

Mélanges Généalogiques

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The Ancestors of Elizabeth Davidson Benington¹

Introduction

I was quite surprised to discover that my great-grandmother, **Elizabeth (Lizzie) Davidson Benington, Herbert Benington's** mother, was born in Canada. The surprises continued when I learned that her grandparents, Davidsons and Hingstons, had settled in Quebec, near the U.S. border, but that she was born in Northern Ontario, where her father worked for a mining company. I have recently discovered the connection of her mother's family to County Cork in Ireland, but with a detour through Revolutionary America. This note is intended to record what I now know of her ancestry.

Each of the major sections of this article is about one couple, starting with section 1 on the Davidson-Benington couple. The sections on the parents of the wife and the husband of the couple in section n are numbered $2n$ and $2n+1$, respectively. I have not, however, included anything in this document on Arthur Benington's ancestry, as this is well covered in other places, such as Edward and Herbert Benington's notes.

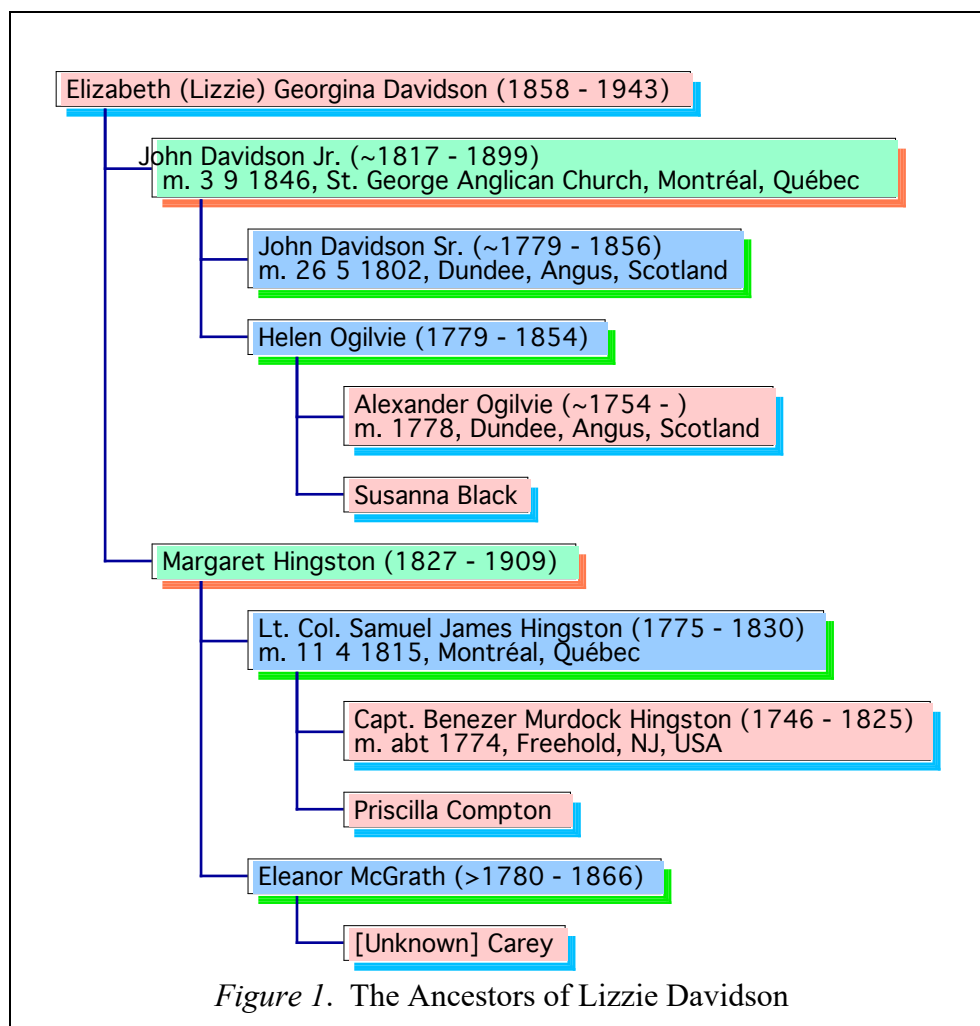
¹ This document is one of a series of occasional pieces on genealogical topics. It and others of my *Mélanges Généalogiques* are available on my web page
<http://www.ai.sri.com/~perrault/genealogy/genealogy.html>

The first four generations of Lizzie Davidson's pedigree are shown in Figure 1.

1. Arthur Benington and Elizabeth Georgina Davidson

Elizabeth Georgina Davidson², sixth child of **John Davidson, Jr.** and **Margaret Hingston** was born on 12 April 1858 in Bruce Mines, Ontario [28], where her father, John, was employed as a storekeeper by the Montreal Mining Company. She moved with her family, first to Sault Ste. Marie, then to Silver Islet (on Lake Superior), then back to Montreal in 1876.

Edward Benington writes "The story goes that Dad spotted her on the pier from the deck of a ship coming into Sault Ste. Marie, Canada, and asked a friend who she was. That



² To help distinguish the relation to me of various people mentioned in this paper, my direct ancestors are shown in boldface, the descendants of my direct ancestors are shown in SMALL CAPS, and the spouses of direct and indirect ancestors who are not themselves direct or indirect ancestors are shown in *italics*.

started the whole thing.” [3]

Arthur Benington was born in 1865 at Stockton-on-Tees, Yorkshire, England. He left the Quaker Academy in York at age 16 (ca. 1881) to join British and Benington, the family tea business³. At 18, his father sent him to Toronto to open a branch of the firm. This is where he is believed to have converted to Catholicism. About 1885, he was fired by his father (Edward Benington says the firm had lost \$100,000) and turned to odd jobs – clerking, bookkeeping, etc. In the Spring of 1887, he is in the photo-engraving business in Duluth, Minnesota, and this is where he turned to journalism, getting jobs with the *Duluth Tribune* and the *St. Paul Globe*, as “railroad and hotel reporter”. He is apparently in St. Paul by late 1887.

McCardell says that in November 1888, he cast his first vote, for Benjamin Harrison. To the best of my knowledge, it was the case then, as it is now, that one needed to have been a U.S. resident for five years before getting citizenship, and that voting has always been a privilege of citizenship. I don’t see how Arthur could have been in the US earlier than late 1884, so something about this story isn’t quite right.

Soon thereafter, he moved to Montana where he went to work for the *Helena Journal*, whose editor was Benjamin Harrison’s son, and he reported on the constitutional convention admitting Montana as a state. In the next year, he was fired from the *Helena Journal*, went to Washington as a correspondent for the *Minnesota Globe*, was laid off by them when they closed their Washington office, joined the *New York World*, and was fired by then in September 1890 – the news of this event apparently reaching him in Montreal, where he was getting married. Quite a year!

So, what were the circumstances of his meeting Lizzie in Sault Ste. Marie? Sault Ste. Marie is on the natural boat route between Duluth and Toronto (or Washington?), so he probably met her there, during the summer of 1888 or 1889 (there was probably no shipping in winter in those days, as witnessed in events relating to John Davidson, Lizzie’s father). After 1876, Lizzie was living with her parents in Montreal, but she could have been visiting relatives: her oldest sister Ellen was by then married and in Sault Ste. Marie. [10]

Arthur and Lizzie were married in Montreal, on 10 September 1890 at the residence of Lizzie’s parents, at 9 Bishop St.⁴, and the marriage was recorded at St. Paul’s Presbyterian Church. The groom was 25 years old and the bride was 32. The witnesses were Florence Davidson, Lizzie’s sister, and Sir Hugh Graham, later Lord Atholstan, the owner of the *Montreal Star*. [43]

I have long been curious as to the origin of the connection between Arthur Benington and Hugh Graham. By 1890, Arthur was still a very young man and an inexperienced journalist, who had never lived in Montreal, so he had most likely never worked for Graham. I now believe that the link was on the Davidson side: Graham was born in Athelstan, Huntingdon County, Quebec, not far from where the Davidsons and the

³ Most of the information I have on Arthur Benington’s early life and his professional life is from McCardell’s profile. [27]

⁴ 9 Bishop St. is on the east side, between Dorchester Blvd (now Boul. René Lévesque) and St. Catherine St.

Hingstons settled. His father, a Scot, would almost certainly have known Lizzie's parents and grand-parents. Graham also had close ties to CHARLES PEERS DAVIDSON (later Sir Charles), Lizzie's cousin, who ran as a Conservative for parliament in Huntingdon County in 1882, at Graham's behest and with Graham's support⁵. He also acted as Graham's lawyer in several libel cases. Sir Charles even had a son, born two years before the Benington-Davidson marriage, who was named Hugh Graham Davidson. I therefore conjecture that when Arthur, the young journalist, was taken to make the rounds of the family, he was introduced to Hugh Graham. Graham was a staunch imperialist (a few years later he raised support for a Canadian contingent in the Boer War). I wonder if this is an indication of Arthur's politics.

After their marriage, and for the rest of their lives, the Beningtons lived in New York. Arthur worked for a number of papers, including the *New York World*, the *Morning Journal* (Joseph Pulitzer's paper, which Arthur left when it was acquired by William Randolph Hearst), the *New York Mercury*, finally returning to the *New York World*, where he became a science writer. Graham and Arthur crossed paths again in the 1920s, when Arthur managed the New York World's Disarmament Campaign, a joint activity of Graham and of Ralph Pulitzer.

Around the turn of the century, he started learning Italian, which became good enough so that he could read Dante and get the job heading the US Information Agency in Italy during WWI. He was made Commander of the Crown of Italy by Victor Emmanuel and Knight Commander of the Order of Danilo by the Queen of Montenegro. He was then recalled from Montenegro by Woodrow Wilson for impolitic remarks. He was President of the National Catholic Writers Guild. He died on 20 March 1924 in Brooklyn and was buried there.

Lizzie outlived her husband by almost 20 years, and died in Montreal, at the home of her sisters at 1620 Selkirk St., #1, on 1 September 1943, but was buried at Pinelawn, Long Island. [44]

In May 1996, I spoke to Andrea Dolan McNally, née Hingston, of Montreal. She was 83 at the time, and knew Lizzie, her mother, and her sisters well. "Lizzie was a smart woman", she said. "Best sense of humour of the lot." She was a guest at the wedding of Herbert Benington and Lucette Beaubien.

3. John Davidson Jr. and Margaret Hingston

Lizzie Davidson's father, **John Davidson Jr.**, youngest child of **John Davidson Sr.** and **Helen Ogilvy**, was born in 1817 or 1818, in Scotland⁶. He came to Canada at the age of

⁵ Graham, a staunch supporter of Sir John A. Macdonald's protectionist policy considered the free-trade leanings of the farmers of Huntingdon County, along the U.S. border as "political apostasy". One of his main adversaries was the editor of the *Huntingdon Gleaner*, Robert Sellar, whom Graham tried to destroy by suing him for libel, with the legal assistance of Sir Charles [51]. For more about Sir Charles, see Section 6.1.

⁶ John Davidson was 55 in the 1871 Census of Ontario (Sault Ste. Marie), 64 in the 1881 Census of Quebec (Montreal), and 73 in the 1891 Census (Montreal) and 81 at his death in 1899. His birth record has not been found.

about 2 with his mother and siblings, who were joining their father, established in Dundee, Quebec. In 1837, he became captain in a regiment of volunteers raised by his father as part of the repression of the Patriote rebellions of 1837-38. Having distinguished himself by carrying dispatches through the Patriote lines, he was appointed by governor Sir John Colborne to a permanent regiment in Montreal [22].

On 3 September 1846, at St. George Anglican Church in Montreal [42], he married **Margaret Hingston**, born 9 April 1827 at Huntingdon, Quebec, daughter of **Lt. Col. Samuel James Hingston** and **Eleanor McGrath** [24]. The witnesses were John's brothers James and Alexander⁷.

Likely in 1851 or 1852⁸, the Davidsons and their first three children moved to Bruce Mines, Ontario⁹, where John became storekeeper for a copper mining operation run by the Montreal Mining Corporation [12]. In a company town, the storekeeper is effectively the only source of goods for the entire town. Two winters in a row, John is commended for managing to acquire goods for the winter when the supply ship fails to arrive [31].

⁷ I wondered for some time why no Hingstons were witnesses. The answer is simple: there were no adult relative Hingston males in the area at the time. Margaret's father had died in 1830, when she was 3, and her oldest brother was William, who was only 17 in 1846.

⁸ Davidson is mentioned in a letter from A. A. Campbell to (Sir) Hugh Allan, dated 10 August 1852. MMC was incorporated in 1850. The Methodist Church Records show William Frederick baptized in Algoma District in June 1854 but born in June 1851 in Elgin, but without specifying whether this is Quebec or Ontario. There is an Elgin near Huntingdon, Quebec, and there are two Elgins in Ontario, one in Southern Ontario, and one near Kingston, but none near Bruce Mines. My conjecture is that the birth was in Quebec, soon before the family move to Bruce Mines.

⁹ Bruce Mines is on the North shore of Lake Huron's North Channel, opposite St. Joseph Island, 39 miles S. E. of Sault Ste. Marie. Founded in 1842, it is the oldest copper mining town in Canada. It was named in honour of James Bruce, Lord Elgin, the founder of the Canadian Pacific Railway. [17]

In 1859, John Davidson became Bruce Mines' bookkeeper, taking over an accounting system that a consultant to the company had described a few years earlier as "cumbrous and mystifying" and one "which I may say renders it impossible in a business of the kind in question, to keep any efficient check upon the accounts".

In 1862, John Davidson was "retired from the service" of MMC. The Directors reported to the shareholders that "Notwithstanding repeated instructions to the contrary, the practice of giving far too extended credit was continued up to July last, the result of which, upon a close analysis of the accounts, now proves to be that a large proportion of outstanding debts must be classed as bad or doubtful, thus sensibly diminishing what have long appeared to be available assets." The stores were to be privatized [32]. The mines, which shipped their ore to Swansea, in Wales, during the 1850s, were forced out of operation when the American market was closed during the Civil War [17].



Figure 2. John Davidson Jr. [22]

The family's whereabouts and means of support are unclear for the next few years until John took a position as agent for an Indian reservation near Sault Ste. Marie, from April 1870 to May 1871, for which he was paid £500 a year [19]. This was probably the Garden River Reservation for Ojibway Indians.

John returned to the mining business in 1871, taking a post as storekeeper at a silver mine in Silver Islet, Ontario, on Lake Superior, near the present-day city of Thunder Bay [2].

In 1876, the family – parents and all the children save the oldest daughters Ellen and Margaret who were by then married, and probably William who appears to have remained in Port Arthur – returned to Montreal. John was now in his late 50s. He is reported as working for a bank [26] and as a bookkeeper for a newspaper (Hugh Graham's *Montreal Star*?) [11]. The family lived at 112 Ste. Famille St., then at 725 Sherbrooke St., before settling at 9 Bishop St., during the 1880s.

John Davidson died on 24 January 1899 at his residence [45] [22]. Mourners at his funeral included Ned, his only remaining son; Mr. Justice Sir Charles Davidson, a

nephew; Louis Pinsoneault, a grandson; Arthur Benington, his son-in-law (but reported as a grandson); Sir William Hingston, *q.v.*, his brother-in-law; and R.W.H. Smith, a nephew. He was buried in Mt. Royal Cemetery¹⁰.

Margaret outlived him by 10 years and died in Montreal on 4 December 1909. She was buried in Mt. Royal Cemetery [45] [30].

John Davidson and Margaret Hingston had ten children. The first two, Ellen and Margaret, were born in Huntingdon, Quebec, the last seven in Northern Ontario, and William Frederick was baptised in Ontario, but may have been born in Quebec.

1. ELLEN HINGSTON DAVIDSON, b. 24 August 1847 in Huntingdon, Quebec [18] m. Capt. Thomas Towers, bef. 1866 [9]. They lived in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. He died there 25 November 1913 and she 2 November 1924.
2. MARGARET OGILVY DAVIDSON, b. 28 April 1849 in Huntingdon, Quebec [18] m. Alfred Charles Pinsoneault, 9 June 1870 in Montreal [33], d. 15 March 1882 in Montreal [45].
3. WILLIAM FREDERICK (MANNY) DAVIDSON, b. 14 June 1851 in Elgin [28]. He is reported to have moved to the area of what is now Thunder Bay, Ontario around 1870, where he became an executive in the shipping industry. He may have been an associate of his brother-in-law, Thomas Towers. He died 18 August 1891 in Toronto [47]. He probably never married.
4. SARAH CHESLEY (TOTTIE) DAVIDSON, b. 14 June 1852 in Bruce Mines, Ontario [28], d. 30 May 1923 in Montreal [45]. Sarah was probably named after Solomon Chesley, Indian Agent for the St. Regis Indians in Dundee, Quebec, and an old friend of John Davidson Sr.'s. She never married.
5. FRANCES BRUCE (FANNY) DAVIDSON, b. 21 October 1855 in Bruce Mines, Ontario [28], d. 18 May 1946 in Montreal [45]. A spinster, she lived with her sister Flo on Selkirk Avenue in Montreal and played the piano. She is said to have had a particular affection for *Blue Danube Waltz*.
6. **Elizabeth (Lizzie) Georgina Davidson**, b. 12 April 1858 in Bruce Mines, Ontario. [28]
7. JOHN GRANT DAVIDSON, b. 18 March 1861 in Bruce Mines, Ontario [28] d. 9 November 1895 in Montreal [45]. He is reported as a bank clerk in 1879 [25] and a land surveyor in 1891 [11]. He never married.
8. JAMES ALEXANDER DAVIDSON, b. 27 January 1863 in Sault-Ste-Marie, Ontario, [28] d. 30 December 1888 in Port Arthur, Ontario and probably never married.
9. FLORENCE (FLO) CAMPBELL DAVIDSON, b. July 1866 in Bruce Mines, Ontario [28] d. 13 January 1934 in Montreal [45]. She never married.
10. EDWARD ALFRED (NED) DAVIDSON, b. 1868/9, probably at Sault-Ste-Marie,

¹⁰ There is presently no gravestone for John. Sally Davidson reports that the cemetery claims it may have been destroyed in the digging of another grave.

Ontario¹¹, d. 30 May 1924 in Montreal [45]. He was a clerk in Montreal and was still living at his parents' house at 9 Bishop St. when he died [10][11]. He never married.

Edward Benington wrote:

“Mother was brought up in Canada in the Victorian era when “acceptable gentlemen” were doctors, bankers, lawyers, ministers, and apparently some writers, certainly no one “in trade”. Her family was never wealthy, but very staid and correct and consisted of four brothers and six sisters. I well remember aunts "Tottie", "Barlow", and "Moe"¹² when I visited them as a boy in Montreal. All were typical spinsters. There was also uncle Ned, to me a romantic man who was a captain in the Victorian Rifles, was frequently tempted by the bottle, and was a wonderful story teller.”

As we shall see, there were a number of doctors, bankers, lawyers, ministers (priests, actually), and writers, in the family, but John Davidson Jr., his sons, his father and his brothers were all squarely engaged in “the trade”, hardly surprising for recent immigrants from modest backgrounds.

It must have been an unusual family. Of the six girls, only three married: Ellen and Margaret, the eldest, and Lizzie. Probably none of the four boys did, so none of John Jr.'s descendants bear the Davidson name. And, as of 1891, when John was 73 and Margaret 63, all their unmarried children except Manny, ranging in age from 21 to 36, were living under their parents' roof, at 9 Bishop St.

6. John Davidson Sr. and Helen Ogilvie

John Davidson Sr. was born around 1779 [6] probably in Perthshire, Scotland [39]. His parents are not known, but Sellar says of him that he “went as a poor boy to Dundee, where he was taken into the household of a Mr. Ogilvie, who owned a small factory, and who gave him work and whose daughter he subsequently married.” [39]

On 26 May 1802 [37], he married **Helen Ogilvie**, born 20 June 1779 at Dundee, Angus, Scotland, probably the daughter of **Alexander Ogilvie** (b. ca 1754 in Dundee, married 1778 in Dundee), a woolen manufacturer, and **Susanna Black**¹³. [37]. After having at least one daughter, Elspeth, and two sons, Alex and James, John was drafted in the Army around 1810 and served “overseas” [39], but where and in what capacity is not known¹⁴.

¹¹ I have yet to find Ned's birth record.

¹² Lizzie's sisters were Ellen, Margaret, Sarah, Frances, and Florence. Only Ellen and Margaret married. “Moe” was probably Margaret. My mother claims “Tottie” was Sarah. Florence was known as “Flo”, and Frances as “Fanny”. That would leave Ellen to be “Barlow”.

¹³ Alexander Ogilvie and Susanna Black are whom I currently believe to be the most likely parents of Helen Ogilvie. Of the candidates available from the Scottish Church Records, they are of the right age, right region, and their children include an Alexander of the right age and another son, John, of the right age, who could be an eldest son who would have usurped an inheritance.

¹⁴ I have now searched the records of over a dozen British regiments known to have recruited in Scotland, and found no one matching what is known of John. As the available records are all for servicemen who were granted pensions, it is possible that John never got one.

He was discharged in 1817 and had another son, John Jr., about at that time, just before he left for Canada. He worked as a travelling merchant for about a year, before settling in 1819 in Dundee, Quebec, a settlement very near the point where the boundary between Quebec and New York State meets the St. Lawrence River. Fort Covington, NY is just across the border. Sellar writes:

“His log shanty, consisting of one room, was the nucleus of the village to which he gave the name of Dundee. The store was situated on the east bank of the Salmon river and behind it stretched a deep swamp, impossible to cross unless frozen, so that settlers could only get to it by going round by Fort Covington.”

In October 1821, he was granted by the Chiefs of the St. Regis Indians a renewable long-term lease to three large lots (lots B, C, and D) and one smaller one (lot N) [20], as shown in Figure 3. He had evidently been occupying at least some of these for some time, the large lots being used for lumbering and the small one for his house.

On 28 May 1820, his wife Helen, her children, and her brother Alexander Ogilvie arrived in Quebec City from Dundee on the *Psyche*. One of the other passengers was William Lyon Mackenzie, on his way to Upper Canada and later fame as the leader of the 1837 rebellion there [35].

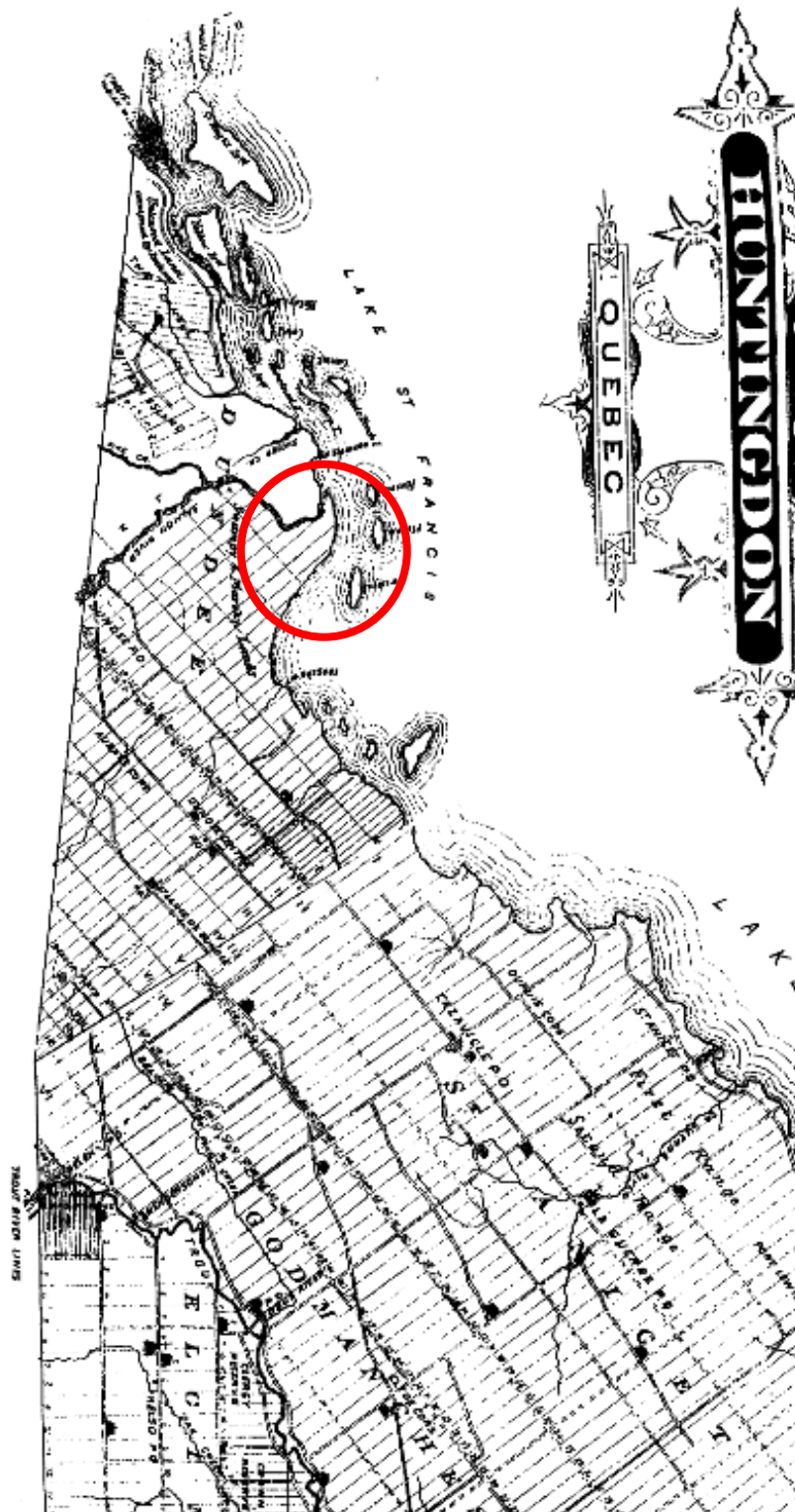


Figure 3. Dundee, Quebec. The circle shows the area where John Davidson Sr. settled.

Helen and Alexander Ogilvie had been cheated out of their share of their inheritance of their father (**Alexander Ogilvie Sr.**) by their older brother JOHN OGILVIE. Their father died intestate, but, on his deathbed, he confided his intentions to his oldest son and received the promise that they would be faithfully carried out. The young man took advantage of his position and appropriated the entire estate. John Davidson, having gone to settle in Canada, asked his family to come join him. Helen was afraid of sailing alone and convinced her brother Alexander to join her. [35]

John opened a store in Dundee and established himself as a leader of the community. He was appointed justice of the peace 25 November 1819 [29], was appointed officer in the local militia, and sent numerous petitions to the government for the opening of a road to connect Dundee with Châteauguay and Beauharnois. In an early petition, he alleged

“that the prosperity of the settlement... is much retarded from the want of a public road. In their present situation, many of the inhabitants are under the necessity of passing through a section of the U.S., in going to and returning from market (Dundee lines), and are consequently liable to pay heavy duties at the American custom-house. Under the circumstance we pray for aid to enable us to open a road on the British side of the lines.” [39]

The road matter was obviously politically very contentious. Dundee is in “the townships”, those parts of the territory of Quebec outside the seignories established along the St. Lawrence River during the French regime. After the Conquest, the government encouraged immigrants from “the old countries” to settle the townships, and at the same time made it very difficult for French-Canadians (or simply Canadians, as they were then known) to migrate there from the seignories, which were by then over-populated and poorly farmed. The Canadians controlled the Legislative Assembly, whose only real power was to approve the spending bills presented to it by the British Governor. Fearing religious and linguistic assimilation, by now the overt policy of the government, they systematically withheld approval of spending bills.

John Davidson’s road was also the target of another objection: why would anyone settling in an remote swamp expect the public to provide him with access? Not until 1831 did the surveyor of Lower Canada, Chaussegros de Lery, recommend the opening of a road. John Davidson was named its commissioner, and it was finally built around 1833. [29]

In the meantime, John rose in the ranks of the local militia. In 1831, upon the death of **Samuel James Hingston**, q.v., he became lieutenant-colonel of the militia of Beauharnois County. On 24 November 1837, upon the outbreak of the first Patriote rebellion, he was named lieutenant-colonel of the *Huntingdon Loyal Volunteers*, a regiment raised explicitly for the purpose of quelling the rebellion. This was a family affair: his sons ALEXANDER, JAMES and **John** were named captain of a company, paymaster and adjutant, respectively [21]. There were no battles in Huntingdon County during the 1837 rebellion. The Volunteers saw action only once in 1838, at St. Regis, but the particular role of John Sr.’s and his sons in that engagement is not clear.

John and his family are known to have been still living in Dundee in 1842. By 1852, he was Collector of Customs at Russeltown, a few miles away¹⁵.

Helen Ogilvie died in Russeltown on 3 August 1854 [41]. John followed her on 13 April 1856 [23]. They were buried at Laguerre, just north of Huntingdon. Their gravestones still stand, although the church itself is in ruins.

They are known to have had three children.

1. SUSAN DAVIDSON, b. ca. 1803 in Scotland, married ca. 1820 in Dundee, Quebec to Alexander McBain, from Inverness, Scotland, one of the original settlers of the area [39]. They had 7 children [6] before McBain's death in 1830 of a bolt of lightning [39]. Around 1832, she married John MacDonald, also from Inverness, a lumberman and potash maker, who was a business associate of John Davidson Sr. [39]. They had 5 children [7]. She died 21 February 1875 at Laguerre, Quebec. There exists a baptism record from Dundee, Scotland, dated 1 January 1805 in the name of Elspeth Davidson, daughter of John Davidson and Helen Ogilvie [37]. I know of no other report of any child of John and Helen's of that name in Canada. She may be the same person as Susan, for whom no birth record has been found, or have died young.
2. JAMES DAVIDSON, b. 21 September 1808 at Dundee, Angus, Scotland [37] m. 1833 at Dundee, Quebec to SARAH HINGSTON, d. 6 January 1860. James settled in DeWittville, Quebec, where he was a merchant and postmaster. Sarah Hingston was the daughter of **Samuel James Hingston** and his first wife Winifred Cavendish, and the half-sister of **Margaret Hingston, John Davidson Jr.**'s wife.
3. CAPT. ALEXANDER DAVIDSON, b. 16 October 1810 at Dundee, Angus, Scotland [37], m. Marian Peers, 8 January 1839 at Ormstown, Quebec, d. 29 July 1886 at Montreal, Quebec. His obit says:

“The deceased took part in the march of a large force down the valley of the Châteauguay under the late General Campbell, led the infantry detailed to charge upon the entrenchment at Baker's Hill, an affair in which several were killed and wounded and was present when these local forces strengthened by Glengarry battalions effected a junction with a force of regulars under Sir John Colborne at St. Remi. Upon the disbandment of the force Capt. Davidson was detailed to the command of a detachment embodied for permanent service at Huntingdon and there remained on duty about five years, ultimately retiring with the rank of Major. Subsequently and after a number of vicissitudes of fortune Capt. Davidson became connected with the British America Assurance Company and was regarded as an authority on technical questions of insurance law.” [21]

Capt. Davidson was apparently a bit of a martinet. There appeared in the Huntingdon Gleaner some time after the Rebellions of 1837-38 an article on

¹⁵ John Davidson Jr. is reported to be a resident of Russeltown at the time of his marriage to Margaret Hingston in 1846.

“The Sash Mutiny of 1837-1838”. The loyalist volunteers had been issued overcoats “of grey colour and miserable cloth”, which were “loose made and went flapping about our legs”. One of the men got a number of red cotton sashes which were then used to tie the coats. The officers took offence at this and announced that they were to be taken off, which the men were reluctant to do. The story continues:

“Sandy Davidson was walking up and down on their gallery, and on seeing us come across with our sashes on exclaimed, “By Christ, we will see who is the master.” He was a proud beggar, and McLachlan well nicknamed him Capt. Swagger. ... The officers reported the matter to Gen. Colborne, who said to drop the matter, and advised the officers to wear their sashes shoulder fashion to distinguish them from the men.” [14]

Alexander Davidson and Marian Peers had 7 children, including SIR CHARLES PEERS DAVIDSON, about whom more below.

4. **John Davidson Jr.**, b. 1817/8 in Scotland.

6.1 **Sir Charles Peers Davidson**

SIR CHARLES PEERS DAVIDSON (1841-1929). A graduate of McGill University, he was called to the Bar in 1864, and appointed King’s Counsel in 1880. He ran unsuccessfully as the Conservative candidate for a seat in the Quebec Legislature for Montreal Centre in 1871 and again for one in the House of Commons for Huntingdon County in 1882. His contributions to the Conservative Party were recognized: he was named puisne judge of the Superior Court in 1887, chief justice of Quebec in 1912 and was knighted in 1913. He joined the Victoria Rifles when they were formed in 1862 and became lieutenant-colonel in 1887. He married Alice Mattice, daughter of William Mattice, one time MP for Stormont, and they had eight children [50]. One of their sons, Thornton, went down with the *Titanic*.. Another, SHIRLEY DAVIDSON, was an exceptional athlete – quarterback of the McGill rugby team, member of a Stanley Cup winning team, and accomplished yachtsman. He and AILEEN HINGSTON, daughter of SIR WILLIAM HINGSTON, q.v., drowned in a sailboat accident in calm weather on Lac St. Louis in 1907 [38]. In the margins of the article on Sir Charles in a copy of *Les Juges du Quebec* in the Archives Nationales du Québec is a handwritten comment, apparently placed there by a researcher at the courthouse, to the effect that the pair committed suicide because their families would not allow them to marry. The papers also reported that Ned Davidson, Lizzie Davidson’s brother, was a visitor at the Hingston house in Varennes the day of the drowning.

7. **Samuel James Hingston and Eleanor McGrath**

Samuel James Hingston, son of **Capt. Benezer Murdock Hingston** and of **Priscilla Compton**, was born 1 November 1775, probably at Freehold, Monmouth County, New Jersey [24].

Samuel Hingston was about 5 when his parents, who had emigrated to New Jersey from County Cork, Ireland, were expelled as Loyalists. His birth record has not been found.

Hingston joined the 100th Prince Regent's Company of Dublin Regiment, likely in Ireland, possibly at its inception. The 100th was raised in 1805 and with few exceptions its officers and men were Irish. The regiment was sent to Canada for the War of 1812-15, participating in engagements at Sacketts Harbour, Plattsburgh, Chippawa, Fort Niagara, and Fort Erie. It was renumbered the 99th in 1816 and then disbanded at Chatham in 1818 [1][49].

Hingston was named adjutant and ensign on 4 January 1810, and lieutenant on 15 May 1813. He was at the Battle of Lundy's Lane and wounded at the Battle of Queenston Heights. He was discharged at Montreal on half-pay on 25 September 1818 and eventually received several land grants in Lower and Upper Canada from 1825 to his death.

He was first married about 1797 to Winifred Cavendish, a Catholic, at County Cork, Ireland [24]. They had three children:

1. SAMUEL JAMES HINGSTON, b. 1800/3 at County Cork, Ireland. [6] He received land grants in Hinchinbrooke Township, Quebec in 1835. He probably died before 1850. He is not known to have married.
2. THOMAS HINGSTON, b. 1801-1803 at Cloyne, County Cork, Ireland, m. Mathilda Picard, ca. 1843. He was a farmer in Hinchinbrooke Township and they had 11 children. [9] [8]
3. SARAH HINGSTON, b. 1799- 1809, probably at Cloyne, County Cork, Ireland, m. JAMES DAVIDSON, eldest son of **John Davidson Sr.** and **Helen Ogilvie**, in 1833 at Dundee, Quebec. [7]

Winifred Cavendish died on 9 March 1814, in Canada [24]. On 11 April 1815, Samuel Hingston married **Eleanor McGrath**, in Montreal [24]. We know little about her, save that her mother's name was probably Carey and that she was 45 at the 1825 census [6].

Samuel Hingston died on 21 November 1830, shortly before the birth of his last child [24]. Eleanor McGrath outlived him by 35 years, dying on 3 October 1866 [24].

They had four children:

1. ELEANOR HINGSTON, b. 30 June 1825, m. Richard Pierce Smith, ca. 1847, d. 12 May 1892 [16].
2. **Margaret Hingston**, b. 9 April 1827 at Huntingdon, Quebec, m. **John Davidson Jr.**
3. SIR WILLIAM HALES HINGSTON, b. 29 June 1829 at Hinchinbrooke Twp, Quebec, m. Margaret Josephine Macdonald, 16 September 1875 at Toronto, Ontario, d. 19 February 1907 at Montreal, Quebec, about whom more below.
4. SAMUEL JAMES HINGSTON (2), b. 28 June 1831 at Athelstan, Quebec, m. Rebecca Turney, 27 November 1858, d. 29 April 1904 [24].

7.1 Sir William Hales Hingston

William Hales Hingston was the third child of **Samuel James Hingston** and **Eleanor McGrath**. A Catholic, he did a *cours classique* at the Petit Séminaire de Montréal,

followed by medical studies at McGill University, at the Royal College of Surgeons in Edinburgh and in other cities in Europe. He returned to Montreal in 1854 and became surgeon and professor of clinical surgery at Hotel-Dieu Hospital. He performed daring operations, such as the removal of a cancerous kidney in 1863, and he is believed to have been the first in Canada, if not in the world, to perform such an operation. In 1872 he was the first in North America to undertake excision of a tongue and lower jaw.

In 1871, he left Hotel Dieu to participate in the founding of the Bishop's College faculty of medicine in Montreal. He became professor of surgery at the Montreal School of Medicine and Surgery in 1875, then President of the school and dean, and he was still professor in 1891 when it merged with the Montreal branch of the Université Laval.

He helped set up a number of medical organizations, including the Canadian Medical Association in 1867. He was president of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Quebec in 1886-9. He participated in the incorporation of the Women's Hospital of Montreal in 1870 and the Samaritan's Hospital for Women in 1895. His contributions to medicine were recognized through his election as vice-president of the British Association for the Advancement of Science and as honorary president of the British Medical Association.

Hingston was politically active. He was elected mayor of Montreal from 1875-7, and proposed measures to improve the sanitary condition of the city. Having recommended vaccination, his house was threatened by rioters. He ran as Conservative candidate in the House of Commons for Montreal Centre and lost but was named to the Senate in 1896.

His business interests included positions as president of the Montreal City and Savings Bank and of the Montreal Street Railway Company.

He was knighted by Queen Victoria on 15 July 1895. [15]

For the coolness and judgement displayed by him during the Guibord riots¹⁶ in Montreal, he received the thanks of the Governor-General of Canada, the Earl of Dufferin. He received honorary degrees from Bishop's College University and from Victoria University of Toronto. He was made Commander of the Roman order of St-Gregory 1875. [13]

Sir William had a house at 882 Sherbrooke St., between Metcalfe and Peel Sts., now demolished [13]. Hingston Street in Montreal is named in his honour [46].

Sir William married in 1875 Margaret Josephine Macdonald, the daughter of Donald Alexander Macdonald, Lt. Gov. of Ontario. They had six children, among whom FATHER WILLIAM HINGSTON, S.J. (1877-1964), rector of Loyola College from 1918-1925 and after whom Hingston Hall there is named; DONALD ALEXANDER HINGSTON (1878-

¹⁶ Joseph Guibord was a printer and a member of the Institut Canadien, a society with liberal and anticlerical leanings whose members were excommunicated by the bishop of Montreal, Mgr. Ignace Bourget. Upon his death in 1871, he was denied burial in the consecrated ground of the Cimetière de la Côte des Neiges. This led to legal proceedings by the Institut against the church and a riot in Montreal. For many years, and still at his death, Guibord was an employee of LOUIS PERRAULT, my g*uncle, and a leader of the 1837 rebellion. For more, see my *Mélanges* 3.

1950), a surgeon and founder of St. Mary's Hospital in Montreal; and LT. BASIL HINGSTON (1885-1918) who died in action in France in World War I.

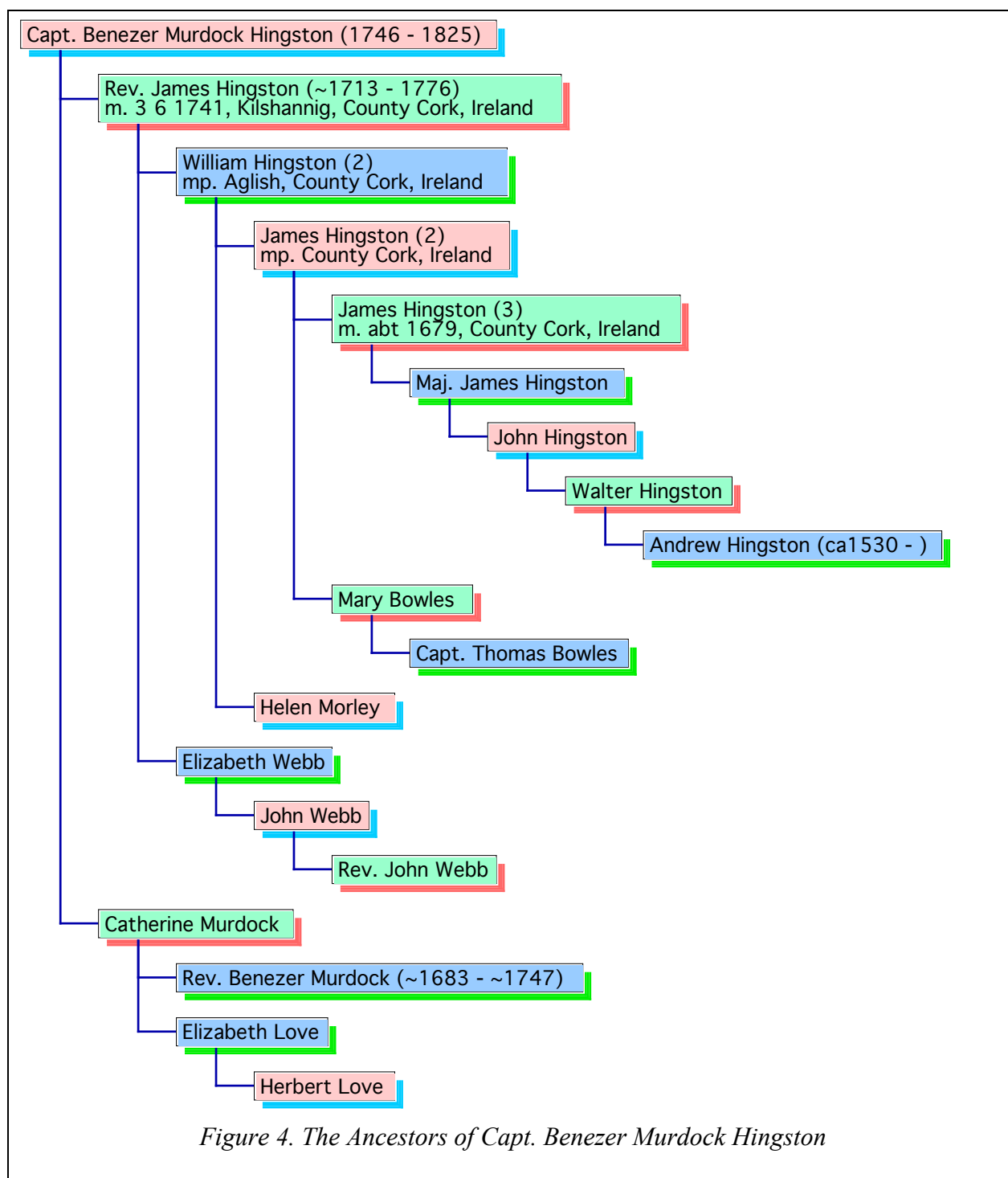
13. Alexander Ogilvie and Susanna Black

Alexander Ogilvie, b. ca. 1754 at Dundee, Angus, Scotland, married **Susanna Black** in 1778 at Dundee, Angus, Scotland [37]. They had at least seven children, **Helen** being the eldest, and **ALEXANDER** the youngest [35].

14. Benezzer Murdock Hingston and Priscilla Compton

Capt. Benezzer Murdock Hingston, the fifth child of **Rev. James Hingston** and **Catherine Murdock**, was born on 28 December 1746 at Kilshannig, County Cork, Ireland [24]. His pedigree is shown in Figure 4.

He emigrated to the New Jersey colony shortly before the Revolutionary War. Around 1774, he married **Priscilla Compton**, daughter of **Richard Compton** and lived in Freehold, Monmouth County, NJ on a large tract of land of 100 acres deeded to him by his father-in-law. During the Revolutionary War, he served as a recruiter and guide for the British Army but there is no evidence that he was in military service. Because of his Loyalist activities, his property was confiscated and later sold at auction by the Continental Government at Freehold Court House in 1779. Hingston fled the country in 1780, with his wife and children, returning to Ireland. He is thought to have attained the rank of Captain in the Irish Volunteers after he returned to Ireland, in tribute to his service to the British Forces [24].



Benezer Hingston died 31 May 1825 at Aglish, County Cork, Ireland [24].

Much of what is known about **Priscilla Compton** is from a petition filed by her sister, Jenny Ferrol, in 1799, claiming Priscilla's share of the estate of her father, Richard, who died between 1784 and 1786, share which she had not collected, this being after her

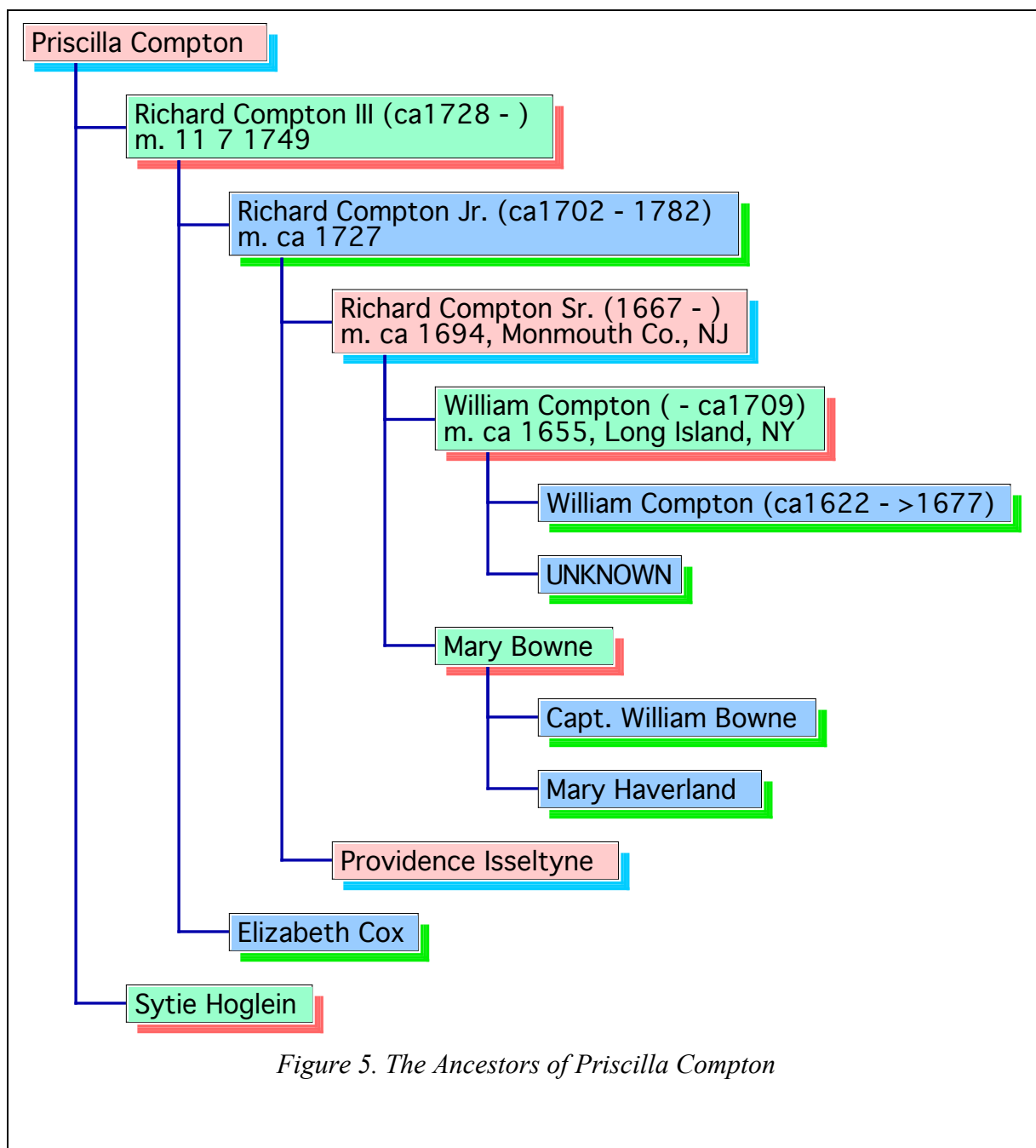


Figure 5. The Ancestors of Priscilla Compton

having followed her husband back to Ireland. These documents also indicate that Benezer may have participated in the battle of Monmouth, one of the major battles of the Revolutionary War [34].

Although it is almost certain that Priscilla was descended from **William Compton**, who settled in Gravesend, Long Island, in 1647 and then moved to Monmouth Co., NJ in 1666, the relation between William and her father, Richard, is not clear, nor is the identity of her mother. My current best guess is that her father was **Richard Compton III** (born ca 1728) who married **Sytie Hoglein** 17 July 1749, which would make her pedigree as shown in Figure 5 [4].

They had at least seven children [24]:

1. **Lt. Col. Samuel James Hingston**, b. 1 November 1775 at Freehold, NJ, USA.
2. JOHN HINGSTON (3), b. ca. 1777, probably in New Jersey, m. Judith Anne Limerick, d. ca. 1824 in Ireland
3. CLAYTON LOVE HINGSTON, born in Ireland after the family returned there, he married his cousin, Mary Ann Bernard Hingston, ca. 1817
4. LT. COL. JAMES HINGSTON, m. Jane O'Mahony, d. ca. 1837. Served in 83rd Regiment in the Peninsula War. In 1828 was appointed Commandant, Royal African Corps and Lt. Gov. of Cape Coast Castle, Ghana.
5. WILLIAM HALES HINGSTON, b. 30 January 1785 at Ireland. He was a midshipman in the Royal Navy and never married.
6. CATHERINE ISABELLA HINGSTON, b. May 1787 at Kilshannig, County Cork, Ireland, m. Andrew Johnson Welstead, 28 July 1818 at St. Peter's Church, Cork, County Cork, Ireland, d. ca. 1862
7. SPENCER COMPTON HINGSTON, b. 4 April 1791 at Mallow, County Cork, Ireland, m. Anne Haynes, ca. 1813, d. ca. 1839

28. Rev. James Hingston and Catherine Murdock

Rev. James Hingston, son of **William Hingston** and **Elizabeth Webb**, was born ca. 1713 at Aglish, County Cork, Ireland [24].

The eldest son and heir, he studied at Trinity College, Dublin and was ordained priest at Cloyne Cathedral in 1737. He spent his life as a minister in the diocese of Cloyne – curate¹⁷ of Donoughmore 1737-40 and Kilshannig 1740-50, rector of Clonmeen, Roskeen and Kilcorney 1751-71, prebendary at Brigowne 1771-2 and at Donoughmore 1772-5. He is the author a collection of legal statutes of Ireland, and of translations from Greek Classics.

On 3 June 1741, he married at Kilshannig, County Cork, Ireland **Catherine Murdock**, daughter of **Rev. Benezet Murdock** (1681-1741), rector of Kilshannig and of **Elizabeth Love** [40]. She was the great-granddaughter of **Col. Randall Clayton**, MP and **Judith Perceval** (daughter of Sir Philip, ancestor of the Earls of Egmont) of Mallow, Co. Cork.

¹⁷ A *curate* is an assistant to a parish priest (in French, *vicaire*). The OED says “This use is particular to the Church of England and to the R. C. Church in Ireland, where assistants to the parish priests are also so called. It appears to have originated in the application of the name curate to the clergyman in actual charge of a parish of which the benefice was held by [i.e. *impropriated by*] a non-resident clergyman, the head of a college, etc. and to have thence been extended to the deputy of an aged and infirm incumbent, and so gradually to any deputy or assistant of the beneficed clergyman [...] A *rector* (in French *curé*) is “a parson or incumbent of a parish whose tithes are not impropriated” A *vicar* is “a person acting as priest in a parish in place of the real person or rector or as the representative of a religious community to which the tithes had been appropriated; hence in later and modern use the incumbent of a parish of which the tithes are impropriated or appropriated, in contrast to rector.” A *prebendary* is “The holder of a prebend; a canon of a cathedral or collegiate church who holds a prebend”, and a prebend is “the separate portion of land or tithe from which [a] stipend is derived.”

James Hingston died 21 May 1776 at Aglish, County Cork, Ireland.

They had eleven children:

1. ELIZABETH HINGSTON, b. February 1742 at Kilshannig, County Cork, Ireland [40].
2. WILLIAM HINGSTON, b. April 1744 at Kilshannig, County Cork, Ireland. Never married [40].
3. ELIZABETH HINGSTON, b. July 1745 at Kilshannig, County Cork, Ireland, [40]m. Thomas Tuckey, 25 August 1770 at County Cork, Ireland, d. ca. 1777 at Mallow, County Cork, Ireland. They had four sons and two daughters. One of their sons, CAPT. JAMES HINGSTON TUCKEY (1776-1816), of the Royal Navy, died while leading the first scientific expedition to explore the river Congo in Africa. He married his wife, Margaret Stewart, in Verdon, France in 1806 while they were both prisoners of war.
4. MARIA HELENA HINGSTON, b. 28 August 1745 at Kilshannig, County Cork, Ireland, [40] m. her cousin, JUSTICIAN HINGSTON, at County Cork, Ireland.
5. **Capt. Benezar Murdock Hingston**, b. 28 December 1746 at Kilshannig, County Cork, Ireland [40].
6. CATHERINE HINGSTON, b. May 1749 at Kilshannig, County Cork, Ireland, [40]m. Rev. John Reid, January 1775, d. ca. 1781.
7. MARY HINGSTON, b. October 1751, [40] d. ca. 1775. Not married.
8. JAMES HINGSTON, b. December 1753 at Kilshannig, County Cork, Ireland, [40]d. 19 February 1754 at Kilshannig, County Cork, Ireland.
9. REV. JAMES HINGSTON, b. 19 May 1756 at County Cork, Ireland, [40]m. Ann Hodnett, ca. 1780, d. 6 December 1840 at Cloyne, County Cork, Ireland. From 1794 to his death 46 years later, he was vicar-general of the Diocese of Cloyne.
10. ISABELLA HINGSTON, b. May 1759 at Kilshannig, County Cork, Ireland, [40]m. Capt. George Brereton, April 1781 at County Cork, Ireland, m. Sir James Lawrance Cotter, the second baronet of that name, 16 July 1785 at County Cork, Ireland, d. April 1892 at County Cork, Ireland.
11. REV. JOHN HINGSTON, b. August 1761 at Kilshannig, County Cork, Ireland, [40] m. Alicia Bernard, 1789.

56. William Hingston and Elizabeth Webb

William Hingston (2), son of **James Hingston** and **Helen Morley**, was born at Aglish, County Cork, Ireland. He married in Aglish **Elizabeth Webb**, daughter of **Rev. John Webb** of Clonteadmore, County Cork, Ireland. He succeeded in 1728 to his father's seat at Aglish and was justice of the peace. **Rev. John Webb** was rector of the parishes of Temploroan and Castlemagner and chancellor of the Diocese of Cloyne.

Among their children were **Rev. James Hingston** (1713-1776), who married **Catherine Murdock**, and HELENA HINGSTON (1725-1787) who married Rev. Samuel Hales, May

1746 at Aglish, County Cork, Ireland, d. 3 March 1787. Their son, **REV. WILLIAM HALES**, is apparently the one after whom all the Hales Hingstons are named [24][5].

WILLIAM HALES was educated by his maternal uncle, **Rev. James Hingston**. He attended Trinity College, Dublin 1764-8. As tutor at the college, he wore a white wig to obviate the objections of parents to his youthful appearance and was known to occasionally rouse students with a dose of cold water. He also held the professorship of oriental languages. His first publications, “*Sonorum doctrina rationalis et experimentalis*” (1778) and “*De motibus Planetarum dissertatio*” (1782) were studies of sound and the motion of planets following Newtonian theory. He published “*Analysis Aequationum*” in 1784, for which he was complimented by Lagrange. In 1788, he relinquished his professorship and retired to Killeshandra, Co. Cavan, where he became rector. In 1812, he also held the chancellorship of the diocese of Emly. He was a kind-hearted, well-informed man, who told anecdotes well. His best-known work, “*A New Analysis of Chronology*”, published by subscription from 1809-12, occupied him for 20 years. In it, he argues for investigation of chronology from the original sources. He gives a chronology of the entire Bible, and gives a portion of the early history of the world. He suffered from an attack of yellow fever in 1801, from which he recovered, but from about 1820 he appears to have suffered from depression. He died in 1831 at the age of 83. A list of his 22 publications appears in his “*Essay on the Origin and Purity of the Primitive Church of the British Isles*” (1819). He had two sons and two daughters. [48]

102. James Hingston and Helen Morley

James Hingston (2), son of **James Hingston** and **Mary Bowles**, was born at County Cork, Ireland. He was the first Hingston to settle in Aglish, having purchased the estate in 1702. There he married **Helen Morley**. Their son, **William**, married **Elizabeth Webb**. [24][5]

204. James Hingston and Mary Bowles

James Hingston (3), son of **Major James Hingston**, b. at County Cork, Ireland, married in 1679 **Mary Bowles**, b. at Cork, County Cork, Ireland [5]. He was Commissariat at County Cork, succeeding his father. His son, **James Hingston (2)** married **Helen Morley**.

Major James Hingston is thought to be the son of **John Hingston** who was the organist to Lord Cromwell. [24]

Open Questions

A number of open questions remain, and these are some of the most prominent ones:

- Where and in what capacity did John Davidson Sr.’s serve in the British Army? Searching these records has, so far, required knowing what regiment he was in. I’ve searched a good number without success. There is apparently in preparation a nominal index, and I’m prepared to wait for it.

- Who were John Davidson Sr.'s parents? There are half-a-dozen potential candidates. Sellar says that he went as a young man to live with the Ogilvie family. Why? Death of his parents? A falling out?
- Who was Alexander Ogilvie Sr. and who were his ancestors?
- Where is John Davidson Jr.'s birth record?
- Where were John Davidson Jr. and Margaret Hingston between when John left MMC in the mid 1860s to when he joined Indian Branch in 1870? Where was Ned Davidson born?
- Was the Elspeth Davidson who is known to have been a daughter of John Davidson Sr. and Helen Ogilvie the same as Susan, who married Alexander McBain? If not, where was Susan born?
- Does Samuel James Hingston's birth certificate still exist? It is likely that it has been destroyed during or after the Revolution. Where are his marriage certificates?
- Where was Eleanor McGrath born, and who were her parents?
- What is the relation between Richard Compton, Priscilla's father and William Compton, the likely first arrival? A side question here is that Blalock claims that William Compton is an ancestor of Abraham Lincoln, but another genealogy of Lincoln's I've seen indicates that the link Blalock shows may be incorrect.
- How accurate is McCardle's profile of Arthur Benington, e.g. about when Benington acquired U.S. citizenship?

SOURCES

This story could not have been told without the help of my internet cousins. I've exchanged hundreds of emails and faxes with Sally Davidson, of Montreal, the source of much of what I know about the Davidsons, including a lot on John Davidson Jr. and his children, even if she is not from that branch. I'm also grateful to her for proofreading this document. Bill Hingston of Ottawa, a descendant of Sir William Hales Hingston, provided me with Donald Gray-Donald's chart of the descendants of Samuel James Hingston. Most of the information about Samuel James Hingston's Hingston ancestors is from James W. King's a four-volume genealogy of the Hingstons, unfortunately available only in microfilm from the LDS Family History Library. Most of the Compton side comes from Delton Blalock's book (which I found in the Library of Congress) and original revolutionary sources pointed out by King.

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[3] Edward Benington, *Arthur Benington*, unpub. ms. 1978

- [4] Delton D. Blalock, *British and American Comptons from the colonial era to the modern day in New York, New Jersey, Virginia, Tennessee, Alabama, and Texas, 1634-1984*, 1984.
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- [7] *Canada Census, 1851*
- [8] *Canada Census, 1861*
- [9] *Canada Census, 1871*
- [10] *Canada Census, 1881*
- [11] *Canada Census, 1891*
- [12] *Canada Directory, 1857*
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