

Canadian Materials in the NEHGS Circulating Library

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*****Note: The Circulating Library is no longer available at NEHGS.*****

One of the benefits of membership in NEHGS is the ability to borrow from thousands of titles in its Circulating Library. Currently the library contains over 30,000 titles of interest to those researching their New England ancestors. Among those titles are hundreds of volumes of material on Canada, many of which are difficult to find or out of print. These rare volumes can give you tremendous information about your ancestors and how they lived. The following are some examples of the treasures to be found in these materials.

For those with Loyalist ancestors there are materials such as *The Camden Colony or The Seed of the Righteous: A Story of the United Empire Loyalists* by Rev. W. Boaman Tucker, M.A., Ph.D. (Montreal, PQ: John Lovell & Son, Limited, 1908) [CS90/M55/1908]. This volume focuses on the Miller family with a narrative that traces the Loyalists back into the origins of Europe.

Thousands of individuals emigrated from Scotland to Canada, with some coming through England, Ireland, and Wales. Others settled in Canada for a while before eventually moving on to the United States, Australia, New Zealand, and elsewhere. Donald Whyte has spent decades researching these individuals. The result of his work is *A Dictionary of Scottish Emigrants to Canada Before Confederation* (Toronto, ON: Ontario Genealogical Society, 1986) [Ref F1035/S4/W49/1985].

This fully documented work contains over 12,500 individuals who immigrated to Canada prior to 1867. Listings are in alphabetical order, and each immigrant is given a unique identifying number. There is scant information for some individuals, but the following entries show the level of detail available for many others.

1422 Campbell, John C., d 11 May 1879. From LKS. S/o Daniel C. and Elizabeth Taylor. To ONT, 1843; later to Saratoga Twp, MN. Weaver. M Mary Robertson, ch: 1. John Robert, qv; 2. Elizabeth; 3. Joseph; 4. Mary Ann; 5. Marion. **DC 3 Mar 1968.**

[p. 49]

7122 McKay, John. From Farr, SUT. Bro/o Angus M, qv, Charles M, qv, and Andrew M, qv. To York Co, ONT, 1836, later to Mariposa Twp, Victoria Co, and then to Woodville. Storekeeper, later farmer. ch. **EC 273.**

Checking the list of abbreviations we see that LKS stands for Lanark[shire] and SUT for Sutherland. The source citations appear at the end of each entry, and a complete listing of sources is at the end of the volume. The source EC 273 in John McKay's entry stands for page 273 of *Elder Connections* by Rae Fleming (Woodville, 1975). John C. Campbell's source DC stands for the author's *Dictionary of Correspondence*. This is in reference to a file of letters received by the author while researching the volume. The date at the end of the entry indicates the date of the letter.

Whyte has published two additional volumes on Scottish emigrants. Volume 2, published in 1995, contains information on over 11,200 additional emigrants and contains updates on individuals who appeared in volume 1, referencing them by their unique identifier. Volume 3, published in 2002, is much smaller and contains only 1,820 new entries. This volume contains updates on hundreds of individuals who appeared in the previous two volumes as well.

Colonel Leonard H. Smith, Jr. and Norma H. Smith have published a two-volume set of materials entitled *Nova Scotia Immigrants to 1867* (Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1992-1994) [CS88/N64/S51/1992]. The first volume is split into two parts: information culled from manuscripts and that taken from Nova Scotia periodicals. Volume two contains materials taken from periodicals outside of Nova Scotia and from published diaries and journals.

These works cover a broad range of immigrants to Nova Scotia and do not focus on any particular groups. The amount of information available varies from individual to individual, and all entries are documented with source citations listed alphabetically in the back of the book. The example below illustrates the important information that can be gleaned from this resource.

Holmes, Patrick. Enlisted at Wexford, Wexford, Ireland, 26 Nov 1804 age 26; disbanded at St. John (or St. Johns) 24 July 1818; “located” Dalhousie Military Settlement 1820 (460:101).

[vol. 1, p. 377]

The first number in the source citation is the source code; the second is the page number. Referencing number 460 shows that the information in this entry comes from an article by Wayne Walker entitled “Disbanded Soldiers in Dalhousie, Annapolis Co., 1820” (from Public Record Office London, WO-25 vol. 548), published in the *Nova Scotia Genealogist*, 1(1983): 3:101-103.

Those researching early New Brunswick ancestors have the benefit of a very valuable book published by Heritage Books in 1989. R. Wallace Hale compiled *Early New Brunswick Probate Records 1785-1835* (Bowie, MD: Heritage Books, 1989) [CS88/N33/H36/1989], in which he reviewed and abstracted over 2,000 probate files covering all counties in the first fifty years of the province of New Brunswick. In the introduction Hale explains his research process, cites guides that were consulted, and, most importantly, identifies missing data (such as files for Kent County which were destroyed by fire in 1940).

The abstractions are quite detailed and provide much valuable information for researchers. They are listed alphabetically by last name. Each entry begins with three pieces of information: the location of the individual; the date of the will if one was filed; and the date the will was proven (or, in the case of intestate individuals, the date administration was granted). Information that Hale was unable to decipher is included in brackets. Surnames are printed in all caps to make them easier to see on the page. The following example shows the kind of information available.

PETERS, Thomas

Parish of Fredricton, York Co. Will dated 25 October 1806, proved 20 December 1813.

Wife Susannah 600 pounds and furniture. Son Samuel 750 pounds. Sons Marcus and William each 150 pounds. Daughters Susan and Ann each 350 pounds. Granddaughters Hannah MERRIT and Ann Peters Merrit each 25 pounds. Grandsons Robert MERRITT, Peters MERRITT, Eleazer MERRITT and Israel MERITT each 25 pounds. Granddaughter Mary MERRITT 100 pounds. Grandson Thomas PETERS, son of Marcus, 50 pounds. Granddaughter Susan PETERS, daughter of Marcus, 25 pounds. Granddaughter Susan Ann HUNT 25 pounds. Grandson Marcus William PETERS 25 pounds. Wife Susannah, sons Marcus and William PETERS executors. Witnesses: Abraham BROWN, Dennis COOMBES, [initials illegible] ANDERSON.

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Another valuable New Brunswick book is B. Wood-Holt’s *Early Marriage Records of New Brunswick: Saint John City and County from the British Conquest to 1839* (Saint John, NB: Holland House, 1986) [CS88/N43/W6/1986]. Because a large number of individuals immigrated through Saint John, many individuals who later settled in other areas of New Brunswick may be found here.

Wood-Holt examined a large number of records for inclusion in this work, among them:

- Anglican marriage records from historic newspapers (1784-1812)
- Anglican marriage records from Trinity Church (1810-1828)
- Anglican marriage records from Carleton St. George’s Church
- Anglican marriage records from Portland St. Luke’s (Grace) Church
- Magistrates and marriage bonds (1790-1837)
- Presbyterian marriage records (1817-1828)
- Presbyterian marriage records from St. Andrew’s Kirk and St. Stephen’s Church
- Roman Catholic marriage records (1814-1839)
- Marriage records from miscellaneous sources (1789-1839)

The amount and quality of information varies from entry to entry, based on the amount of information available in the original.

Those with French-Canadian ancestry will find many valuable works in the Circulating Library collection. Among them are three cornerstones of French-Canadian research: Rene Jetté's *Dictionnaire généalogique de Québec* (Montreal, QC: Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 1983) [REF CS81/J4/1983]; Père Cyprien Tanguay's *Dictionnaire généalogique des familles Canadiennes: depuis la fondation de la colonie jusqu'à nos jours* (orig. pub 1871, reprint: Pawtucket, RI: Quinton-Rock Publications, 1982) [CS88/T3/1871]; and Claude Drouin's *Dictionnaire national des Canadiens-Français (1608-1760)* (Montréal, QC: Institute Généalogique Drouin, 1979) [CS81/D53/1979].

In addition to these basic works, one can find information on the early settlers of New France in works such as Robert Larin's *La contribution du Haut-Poitou au peuplement de la Nouvelle France* (Moncton, NB: Les éditions d'Acadie, 1994). A large number of early immigrants came from this section of France to settle in Acadia and Québec. This work details their migrations, and provides information about the individuals known to have originated there. The immigrants are listed by town of origin and assigned a unique identifying number. Brief descriptions of towns are also included. The work is written in French, but the biographical information is easily translated with a basic French dictionary for those who do not speak the language. The example below is a good illustration of the information included.

Original

Brigueil-Le-Chantre

Situé dans la pointe sud-est du département de la Vienne. Ancienne ville fortifiée où l'on a trouvé des traces d'occupation gallo-romaine. L'église Saint-Hilaire date du XIIe siècle.

333 – **Louis Guérin dit Berry** (f Mathurin & f Léonarde Guionnet), «de la paroisse de Briguel-le-Chantre dans le diocese de Poitiers». Le 1er août 1712, il se mari à Québec où il avait établi domicile dans la basse ville. Le recensement de 1716 le dit tailleur âgé de 40 ans. Veuf depuis 1715, il se remarie à Beaumont le 13 janvier 1721, et sera qualifié de cabaretier au recensement de 1744 à Québec. Il fut inhumé dans l'église de Québec, le 2 avril 1759. [1+1 enfants]

English Translation

Brigueil-Le-Chantre

Situated in the southeast section of the department of Vienne. Ancient town fortification where is found traces of the Gallo-Roman occupation. The Saint Hilaire church dates to the twelfth century.

333 – **Lous Guérin dit Berry** (the late Mathurin and the late Léonarde Guionnet), "of the parish of Briguel-le-Chantre in the diocese of Poitiers." The first of August 1712, he married at Québec where he had established a house in the lower village. The census of 1716 the said tailor was 40 years old. Widowed before 1715, he remarried at Beaumont the thirteenth of January, 1721, and was styled a tavern-keeper at the census of 1744 at Québec. He was buried in the church of Québec the second of April 1759. [1 + 1 children].

These are just a few examples of the treasures waiting for Canadian researchers in the NEHGS Circulating Library. For more information about the library, visit the Circulating Library pages of NewEnglandAncestors.org. To search the Circulating Library, visit the Library Catalog and select Circulating Library.