. We plan to continue these tributes through the winter issue, so please consider including members of your family if you have not already done so. A family untouched by the horrors of this war is very rare indeed.

AGATE, Henry Victor (1892-1915)



Born at Nutfield, Surrey, in 1892, my first cousin twice removed, Henry Victor Agate was the son of **Edwin Agate and Mercy Leigh Howick**. Victor grew up in Bletchingley, Surrey, the home of an Agate family for at least two centuries. He enlisted as a private with the Queen’s Royal West Surrey Regiment, 1st Battalion, and served in France where he was killed on the Somme, August 8, 1916. He was twenty-four years old at his death. Henry Victor Agate rests in France at Dernancourt Communal Cemetery, three kilometres south of Albert.



Submitted by NFHS member Carolyn Kemp

CRYSLER, Carlton Aquilla (1898-1917)



My second cousin twice removed, Carlton Crysler, was born February 10, 1899, son of **Aquilla Walsh Crysler and Christina Anguish** of Delhi, Ontario. A member of the 23rd Squadron, RAF, Carlton had trained in England from November 1917 to January 1917. In *Dolphin and Snipe Aces* by Norman Franks, the author records that Carlton, a nineteen year old, flying a Sopwith Dolphin on May 20, 1918, “had been attacked by three Fokker Dr. I’s, and in the subsequent dogfight, witnessed by many Allied troops on the ground, he reportedly shot down a

triplane before his own aircraft was set on fire. He then rammed a second Fokker ...” (p. 23). Carlton rests in France at Adelaide Cemetery, Villers-Bretonneux.

Submitted by NFHS member Peter Sowden

NEWS BRIEFS

Library and Archives Canada

- **LAC** has announced the addition of digitized microfilms to its [Héritage](#) website. Records are in the language of origin, but titles have been translated: searching in the original language will improve search results. Topics include Canadian Army Courts Martial documents, 1842 Canada West census returns, French colonial archives, Lower Canada Land Papers, and many others.
- A new page on Canadian war brides from both WWI and WWII has been added to the [Military Heritage](#) site.
- [War Diaries of First World War](#) is a site now available. Using “Image Search,” WWI diaries, now digitized, can be accessed.

The Canadian Letters & Image Project

Can you help locate Canadian WWI materials? What do you have in your closets and attics? [The Canadian Letters and Images Project](#) is an online archive of the Canadian war experience. As an online archive materials are borrowed, digitized, and then returned to their owners. In this manner archival materials which would otherwise not be seen are brought into the public domain. Roughly half of the Canadian Expeditionary Force in WWI was foreign born, largely from Great Britain, so letters written home ended up in Great Britain rather than Canada. We'd like to be able to tell their stories as well through the project. Project organizers wish to borrow letters, diaries, photographs, and so on, connected not only to Canadian soldiers with families in Canada but also to the wartime experience of Canadian personnel whose families were in Great Britain. If you can help us, please contact the project through the website, or by writing to: Dr. Stephen Davies, Project Director, The Canadian Letters and Images Project, Vancouver Island University, 900 Fifth Street, Nanaimo, British Columbia, Canada, V9R 5S5.

Canadian Expeditionary Force Records

Canadiana, a digitation service, has recently added Canadian Expeditionary Force registers to its site: “Canada had only 3,100 under arms in August 1914, few countries having entered a major international conflict with less military preparation. The creation of a Canadian contingent in Europe depended on an influx of volunteers drawn from the civilian population as well as the larger Canadian militia, whose structure and organization is detailed in the [Quarterly Militia List of the Dominion of Canada](#) (1899-1917).”

“These registers describe units as recruited and organized in Canada, often within a particular geographical region. Page one usually lists the commanding officers in order of rank; other members follow on succeeding pages in alphabetical order. Many of these battalions were broken up on arrival in Europe and absorbed into existing reserve units before being fed piecemeal to reinforce units at the Front.”

The site can be searched by keyword (such as name) and date range, and provides former corps, name and address of next of kin, and country of birth. Access is free.

NEWS BRIEFS continued from page 11

What Do First Names Reveal About Our Ancestors?

An interesting article posted by *Genealogy In Time* discusses what registered first names may reveal about families. The article [“What First Names Reveal About Someone”](#) discusses deliberate misspellings of common names, the use of middle names, and registered names that are usually considered diminutive names (Harry for Harold and so on).

Brickwalls — Understanding Name Problems

A comprehensive list of [Brick Wall Solutions](#) particularly with name conundrums has been included in another article by *Genealogy In Time*. The article addresses such practices as name changes upon immigration. Many Scots, for example, dropped the “Mac” from their names, so genealogists may want to try researching their family name with a “Mac” added to their searches. The article also provides tips on census returns, city directories, fire insurance maps, and many other areas of research.

Irish Archives Resource

This site links the researcher to archival collections throughout Ireland. The collections contain documents and records of great use to the the researcher of Irish genealogy, when information is needed on people, places, organizations, and events. [Irish Archives Resource](#) offers free access.

Mocavo Joins Findmypast

Another genealogy company has been sold — Mocavo, a Colorado enterprise offered a similar service as *Genealogy Search Engine*. It is uncertain as to what plans Findmypast has for its new acquisition. *Genealogy in Time* online magazine notes that “FindMyPast’s purchase of two independent genealogy companies combined with Ancestry’s recent announcement that they were shutting down some of their websites clearly shows a consolidation trend going on within the genealogy industry. Ancestry, FindMyPast and MyHeritage continue to grow in size and strength.”

Also note that the sharing agreement between Ancestry and FamilySearch signed earlier this year has resulted in Ancestry adding many “new” databases to its collection. Many of the “new” databases are ones that are still free on FamilySearch.

Dutch Genealogy

A genealogy site from the Netherlands, [WieWasWie](#) (Who Was Who) is now available in English for those of you with Dutch ancestry. As well as data from numerous archives, the site makes available user-generated content. Currently there is free access to the records although future plans will include subscriptions.

India War Diaries

The National Archives of the United Kingdom has added to its [Operation War Diaries](#) site the records of 171 Indian infantry units deployed to the western front during World War I. These diaries cover the Lahore and Meerut Divisions as well as the Secunderbad Cavalry Brigade.

Unit diaries for all units are being added regularly. The information found in the data on this site can be valuable for the genealogist since it can document specific individuals as well as the units in which they served. The home site provides access to a tutorial on how to read the documents.

Web Updates

Ancestry

[Alaska, Passenger and Crew Manifests, 1906-1981](#)
[Birmingham Rate Books 1831-1913](#)
[Canada Loyalist Collections](#)
[Canada South African War Land Grants 1908-1910](#)
[England, Lancashire Baptisms, Marriages and Burials](#)
[Irish Marriages in Walker's Hibernian Magazine, 1771-1812](#)
[London, King's Bench and Fleet Prison Discharge Books and Prisoner Lists, 1734-1862](#)
[London, Marshalsea Prison Commitment and Discharge Books, 1811-1842](#)
[New York Prison Records 1842-1908](#)
[Somerset, Wells, Bishop's Transcripts 1594-1736](#)

FamilySearch

If you're looking for new databases in a particular location, choose your location from the FamilySearch home page and then skim the lists noting the dates that the data has been added. This is a great help when you're revisiting brick wall individuals in your research. Limited space allows us to post only a few recently added or supplemented databases that may be of interest to our members:

[California, County Birth and Death Records, 1849-1994](#)
[Jamaica, Civil Registration, 1880-1999](#)
[Netherlands, Zuid-Holland Province, Church Records 1076-1916](#)
[New York, Passenger Lists, 1820-1891](#)
[South Africa, Cape Province, Civil Deaths, 1895-1994](#)
[Sweden, Stockholm City Archives, Index to Church Records, 1546-1927](#)
[United States, GenealogyBank Obituaries, 1980-2014](#)

findmypast

[Australia, Victoria, State Historic Passenger Lists](#)
[Ireland Donegal, Fermanagh, Tyrone and Wicklow Parish and Cemetery Records](#)
[National School Records](#)
[Surrey Marriages 1540-1841](#)

ScotlandsPeople

[Soldiers' Wills WWI](#)
[Valuation Rolls 1875](#) (Free Access until December 31)

Durham Online

Easington burials 1758-1797, baptisms 1769-1797
Gateshead baptisms 1559-1663
Merrington marriages 1837-1862
Stockton Holy Trinity baptisms 1838-1852
Stockton Friends Burial Ground 1878-1891
Trimdon marriages 1837-1852

[Essex and Sussex Surnames](#)

Future Guest Speakers

October 20, 2014

David Hill-Turner

**For Whom the Whistle Blows:
Bob Swanson and the Whistle Farm**



Since the dawn of civilization, sound has been used to announce celebrations and mourning, to call people to worship and to warn of danger. The technology for producing the sound

has evolved over time – horns and bells are the earliest examples. Later, steam whistles were used to mark time in factories, warn ships of danger and on steam locomotives that sped across the country. In Nanaimo, the “Boss Whistle” at the No.1 Esplanade colliery called men to work and the dreaded single long wail warned of an accident in the mine.

In the early 1950s, the sound of a train whistle changed one man’s life. Bob Swanson, better known as the loggers’ poet, accepted a challenge: invent a whistle for the new diesel locomotives on Vancouver Island that sounds like a steam whistle! Bob referred to it as the “sound of a sick moose” and the challenge launched a new direction in Bob’s already busy life. As his business grew, he soon needed a new place to test his loud inventions. His solution — he assembled the Whistle Farm near Nanaimo.

We will learn more about the life of the fascinating Bob Swanson at this presentation. And as a man louder than life, we’ll also hear from him through the everyday sounds he created.

While David now calls Vancouver Island home, he grew up in small communities on the northern shore of Canada’s Hudson’s Bay and in the Northwest Territories. His interest in the history of the Pacific Northwest was sparked when he moved to the coast to ski

and scuba dive. Through diving and sailing, he has explored miles of the BC coast. His growing fascination with coastal history influenced him to study history at the University of British Columbia.

David has worked with museums, marine industry, government and universities preparing and presenting a variety of interpretative programs about maritime history. In co-operation with the World Ship Society and BC Coast Pilots, David authored *Business in Great Waters*, a history of coastal pilotage. David’s broad interest in maritime history has been featured on local and national radio and television. For over 15 years he worked in national parks and historic sites. Until May 2014, he was the curator at the Nanaimo Museum. He is the Past President of The Underwater Archaeological Society of BC and is an Honorary Research Associate at Vancouver Island University. Apart from Scuba diving, David and his wife Brenda enjoy hiking, sailing, travel and international volunteer work

November 17, 2014

Dave Obee

1984, Thirty Years Ago



Technology has had a huge impact on our lives and our research techniques. The first half of this presentation examines the way we did research back in 1984, before the rise of the Internet and the many resources we have at our disposal today. The transformation is stunning,

and gives a hint of what might be in store in the years to come. The second half looks at the impact of that technology, including the good points and the bad. Among other things, while we have access to more information than ever before, we have lost much of our privacy.

MEMBERS' MISCELLANY

**A Brick Wall
Can You Help??**

Bev Sherry has been trying to locate obituaries for three individuals who died in Nanaimo. She located one at our library, but has had no luck with two others:

- Gibson **Yarrow** — died Nanaimo, January 25, 1916
- Mathew **Cottle** — died Nanaimo March 25, 1916

Can you help with her search? Contact Bev at bjsherry@telus.net

**Ontario Genealogical Society Blog
Brick Walls**

The Ontario Genealogical Society blog now has an interactive site where researchers can enter their [brick wall queries](#) in order to receive public assistance. The site has “house rules”:

- If you have hit a brickwall, you may send a detailed, **but brief**, i.e. no more than 4 paragraphs, query to: blog@ogs.on.ca – please use **Brickwall Query** in the subject line of your message.
- Once your query has been posted, anyone who believes they can offer assistance may contact you in one of two ways:
 - Indicate and Include contact information in your query – Keep in mind though – this is a public site!!
 - Not comfortable with putting your info *out there*? No problem – folks can simply leave any info they may have in the comments sections of your post – you just have to remember to check the blog regularly to see if any comments have been left for you.

EDITOR'S NOTES

Thank you to the NFHS members who contributed to this edition, especially Linda Tissington for her article on the McMillan family and to Peter Sowden for his remembrance of Carlton Crysler.

Your editor had hoped to continue our remembrance page into the winter edition, but unless I have submissions from you, this will not happen. There were only two for this edition ... and one was from my family! Please submit some WWI remembrances for the winter edition!

Your journal is dependent on contributions by members – these are the articles for which we receive very positive feedback. Read around the world, your articles result in new contacts and further information on your family.

If you have a submission, please forward it to our society – mark clearly in the subject line of your email that your article is for AncesTree. If you haven't received an acknowledgement reply from your editor within a day or two, please resend the submission.

**Family History Center
(LDS) Library Hours**

The regular hours of the Nanaimo Family History Centre, 2424 Glen Eagle Crescent are Tuesdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.



A Day With Cyndi
Nanaimo Family History Society
Saturday October 11, 2014
9:00 AM — 5:00 PM
Beban Park Social Center 2300 Bowen Road Nanaimo, BC
Presented by Cyndi Ingle, owner/creator of Cyndi's List

Evaluating Web Sites: 14 Years Later

Years ago Cyndi presented a lecture titled Evaluating Web Sites. All these years later several things have changes, while many things have stayed the same. How can you know whether what you find online is accurate and reliable? We'll discuss how to delve into online datasets and determine the original source of the materials, and then how to evaluate the material you find there.

Productive Social Networking: A Genealogist's Water Cooler

It seems that the Internet and social networking both were made just for genealogists. Social networking can be a productive research venue. Share tools, methodologies, and advice with fellow genealogists. Interact with family members — both genealogists and non-genealogists — to share photos, documents, and stories of your common ancestors. Host collaborative research projects with others. We will discuss how to spend your social networking time in ways that will help you move your research efforts forward.

Foreign Language Tools for English Language Genealogists

Whether you're reading an old letter, a record on microfilm, or a website in a foreign language, don't despair. There are several tools and options available to help you get a basic idea of what it is you're reading without taking a foreign language class. We'll explore various ways to use these tools to help decipher key words and special alphabet characters, moving you a bit further along in your research.

Question and Answer Session

Conference Fee: \$50 NFHS members and \$60 non-members.

Coffee and tea provided

Please bring a bag lunch

For further information, please contact Jan Nelson at [NanaimoFamilyHistory](http://NanaimoFamilyHistory.com).

Registration forms are available at our [NFHS web page](http://NFHS.com)

Nanaimo Family History Society
Executive 2014-15

President	Ron Blank
Vice President	Sharon Davison
Secretary	Gary Forbes
Treasurer	Jocelyn Howat
Director at Large	Peter Sowden
Program Director	Maureen Wootten
Membership Director	Enid Lighthart
Librarian	Volunteer Needed!
Library Coordinator	Janis Nelson
Newsletter Editor	Carolyn Kemp

AncesTree

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