

Family History Newsletter



Editors: Annette Fulford, Andrea Lister
Contributors: Family History Group

Production: Val Patenaude
Distribution: Brenda L. Smith

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The Family History group supports members in researching their family history research. Members have ancestors from around the globe.

They meet on the first Wednesday of each month at 7pm at the Maple Ridge Library.

Email: mrfamilyhistory@gmail.com

Beyond Schedule 1 of the Census

by Andrea Lister

www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/census/Pages/census.aspx

The Family History Group has embarked on a project to look at the Maple Ridge censuses between 1881 and 1921, and possible areas of focus, such as ethnicity, population, business, industry, occupations, etc. At this point, the project is still in its early stages.

Did you know that there are other documents that complement each census? Links to instructions to enumerators and statistical reports can be found on the Library and Archives Canada website.

Each census had a document with instructions to enumerators on how to collect the names and other information. For 1881 those instructions can be found in *Manual Containing the "Census Act" and the Instructions to Officers Employed in the Taking of the Second Census in Canada*, 1881, Ottawa: Department of Agriculture, Census Branch, 1881 (AMICUS 7204103) on the Internet Archive. This is where you will find what the abbreviations mean. As well, you will find that "'unsound mind' is intended to include all those unfortunates who are plainly deprived of reason." In 1891, "S. 2/6" in column 4 means the house is made of stone, has two stories and six rooms.

<https://archive.org/details/1881981881i11882engfra/page/n1>

There are instructions as what is the definition of a household. Also, who to include and who not to

include. In 1891, the instructions were very specific for sea-faring men, fishermen, lumbermen, hunters and so forth. "Sea-faring men or fishermen at sea or on the coast, lumbermen or hunters in the forest, merchants, or tradesmen, or labourers, or travellers, or students, or any others happening to be temporarily absent from home and not permanently settled elsewhere, are not to be considered as absent for the purposes of the census ; but their names are to be registered by the enumerator as being present."

Other information was gathered during the enumeration. For example, *Schedule 2, Nominal return of the deaths*, and *Schedule 3, Real estate, public institutions and industrial establishments*. Unfortunately, only *Schedule 1* has been preserved but that information has been turned into reports.

These statistical reports can be quite illuminating. The *Census of Canada, 1890-91. Recensement du Canada* reveals on page viii that "an effort has been made to give for the first time the occupations of the female part of the population."

<https://archive.org/details/1880censusofcana01canauoft/page/n5>

Then there is the *Canada Year Book (CYB) Historical Collection* that covers the first century of Canada's history, from 1867 to 1967.

https://www65.statcan.gc.ca/acyb_r000-eng.htm

Newspapers are a good resource as well. In 1921 there are several reports of Dukhobors refusing to give information to enumerators. The May 3, 1901 *Montreal Gazette* reported that the discussion in parliament was that the 1901 census had been "bungled" and that it cost three times more than the 1891 census.

For more information:

Obee, David B. *Counting Canada: A Genealogical Guide to the Canadian Census*. Altona, Manitoba, Canada: Friesens Corporation, 2012.

1891 Ontario Letter Transcribed

By Brenda L. Smith

Photos by Erica Williams

My dear friend gave me the gift of a letter written in 1891. In a couple of hours I transcribed this missive and took a quick look at *Ancestry.ca* to discover who the writer and recipient might be.

The envelope is cream rag, light weight 10 x 9.5 cm. The cancelled three cent Canada Postage stamp is orange, mildly faded black ink, postmarked Bellville Ontario 05 October 1891, franked 06 October 1891. The addressee is Mrs. Steele, 151 James Street South, Hamilton Ont. The letter is cream note paper, stationery of Merchants Bank of Canada, 21.5 x 17.5 cm, folded in half, once vertically and once horizontally, with unfaded black ink.

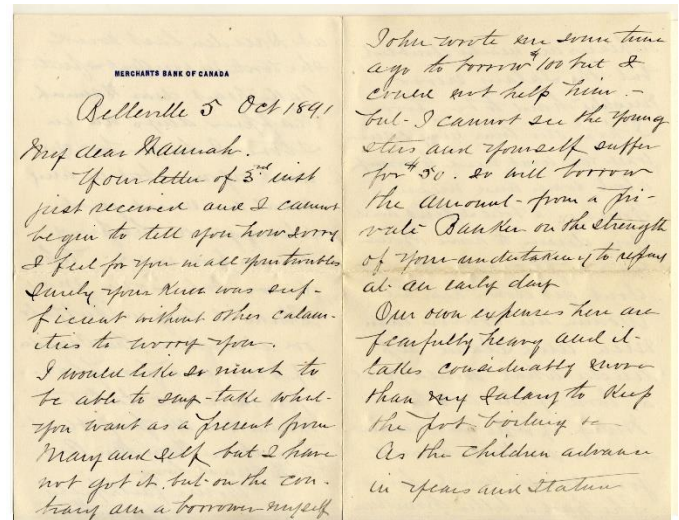


I think it is William Hamilton who wrote to his sister-in-law Hannah Steele. In the 1891 Census of Canada, William was the 55 year old manager of a bank in Belleville, Ontario living with his wife Mary aged 40 and their nine children: Lindsay H 16, Henry H 14, Muriel M 13, Kathleen C 11, Mary S 10, Margaret 8, William 7, Robert 5, Gwendolin 3. In the same census, Hannah Steele, aged 44, lived in Hamilton, Ontario with her husband RT Steele 48, a leader of vocal music, and their four children: Mary 16, Ralph 15, Frank 13, and Clara 6.

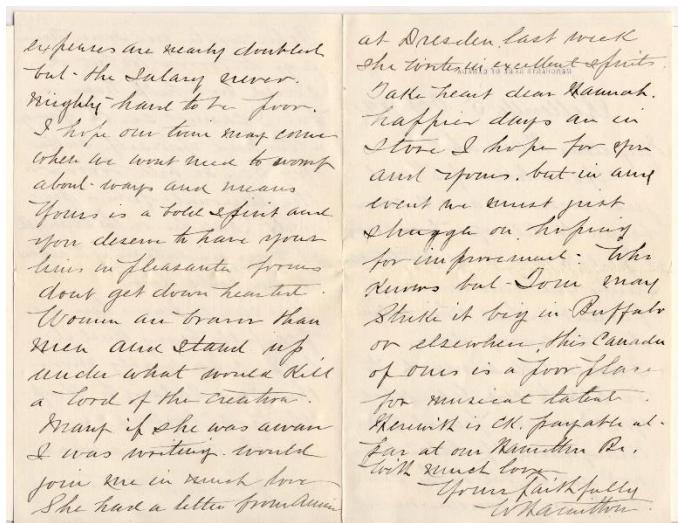
Directory and vital record searches confirm that Hannah More Miles and William's wife Mary Ann were born in Elizabethtown, Hudson Bay Territory (or Manitoba). Their parents were Robert and Elizabeth Miles. In the 1871 census, widowed Elizabeth Miles was living with her daughters Mary 25 and Hannah 23 in Brockville, Ontario.

The same searches suggest that Tom, who is off in Buffalo, is Hannah's husband. Richard Thomas Steele was a "Bachelor Gentleman" when they married in 1872. Later records confirm that he was making their living as a music teacher, leader of vocal music, and a professor of music.

Questions spring to mind. Was William Hamilton associated with the Bank of Hamilton that became the Imperial Bank of Commerce in 1924? How poor was he, compared with a music teacher? Did Tom Steele find his fortune in Buffalo? Was William sincere in his admiration of women's strength or was this a polite way of telling Hannah to make do?



My goal in sharing this letter with you, fellow researchers, is to find the right home for the original and its stamped envelope. Meanwhile, please enjoy this glimpse of Canada's past. And let me know if you learn anything more about the Steele and Hamilton families.



Transcription

Special thanks to Maureen Cruise who helped with the transcription.

Page 1

MERCHANTS BANK OF CANADA

Belleville 5 Oct 1891

My dear Hannah,

your letter of 3rd inst just received and I cannot begin to tell you how sorry I feel for you in all your troubles Surely your kill [?] was sufficient without other calamities to worry you I would like so much to be able to say take what you want as a present from Mary Ann and self, but I have not got it, but on the contrary am a borrower myself

Page 2

John wrote me some time ago to borrow \$100 but I could not help him — but I cannot see the youngsters and yourself suffer for \$50. I will borrow the amount from a private Banker on the strength of your undertaking to repay at an early day. Our own expenses here are fearfully heavy and it takes considerably more than my salary to keep the pot boiling — As the children advance in years and stature

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expenses are nearly doubled but the salary never Mighty hard to be poor. I hope our time may come when we won't need to worry about ways and means. Yours is a bold spirit and you deserve to have your lives in pleasanter forms

Don't get down hearted Women are braver than men and stand up under what would kill

a Lord of the creation.

Mary if she was aware i was writing would join me in much love she had a letter from Au____[Annie?]

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at dresden last week She writes in excellent spirits. Take heart dear Hannah. happier days are in store I hope for you and yours, but in any event we must just struggle on hoping for improvement. Who knows but Tom may strike it big in Buffalo or elsewhere. This Canada of ours is a poor place for musical talents Herewith is CK payable at par on Hamilton Br [Branch]

with much love
yours faithfully
W. Hamilton

Sources

Archives of Ontario; Toronto, Ontario, Canada; *Registrations of Marriages, 1869-1928*; Reel: 7

Hamilton City Directories 1886-1887 and 1890-1891.

Library and Archives Canada. *Census of Canada, 1871, 1881, 1891, 1901, 1921.* Ottawa, Ontario, Canada: Library and Archives Canada, n.d. RG31-C-1.

Online Resources

RCAF History

<https://rcafassociation.ca/>

There is quite a bit of information under the “Heritage” menu for different squadrons and casualties.

Northern Ireland's Tithe Applotment Books Go Online

<https://www.irishgenealogynews.com/2019/11/>

The Public Record Office of Northern Ireland has released its newly digitised collection of Tithe Applotment Books online. The books, which date from c1820 to c1840, can be viewed, free of charge, on PRONI's e-catalogue.

Claire Santry has published instructions on the Irish Genealogy News blog about how to access the records.

Points to the Past

www.fvrl.bc.ca/databases.php

Points to the Past is a free research resource, produced by Gale in partnership with UBC, UVIC and SFU for use in British Columbia only. Its focus is North American and UK history, with an easy-to-use keyword search of primary sources including newspapers, maps and photographs. Includes newspapers, periodicals, and more. Available through the Fraser Valley Library website.

Find My Past

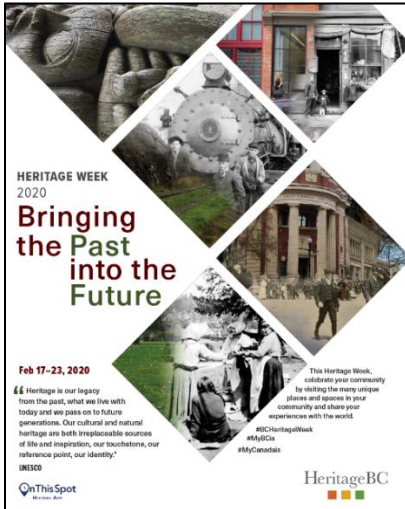
www.findmypast.com

- **Middlesex Monumental Inscriptions** between 1485 and 2018
- **Sussex Monumental Inscriptions** include Chidingly; East Dean, St Simon & St Jude; Eastbourne, Ocklynge Cemetery St Mary, Old Town; and more.

Family History Events

Heritage Week: February 17 to 23, 2020: Bringing the Past into the Future

<https://heritagebc.ca/events-activities/heritage-week/>



Maple Ridge

www.mapleridge.ca

- **Winter Fun Fair**, Come and celebrate Family Literacy Day at Maple Ridge Public Library! The Family History Group will be there to consult on your family history research problems. Saturday, January 25, 2020, 11:00 am – 2:00 pm.
- **2020 Heritage Awards**, February 20, 2020 7:00 pm at St. Andrews Heritage Church (22279 116 Avenue).

Abbotsford Family History Center

www.abbotsfordfamilyhistory.com

Abbotsford Family History Day, Saturday, April 28, 2020, 8:30am – 3:30pm. 30635 Blueridge Drive
Fee: Free.

Abbotsford Genealogical Society

Studio 2 The Reach

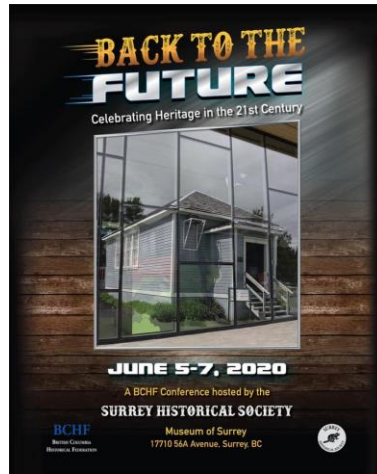
<http://abbygs.ca/index.html>

- **AGM & It's a Living** with Brenda L. Smith, Thursday, January 30, 2020, 1:30pm.

BC Historical Federation

www.bchistory.ca/conference

- **2020 BCHF Annual Conference**. June 5–7, 2020. The 2020 BCHF conference is being held in Surrey.



Langley Centennial Museum

<https://museum.tol.ca/>

- **Built for the Future: Structures in the Cemetery** with Brenda L. Smith, Saturday, February 8, 1:00–3:00pm. Fee: \$15
- **Find Granny in the Archives** with Brenda L. Smith, Saturday, February 15, 2020, 1:00–3:00pm. Fee: \$15
- **Photographs and Photographers** with Brenda L. Smith, Saturday, February 22, 2020, 1:00–3:00pm. Fee: \$15

New Westminster Library

<https://www.nwpl.ca/>

All sessions are free but space is limited so pre-registration is required. To register call 604-527-4665.

- **Family History: Introduction to Genealogy** with M Diane Rogers, Saturday, February 15, 2020, 1:30–3:00 pm.
- **Family History: Newspaper Searches** with M Diane Rogers, Saturday, February 22, 2020, 1:30–3:00 pm.

- **Family History: Online Searches** with M Diane Rogers, Saturday, February 29, 2020, 1:30–3:00 pm.
- **Family History: Online Searches** with M Diane Rogers, Saturday, March 7, 2020, 1:30–3:00 pm.
- **Family History: Post-Second World War Immigration** with M Diane Rogers, Saturday, March 14, 2020, 1:30-3:00 pm.

Nanaimo Family History Society

<http://nanaimofamilyhistory.ca/>

- **Steps to Our Ancestors**, One day Beginners/Intermediate seminar, March 28, 2020, More details on agenda TBD.

Vancouver Public Library

<https://www.vpl.ca/>

- **Genealogy: Trace Your Ancestors with Ancestry Library Edition**, Thursday, February 6, 2020, 10:30 am–12:30 pm. Central Library.

Vancouver Postcard Club

<http://vancouverpostcardclub.ca/>

Hastings Community Centre, 3096 E. Hastings St., Vancouver

Postcard Genealogy, an illustrated interactive session with M. Diane Rogers, Sunday, January 12, 2020, 11:30 am–2:00 pm.

Maple Ridge Family History Group, first Wednesday of the month, 7pm in the Greenside Room at the Maple Ridge Library.

January 8, 2020: Gunter Rebele – Extreme Genealogy

February 5, 2020: Andrea Lister – Copyright and Family Historians.

March 4, 2020: Marlene Dance – Living in Ruskin, 1950's and early 1960's.