

Family History Newsletter



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November
2020

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 virtually until further notice.

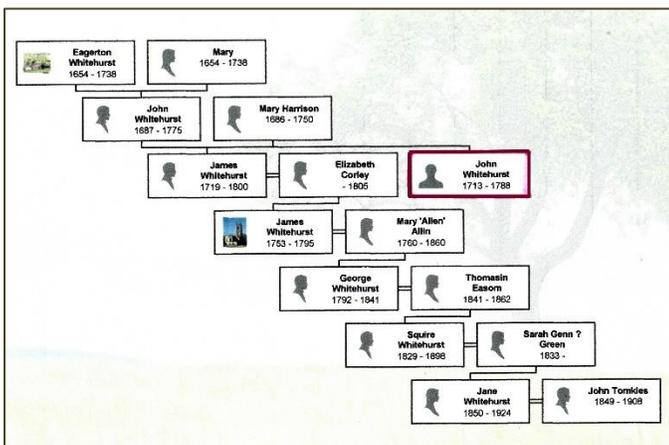
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John Whitehurst FRS

By Gunter Rebele

While doing family research for my daughter-in-law, I was delighted to find a real gem in her family tree, John Whitehurst (1713), Fellow of the Royal Society, a shining light in the English Enlightenment era.

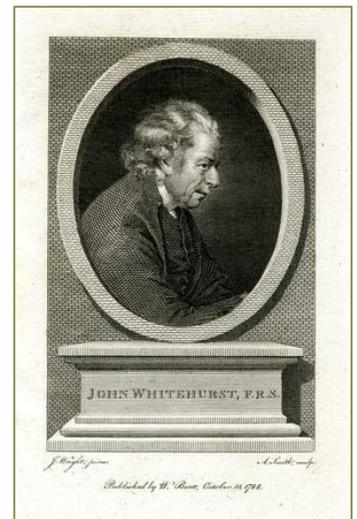
He is rather a very distant relative—her 7th great-grandfather's brother, or her 8th degree cousin—but a cousin nevertheless.



Whitehurst was one of the foremost scientists of his day, father of modern geology and founder member of the Lunar Society along with Erasmus Darwin, Josiah Wedgewood, James Watt and others.

Whitehurst was born in Congleton, Cheshire, on April 10, 1713 to a clockmaker, the elder John Whitehurst. Receiving only a slight formal education, the younger Whitehurst was taught clockmaking by his father, who also encouraged the boy's pursuit of knowledge.

About 1736, Whitehurst entered into business for himself at Derby, where he constructed a turret clock for the town's guildhall. For this, the corporation enrolled him as a burgess, which gave him the freedom to trade. With his skills in mechanics, pneumatics, and hydraulics, he also made thermometers, barometers, precision



compasses, and other philosophical instruments. He helped Benjamin Franklin to develop a standardized clock for his research. On January 9, 1745, Whitehurst married Elizabeth Gretton, daughter of George Gretton, rector of Trusley and Dalbury in Derbyshire.

On May 13, 1779, Whitehurst was elected a fellow of the Royal Society. In 1783, he was sent to examine the Giant's Causeway and the volcanic remains in the north of Ireland, embodying his observations in the second edition of his Inquiry.

In 1774, he obtained the position of Stamper of the Money Weights and regulation of the gold coinage at the Royal Mint under an act of 1780, finally leaving Derby in 1780 for London.¹

¹ <https://www.sellingantiques.co.uk/612642/18th-century-whitehurst-of-derby-longcase-clock/>

He invented the "pulsation engine" a water-raising device which was the precursor of the hydraulic ram and in 1784 he contrived a system of ventilation for St. Thomas's Hospital.

In 1778, Whitehurst published his theory on geological strata in *An Inquiry into the Original State and Formation of the Earth*, and in 1787, age 74, a year before his death, he published *An Attempt towards obtaining invariable Measures of Length, Capacity, and Weight, from the Mensuration of Time* (London). Whitehurst wanted to study the shape of the earth by measuring differences in gravitation. For this, he studied heavy pendulums in different locations.² He died in 1788, leaving his property and clock making business to his nephew John Whitehurst II, son of his brother James, who had succeeded to his father's firm in Congleton. There were no surviving children. Whitehurst antique clocks are presently selling for 3,000–4,000 GBP.

Do You Have a Politically-Minded Ancestor?

By Brenda L. Smith

I have a few public facing ancestors and they have been in mind during election season. My introduction to politics began as a small child listening to the grownups debating round card tables and leaning over farm equipment.

Stan Carnell b. 1903 d. 1989 was married to my grandmother's cousin. He owned the Dawson Creek Star newspaper Stan was elected in 1956, 1960 and 1963 as a Member of the Legislative Assembly in the British Columbia Social Credit Government representing South Peace River. I remember him sitting at our kitchen table talking with constituents.

Farther back in time and place, **Thomas Nock** b. 1761 d. 1840 was Mayor of Bridgnorth, Shropshire 1814-15. His grandson **Edwin Thomas Smith Nock**, b. 1828 d. 1894, in August 1892 was an auctioneer and corn factor. He and his partner Thomas Deighton were aldermen on Bridgnorth Town Council and served as mayor 1877-78. On 18 November 1828 Edwin's father, mercer and draper, George Nock b. 1798 d. 1834

signed a petition to ask Parliament to exclude Roman Catholics from holding office.

Mary Ellen Campbell Smith b. 1887 d. 1954 had an active public life that began in Dawson City when her husband George Robert Smith b. 1869 d. 1942 received an appointment as the Acting Superintendent of Public Works for Yukon Territory. George lost his job after the Conservatives won the 1911 federal election. They came to North Vancouver in 1912. Mary Ellen returned to nursing and, through their Liberal connections, George received a secure job. She continued to work as a party organizer for many years.



Mary Ellen Smith, President of the Happier Old Age Club greeting Mayor Gerry McGeer, 1948.

City of Vancouver Archives, AM54-S4-: Port P975

Politics ran in the family. Their son **Charles George Smith** b. 1913 d. 1978 worked for Sacred Grace McCarthy's campaign in the BC election of 1975. According to Charlie's mother-in-law Emma Eliza Biggs b. 1881 d. 1974, she and her husband Arthur Owen Walter b. 1879 d. 1971 were supporters, and hosts when he came to Vancouver, of J. S. Woodworth, founder of the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) the pre-cursor of today's New Democratic Party.

Charlie's uncle **Richmond Charles Biss** b. 1868 d. 1943 had a colourful career in Saskatchewan before coming to North Vancouver in 1907. Soon he was a North Van alderman, serving from 1911 to 1915 when he took a pre-emption near Forest Grove, BC and

² <https://www.revolutionaryplayers.org.uk/a-portrait-of-john-whitehurst/>

returned to farming. Active in the Farmers' Union and a justice of the peace, he ran for the CCF in the Cariboo riding in the 1937 and 1941 BC elections.

Secret ballot was introduced to BC in 1873, two years after we joined Confederation, and in 1874 Chinese people, Indigenous people, and female Canadians were prohibited from voting. From 1878 to 1883, federal government employees and school teachers were prohibited from voting or campaigning. These details and many other interesting details about our democratic process are available on Elections BC's "Electoral History of BC" page elections.bc.ca/resources/outreach-and-education/electoral-history-of-bc/

For a summary of election candidates and results see elections.bc.ca/docs/rpt/1871-1986_ElectoralHistoryofBC.pdf:

- Between 1871 and 1986 BC had 34 general elections.
- The 10th General Election in 1903 was the first provincial election in BC fought along organized federal party lines, i.e. Conservative and Liberal.
- 16 political parties fielded candidates in the election held 1 December 1920. For comparison, in the 2020 election voters chose candidates from ten parties.

Query from the MRFHG Website

By Brenda L. Smith

In November, while we recall the contributions that our ancestors have made to the safety and security of their homes and lives through military service, I am exploring some online sources for information about civilian participation in the Canadian Second World War experience.

We hear from folks who find us via the Maple Ridge Museum and Community Archives website. Sometimes we receive comments about newsletter topics. And sometimes we respond to queries for research help. Last week we heard from a man asking for clarity about a document found among his mother's papers. He wrote:

I have a ton of little pieces of paper with assorted facts/clues that I would like to verify for our family history. One piece of paper references ARP and there seems to be some specifics that I was hoping you would be able to confirm for me....

The details:

- Civilian Defense Committee ARP # 240,693
- Member of Civilian Defense Committee January 8, 1943 Toronto, Region #9
- Basic Home Nursing Course 1942
- Canadian Red Cross Emergency Reserve

To tackle the data package, I first looked for an overview. I found an interesting paper that describes the Second World War civil defence of Canada at www.publicsafety.gc.ca/lbrr/archives/ua%20929.c2%20e49%201986-eng.pdf. My second stop for general information was the Canadian War Museum catalogue www.warmuseum.ca/cwm/exhibitions/newspapers/intro_e.html If you drill down you will find clues to newspaper articles about Canada's civil defence preparations and events.

The next step was to look more directly at the information provided in the query. A simple online search led me to the *WarTime Canada* site. <https://wartimecanada.ca/categories/air-raid-precautions> *WarTime Canada* is a project of historians at the University of Western Ontario (see wartimecanada.ca/about-us). There I found a range of items discussing the Air Raid Precautions (ARP) program and sample documents. The search string "ARP Toronto 1942" yielded instruction booklets for air raid precautions and regulations, how to prepare homes and shops for blackout, sample documents, and essays about these items. Further searching for other elements of the query led me to the Civilian Defense Committee, and nursing training linked to air raid training. I found an image of the Air Raid Police Badge Ontario Civilian Defense Committee on a memorabilia sale site.

The Canadian Red Cross site includes The Second World War: 1939-1945 www.redcross.ca/about-us/about-the-canadian-red-cross/historical-highlights/the-second-world-war-1939-1945 This page is a starting place for learning more about the "Canadian Red Cross Emergency Reserve".

Wartime history is rife with food restrictions, propaganda, censorship, and tragedy. Thinking about the tensions of enforcing civil defence regulations, I opened out the search to discover the transcript of The Civilian Front Line an address to the Empire Club of Canada 02 April 1942.

<http://speeches.empireclub.org/62611/data?n=5>
Another aspect of the civilian wartime experience

appears in newspaper articles such as "Ousting of Italian pastor from A.R.P. brings protest", *Toronto Daily Star*, 26 March 1942.

www.italiancanadianww2.ca/collection/details/icea2010_0008_0025

It is likely that the young woman with the qualifications listed on her documents was a nurse and a volunteer active in Toronto's Second World War civil defence program from early 1942. I hope that this preliminary. She represents our mothers and grandmothers who gave everything they had to support the effort to secure our nation.

Lest We Forget



Free Access to Military Records

- **Ancestry:** Free access to Ancestry's global military records runs from November 1 to 11 at 11:59 EST.
- **Fold3:** November 1 to 11, and is limited to Canadians' participation in the Revolutionary War, War of 1812, Fenian Raids, and World War One.
- **Newspapers.com:** free from November 6 until November 11 at 11:59 pm EST.

Tower of London Remembers

www.hrp.org.uk/tower-of-london/history-and-stories/tower-of-london-remembers/#gs.kfvuo2



Each year since 2014, as part of Brenda's own remembrance of sacrifices in war, she has viewed the Tower of London Poppy Project. *Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red* was an installation of 888,245 ceramic poppies filling the moat of the Tower of London designed to acknowledge the onset of war in 1914. On the site you can view the history of the project, culminating with Beyond the Deepening Shadow, the lighting of lamps in the moat in 1018 to complete the commemoration.

Microfilm Collection at MR FVRL

www.fvrl.bc.ca

The Maple Ridge Public Library has a state-of-the-art microfilm reader/printer, a STImaging ViewScan 4. Read all about it in our [May 2019 newsletter](#).

While many historical records have been digitized, there are still many records and documents that are only available on microfilm or microfiche.

The microfilm is not in high demand so it is best to call ahead and make sure that its software has been updated and it is ready to use.

Maple Ridge Library's microfilm collection of local newspapers has not been digitized and they are not available electronically. The collection consists of:

- *Haney Gazette* (1922–1984)
- *Maple Ridge News* (1979–1996)
- *Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows News* (1997–2012)
- *Daily British Columbian* (1861–1869)
- *British Columbian* (1890–1922)
- *Mainland Guardian* (1870–1889)
- *Fraser Valley Record* (Mission, 1908–1927)
- BC Census (1881, 1891, 1901)
- BC Directories (1860-1910)
- BC Death Index (1872-1978)
- BC Marriage Index (1872-1924).

Capture the entire image or just a portion. Resize an image. Add notes and highlights to an image. Combine, arrange and edit multiple images into one page. Print, save to a USB stick, or send images by email. Easy to use instructions are on hand as well as an online tutorial.



The ST ViewScan 4 and dedicated family history computer.

WHILE WE ARE APART...

COVID-19 continues to keep us at home, behind masks, and socially distant. Last issue we heard from friends about how they are keeping their research fresh and stimulating. These inspirational stories were well received, so we are sharing a few more.

Lindley Roff is the President of the Kamloops Family History Society. Some of her research is deeply embedded in the early history of British Columbia. Here Lindley tells how her group has met the pandemic challenge.

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Even before the World Health Organization declared the coronavirus a pandemic on March 11, 2020, the Kamloops Family History Society and I slowed things down in terms of meetings. We had our last regular meeting on February 27. We had our last executive meeting on March 3, 2020. We sent out 2019 Reports and were due to have our Annual General Meeting on March 19, 2020; however, as our meeting venue was closed by the City, this was cancelled.

During the early period of lockdown, a subcommittee of members worked on the next edition of our journal "Family Footsteps" due May. Our contributors wrote seven articles on such things as: a history of one of Kamloops' early pioneers, DNA success stories (linking England, Canada and Western Australia), pandemics related to family members in the 1800s, a grandparents' story, and how one of our members became interested in family history research. We think this will be a regular part of our journal from here on.

Other articles included introducing new members, research we've done for others, using internet search engines for research and resources of interest. One of the articles was a guide of tips and tricks, which we called "plant a seed, grow a family tree. On May 19, we emailed out a 27-page journal to our members and other societies interested in our journals. It has been well received.

While the province was in full lockdown, the Society did not meet at all; however, as social distancing regulations were put in place and the weather got better, as many of the executive as felt it safe, started meeting informally (May 25, 2020). We met with a cup of coffee and portable chairs in one or other of our local parks. Most of what we discussed was

"How do we Keep our Society together and get meetings going again?". However, we also shared what successes we have had in our family tree research and contacts.

Initially we were not certain what to do about our missed AGM. We found we received conflicting messages from the Registry office. However, in early July we sent a series of motions out to the membership for consideration. On July 17, we held a combination virtual and in person, socially distanced, Annual General Meeting. At that time, we approved the Treasurer's and other report, confirmed the 2019 executive as the 2020 executive and adjourned the meeting. Oh, that all business could be dealt with so well.

Since that time, we continue periodic "coffee meetings". We are carefully planning an "in person" membership and teaching event. The teaching component of the meeting will provide a visual "how to" of using the Zoom app, so we do not have to meet in person again, until restrictions are lifted. We've rented another place for this meeting as our regular venue is not available. The new venue has to and will meet all the Provincial Health Officer's requirements including: social distancing, masks, taking names and contact information, etc.

Our desire to operate our Society and meet with our members is very strong. We will overcome the current challenges by being calm, being kind, and being safe.

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Marlene Dance is the leader of the Sardis Library Genealogy Group in Chilliwack. She is our local specialist in United Empire Loyalist and Home Children research. Recently she presented her memories of growing up in Ruskin to our members.

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I have had a couple of nice new discoveries on my husband's and my family trees.

#1) A DNA connection to Sweden has revealed the reason that we could find nothing on the family. A name change with an interesting story to go with it. DNA says we are related, so we go with the flow.

#2) a simple enquiry for another friend resulted in an email correspondence and as an aside a question was asked resulting in my finding the line back to my 8th Great Grandfather who arrived in New Amsterdam (now New York) in 1638. In addition, there are connections to some people living here in

Chilliwack and an old friend from the late 1980s in Burnaby, BC where we were next door neighbours.

Janice Wilkin is a dynamic member of the Campbell River Genealogy Society. I first met her in 2013 when she led a wonderful cemetery tour for that year's British Columbia Historical Federation conference. Her inspiration and excitement in family discoveries is contagious.

Staying home has always been enjoyable but knowing that no one is going to come inside is pretty wonderful! What better time than this to make a mess and sort through photos...again!. A project that never disappoints and always uncovers another clue to finding that elusive bit of info on family history. This time I decided to scan and digitally label names right on the photo itself. First up was the wedding photo of my parents. Sadly, I realized I didn't know who 2 of the bridesmaids were. After consulting with my sister, we recalled our mom had mentioned she had best friends from her youth named Claire and Marion. My quest was to find pictures of both girls to see if they were the bridesmaids. We knew Marion's last name and so we turned our attention to figure out who Claire was. Of all the pictures that had been passed on to me, there was no mention of a Claire in any of them and no one to ask.

As we chatted, my sister mentioned she had a few old pics that had been pasted in her baby book and maybe I would like to see them. A lightbulb went off! Most baby books have lists of gifts and who gave them to the new baby and sometimes a visitor's register. Sure enough Claire and her mother had both signed the visitor's page and there was a mention of their gift. I now had the maiden name of Claire. A quick search of old BC newspapers that are available online led me to the marriage announcement of Claire and the name of her husband. And wasn't I surprised to read that my mother was listed as her Matron of Honour. I then found the obituary of Claire's mother and it mentioned Claire and her husband of Prince George. Hoping to find a living descendant of Claire, I checked with Canada411 for anyone with the same last name. There were only 3 listed, so I picked up the phone and dialed. What a wonderful and unexpected surprise was in store for me.

Claire stayed in Prince George and is now 95. She lives in an assisted living facility and proudly displays her wedding picture on her dresser. I have a copy of that picture now, showing my mom beside Claire. In return I have sent Claire a copy of my mom's wedding photo showing Claire in her rightful place in the wedding party. As for the journey into Marion's family, it would take a chapter, not a few paragraphs to tell the story. I not only tapped into a wonderful family but also a source of many photos of my mom and her family growing up as next door neighbours. The surprise along the way was discovering a new first cousin. I hear another lockdown might be imminent and I am looking forward to tackling the next photo!

Online Resources

Free Family Tree Templates and Relationship Charts

www.familytreemagazine.com/free-family-tree-templates/

Whether you're a beginner or a longtime genealogy researcher, download these free family tree templates, biographical outlines and relationship charts to keep track of your ancestors. Register for or sign in to your free FamilyTreeMagazine.com account to download each form.

American WW1 Burial Cards

<http://wjh.us/aef/index.asp>

These cards document the death and burial information of over 78,000 American soldiers in the First World War. Each card contains the name of the individual who died, the unit they were assigned to, the nature of their death and the burial location(s) of the soldier, up to and including their final resting place.

Canadian Colour

www.canadiancolour.ca

Canadian Colour's Mark Truelove meticulously colourizes black and white photos. He does his research to use accurate colour references for everything from military uniforms, sports uniforms, and advertisements.

Take a look to see Canadian history in colour.

Provisional Schedule of Reserved Occupations

<http://anguline.co.uk/Free/Reserved.pdf>

In 1938/39 the British government drew up a list of reserved occupations exempting workers in those occupations from conscription. Around 5 million men were in reserved occupations, including railway workers, dockers, miners, agricultural workers, schoolteachers and doctors.

Download a copy of the *Provisional Schedule of Reserved Occupations* published in January 1939 free from the website of Anguline Research Archives.

Legacies of British Slave-Ownership

<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/>

Colonial slavery shaped modern Britain and we all still live with its legacies. This database identifies the slave-owners who claimed compensation following the 1833 *Slavery Abolition Act*; it also includes the ownership histories of thousands of estates.

Family History Events

Victoria Family History Centre

<http://victoriafhc.org/about-fhc.html>

The Victoria Family History Centre, is a branch of the Family History Library of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. They have expanded their services to include online training, which anyone, anywhere, can attend.

- **How to Research and Find Your Ancestors** with Julie Keyes on Tuesday November 10th at 7:00 pm via Zoom, contact them for the link.

Canadian Genealogical Virtual Research Institute (CGVRI)

<https://virtualgenealogy.org/>

- **Virtual Genealogical Association 2020 Conference**, All sessions will be recorded, and closed captioning will be added. November 13–15, 2020. Fee: \$59 USD for members, \$79 USD for non-members.

Campbell River Genealogy Society

www.crgenealogysociety.ca/fall-virtual-seminar/

A fall virtual seminar via Zoom. Saturday, November 7 and November 14, 2020. Fee: \$25 for all 4 sessions.

- **Family Reconstitution** – Why should family historians trace the siblings of their ancestors? What are the benefits of doing so? with Eunice Robinson, November 7, 9:30–10:30 am
- **Where Should I Put My Family History?** with Eunice Robinson. One of the biggest dilemmas facing family historians is what to do with my research when I'm no longer here. November 7, 11:00 am–noon.
- **Trusting Your Sources - How Do You Know You've Found the Right Record?** with Marie Palmer. You've worked hard to collect records for your ancestors, but how do you know you have the right records for the right people? This session/talk gives tips on how to evaluate records to ensure your research is top-notch, November 14, 9:30–10:30 am
- **DNA Testing for Genealogy** with Marie Palmer. Find out about the different types of DNA testing that are available and which might be best for your needs. We'll talk about

ethnicity estimates, privacy issues and how to use your results and matches to help break through brick walls in your family tree, November 14, 11:00 am–noon.

Quebec Genealogical eSociety

www.genquebec.com/en/2021-conference

- **The Art and Science of Quebec Genealogy**, from January 15 to 17, 2021, virtual. Details to be announced.

RootsTech Connect 2021

www.rootstech.org

A Free Online Conference Experience: the world's largest family celebration event will be entirely virtual and completely free. February 25-27, 2021.

Maple Ridge Family History Group, first Wednesday of the month, 7pm on Zoom until further notice. Email us at: mrfamilyhistory@gmail.com for information on how to join the meeting.

November 4, 2020

December 2, 2020: Apprenticeship and Unions: Job training and qualifications, workers' protections, access to jobs took form as guilds and fraternal orders in medieval Europe. The industrial revolution complicated the right to work. Presented by Brenda Smith

January 6, 2021: New Year's Challenge – Census Records – The Story They Tell Share the story of an ancestor through the details/clues found in census records.

February 3, 2021: the romance month. Have you come across a "secret romance" in your family history? This is the month to share the details with us.