

Family histories of early settlers on Gabriola Island.

THESE ARE ARCHIVED FILES written mainly by Barrie Humphrey and Lynda Poulton with some help from the “old” Gabriola Historical and Museum Society (GHMS) History Committee including Kit Szanto and Joyce White.

They were originally posted on the Gabriola Museum Website, but have since been removed. They are re-posted here to ensure that at least the files are always available.

The original html links in this file either no longer function, or have been re-installed in a format compatible with this pdf file.

Opinions expressed in these notes are those of the original posters and authors.

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If you recognize a name on the following list as part of your family tree, the museum may hold archival materials relating to your family. Members of the History Committee have written summaries for some families (those with [links](#)), and are working on others (those with construction signs ). The names of the earliest settlers (pre-1882) are *italicized*.

Links to articles in the *Nanaimo Free Press*


[like this](#) .

are marked .

Family summaries do not necessarily include all the information we have. If you are researching one of these family names, or have information which should be added, or a correction which should be made, please write the History Committee at Box 213, Gabriola BC V0R 1X0, or [Email us](#). We welcome your enquiries and your help.

- . Adams
- . Aitken
- . Alesem
- . Alexander
- . Antonio
- . Baker
- . Bevelockway
- . **Brady**
- . **Brook**
- . **Buckley**
- . **Burrell**
- . **Cafferly**
- . **Canessa**
- . **Caufield**
- . **Chapple**  or Chappel
- . Jackson
- . James
- . **Jamieson**
- . **Jefferies**
- . Johnston(e)
- . **Jones**
- . **Kemp**
- . **LeBoeuf** \_\_\_\_\_, Le Boeuf or Le Boeuff
- . Lewis
- . Loat
- . **Manley**
- . **Martin**
- . **McConvey** 
- . McDougal

- . Clunas
- . Chivers
- . Cox
- . **Cross**
  
- . Davies
- . [Degnen](#), Dignan or  
Degnan **NEW**
- . **Dick**
- . [Dombrain\(e\)](#)  
or Dumbrain
- . Drake
- . **Driver**
- . Dunn
- . **Easson**
- . **Eastham** or Easthom
- . [Edgar](#) 
- . Elphinstone
- . Evans
- . Finney
- . Fisher
- . **Fletcher**
- . [Flewett](#), Flevell, Flewell  
or Flewitt
- . **Foster**
- . **Frew**
  
- . Gilbert
- . Gimmell or Gemmel
- . Gordon
- . **Goss**
- . [Gray](#) 
- . **Green**
- . Griffith(s) or Griffeth(s)
- . **Hall**
- . Halloran
  
- . **McFarlane** or  
MacFarlane
- . McGarrigh or McGarrick
- . McGee
- . McGregor
- . [McGuffie](#) 
- . McKinnon
- . [McLay](#)
- . McLean
- . Miles or Myles
- . **Mounce**
- . Myers
- . Neilson
- . Newberg
- . Newcomb
- . Nightingale
- . **Norris**
- . Orr
  
- . **Penberthy** or  
Pemburthy
- . Perkins
- . **Peterson**
- . Phillips
- . Provier or Provin
- . Raper
- . Renwick
- . Rivers
- . [Roberts](#)
- . Robinson
- . **Rogers or  
Rodgers**
- . [Rollo](#)
- . Rowe or Roe
  
- . Sabiston

- . Hamilton
- . Hanson
- . Harris
- . **Harrower**
- . **Heath**
- . Higgins
- . Higham or Hyam
- . Hirst
- . Hoger
- . **Hoggan** 
- . Howard
- . Hoy
- . **Hunter**
- . Seneker
- . Severne
- . Shaw
- . Shepard, Shephard or Shepherd
- . **Silva** , Sylva or Silvie **NEW**
- . Smith
- . Stephenson
- . Stewart
- . **Stubbin(g)**
- . **s**
- . Taylor
- . Thatcher
- . **Wake**
- . Wenborn or Wenborne
- . **White**
- . Wild
- . Williamson
- . Wilson or Wilsson
- . Wylie

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Created July 21, 1996. Last updated: November 17, 2008



## Robert Burrell (18?? - 1873)



**Webpage Under Construction  
Suggestions Welcome**



Although not much is known about Robert Burrell, who pre-empted land on DeCourcy Island in 1873, one story about him is tantalizing not only in what it tells, but also in what it omits. It makes one wish we knew more about the man. Before he pre-empted 160 acres of land on DeCourcy Island (then considered part of the general district of Gabriola Island) Burrell worked for the Bank of British North America (BBNA), in Victoria and, for several years, as manager in the newly opened Cariboo branch in Barkerville [1]. Newspaper accounts of Burrell report he was well thought of by his peers [2], and this photograph of him suggests the confidence of a man accustomed to success, a confidence that was not misplaced, according to what follows.



**DeCourcy Island**

On November 28, 1871 Victoria's British Colonist newspaper reported that Burrell, then the interim manager of the Victoria branch of BBNA, "returned from a trip to Idaho yesterday", and goes on to recount the "extraordinary circumstances" of his trip [3]. In October the bank discovered they had been defrauded of \$1600 (a considerable sum of money then) by someone who had stolen a check drawn on the BBNA, forged a signature, received the cash from the Victoria bank and then fled to the United States. Burrell, with an extradition warrant obtained from the colonial government, pursued the forger and caught up with him in Salmon River, Idaho. There Burrell discovered that, in order to complete all the legal paperwork involved to bring the forger back to British Columbia, he would have to continue on to Boise City. Since this would involve a great deal of both time and money for which he would not be reimbursed, Burrell "thought it best to take back the \$1600, with \$300 additional for expenses, and leave the swindler to escape unwhipt of justice as he might." [3] With these words the story in The Colonist concludes. It would be interesting to know just how the swindler was persuaded to hand over the money - or how Burrell traced him from Victoria to Salmon River.... but that is all we are told of the story.

**REPORTED DROWNING.**—The steamer Emma arrived from Nanaimo yesterday morning bringing intelligence of the supposed drowning of Mr. Robt. Burrell, near Nanaimo, on Wednesday night last. Mr. Burrell had established a stock ranch on DeCourcey Island, about 8 miles from Nanaimo, and started in a small row boat for home on Wednesday about 4 o'clock. On Friday morning several articles which Mr. Burrell is known to have had in the boat were found on the beach about 1½ miles from town. From this it is feared that the boat was capsized and Mr. Burrell drowned on Wednesday night. An Indian woman who lives near the point thinks she heard some person shouting that evening. When the Emma sailed a party had gone to DeCourcey Island to ascertain if the missing man had reached there. Mr. Burrell is well known and liked throughout the Province. He was for a long time Manager of the Bank of British North America's business on William Creek.

**REPENTING.**—We understand that the people of Salt Spring Island (or a portion of them), having already become tired of Municipal institutions, have petitioned the Legislature to be delivered therefrom. We suppose it is the old story—"Marry in haste and repent at leisure." It is to be regretted that it should be thought necessary to make such a retrograde movement.

enough to have made his mark as an early settler. His pre-emption claim is dated October 27, 1873 [4] but on December 21st, not quite two months later, he was reported drowned while rowing home from Nanaimo.[5]

He had started a stock ranch on DeCourcey [6] -- but nothing is known about what happened to his animals, or any of his other possessions. His land must have reverted to the Crown. A few years later, land on DeCourcey was pre-empted by other Gabriolan settlers, first by Roger Elphinstone on January 11, 1875, who seems not to have stayed long on the island, and then on September 15, 1876 [William Flewett](#) pre-empted 160 acres of DeCourcey.

Probably Flewett's land included some of what Burrell had originally pre-empted. The only other record of Burrell's life we have found so far is some correspondence about the bank act,(7) and letters concerning lands he bought in the New Westminster district in September of 1871, and also in March 1872 (8). Nothing seems to be known about what happened to this land, whether he ever lived there, before pre-empting land on DeCourcey, or whether he sold his claim to that land.

A number of early settlers in this region, whose names are first known when they pre-empt land or are mentioned in the newspapers, then seem to disappear from history. No further mention of them appears in any of the records. It has been assumed, by

Jean Barman, among others, that they have "moved on" (9) -- returned home, or left for more promising territory. But it seems likely that some, like Burrell, drowned on their way to or from Nanaimo.

Transportation between Gabriola and Vancouver Island was risky in the days before there were ferries.

Currents can be very strong, and even in summer, storms can be sudden and fierce, overturning small boats with no help in sight.

## Footnotes

[1] The British Colonist, April 24, 1869 p.3; June 26, 1869, p.3; and April 27, 1870, p.3.

[2] Colonist articles about him quite often refer to the general esteem he was accorded. For example, in the June 26, 1869 issue, p. 3, Burrell is "favorably known from his connection with the Cariboo branch" (of the BBNA), and when his death was reported in 1873, the paper says he "is well known and liked throughout the Province." Dec. 21, 1873, p.3.

**December 25, 1873, p.3**

**THE DEATH** of Mr. Robert Burrell by drowning is too true. The boat was found bottom up near Nanaimo and the settler with whom he cabin'd on one of the islands reports that the missing man never reached there.

**NANAIMO.**—No trace of the escaped prisoner has been obtained. No doubt as to the fate of Mr. Burrell is entertained. The Onward Lodge No. 2, I. O. G. T. will hold their annual tea meeting on New Year's Eve.

[3] The British Colonist, November 28, 1871, p.3.

[4] BC Archives GR-0766: BC Dept. of Land & Works:Pre-emption Records of West Coast Land, 1861-1886; Box 12, File 1458.

[5] The British Colonist, December 21, 1873, p.3; and December 25, 1873, p.3.

[6] The British Colonist, December 21, 1873, p.3.

[7] BC Archives GR-1372: BC Colonial Correspondence: 1857-1872: Microfilm B01312, Item 241. Letters from Burrell, Robert and William C. Ward.

[8] BC Archives GR-0868: BC Dept. of Lands and Works: Lands and Water correspondence in 1871-83, Box 1, folder 2, files 75/72, and 85/72.

[9] Jean Barman in "Island Sanctuaries," *SHALE* No.2, March 2001, p. 13.

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Created December 2, 2004 by Kit Szanto. Last updated: January 15, 2005





## John Canessa (1835-????)

John Canessa, born 1835, is listed in the Nanaimo Census of 1881--occupation fisherman [1](#). His wife, Nora (b. 1849), daughters Josaphine (b.1870), Philomena (b.1874), and Caroline (b. 1877), and son John (b.1879) are also listed. While he certainly owned land on Gabriola, there is no evidence that he lived here. Rather, he appears to have used it for fishing, and built an ice-house.

In 1882, he and his neighbour, Alexander [Hoggan](#), began a six year dispute over who owned the land on which John Canessa had built [2](#). In 1884, Canessa gave notice that he would prosecute trespassers [3](#), and in 1886 charged Hoggan with trespass and damages [4](#). The judge decided that the copies of the surveys each had were inaccurate, that the land was Hoggan's but that Hoggan should pay for Canessa's buildings, which Hoggan was now renting to a third party [5](#).

In 1887, Canessa owed \$1.50 in taxes on the land, and was threatened with a tax sale [6](#).

In 1888, Hoggan appealed the land decision, and also asked for a new trial--both requests were dismissed [7](#).

In 1891, John Canessa, now giving his address as the Europe Hotel, in Vancouver, offered the Southwest quarter of Section 20, Gabriola Island...about 83 acres...  [for sale](#) . There are no further Gabriola references to him.

John Canessa Junior died in Vancouver [8](#) on April 15, 1970, aged 91.



### ----- FOOTNOTES-----

- 1 - Census of B.C. 1881, Nanaimo, Family 242, Case 2182.
- 2 - Nanaimo Free Press, March 17, 1886.
- 3 - Nanaimo Free Press, November 8, 1884.
- 4 - Nanaimo Free Press, March 6, 1886.



5 - Nanaimo Free Press, March 17, 1886.

6 - Nanaimo Free Press, January 8, 1887.

7 - Nanaimo Free Press, June 23, July 7,  [October 6](#) , 1888.

8 - BC Vital Statistics, Deaths, Reg.#1970-09-005554 BCA micro #B13303



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Created: August 22, 1997

Last updated: March 9, 2000



5 captures

12 Jul 07 - 25 Feb 12



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25  
2008 2012 2013

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**UNDER CONSTRUCTION**



**by The History Committee**

This family name is currently being written up by the History Committee. If you have information that should be included in their summary, please write the committee at Box 213, Gabriola, BC, Canada V0R 1X0, or send an email message to [history @ gabriolamuseum.org](mailto:history@gabriolamuseum.org) .

The summary will be posted here as soon as it is completed.



**Last update: March 25, 2007.**



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                                1863
      +----- Richard CHAPPLE-----+----Mary
adopted      (1824-1910)      | (1844-1874)
      1862
      |
      +-----+-----+-----+-----+
Margaret      Richard      William      Joseph      Elizabeth
(nee Sutton) (1865-73)      (1869-1925) (1871-1945) (1872-73)
(c1860-????)

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Richard Chapple (also spelled Chappel and Chapelle), was born in England in 1824, and came to Canada in 1848, at the age of 24. He is first mentioned in the 1871 directory, as a farmer in the Nanaimo district.

In 1862, a child, Margaret Sutton, was baptized and took the Chapple surname. A year later, Richard was married to Mary, (a woman of the Tongass people of southern Alaska). The couple had three sons and a daughter, two of whom died in 1873. Mary died a year later, when she fell from the gangplank of a steamer in Nanaimo harbour on November 28, 1874, and drowned. "A little boy", her son, is mentioned as accompanying her in the press reports of the time.

We get glimpses of Richard's life from contemporary newspaper accounts. He complained of his taxes (23/12/76), and they were adjusted. He built the wharf in False Narrows (19/9/83)--three years later (29/9/86) it was falling down, and he repaired it, helped by Thomas McGuffie. He opened a market in Nanaimo, where he sold suckling pigs for Christmas in 1883 -- but the market closed the following year (10/9/84). He was appointed foreman of roads at "the lower end" of the island in 1887. He was struck on the head by a colt in 1889, but recovered. He planted 20 acres of oats in 1892 (26/2), and, in July of 1893, took to Nanaimo "a quantity of Rose potatoes, the largest and finest brought to the city this season" according to the Free Press.

We know that he was charitable (he donated \$2.50 to the widows and orphans of the Nanaimo mine disaster in 1887), a good dancer (he "astounds all the company with his dancing skill" at the Shaw's silver wedding anniversary in 1886), and a good friend (he served as pall-bearer at the funeral of Magnus Edgar in 1894). There is also reason to suspect that he was firm in his beliefs. In 1894, he and H Petersen, disagreeing about the results of the election of school trustees, rowed to Victoria together to interview the superintendent of education there about the rights of the matter. (Unfortunately, we do not know the outcome of their consultation.)

Both sons attended the Gabriola North School, where they did moderately well. Joseph, the younger, was apparently a bit wild--his name appears a number of times in the Free Press, his brother William's, never. He appeared before the magistrate in 1883, charged with breaking into William Hoggan's house and stealing apples. The case was dismissed with a warning. Three years later, when Joseph was 15, his father posted a notice in the newspaper that he would not be responsible for his son's debts. A year later, Joseph was swimming with others in Rocky Bay when one of his companions--Charles Le Boeuf--drowned. Shortly after that (September 7, 1887), Joseph assisted in rescuing three men thrown from a small boat when halfway to Gabriola. In 1894, he "shot a monster panther on his farm... [It] measured 8 feet 7 inches and was quite... old....

Joseph was gone from Gabriola by the time of the 1901 census, leaving Richard and William to run the farm. Joseph lived on Saltspring for a time, but for him, Gabriola was always home, and by 1920, after his father's death, he came back. Neither brother ever married, but their adopted sister, Margaret, married a James R Shephard of Nanaimo in 1876, when she was sixteen. A daughter, Isabella Silvia Gertrude Shephard, was born on Gabriola ten months later, and a child of Isabella's second marriage -- Mr. J. Shouldice -- provided details for the death registration of William Chapple in 1948, identifying himself as a "nephew-in-law".



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**Last Update: June 23, 2005.**



## Gabriola settlers family trees



### Degnen Family Tree

The family tree only shows the children of Thomas and Jane Degnen.

Thomas Degnen (family name in Ireland "Degit") Immigrated 1857

- [Home](#)
- [Settlers Families](#)
- [Contact](#)

#### Family

- [Thomas Degnen](#)  
1833

#### Thomas Degnen descendents

- [James Degnen](#)  
1859
- [Jane Thatcher](#)  
1864
- [Ellen Thatcher](#)  
1868
- [Robert Degnen](#)  
1870
- [Mary Ann McDonald](#) 1878

### Degnen Family

#### Jane (Janimetga Jeameya) (name "Jean" in Canada Census 1911)

- [Parents of Janimetga](#)
- Born. between 1833 - 1840 in Gabriola Area First Nations ( 1841 in Canada Census 1911)
- Died. March 14, 1919 on Gabriola Island
- Burial: Gabriola Cemetry
- Married: [24 Sept 1868](#)

#### Thomas Degnen (Spouse)

- [Parents of Thomas Degnen](#)
- Born. between 1833 - 1836 in Longford, Ireland (Mar 1837 in Canada Census 1911)
- Died. March 10, 1921 on Gabriola Island
- Burial: Gabriola Cemetry

divider

Children of **Jane** and **Thomas Degnen** are:

divider

#### 1. James Degnen

- Born. January 11, 1859, Nanaimo, BC ( 1860 in Canada Census 1911)
- Died. December 21, 1921, Gabriola Island
- Burial: ( no info)

- [Family of James Degnen](#)

## 2. John Degnen

- Born. 1862
- Died. February 27, 1903, Gabriola Island.
- Burial: Gabriola Cemetery

## 3. Jane Degnen

- Born. 1864
- Died. November 21, 1896
- Burial: ( no info )
- [Family of Jane Degnen](#)

## 4. Margaret Degnen

- Born. 1866
- Died. February 22, 1893
- Burial: Gabriola Cemetery

## 5. Ellen Degnen

- Born. 1868
- Died. November 16, 1916
- Burial: Gabriola Cemetery
- [Family of Ellen Degnen](#)

## 6. Robert Degnen

- Born. 1870, baptized December 12, 1872 (Jul 1871 in Canada Census 1911)
- Died. April 17, 1948, Gabriola Island
- Burial: ( no info)
- [Family of Robert Degnen](#)

## 7. Thomas Degnen

- Born. July 15, 1874, Nanaimo ( 1871 in Canada Census 1911)
- Died. March 13, 1942, Nanaimo
- Burial: March 16, 1942, Gabriola Island

## 8. Mary Ann Degnen

- Born. March 29, 1878, Gabriola Island (1884 in Canada Census 1911)
- Died. 1959
- Burial: ( no info)
- [Family of Mary Ann Degnen](#)

## 9. Frank Francis Degnen

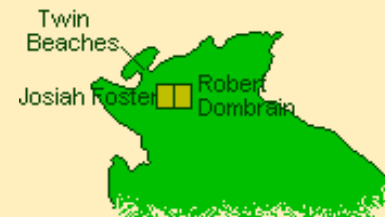
- Born. May 4, 1882, Gabriola Island (1887 in Canada Census 1911)
- Died. March 2, 1950, Vancouver
- Burial: Gabriola Cemetery



## The Dombrain Family

We know the names of the settler families who remained on Gabriola for several generations -- older residents remember them, or geographic features of the island have been named after them. Others, now forgotten, lived here for a short time and moved on, or died without descendants who were willing to live and work here. Their passage is marked only by their names on a few pieces of official paper, or in the directories of the time.

One such was Robert Peel Dombrain, who pre-empted 100 acres at the northwest end of Gabriola on March 26th, 1870. The rough map which he drew on the back of his pre-emption claim was somewhat ambiguous, but showed his land to the east of Josiah Foster's, a mile inland from what we now call the Twin Beaches. Apart from this pre-emption, we were able to find his name only in the Nanaimo directories for 1869 and 1871. We guessed that he had tried farming and didn't like it, and we moved on to look at others for whom more information was available.



In January of 2001, the museum received an email from Nicholas d'Ombraïn of New Brunswick, telling us that the name and family are Huguenot in origin and can be traced directly to a Jacques d'Embrun who fled France from Rouen in 1572 just before the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre. Nicholas suggested several candidates for the role of Gabriola's Robert Dombrain, including a son of the Rev. Henry Honeywood D'Ombraïn (vicar of Westwell, in Kent, and one of the founders of the Royal Horticultural Society). This Robert died in Natal, South Africa on 8 April 1879 where he was serving in the Zulu War as a Lieutenant in the 1st Battalion, Natal Native Contingent of the Keynsham Light Horse.

In April, sparked in part by Nicholas' interest, a visit to the Anglican Archives in Victoria turned up two interesting baptisms:

James Dumbrain, born February 7, 1864 to Robert Dumbrain (a labourer) and See-ate-a-sult (a Sishel woman), was baptized September 18, 1864, by the Reverend John B Good, rector of St. Paul's Anglican Church in Nanaimo..

More than a year later, Lucy Dumbrain, born of Indian parents, was baptized as an adult, on June 11, 1865, also by JB Good.

As the birth of James would have required Nicholas' favourite candidate to arrive in Canada at about age 14, we gave him up reluctantly. Nicholas suggested that we look for a marriage record which might tell us something of our Robert Dombrain's parentage. This proved a good recommendation -- another trip to

the Anglican Archives revealed two relevant marriages at the end of 1865:

The first (#13 in the parish registry of St. Paul's) took place on December 12, between Ambrose M Fletcher and "Mary", born in "Seshel country". Robert Peel Dombtrain gave the bride away, and the bride's maid was Lucy, "a Seshel Indian." One of two witnesses to the event was Robert's neighbour -- Josiah Foster.

The second marriage (#14 in the registry), occurred two weeks later, on Christmas Day, between Robert P Dombtrain, a bachelor of Nanaimo aged 28 (who gave his occupation as "gentleman", his birthplace as "Canterbury, Kent, England", and his father as William, "a hop planter") and Lucy, a spinster of Nanaimo, aged 20, (who gave her birthplace as Seshel BC, and her father as "Indian"). The bride was given away by Andrew M Fletcher, Mary (Seshel) was the bride's maid. There were four witnesses, including a future Gabriolan -- [Theodore LeBoeuf](#).

Armed with this age, birthplace, and parentage, Nicholas requested a search of the Canterbury Parish churches archives, In early August of 2001, he learned that a Robert Peel Dombtrain was baptized on 25 August 1835 at St. Margaret's Church, Canterbury. He was the child of William Dombtrain (1803-1880) and Jane Seguin (1796-1864); William was a "wine and spirit merchant" according to the marriage certificate of one of his children, and was the youngest son of Abraham Dombtrain (1762-1837) and his second wife Elizabeth Aldridge (1757-1820). William's brother James, later Sir James, became the Commissioner of the Irish Coastguard. It is likely that Robert and Lucy's child was named for him.

Although we now know more of the beginning of the story, we still don't know the end. Did Robert, Lucy, and James move to Washington or Oregon when BC became a province in 1871? (Many who held republican views did.) Or did Robert fall victim to drowning or disease, before deaths began to be officially registered in 1872, and Lucy remarry? Or did they move on to another frontier, further north? Possibly. Because he lived in an isolated area, during a time when there were few public records and no local newspaper (the Free Press was not published until 1874), we might never know.

But.... we might. If you read this, and can provide more information, the Gabriola Museum and Nicholas d'Ombtrain of New Brunswick would very much like to hear from you. You can send an email to [history@\[gabriolamuseum.org\]\(#\)](mailto:history@gabriolamuseum.org)

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Created May 23, 2001    Last modified April 16, 2007





## Gabriola settlers family trees



### Magnus Edgar Family Tree

Mr Magnus Edgar was born on the Shetland Islands and as a young man hired by the Hudson's Bay Company ([HBC record](#)) in June of 1851, to work at York Factory"([York Factory](#)) then moved on to Columbia ([Columbia](#)), by 1854 he was not working for the HBC. He initially, on Vancouver Island, worked for a coal company, but became a farmer some time prior to 1874. The Nanaimo Free press reported on activities that Mr M Edgar was involved with. Attached is a Nanaimo Free press Gabriola Section on Magnus Edgar([Free Press](#))

- [Home](#)
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#### Family

- [Magnus Edgar](#)  
1836

#### Magnus Edgar descendents

- [Mark Edgar](#)
- [Ann McConvey](#)
- [Margaret Bennett](#)

### Magnus Edgar Family

#### Magnus Edgar

- [Parents of Magnus Edgar](#)
- Born. 7 Oct 1826
- Place: Tingwall Shetland Islands
- Died. 4 Jan 1894
- Place: Gabriola Island
- Burial: no info
- married. no info

#### Susan (1 Spouse)

- Born. no info
- Place: Fort Simpson
- Died. no info
- Burial: No info

#### Mary Ann (2 Spouse)

- Born. 1844 BC First Nations
- Died. 22 Oct 1882
- Burial: Gabriola Cemetery

#### Ann Swanson (3 Spouse)

- Born. 1846
- Place: Shetland Islands

- Died. No info
- Burial: No info
- married. Oct 8 1891 in Vancouver

divider

Children of **Magnus** and **Susan Edgar** are:

divider

#### 1. **George Edgar**

- Born. 1852
- Died. 7/11/1931 in KLEMTU
- Burial: no info

divider

Children of **Magnus** and **Mary Ann Edgar** are:

divider

#### 2. **John Edgar**

- Born. 6 March 1864
- Place: Gabriola Island
- Died. June 8 1885
- Burial: no info

#### 3. **Mark Edgar**

- Born. 25 Dec 1865
- Place: Gabriola Island
- Died. 21 March 1928
- Burial: no info
- [Family of Mark Edgar](#)

#### 4. **Ann Edgar**

- Born. 12 Feb 1869
- Died. 1936
- Burial: no info
- [Family of Ann Edgar](#)

#### 5. **William Edgar**

- Born. 6 August 1871
- Died. no info
- Burial: no info

#### 6. **Catherine Edgar**

- Born. 22 June 1873
- Place: Gabriola Island
- Died. 24 July 1874
- Place: Gabriola Island
- Burial: no info

### 7. Jane Edgar

- Born. 23 March 1876
- Place: Nanaimo District
- Died. 20 July 1894
- Place: Nanaimo District
- Burial: no info

### 8. Margaret Edgar

- Born. 15 Sept 1878
- Place: Gabriola Island
- Died. no info
- Burial: no info
- married. Jan 17 1906 in Vancouver
- [Family of Margaret Edgar](#)

### 9. Agnes Edgar

- Born. 6 Dec 1880
- Place: Gabriola Island
- Died. 25 Sept 1897
- Place: Nanaimo District
- Burial: no info







Nanaimo	Union Bay	Gabriola	2
1 daughter	Seattle		
other	Chicago	Emily Washington (4/2/78-26/1/48) Teacher at Gabriola School 1896-98 m Jack LAWSON	3 children Illinois Texada Island

William Minter Flewett was born in Shoreditch, London, England, in 1832, the youngest of three children of Thomas Flewett (a farrier) and Rebecca MINTER. William came to St. John, New Brunswick in Canada in 1853, to work as an engineer. He married Sarah Lipsett BROWNE (originally from Ballyshannon, Ireland) at the end of that year. He was 21, she, 22. They had six children between 1854 and 1864--one son apparently dying young.

By the time of the 1871 census, Sarah Lipsett (Browne) Flewitt was in hospital in St. John, and "of unsound mind". William, age 39, had remarried (Rebecca, surname unknown, age 36), and lived in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, with Elizabeth, Jane, Sarah, and "Ellen" (Mary Helen). His occupation was given as "engineer" on the census--he was probably working in the mines there. Wilhelmina's whereabouts at this time are a mystery--she wasn't on either the Cape Breton or the St. John 1871 census--we have not discovered her again until the 1910 Chicago census, where she is married (apparently for the second time) to Albert Young, and lists her occupation as Christian Science practitioner. She brought two sons to that marriage--Samuel W and James W, and had a daughter (Mabel) in about 1912.

After sending his other daughters off to boarding school in Boston, William made his way west, arriving in Nanaimo, British Columbia, some time around 1873 (apparently without Rebecca). The daughters joined him there. The three oldest promptly married Nanaimo men during the next two years (at the ages of 19, 17, and 14), leaving only Mary Helen at home with her father and his new third wife, Martha (born in Holland, the same age as William, immigrated to Canada in 1875). William is said to have worked as an engineer at Bulkley's Harewood Mine from 1875 to 1876. His diary (present location unknown) is reported (by a descendant who has seen it) to describe his work in marine salvage over the next few years -- "I have cleaned my pistol and packed my sextant, and am away." Three months later, "Home again."

In 1879, he bought a steam launch--the *Mercury*--renamed it *Nellie*, and  [advertised](#)  two trips a day from Nanaimo to Departure Bay, carrying 15 passengers at a top speed of 8 knots. A few months later, the  [Free Press](#)  reported that the *Nellie* had sunk in Nanaimo Harbour. She was refloated, thanks to her compartmented construction. An unconfirmed account also has William working as the engineer of the steamer *Etta White* [one of the two steamers towing the [Thrasher](#) when she went aground off southeast Gabriola on what is still known as Thrasher Rock].

By the time of the 1881 census, the three Flewetts were living on a 320 acre farm, known to the family as "The Ranch". They were the only European inhabitants of DeCourcey Island, southwest of Gabriola. Their

house was located "across from the southern entrance to False Narrows". Flewett Harbour, as it was known then, is the present Boat Harbour. One of the older daughters, Sarah Maria Raper, lived nearby on Gabriola Island, with her husband Alfred and two daughters--Emily, 3, and Mabel, 2. (Until they were drawn to [Texada Island](#) in the 1890s, by the lure of mineral wealth.) At Christmas of 1881, the [Farmer's Market](#) in Nanaimo (prop. David [Hoggan](#)) was selling "mutton raised by Mr. W. Flewett, De Courcey Island". William and Martha were 50, Mary Helen, 17.

Early in 1883, there was a small flurry of articles to do with the Flewett family in the *Nanaimo Free Press*. On [January 10](#), William disclaimed responsibility for Mary Helen, who had left home without his consent, and also offered the DeCourcey farm and the *Nellie* for sale. On [February 17](#), Mary Helen married Thomas R Jones without her father's consent--which led to a diatribe by the Rector of St Paul's against the marriage of minors, also in the *Free Press*. Nothing more is heard of the sale of the farm, nor of "the children of disobedience". Readers will have to use their imaginations to flesh out the rest of the story--it does not seem to have been passed down in family legend. Was William's offer to sell the farm and the *Nellie* related to Mary Helen's leaving home "without consent"? We do know, from one of the Jones' descendants, now living in Seattle, that the Jones family moved several times between Nanaimo and Black Diamond, Washington, before settling in Seattle in 1899. Their house in Seattle, built by Thomas in 1903, still stands. Mary Helen had nine children, only four of whom (two girls and two boys) lived. She remarried shortly after the death of Thomas Jones, in 1909, and died in 1921. One of her children was named Martha, another, Minter, which suggests that some reconciliation had occurred.

In 1884, William donated \$5.00 (a large sum for the time) "in aid of the widows and children of those killed in the late explosion at the Wellington Colliery". In June of 1887, he made a similar donation, following Nanaimo's largest mine disaster.

Transportation to and from Decourcey Island was not without problems. In 1884, a boat lowered from the steamer *Amelia* at "Flewett's Island", was caught in the paddle-wheel and smashed to pieces. Fortunately, the crewman in the boat escaped. In 1886, William had to row to Nanaimo when the mail boat failed to dock at Gabriola and Decourcey. [We wonder what happened to the *Nellie*.]

The previous year, while building a new dock, William had discovered a [strange clam](#) embedded in the rock of the shore. He sent it to the *Free Press* for identification.





In the summer of 1887, there was a land rush on the DeCourcey group of islands, sparked by the prospect of a coal seam running to them from Nanaimo. William and Martha bought up the remainder of DeCourcey Island, and Ruxton Island [then called Flewett's Island]. [Only small coal deposits were ever discovered, though efforts to find a workable vein continued for several years.]

### William Flewett's Clam

William's curiosity about nature was common in late Victorian times, particularly in the professional class. It would not have been unusual for an "engineer" to send a strange clam to the newspaper for identification.

He had found a piddock -- a clam of the family *Pholadidae* -- which, when still quite small, uses its shell to burrow into wood, shale or sandstone, where it lives and grows, enlarging its living space, but leaving its entrance hole small, as a defense against predators. Water sucked in through the entrance is filtered for small organisms on which the clam feeds.

Unfortunately, the newspaper article doesn't give quite enough information to identify the species. If

By 1888, William's occupation was given as "farmer" on the voters' list. Subsequent articles in the *Free Press* suggest that the Flewetts had settled down to raising poultry and vegetables. In  [October, 1888](#) , William took an apple weighing twenty ounces [570 grams] to the *Nanaimo Free Press* office. The apple was from his first attempt at grafting, in 1885. Although unable to recall the name of the parent tree, he believed that it was Australian. In June of the following year, he took in some  [monster cherries](#)  "...of the Yellow Spanish variety" in addition to his usual assortment of produce. He complained of the continued dry spell, and described a method of outsmarting crows which he had developed. In August he delivered "several large and luscious peaches", and in September, a 22 ounce [625 gram] apple -- larger than the previous year's.

full-grown, its size suggests either *Penitella penita*, the flat-tipped or common piddock, or *Penitella gabbi*, Gabb's piddock. It could also have been an oval piddock (*Chaceia ovoidea*) or a young rough piddock (*Zirfaea pilsbryi*). Piddocks contribute to the erosion of our coast -- as do people breaking off rock to look for piddocks.

Morris, PA. *A Field Guide to Pacific Coast Shells*. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1966.

Audobon Society. *Pacific Coast Nature Guide*. NY: Knopf, 1985.

On October 22, 1889, William arrived in Nanaimo, having piloted the steamer *Isabel* through the False Narrows. He reported that "some miscreant, or miscreants" had shot several of his sheep, "including an old pet ewe which he has had for the past 10 years". He offered a reward of \$50 for the conviction of the offenders -- we don't know if they were ever identified.

In 1892, William is listed as a passenger on the steamer [Esperanza](#). No further mention of the Flewetts is found in the *Free Press* in the next three years.

A daughter of Sarah Maria Flewett--Emily Raper--taught at the South Gabriola school for two years (from 1896 to 1898) before marrying Jack Lawson and leaving the island. (It was hard to keep a teacher on Gabriola in those days--Emily lasted a year longer than most.)

William and Martha both appear on the 1901 census, giving their religion as "Agnostic". In the 1909 assessment, the "Ranch" on Decourcey, 600 acres in size, was valued at \$100,000. According to one source, "Mr. Flewett appeared frequently in Nanaimo when he was in to sell his produce, paid a visit to many of his friends. On April 27th, 1912, Great-grandfather Flewett paid a visit to his Great-granddaughter on his 81st [*sic*] birthday." A photograph of him, taken about that time, can be found on page 35 of *The People of Gabriola* by June Lewis-Harrison (Friesen & Sons, 1982 -- now out of print).

William died in July of 1914, at the age of 82. Martha followed him seven months later, aged 83. Both were buried in the Nanaimo Cemetery.

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The History Committee thanks:

Marlene Valiant, granddaughter of Anna Elizabeth Victoria Flewett (Malpass);  
Lesley Gee, great granddaughter of Anna Elizabeth Victoria Flewett (Malpass);  
Maryrose Howard, great granddaughter of Anna Elizabeth Victoria Flewett (Malpass); and  
Scott Anderson, great grandson of Mary Helen Flewett (Jones),

without whose help, and contribution of family stories, we could not have reconstructed even this much of  
the Flewett history.

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If *you* have information about the Flewetts of DeCoursey Island that should be included here,  
or have questions about any of *our* information,  
please email us ( [history @ gabriolamuseum.org](mailto:history@gabriolamuseum.org)), and let us know.

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Created: December 12, 1999 by Barrie Humphrey

Last Update: March 24, 2007.





## Robert Gray (1833-1908)

### Lighthouse Keeper (1876-1907)

```

                Robert Gray---+-- ?      2 m. Mary
Jeffrey 9/9/82
                (1833-1908) |
+-----+-----+-----+-----+
Jane                James                Fred [PG]
(1861- ? )          (1865-1946)          ( ? - ? )
m Henry J Peterson  m Jessie Aitken          |
  ?/?/?              ?/?/? Nanaimo      ???
|                    |
Ann(e) Mary ( c1878 -????)  Robert J ( 1/ 2/98-????)
Robert J    (25/12/80-????)  William A ( 5/10/99-????)
Henry A     (14/ 6/85-????)  James    (??/?/04-17/4/10)
William S   (23/ 2/87-????)
Flora E     (23/12/88-????)
Christian F (10/12/90-????)
Mary        ( 2/ 5/93-????)
George      (19/ 2/96-????)
Samuel      (11/ 3/98-????)
Maggelene  (23/ 5/00-????)

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July 3, 1875. Daughter of Mr. R Grey, aged about 14, narrowly escapes being trampled to death by a cow.

Nov 22, 1876. Robert Gray takes up duties of lighthouse keeper.

Dec 27, 1876. R Gray complains of Wild Land tax, but has to pay it.

Jan 4, 1879. R Gray reports on mild weather.

Oct 23, 1879. R Gray reports on missing canoeist, presumed drowned.

Nov 13, 1880. R Gray reports finding a skiff.

May , 1881. CANADIAN CENSUS District 191A, Family 0309, Case 2249. Robert (44), James (17).

Nov 17, 1881. R Gray reports a sloop wrecked on Entrance Island, and all presumed lost.

Feb 10, 1883. Robert Gray refuses responsibility for any debts contracted by his wife (better known as Mrs. Jeffrey) in his name.

Feb 16, 1883. Robert Gray notifies that his wife has not contracted any debts in his name.

July 11, 1883. Editorial on poor provision of lighthouse and Mr. Gray's hardship.

Dec 19, 1883. Robert Gray notifies people of Nanaimo that he has not been running Dr. O'Brian down, contrary to rumour.

ASSESSMENT ROLL, 1884:

1 NW 1/4 160 283 GRAY, Robt. [10]

1 NE 1/4 W 1/2 67 285 GRAY, Robt. [13]

6 SW 1/4 NE 1/4 40 297 GRAY, Robt. [37]

6 SW 1/4 S 1/2 80 297 GRAY, Robt. [38]

Aug 2, 1884. Report of Nanaimo hospital includes: "Robt. Gray, fistula, entered Oct. 14th, left improved, Dec. 8th, '83".

Oct 18, 1884. Editorial on inadequacy of lifeboats mentions Robert Gray.

Dec 20, 1884. Report that Robert Gray had to leave the lighthouse and row to Nanaimo for coal to keep from freezing and to keep the light free of frost.

June 4, 1887. Robert and James Gray each donate \$5.00 to widows and orphans.

1888 VOTERS LIST: GRAY, Mr. ROBERT: LIGHT KEEPER

July 13, 1889. Robert Gray visits friends in Nanaimo.

Aug 17, 1893. Robert Gray interviewed re: fog alarm on Entrance Island--machinery not yet installed.

Occupants of Gabriola Cemetery GRAY Robert 1833 0 0 1908 0 0 75 [22]

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[MAIN MENU](#)

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**Created: Sunday, 09 March, 1997 -- Last Updated: Sunday, 09 March, 1997**





They were homestead farmers, growing crops of vegetables, and raising cattle and poultry, both for their own use and for market. The LeBoeufs were mentioned in a  [Nanaimo Free Press article](#)  which praised the industry of the Gabriola settlers. Theodore was an accomplished carpenter, skilled with the broad axe, and built many barns on Gabriola and in Nanaimo. He is also remembered for constructing remarkable ditching systems, some of which are still in use today. To his neighbours, he was known as "the Frenchman". Maria worked in other settlers' homes, as a washerwoman[4].

Maria and Theodore's first child, Caroline, was born on June 2, 1869. Two years later on May 2, 1871, their only son, Charles, was born, and on August 1, 1873, a second daughter, Eliza (also known as Elise, Alese, or Elizabeth). All three children were baptised on December 6, 1874, in Nanaimo[3].

Maria LeBoeuf died on November 11, 1876, at only 35 years of age. She was buried two days later, in the cemetery of the new St. Peter's Church, on Fitzwilliam Street in Nanaimo [5], one of the first to be interred at this cemetery. Theodore and Charles were the only occupants of the LeBoeuf household at the time of the 1881 census.

In the early 1880s, Theodore was delinquent in paying his taxes on several occasions, although he managed to pay the \$3.75 owed by January of 1881. In the 1884/85 assessment roll, the LeBoeuf land was assessed at \$500.00. His income was also \$500.00. The taxes for this term were \$3.75 of which he had paid only \$2.66 [2]. Also in 1884, he advertised for sale in the Nanaimo Free Press, on July 9, "a yoke of well-broken and handy work oxen, in excellent condition"[6].

In July of 1884, there was an explosion at the Wellington Colliery, near Nanaimo. On May 3, 1887, there was another disastrous explosion at the #1 shaft of the Vancouver Coal Company mine in Nanaimo[7], in which three sons of Gabriola farmers were killed. On each occasion, concerned Gabriola citizens raised money for the widows and children. Theodore contributed a dollar each time.

On July 1, 1885, Theodore was elected to be Trustee of the  [Gabriola school](#) , a position he held for three years[8]. His son Charles would have been school age, however no record of his schooling has been found.

In 1886, Theodore was mentioned in the Free Press for growing an amazingly large blood-red beet, which weighed 12 pounds, with roots and stems removed, and a turnip beet, weighing 7 pounds. The newspaper headline read -- WHO CAN BE(E)AT THIS?[9]

On August 14, 1887, tragedy once again struck the LeBoeufs. According to the Nanaimo Free Press, Charles was swimming with friends at Rocky Bay (now called Descanso Bay, the site of our present ferry landing), and suddenly disappeared under water. Although his friends ran for help from neighbours, who tried to resuscitate him, they were too late. The cause of death was given as "cramping". His funeral was held at

St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church, Nanaimo, on August 17, the Rev. Father Durand, the parish replacement priest giving the service. The church records are incomplete, but it can be assumed that, according to custom, Charles was laid to rest beside his mother Maria's unmarked grave, which has been located with the aid of church records[5].

Some time in 1889, Caroline LeBoeuf married Richard Gilbert at St. Peter's Church. Theodore was present as witness[5]. Their first child, Adeline (Adelina), was born on Gabriola, on February 20,1890, and baptised on April 27, at St.Peter's. Theodore was the sponsor[5].

The 1891 census lists the occupants of the LeBoeuf household as Theodore, a 55 year old farmer; his daughter, 17 year old Alese; Caroline Gilbert, 22 years old; her husband Richard, a 27 year old miner; and year-old Adelina Gilbert. Caroline was expecting their second child.

On May 25,1892, on Gabriola, a second daughter, Maria, was born to Caroline and Richard. She was baptised at St.Peter's on June 11,1892. The sponsors were Theodore and Mary Enos[5].

Alese LeBoeuf, the younger daughter of Theodore and Maria, was married in Victoria on September 2,1897[10], to William Miller, a 38-year-old German-born longshoreman from Tacoma. On March 30,1903, a daughter -- Isabella -- was born to Alese (Elizabeth LeBoeuf) and Robert Rivers, in Nanaimo. She was baptised at St. Peter's Church. Adelina LeBoeuf, cousin to Isabella, was the sponsor[5].

On February 20, 1894, The Free Press reported that Theodore was very ill at his Gabriola home. He was attended by friends who sought medical help from Nanaimo[11]. There is no further information about this illness, but we know he survived it. He was registered as a farmer on Gabriola on the 1898 voters' list for the Nanaimo area -- no other family members appear on that list. He left the island prior to the 1901 census, and died of "apoplexy" on November 23, 1903, in New Westminster, aged 68 years[12].

Richard Gilbert died on November 6, 1918, at the age of 57 years, one of the many victims of the terrible influenza epidemic of that year[13]. We have so far been unable to trace Caroline, Alese and their daughters beyond Gabriola.

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If *you* can help us fill in the gaps in the story of the LeBoeufs of Gabriola Island,  
have questions about any of *our* information,  
or would like more information about this family,  
please email the History Committee ( [history @ gabrielamuseum.org](mailto:history@gabrielamuseum.org)) and let us know.

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- FOOTNOTES-

1. [Nanaimo Free Press, May 9, 1874.](#)
2. Nanaimo Archives: Nanaimo/Alberni Assessment Rolls 1884-1885. Section 19, NE¼ of the NW¼, and the NW¼ of the NE¼; and section 22, SW¼ of the SE¼, and the SE¼ of the SW¼.
3. Records of St. Andrews Roman Catholic Church, Victoria, B.C. 1849-1934.
4. Lewis-Harrison, June, *The People of Gabriola*. Friesen & Sons; 1982 (out of print)
5. St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church Records, Nanaimo, B.C.
6. Nanaimo Free Press, August 9 & 13, 1884.
7. Nanaimo Free Press, May 7 & June 11, 1887.
8. [Nanaimo Free Press, July 1, 1885.](#)
9. Nanaimo Free Press, September 18, 1886.
10. British Columbia Vital Statistics:Reg # 1897-09-008152; BCA# B11368; GSU# 1983525.
11. Nanaimo Free Press, February 20, 1894.
12. British Columbia Vital Statistics Reg # 1903-09-081169; BCA# B13088; GSU# 1927116.
13. British Columbia Vital Statistics Reg # 1918-09-098401; BCA# B13091; GSU# 1927119.

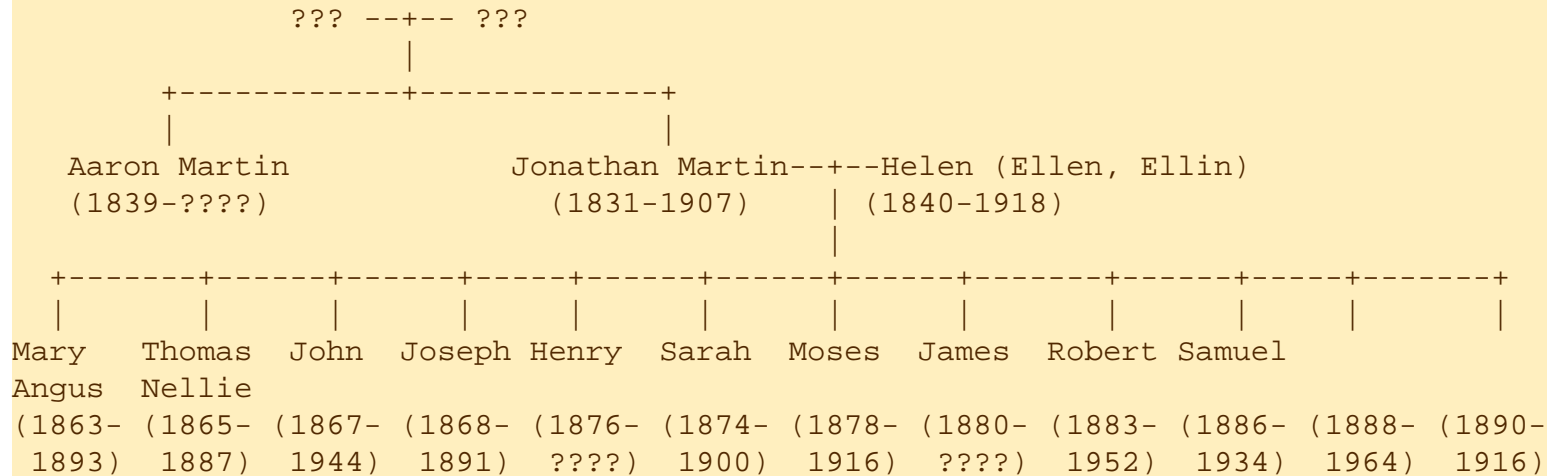
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Created June 2, 2000, by Lynda Poulton and Barrie Humphrey.

Last Updated: July 19, 2000.



## THE MARTINS OF GABRIOLA



Jonathan Martin (Born Aug.26, 1831, England, Died Jan.16, 1907, aged 78) and his brother Aaron (1839-???) are referred to as the last preemptors, two of the nineteen settlers on Gabriola as of May 9, 1874, according to the  [Nanaimo Free Press article](#)  of that date. The brothers were about to begin the cultivation of hops, which apparently Jonathan understood well.

On July 7, 1875 (NFP), Jonathan was elected foreman for the east end (now called south end for some inexplicable reason). The government grant (for roads, etc) of \$500 was shared equally between the east and west ends. The following year Jonathan was 'appointed' foreman. (NFP). The budget for roads, etc. was again \$500 and shared between east and west ends.

The \$500 budget must be considered in the light of the fact that shortly after (1879) Jonathan is delinquent in taxes for \$2.40 (presumably the full taxes for 1879). Apparently his land was not sold as threatened in Sept. of that year as he is noted as the landowner of the 160 acres (North east 1/4 of Sec 2-west and north of the present location of the United Church) in the 1884/1885 maps/records of the Gabriola Museum. Aaron may not have fared as well, though. He was the owner of 196 acres west of Degnen Bay (Gabriola Museum Society) (South west 1/4 of Sec 1 and pt of SE 1/4). and the owner of SW 1/4 of Sec 15 (along what is now called 'the tunnel'). On Nov. 7/85 the NFP notes he owes \$10.40 taxes on the latter and if not paid, the land will sold by public auction on Dec. 12/85. Aaron appears to have lived on Gabriola from 1874 to the 1881



census, but is not noted on the 1888 voters list. There is no indication of him marrying and having family.



Jonathan had lots of family. He was married to Helen (or Ellen or Ellin) who was nine years his junior (born in B.C.-- a woman of the First Nations). Their first child Mary Isabella was born in 1863. We may presume that Helen probably came to Gabriola with Jonathan but we don't know when either arrived here. They continued having family, Thomas (1865), John (1866), Joseph (1868), Henry (or Hendry) (1872 or 76), Sarah Jane (1874), Moses (1876), James (1877), Robert (1881), Samuel (1885), Angus (1887), and Nellie (1890). In the 1901 census Jonathan and Helen still have seven (of the twelve) children living in their 'household'. Jonathan is 70, Helen is 61 and Nellie is listed as their daughter. It appears that Helen was 50 when Nellie was born in 1890 (though she gives different birthdates on different censuses).

Jonathan was a noted man in the community for years. The NFP noted him singing at the silver wedding of the Shaws in 1886 (though it's possibly his 19 year old son, John). In the same year he sends " some monster specimens of red and yellow onions." to the NFP. He (or possibly his son, John, now 23 years old) is one of two Martins who are school board trustees in 1889. The other is a W. Martin (probably William) who shows up once in 1888 in the census history of Gabriola and is listed as a mechanic (coal drill). School Trustee Martin (probably Jonathan) wins an election by two votes in 1894. Peterson protested as "several of the votes recorded for Martin were given by married women who had not yet reached 18 years of age.". (According to family history, related in *The People of Gabriola*, the two men rowed to Victoria together to get a ruling. The result of the ruling is not known.).

Mary Isabella married David Roberts from Mudge in 1883. She was David's second wife (his first wife was also Mary, as was his third) and died in childbirth on Feb. 4, 1893. Thomas, the eldest son, is noted on the assessment roll for 84-85 as being the owner of SW 1/4 of Sec 4, 112 acres. However, the Crown Grant is given to Jonathan on April 11, 1892 for the sum of \$112. On Jan. 23/93 Jonathan conveyed the land to his second eldest, John. Thomas may have been old enough (19 or 20) to be a preemptor on the land in 84/85, but he was killed in the mine explosion of May 3, 1887 (not to be confused with the Wellington Colliery explosion of 1884). He is buried in the Gabriola Cemetery.

John may also have been a preemptor -- he is noted as owning 134 acres of the SE 1/4 of Sec 2 (now known as the Coho Area) on the 1884/85 assessment rolls. He was only 18 at that time, but may have lived a notable 77 years and be the John Martin who died 3/3/44. He married a Charlotte A. (dob 15/5/78) and they had three children (as of 1901 census) --Henry Chester (27/1/95 - 27/7/68), John E. (9/7/96 - ????) and Mary J. (31/12/00 - 28/10/25).

The Martin boys were busy in various sports, though it is difficult to distinguish between Jonathan, Joseph and John as the NFP often says J. Martin or just Martin. However, some were involved with foot races, baseball, sculling, and tub racing (NFP-Aug 23, 1892). The Martin name shows often in the NFP as donations are listed for the Nanaimo Hospital and mine disaster relief for families. Joseph is listed on the 1889 school roll of honour for proficiency. He becomes another family tragedy when he is kicked in the head by a horse in

1891 and  [dies in hospital](#)  six weeks later.

There is little information on the rest of the children. Sarah Jane married George Jackson in 1899 and died giving birth to a son (also George) in 1900. Moses also made the school roll of honour in 1889 for his deportment. Angus and Samuel served in WW I and Angus again serves in WW II (Roll of honour for Gabriola Island). They both lived through their war experiences. A registered letter dated 16 May, 1935 for a Mrs. Rose Martin is on display at the Gabriola Museum.

Much of the Martin history after 1900 is unknown as records/newspaper articles from 1900 and beyond are not yet on file in the Gabriola Museum.

### Update (Nov.26, 2003)

Since this summary was written five years ago, a number of descendants of the Martin family have got in touch with the museum, and we have learned a great deal more about the family's history. (For example, we now know of an eldest son, William.) One descendant -- Donald Martin, grandson of Jonathan Martin and son of James -- has put up a [website](#) which contains some of this new information, including many photographs. Don is interested in hearing from other family members -- you can find his email address at the bottom of his web page. We at the museum are also glad to hear from family members. We will be adding more to this page as well, as time permits. Until that happens, if you can contribute information about the Martins, or wish to learn more, please write the History Committee at Box 213, Gabriola, BC, Canada V0R 1X0 or email us at [history @ gabriolamuseum.org](mailto:history@gabriolamuseum.org)



[Don Martin's Website](#)

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Created Dec. 14, 1998 by Jay Mussell  
Partial Update March 26, 2007  
Full update pending



## Gabriola settlers family trees



### Daniel McConvey Family tree

Daniel McConvey came from Ireland. Moved to Gabriola in the 1890's. Probably lived originally on the south end, until buying Foster's Point ( including the Malaspina Galleries ) around 1895 ( certainly before 1900).

- [Home](#)
- [Settlers Families](#)
- [Contact](#)

#### Family

- [Daniel McConvey 1862](#)

#### Magnus Edgar descendents

- [Vera Finnamore](#)
- [Margaret Tanner](#)

### Daniel McConvey Family

#### Daniel McConvey (Spouse)

- Born. 12 Mar 1862
- Died. 1955
- Burial: No info

#### Ann Edgar (Spouse)

- [Parents of Ann McConvey](#)
- Born. 12 Feb 1869
- Died. 1936
- Burial: no info
- married. no info

divider

Children of **Daniel** and **Ann McConvey** are:

divider

#### 1. Vera McConvey

- Born. 7 Feb 1896
- Died. no info
- Burial: no info
- [Family of Vera McConvey](#)

## 2. Catherine McConvey

- Born. 17 Dec 1898
- Died. no info
- Burial: no info

## 3. William McConvey

- Born. 10 Feb 1899
- Died. no info
- Burial: no info

## 4. Lena McConvey

- Born. no info
- Died. no info
- Burial: no info

## 5. Edgar (bud) McConvey

- Born. May 1903
- Died. no info
- Burial: no info

## 6. Margaret McConvey

- Born. 1908
- Died. no info
- Burial: no info
- [Family of Margaret McConvey](#)



Thomas McGuffie was born in County Galloway Scotland c1831, son of James and Eliza. He immigrated to Canada working first of all in the Cariboo as a miner during the time of the gold rush. In 1860, he moved to Nanaimo to mine for coal.

June of the following year a baby girl, Annie Jane, was born. Her baptismal certificate lists her father as Thomas McGuffie, miner, and her mother as a `Tongas woman'. This certificate; which was dated April 13<sup>th</sup> 1862, states the child is illegitimate and that Chappel and Grey were in attendance in a private ceremony.

There is a sad ending to this part of the story. Two years later a funeral was held at St. Paul's Church Nanaimo for two-year-old Annie Jane McGuffie. The remarks on the death certificate, dated September 6<sup>th</sup> 1863, state, `This little child fell into a vessel sunk in the ground and was taken out dead. Verdict of jury accordingly.'

Six other children followed; John who was born 1865, then George born 1867, Ann 1870, Margaret 1872, Elizabeth 1874 and Thomas Alexander 1877. Elizabeth died in May 1875 of `inflammation of lungs', two months before her first birthday. Thomas Alexander aged seven years and eleven months died `of consumption' June 24<sup>th</sup> 1885 and was buried beside his sister.

Our first record of Thomas McGuffie on Gabriola comes from another [Nanaimo Free Press May 1874](#) report citing McGuffie as `one of the oldest settlers' and a neighbour of Chappel and Easson.

The Land Act gives the date of McGuffie's pre-emption record as February 29<sup>th</sup> 1884, and describes the land as the southeast quarter of section nine

On July 4<sup>th</sup> 1875 Thomas McGuffie age 41, a farmer, and a resident of Gabriola Island formally married Adeliza Jane Sabiston, aged 26. (Her age given as 26 is questionable; other records would place her in her thirties). Adeliza is listed as being born in Tongas, U.S.A. Witnesses were Captain John and Jane Sabiston

July 7, 1875, the *Free Press* reported `nearly all the settlers of Gabriola Island attended a meeting called by Mr. Fawcett, Government Agent, at Mr. McGuffie's residence, yesterday afternoon. The purpose of the meeting was to decide how the \$500 government grant for roads, etc. should be spent.

It was duly moved, seconded and carried that one half of the grant be expended at west end and the other half at the east end. Mr. McLay was elected foreman for the west end and Mr. Martin foreman for the east end of the Island. After the customary vote of thanks the meeting adjourned.



In January 1883 fifteen year old George McGuffie made the pages of the [Free Press](#) when it was reported that he was brought to court, along with two other youths, and charged with breaking into the house of Mr. W. Hoggan on Gabriola Island and taking a small quantity of apples. The magistrate explained to the boys the grave nature of the offence and, after warning them not to appear again on a similar charge, dismissed the case

Then, in June 1885, the McGuffie name appeared again in the pages of the *Free Press* with the story of a fire in a Nanaimo house on the hill above Victoria Crescent, known as 'White Lights'. The house was owned by Thomas McGuffie and rented to Lillie White. Fortunately no one was in the house at the time of the fire. The building was not insured but, as reported, the fire was suspected to be a work of 'an incendiary' as it was the third one in the vicinity within the last few weeks.

Another accident was reported in the pages of the *Free Press* Saturday December 11, 1886. Mr A. Summerhayes, bricklayer and stonemason, while at work on the roof of the house of Mr. T. McGuffie of Gabriola Island, yesterday fell to ground and dislocated his ankle. He was immediately brought over to his residence in this city.

1886 seems to have been a busy year for Thomas McGuffie. The *Free Press* of September 3rd reported that the forest had been cleared and graded, and a one and a quarter mile trail had been constructed to Mr. H. Peterson's property with Mr. [Thomas McGuffie as road foreman](#).

Then the September 29<sup>th</sup> issue of the *Free Press* 1886 gives the following account. 'The repairs to the Gabriola Wharf have been completed by Messrs. Chapple, and McGuffie, and it is as good as new. The wharf had been built less than three years ago, and the marine worms had completely eaten through some of the piles.'

Thos McGuffie's name appears again, this time along with Magnus Edgar as a school trustee, in the Want Ads section of the Oct. 2, 1886 edition. The trustees were looking for candidates to fill the position of schoolteacher for the South Gabriola School.

Tragedy struck the McGuffie family when John McGuffie age 23, Thomas and Adeliza's eldest son; was killed in an explosion in No.1 shaft of the Vancouver Coal Company mine. (*Free Press* May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1887). He was buried in the Nanaimo cemetery. 148 miners were lost, 96 White and 52 Chinese. Seven men escaped

In August of the same year the Vancouver Coal Company began drilling for coal on the McGuffie property. Drilling continued intermittently through the years, reaching a depth of 1970 ft. In 1889 the project was deemed unsuccessful and terminated.

The *Free Press* of November 3, 1888 reported that Mr. Thomas McGuffie, on contract to the Dominion Government, was in charge of cutting a boat canal through what was locally known as Biggs Portage. The purpose

was to save the residents of Gabriola and adjacent islands the trip around Jack Point, en route to Nanaimo.

Mr. Thomas McGuffie was reported in June of 1889 to be in Chemainus, with a boom of logs; looking well and healthy and in March 1891 his name appeared again in the pages of the *Free Press*, when he was said to have shown off a large egg weighing four ounces.

It was not all work for Mr. McGuffie though, as in July 9, 1892 the paper reported that Mr. Thomas McGuffie, one of the prosperous settlers on Gabriola, leaves tomorrow for Harrison Hot Springs and then to the Old Country. He is suffering a severe attack of rheumatism.

The next time Thomas McGuffie's name appears in the newspaper is to report the finding of his body in the canoe. His death was attributed to a ruptured aneurysm of the heart. At the time of his death he left a widow, Eliza, a son George and two daughters Anne McGuffie Lewis and Margaret McGuffie.

As Thomas McGuffie died without a will, the probate certificate of March 12<sup>th</sup> 1895 names George McGuffie administrator of the property, valued at less than \$1500

. Of the seven McGuffie children Annie Jane, Elizabeth and Thomas died in infancy, John died in the mine explosion in Nanaimo. Anne married John Lewis on October 31<sup>st</sup> 1899. George married Emily Jane Hodsen on July 29<sup>th</sup> 1895. Emily Hodsen disappeared from records after this entry and on George's 1926 death certificate, his brother in law, John Lewis, lists him as single. We have no record of Margaret marrying. She died in 1911.

This branch of the McGuffie name seems to have become extinct, as the only records we have of Thomas and Adeliza's grandchildren are the two sons of Anne McGuffie Lewis and John Lewis -- John Lewis Jr. and Thomas McGuffie Lewis. We are now researching these Lewises, and will create a Lewis page when we have more information about them.

Created May, 2005    Last Update June 15, 2005









*not superior, to  
the products of Cowichan."*

Later

that year, he showed *"some very large  
apples -- They would  
do credit to a  
Rochester orchard."*

A year later, in 1881, he wrote another article for the Free Press, giving  [farming advice](#) , based on his seven years of experience on Gabriola, in which he credits the liberal use of manure for his success. Later the same year, he wrote a third article, describing an  ["entertainment"](#)  at the Gabriola school.

Early in 1883, Catherine fell ill with *"that insidious  
[sic] disease--consumption"*

(tuberculosis).

Despite medical care in Nanaimo, she declined steadily. James wrote a [poem](#), published in the Free Press, expressing his sense of impending loss. She died, *"in her  
53rd year"* and *"in the  
presence of her husband  
and friends"*



, on April 7, 1883. The funeral took place on April 10,

and *"was largely  
attended". ("Mrs. McLay  
was greatly respected in  
this community..."*

) A funeral discourse in her memory was delivered at the Methodist Church on April 15. She is buried in the Nanaimo cemetery. [Another poem](#) by James was published in the Free Press two weeks after her death.

By September of 1883, James was busy in his role as secretary of the school board, advertising for *"A female teacher for  
the North Gabriola  
school. Salary, \$50  
per month."*

" The assessment rolls of 1884-5 list him as owning 200 acres of Section 18: the south-west quarter (160 acres) and the south-west quarter of the north-west quarter (40 acres). Another 160 adjacent acres are listed as owned by Robert McLay--perhaps a brother. In July of 1884, James was again advertising for a female teacher for the school--still at \$50 per month. In August there was a disaster at the Wellington Colliery--and James joined the committee to collect funds for the widows and orphans, contributing \$5.00 himself. He also wrote [more verse](#) for the Free Press around this time, perhaps stimulated by his thoughts on the disaster.

We should not think of James and his neighbours as a dour lot, always sober and hard-working. In one of his occasional communications to the Nanaimo Free Press (  [January, 1886](#)  ), he gives a Dickensian description of the Shaws' silver wedding anniversary celebration, in which he and Mrs. Shaw dance the Highland fling *"to deafening applause"*. 1886 was

a busy year--in May, another ad for a lady teacher for the North Gabriola School; in June, re-elected as school trustee; in early July, an advertisement for raspberries, and another ad for a "female teacher" (salary \$50.00 per month); and in October, "Mr.

*James McLay, J.P., Gabriola Island, took down to the Maple Bay show, yesterday, three Swede turnips, weighing 35 pounds each, and apples weighing 24 ounces each. Well*

*done, Gabriola he "carried off the first prizes for all the vegetables he took down to the show, viz: apples, drumhead cabbage, red cabbage, onions, and tomatoes.*

." A follow-up article in the next edition reported that

"

On the evening of May 3, 1887, there was an explosion in the No.1 shaft of the Vancouver Coal Company mine in Nanaimo. Fire spread rapidly to the ventilating shaft, and 148 miners died. Among them were three sons of Gabriola farmers--James Hoggan, 21; Thomas Martin, 22; and John McGuffie, 22. James McLay was asked to join the relief committee for widows and orphans, because of his contribution three years previously. He took charge of contributions from North Gabriola, contributing \$5.00 himself.

Later in 1887, James again advertised for a female teacher, offered a cow for sale, and grew a bouquet of roses in mid-December--an indication of "*the salubrity of our climate*



." In 1889, he brought to the Free Press three stalks of rhubarb (weighing together 6½ pounds); was re-elected school trustee, and participated in the examination of the school, at which the teacher--Miss Clunas--handed in her resignation.

Two years later, one of James' cows was brutally attacked--"*the body being slashed in several places, the poor animal being left in agony.*"

The perpetrators --

*"malicious persons who thus endeavoured to work off their spleen on Mr. McLay by damaging his stock"*

--

were apparently identified, but no further mention is made in the press of this incident, its outcome, or the reason for "their spleen". Later in 1891, James took some  [Yellow Egg plums](#)  to the *Free Press* offices -- "*They would take first prize at any exhibition.*"

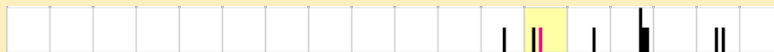
Nothing more is heard of James McLay until 1894, when he serves as pall bearer for Magnus Edgar, a fellow Scot, and another Gabriola pioneer. Later that year, he is involved (as Justice of the Peace) in the investigation of the killing of eight sheep, belonging to the Jamieson brothers, by a pack of dogs. The owners of the dogs could not be identified.

We have no further information from the Free Press after 1895, but do know from his great great granddaughter that he was a taxidermist (she has two stuffed owls in a glass case) and an amateur astronomer. From the 1891 and 1901 censuses, we learn that his religion was "Free Thinker", and that he was suffering from no "infirmities" at the time of the latter census.

According to June Harrison's book--*The People of Gabriola* --James Rollo discovered him quite ill, apparently of a heart attack, sometime in June of 1918. He died on June 27th, at the age of 81, and was buried in the Nanaimo Cemetery, next to Catherine. He appears to have given freely of his education, talents, and inquiring mind to the Gabriola community throughout his life. The island was a less civilized place when he left it.

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Created July 25, 1999      Last modified January 25, 2000



## David Samuel Reece Roberts & family of Mudge Island

**David Samuel Reece Roberts** was born on December 3, 1846, in rural England, to John and Jane (nee Prosser) Roberts. He immigrated to Canada from Wales in 1871. We have no record of how or why he came to Canada.

David first appeared in the 1881 census for Gabriola, Mudge, and DeCourcy Islands, living on Mudge Island. He was listed as unmarried, and head of his household. He was living with **Mary**, a 28 year old unmarried Native.

On June 12, 1883, David married **Mary Isabella Martin**, the 22 year-old daughter of [Jonathan Martin](#), an established Gabriola settler. Her mother was recorded as "Kelly of Stikene" on the marriage certificate. The wedding took place at St. Paul's Anglican Church, Nanaimo, the Rev. J.B. Good officiating.

Within the next seven years, David and Mary Isabella had four sons -- all born on Mudge Island; on May 3, 1884, **Llewellyn Martin**; on January 10, 1886, **John David**; on November 29, 1887, **Edward Voltaire**; and on January 25, 1890, **Ivor Prosser**

On January 9, 1884, while Mary Isabella was pregnant with their first child, David pre-empted land on Mudge Island. Presumably this was the land where he had been living since before 1881. His 160-acre claim was bordered to the South by Dodd's Narrows and to the North by False Narrows. To the East, he was neighbored by Mr. Norris, and to the West by unoccupied Mudge land. Roberts cleared, cultivated, and built a barn and a house. Richard Norris of Mudge Island and [Richard Chapple](#) of Gabriola confirmed his land improvements on May 9, 1888. With this declaration, the estimated value of his land claim was \$250.00. In 1887, he also purchased 40 acres of pastoral land on three small islands at the East end of the DeCourcy Group.

In 1884, the Nanaimo Free Press reported that David Roberts was growing large *Baldwin apples* on Mudge Island. These apples weighed in at one pound each. The NFP article asked a timeless question, "With such a showing of produce, why do we import so much?" Perhaps his father, John Roberts, an exceptional Welsh farmer, was David's inspiration. Or perhaps his father-in-law, [Jonathan Martin](#), Gabriola's most successful apple grower, assisted him. The splendid growing conditions, combined with skill, were probably the success factors. The Roberts orchards were thriving. David was acknowledged for growing "splendid" plums in 1887, "[mammoth](#)" apples in 1888, and by the summer of 1889 he was congratulated for his "monster" [Queen Anne cherries](#). By October 1889, his apples were "magnificent", some weighing in at 22 ounces, with 14 inch diameters. (It was the custom at that time for the award winning fruit to be tested by the staff of the Nanaimo Free Press, and the winners acknowledged in the newspaper.)

Although David and his family lived some distance away from Gabriola, they participated in local community activities and causes.

On August 9, 1884, in aid of the widows and children of those killed in the explosion at the Wellington Colliery, Gabriola families were generous with donations. Included in the list of contributors were the Roberts family, of Mudge Island, who contributed \$1.50. Also, in June 1887, David Roberts was the collector for the Nanaimo Relief Fund, for the southern end of Gabriola and the adjacent islands. He collected \$39.50 in aid for widows and orphans of Nanaimo's largest mine disaster.

In 1887, David was polling officer, at the Gabriola School House, for a provincial by-election. Gabriola produced only 12 votes, perhaps because of a heavy snowfall. Three months later, in the federal election, he served in the same role, again at the Gabriola School.

On Saturday, September 7, 1887, the Free Press described a "heroic rescue" which took place "about halfway between the portage" (probably Biggs' Portage across the neck of Jack Point) and Gabriola Island. Three local men -- Alexander Shaw Jr., John Hamilton, and John Gimmel -- were travelling to Gabriola in a small boat, when the boat overturned in the angry current during a sudden squall.

David Roberts and [Joseph Chapple](#) set out in a boat from Mudge to attempt a rescue, and although their efforts were hampered by strong winds and high seas, they were able to bring the three men safely to shore.

In the 1891 census, David Roberts was listed as a 45 year-old farmer on Mudge Island, living with his wife, Mary Isabella (aged 29) and four children: Lewelleyn, 7; John D, 5; Edward N, 3; and Ivor P, 1.

It is interesting to note that in 1892, the mode of transportation from Mudge, DeCourcy, and Gabriola to Nanaimo, and return, was aboard the steamer [Esperanza](#). This boat made regular double weekly trips to each island, every Friday; leaving Nanaimo, in the early morning, and after returning by noon, leaving again in the early afternoon, and finally returning to Nanaimo by late afternoon.

On Feb 4, 1893, Mary Isabella, aged 32 years, died in childbirth, on Mudge Island, "leaving behind a grieving husband and four young children." She was buried in the Gabriola Cemetery.

On October 20, 1893, Roberts married again. Mary Silvie was the 19 year-old daughter of Joseph Silvie of Reid Island. The wedding took place on near-by Kuper Island. Mary's mother's name is unknown. The couple resided on Mudge Island, at the Roberts' farm, with David's four children.

The 1901 census lists David, age 54, as household head at his farm on Mudge Island; John D, 15 years; Edward V, 13 years; and Ivor P, 11 years. Neither Llewellyn, by now 17, nor Mary, by now 27, is included. We have no further information about Mary and David's lives together.

In the 1920 Voters' list, the Roberts family was no longer living on Mudge Island. Two new families - the Coxes and the Juriets - had taken up residence there. The list shows David as retired and living in Northfield (near Nanaimo); Edward V - an auto driver - was also living in Northfield, with his wife, Julie; Ivor P was involved with auto delivery, and living in Wellington (also near Nanaimo); and the oldest brother - Llewellyn - an engineer, also lived in Wellington.

David Samuel Reece Roberts died, a widower, on March 14, 1925, in San Antonio, Texas, USA. We have no idea how long he had been in the USA, or if he had been living there permanently.

Edward Voltaire Roberts died on January 6, 1965, in Nanaimo, at 79 years. His wife Julie and one son, also named Edward, had predeceased him. Two sons, four daughters, 17 grandchildren and 15 great grandchildren survived him.

In 1975, at age 92 years, Llewellyn Martin Roberts died, unmarried. At the time of his death, he was the oldest member of The Loyal Order of Moose, No. 1952, Nanaimo. His brother, Ivor Prosser Roberts, who lived in California, and many nieces and nephews survived him. Although we know that Llewellyn's brother, John David Roberts, lived in Florida at the time of their father's death, we have no other information about him.

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## SOURCES

- BC Archives and Records
  - **Marriage Records**
    - Roberts, David Samuel and Martin, Mary Isabella  
BCARS Reg # 1883-09-092535; MF# B11380; GSU# 1983708

- Roberts, David Samuel and Silvie, Mary  
BCARS Reg # 1893-09-094228; MF# B11380; GSU# 1983708

- **Birth Records**

- Roberts, Llewellyn Martin, born May 3, 1884, Mudge Island, BC  
BCARS Reg # 1884-09-048298; MF# B13808; GSU# 2114957
- Roberts, John David, born January 10, 1886, Mudge Island, BC.  
BCARS Reg # 1886-09-048299; MF# B13808; GSU# 2114957
- Roberts, Edward Va(o)ltare, born November 29, 1887, Mudge Island, BC:  
BCARS Reg # 1887-09-048300; MF# B13808; GSU# 2114957
- Roberts, Ivor Prosser, born January 25, 1890, Mudge Island, BC  
BCARS Reg # 1890-09-049906; MF# B13809; GSU#2114717

- **Death Records**

- Roberts, Mary, died, February 4, 1893, Mudge Island, BC  
BCARS Reg # 1893-09-044526; MF# B13084; GSU# 1927112

- **Probate Records**

- David Samuel Reece Roberts died March 14, 1925, intestate  
BCARS Probate files: GR-2213; 1881 - 1948, BC Supreme Court (Nanaimo)

- **Nanaimo Free Press**

- **Wedding Notices**

- Wedding: Roberts -- Martin, June 23, 1883

- **Obituaries**

- Mary Roberts; February 4, 1893
- John Roberts; Tycenol, Wales, father to David Roberts; October 12, 1887  
via the Cardiff, Wales News
- Edward Voltair[e] Roberts; January 6, 1965
- Llewellen Roberts; Wed. July 2, 1975, p.11 (classified #36, deaths)

- **Large Fruit from Mudge Island**

- "Monster" "Mammoth" and "Magnificent" Baldwin apples, September 27, 1884; October 7, 1885, October 20, 1888, October 5, 1889
- "Splendid" Plums, August 17, 1887
- "Monster" Queen Anne cherries, June 20, 1889

- **Charity**

- In Aid of Widows Fund: August 9, 1884
- Nanaimo Relief Committee: May 21, 1887

- **Political**

- Provincial Election: January 5, 1887
- Vancouver Election: March 16, 1887

- **Heroic Sea Rescue: September 7, 1887**

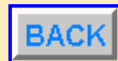
- Joseph Chapple was the son of [Richard Chapple](#), a prominent Gabriola pre-emptor and settler. See Shale #3, page 18, for the Chapple family history
- Alexander Shaw Jr. was teaching on Gabriola at the time. His father had also taught on Gabriola, and his brother - John - in Nanaimo, where he later became principal of Central School
- John Gemmel pre-empted land directly across False Narrows from the Roberts farm on Mudge Island, including the

Green Wharf area. From information in the 1882 - 1887 Directories, John lived on Gabriola for several years, finally returning to Nanaimo and work as a miner for the Vancouver Coal Mining Co.

- John Hamilton, another employee of the Vancouver Coal Mining Co., was in charge of the diamond drill looking for coal on Gabriola.

. Other

- **BC Voters' List, 1920**, transcribed by the Nanaimo Family History Society
- **Canada Census for British Columbia**, Gabriola, Mudge and DeCourcy Islands: 1881, 1891, 1901 (microfilm)



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Created December 7, 2003 by Lynda G Poulton  
Last Updated January 10, 2004





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[MESSAGE BOARDS](#)

## James ROLLO

### First Generation



Gabriola **James<sup>1</sup> ROLLO**, son of George Wemyss ROLLO and Margaret WATERS, was born Wemyss, Fife, Scotland 15 Feb 1832. James died 24 Apr 1916 in North Gabriola Island, BC, at 84 years of age.

He married twice. He married **Christian WILSON** Wemyss, Fife, Scotland, 08 Jan 1856. Christian was born Wemyss, Fife, Scotland Feb 1825. Christian was the daughter of Alexander WILSON and Margaret DUNCAN. She was christened Wemyss, Fife, Scotland, 20 Feb 1825. He married **Janet (Betsy) WESTWOOD** Wemyss, Fife, Scotland, 21 Apr 1862. Janet was born Wemyss, Fife, Scotland Sep 1826. Janet was the daughter of John WESTWOOD and Janet HUTTON. Janet died Bef 1891 in Wemyss, Fife, Scotland ?. She was christened Wemyss, Fife, Scotland, 24 Sep 1826.

@ 1912. Nellie McLaughlon, John Rollo, James, Christina, Helen (On horse), Annie & James Rollo

James was christened at Wemyss, Fife, Scotland, 11 Mar 1832. James's occupation: Farmer in North Gabriola Island, BC. James was listed as the head of a family on the 1881 Census in Gabriola Island, British Columbia. James registered to vote in Gabriola Island, British Columbia, 1888. James was listed as the head of a family on the 1891 Census in Gabriola

Island, British Columbia. James was listed as the head of a family on the 1901 Census in Gabriola Island, British Columbia. James left his second wife in Scotland. She was invited to come to Canada but declined. The two did not get along well. The Rollo's were very proud to be able to own land. Back home in Scotland all the land was owned by the Lords.

James arrived Gabriola Island, Near Nanaimo, British Columbia about 1875. Was able to read. Had a scraggily beard and did not mix much with people.

Alberni-Nanaimo Assessment Rolls for 1884-5 shows James Rollo as owner of: #335: the east half of the northeast quarter of section 19 (80 acres) #341: the east half of the southeast quarter of section 22 (80 acres) The total was valued at \$500.00 taxes for the year were \$3.50. No livestock were listed.

Aug 13, 1884 - J Rollo is listed as contributing \$2.00 in aid of the widows and children of those killed in the late explosion at the Wellington Colliery.

25 Dec 1886 - Nanaimo Free press J. Rollo is listed as one of the two nominators of Colin Campbell Mckenzie as local representative in a by-election. Colin Campbell Mackenzie, proposed by David Hoggan and James Rollo. [The Hoggans were also from Fife].

1909 - Vancouver Island Directory - James Rollo - Farmer.

James ROLLO and Christian WILSON had the following children:

- + 2 i. George<sup>2</sup> ROLLO was born 12 Oct 1857.
- + 3 ii. John ROLLO was born 19 Mar 1859.
- + 4 iii. Christian ROLLO was born 22 May 1860.

James ROLLO and Janet (Betsy) WESTWOOD had the following children:

- 5 iv. Janet ROLLO was born Wemyss, Fife, Scotland 28 Jun 1863. Believed to have died young.
- + 6 v. Margaret ROLLO was born 29 May 1865.
- 7 vi. James ROLLO was born Wemyss, Fife, Scotland 16 Jan 1868. James died Abt 1869 Wemyss, Fife, Scotland.

## Second Generation

2. **George<sup>2</sup> ROLLO** (James<sup>1</sup>) was born in Fifeshire, Scotland 12 Oct 1857. George died 09 Feb 1907 in Nanaimo, British Columbia, Canada, at 49 years of age. His body was interred Feb 1907 in Nanaimo, British Columbia, Canada, Nanaimo, Cemetery.

He married **Jean (Jane) (Dysart) DALRYMPLE**. Jean was born Wemyss, Fifeshire, Scotland 8 Feb 1858. Jean was the daughter of George Johnson DALRYMPLE and Isabella CHRISTIE. Jean died 03 Apr 1944 in Nanaimo, British Columbia, Canada, at 86 years of age. Her body was interred 5 Apr 1944 in Nanaimo, British Columbia, Canada, Nanaimo Cemetery. Jean registered to vote in Nanaimo, British Columbia, 1920.

George's occupation: Coal Miner Nanaimo, British Columbia, Canada. Killed by a fall of coal in No 1 Shaft of the Protection Fail Company. Inquiry found death purly accidental.

#### Poem on Tombstone

Anither freen, Another Scott Anither Living, Dearly Bought

Anither Sob, Anither Tear Anither Loss of friendship Dear

An Geordie, How wo miss Yer Face Yer Pleisint Smile,

Your Winning Grace We'll no forget as days go bye

To mourn yer loss wi' tearful eye

George ROLLO and Jean (Jane) (Dysart) DALRYMPLE had the following children:

- + 8 i. James<sup>3</sup> ROLLO was born 20 Feb 1885.
- 9 ii. Christina Wilson ROLLO was born Wellington, British Columba 26 Feb 1887. Christina died 11 Sep 1887 in Gabriola Island, British Columbia, at less than one year of age. Nanaimo Free Press of Sep 14, 1887. Notice of the death and funeral, on Gabriola Island of an infant ROLLO girl.
- 10 iii. Isabella Christie ROLLO was born Wellington, British Columbia 26 Feb 1887. Isabella died 22 Apr 1890 Wellington, British Columbia, at 3 years of age. Her body was interred 1890 in Nanaimo, British Columbia, Nanaimo Cemetery.
- 11 iv. George Dalrymple ROLLO was born in Nanaimo, British Columbia, Canada 05 Feb 1890. George died 29 Jun 1891 in Nanaimo, British Columbia, Canada, at 1 year of age.

\*\*\*\*\*



3. **John<sup>2</sup> ROLLO** (James<sup>1</sup>) was born Wemyss Fife, Scotland 19 Mar 1859. John died 20 Apr 1939 in Gabriola Island, British Columbia, at 80 years of age. His body was interred 1939 in Gabriola Island, British Columbia.



He married **Helen (Nellie, Ellen) McLAUCHLAN** in Nanaimo, British Columbia, Canada, 08 Jun 1892.

Helen was born Dysart, Fifeshire, Scotland 4 Mar 1868. Helen was the daughter of Robert MCLAUCHLAN and Ann GRIEVE. Helen died 25 Jul 1932 in Nanaimo, British Columbia, Canada, at 64 years of age. Her body was interred 27 Jul 1932 in Gabriola Island, British Columbia. Helen immigrated, 1880. Destination: destination unknown. Helen registered to vote in North Gabriola, Island, 1920. Signed ferry petition, Gabriola Jan 10, 1927

Special to the Times Nanaimo, July 25 Mrs John Rollo of Gabriola Island died at midnight yesterday at the Naniamo General Hospital. She was sixty-four years of age, and was a native of Fifeshire, Scotland. She came to British Columbia forty-three years ago and had resided at Gabriola Island for thirty two years.

She is survived by her husband, one son James at Gabriola and three daughters. Mr.s James Gallagher Nanaimo, Mrs. M. Westwood and Mrs R. Mcneill of Gabriola Island.

John immigrated, 1875. Destination: destination unknown. John was listed as the head of a family on the 1881 Census British Columbia. John's occupation: Farmer in Gabriola Island, British Columbia, Canada. John was listed as the head of a family on the 1901 Census in Gabriola Island, British Columbia. John registered to vote in Gabriola Island, British Columbia, 1920. Nanaimo Free Press - Jun 9, 1892, Notice of Marriage in Nanaimo, of John Rollo and Ellen McLauchlan.

Nanaimo Free Press - Birth Announcement of a daughter to Mr. and Mrs. John Rollo.

Vancouver Island Directory 1909 - John Rollo - Farmer

Signed ferry petition, Gabriola Jan 10, 1927

Obituary - One of the largest congregations ever to assemble on Gabriola Island gathered at the family residence Sunday afternoon to attend the last rites of John Rollo well known and popular farmer of the Island for 40 years who was burned to death on Thursday last on his farm while he was engaged in clearing land.

Rev. J.H. Wright of the United Church of Canada officiated and interment was in the family plot Gabriola Island Cemetery. under the direction of the Westood Hirst Funeral Home and the pall bearers all personal friends and neighbors of Mr. Rollo for many years were Robert Degnen, Dan McConvey, John Eashom, Richard Easthom, Henry Howie and Joseph Chappel.

In the profusion of floral offerings a lovely pillow from the family was noticeable.

John was caught in the brush fire and burned to death.

John ROLLO and Helen (Nellie Nallie Ellen) McLAUHLAN had the following children:

+ 13 ii. Annie Grieves ROLLO was born 24 Jul 1893.



14 iii. James (Jim) ROLLO was born Gabriola, Island, British Columbia 04 July 1896. James died 20 Nov 1986 Gabriola, Island, British Columbia, at 90 years of age. He married Annie Elizabeth (EASTHAM) JURJET 1968. Annie was born in Nanaimo, British Columbia 20 Nov 1898. Annie was the daughter of William JURJET and Elsa TRITES. Annie died 11 May 1978 in Gabriola Island, British Columbia, at 79 years of age. Her body was interred 16 May 1978 in Gabriola Island, British Columbia, Gabriola Island Cemetery.

James served in the military Canadian Exp. Forces, Abt 1914-17. James registered to vote

North Gabriola, British Columbia, 1920. B.C. Directory (Gabriola 1945 - James Rollo - Trucker

+ 15 iv. Christina Wilson ROLLO was born 07 Sep 1898.



Helen ROLLO

16 v. Helen Mclaughlin (Nellie) ROLLO was born British Columbia 19 Jan 1901. Helen died 07 May 1942 in Nanaimo, British Columbia, Canada, at 41 years of age. She married Robert McNEIL. Robert McNEIL was born 1897. Robert McNEIL died 23 Dec 1977 Nanaimo, British Columbia, at 80 years of age.

4. **Christian<sup>2</sup> ROLLO** (James<sup>1</sup>) was born Wemyss, Fife, Scotland 22 May 1860. (Did not come to Canada)

She married **Alexander CHRISTIE**.

Christian ROLLO and Alexander CHRISTIE had the following children:

- 17 i. Robert<sup>3</sup> CHRISTIE was born on (birth date unknown).
- 18 ii. Margaret CHRISTIE was born on (birth date unknown).
- 19 iii. James CHRISTIE was born on (birth date unknown).
- 20 iv. Janet (Nettie) CHRISTIE was born on (birth date unknown).

- 21 v. Alexander CHRISTIE was born on (birth date unknown).
- 22 vi. Johan CHRISTIE was born on (birth date unknown).
- 23 vii. George CHRISTIE was born on (birth date unknown).
- + 24 viii. Christina CHRISTIE was born 1883?.

6. **Margaret<sup>2</sup> ROLLO** (James<sup>1</sup>) was born Wemyss, Fife, Scotland 29 May 1865.

She married **William WALLACE**.

Margaret ROLLO and William WALLACE had the following children:

- + 25 i. Elizabeth (Lizzi)<sup>3</sup> WALLACE was born on (birth date unknown).
- 26 ii. Belle WALLACE was born before Abt 1983, the first event for which there is a recorded date.  
Belle died Abt 1983.
- + 27 iii. Minni WALLACE was born before Bef 1990, the first event for which there is a recorded date.
- 28 iv. Clark Walder WALLACE was born on (birth date unknown).

### Third Generation

8. **James<sup>3</sup> ROLLO** (George<sup>2</sup>, James<sup>1</sup>) was born Wellington, British Columbia 20 Feb 1885. James died 20 Sep 1955 in Nanaimo, British Columbia, Canada, at 70 years of age. His body was interred 22 Sep 1955 in Nanaimo, British Columbia, Canada, Nanaimo Cemetery.

He married **Amelia (Mildred) DUGGAN** in Nanaimo, British Columbia, 13 Sep 1909. Amelia was born Mountain Ash, Wales 21 Sep 1886. Amelia was the daughter of Unknown DUGGAN and Mary Louisa DOWARD. Amelia died 5 Mar 1964 in Nanaimo, British Columbia, Canada, at 77 years of age. Her body was interred 9 Mar 1964 Nanaimo, British Columbia. Amelia immigrated, 1888. Destination: destination unknown. Amelia registered to vote in Nanaimo, British Columbia, 1920.

James registered to vote in Nanaimo, BC, 1920. James's occupation: Caretaker in Nanaimo, British Columbia, Abt 1941. Signed ferry petition, Gabriola Jan 10, 1927

James ROLLO and Amelia (Mildred) DUGGAN had the following child:

29 i. George<sup>4</sup> ROLLO was born Naniamo, British Columbia 31 May 1910. George died 1 Apr 1992 Naniamo, British Columbia, at 81 years of age. He married Elizabeth (Beth) BEVIS in Nanaimo, British Columbia, 5 Oct 1933. Elizabeth was born in Nanaimo, British Columbia 18 Jul 1915. Elizabeth is the daughter of George BEVIS and Ann WATSON. George's occupation: Logger Brish Columbia.



13. **Annie Grieves<sup>3</sup> ROLLO** (John<sup>2</sup>, James<sup>1</sup>) was born Gabriola, Island, British Columbia 24 Jul 1893. Annie died 1 Jan 1993 at 99 years of age.

She married **James (Jim) GALLAGHER** in Nanaimo, British Columbia, Canada, 20 Mar 1914. James was born in Gore Bay, Ontario 1878. James was the son of George GALLAGHER and Maria BAKER. James died 03 Dec 1960 Ladysmith, British Columbia, Canada, at 82 years of age. James's occupation: Engineer 1914. James Grand father was working carrying bricks in Scotland on a church. When they met with a minister they had to put down the bricks and doffed their hat. The grand father ran away and went to Nova Scotia by boat. James parents were United Empire loyalists and had been offered land in Canada. His parents moved to Manitoulin Island, Ontario, James and family were farmers. James must have left in winters as he skated to Sault Ste Marie Ontario. Ashes were spread on Gabriola Island.

Annie Grieves ROLLO and James (Jim) GALLAGHER had the following children:





**Helen Verna Gallagher**

30 i. Helen Verna<sup>4</sup> GALLAGHER was born 21 Aug 1914. She married Harry WARGO 31 Dec 1936 in British Columbia. Harry was born 1902. Harry died 29 Apr 1977 in Nanaimo, British Columbia, at 74 years of age. Harry's Mother and father came through Elis Island. (Czechoslovakia) Had grade 8 education. Started work at 14 in the mine, got hurt at 17 and felt that something was going to fall on him and quite mining. Worked in the lumber industry as a steam engineer and later as a log scaler. Verna and Harry had 2 children, 8 grandchildren and 17 great grandchildren.



**George Harold Gallagher**

31 ii. George Harold GALLAGHER was born British Columbia Sep 1916. George died 13 Jan 2000 in British Columbia, at 83 years of age. He married Helen UNKNOWN 1959. George left school at the end of grade 11, Worked as a mechanic. He then joined the navy. Was on the north Atlantic during the worse part of the war of the Atlantic. Worked in logging camp then bought a logging truck. Moved into commercial fishing from which he retired.



**Lillian Dorothy Gallagher**

32 iii. Lillian Dorothy GALLAGHER was born Feb 1919. Completed grade 8. Worked a housemaid till 1936. Entered the navy CWREN as a cook. She served for 4 years. She continued to work as a domestic cook then a industrial cook both in the Navy and afterwards until retirement.

33 iv. Stanley Russell GALLAGHER was born 1921. Stanley died 26 Jun 1925 in Nanaimo, British Columbia, at 3 years of age.



**John (Jack) Charles Gallagher**

34 v. John Charles (Jack) GALLAGHER was born 21 May 1926. He married twice. He married Doris BROOKES July 27, 1950. He married Lyle in Jan 16, 1988. Worked in the woods then went into the navy RCMVR and served two years. Afterwards worked as a long shoreman. Jack has 4 kids and 7 grandchildren.



15. **Christina Wilson<sup>3</sup> ROLLO** (John<sup>2</sup>, James<sup>1</sup>) was born Nanaimo, British Columbia 07 Sep 1898. Christina died

14 Mar 1987 in Nanaimo, British Columbia, Canada, at 88 years of age.

She married twice. She married **Milton William WESTWOOD** in Gabriola Island, British Columbia, 6 Apr 1921.

Milton was born in Nanaimo, British Columbia, Canada 7 Oct 1895. Milton was the son of Milton Tilley Charles WESTWOOD and Fannie Nannette SMITH. Milton died 30 Nov 1953 Vancouver, British Columbia, at 58 years of age. Milton's occupation: Steam Engineer, Logger, Miner 1922. She married **William (Bill) THOMPSON (Kelly)** in Port Alberni, British Columbia, 27 Mar 1954. William was born Saskatchewan Abt 1905. William was the son of Unknown KELLY. William died 08 Feb 1976? in Port Alberni, British Columbia, at 70 years of age.

Christina registered to vote in North Gabriola Island, British Columbia, 1920. Grew up on Gabriola Island, Met Husband when he was visiting the Shaws. Husband left when the children were small. Raised children on her own. Worked farming, Ran a Rooming House, Worked in plywood and house keeping type jobs.

Christina Wilson ROLLO and Milton William WESTWOOD had the following children:



35 i. Nannette Helen (Nan)<sup>4</sup> WESTWOOD was born in Nanaimo, British Columbia, Canada 03 Jan 1922. Nannette died 03 Jul 1984 in Nanaimo, British Columbia, Canada, at 62 years of age. She married Ronald Dennis ROWA in Nanaimo, British Columbia, Canada, 14 Jan 1945. Ronald was born 20 Nov 1917. Ronald was the son of Charles John ROWA and Margaret KIDD. Ronald died 3 Nov 1999 in Nanaimo, British Columbia, at 81 years of age. His body was interred 8 Nov 1999 Nanaimo, British Columbia.



Velma Westwood

36 ii. Velma Rose Westwood was born in Nanaimo, British Columbia, on the 15th March 1924. After moving to Port Alberni she was firstly employed at the plywood plant and then obtained a job with the Post Office. She married Edmund David Howard on the 2nd of July 1947 They have four children, nine grandchildren and one great grandchild. Edmund retired from Banking.



Marie Westwood

37     iii.     Alma Marie Westwood was born in Nanaimo, British Columbia, on the 2nd Dec 1926. After moving to Port Alberni she was firstly employed at the plywood plant, and then obtained a job in the office of Tom Bros. Trucking. She married Thomas Miller Turner on the 11th Sept 1948. They have two children and three grandchildren. Tom retired from Contracting.



Dorothy Westwood

38     iv.     Dorothy Rollo Westwood was born in Nanaimo, British Columbia, on the 29th March 1930. After moving to Port Alberni she was firstly employed in a Dentist's office, and then obtained a job with the telephone company. She married George Edwin Thomas Abbott on the 8th Sept 1951. George died on the 1st July 1992. They have four children, and seven grandchildren. George retired as a sales representative of Homelite Chain Saws.

24. **Christina<sup>3</sup> CHRISTIE** (Christian<sup>2</sup> ROLLO, James<sup>1</sup>) was born 1883?. Christina died 1975 at 92 years of age.

(Did not come to Canada)

She married **Daniel DARWOOD**.

Christina CHRISTIE and Daniel DARWOOD had the following children:

- 39 i. Alexander<sup>4</sup> DARWOOD was born on (birth date unknown). He married Margaret Wallace (LEVEN).
- 40 ii. Christina DARWOOD was born on (birth date unknown). She married William WINGATE.
- 41 iii. Henry DARWOOD was born on (birth date unknown). Died in Infancy

25. **Elizabeth (Lizzi)<sup>3</sup> WALLACE** (Margaret<sup>2</sup> ROLLO, James<sup>1</sup>) was born on (birth date unknown).

She married **Tom ANDERSON**.

Elizabeth (Lizzi) WALLACE and Tom ANDERSON had the following children:

- 42 i. William<sup>4</sup> Anderson was born on (birth date unknown).
- 43 ii. John Anderson was born on (birth date unknown).

27. **Minnie<sup>3</sup> WALLACE** (Margaret<sup>2</sup> ROLLO, James<sup>1</sup>) was born before (birth date unknown), Minnie died Abt 1992.

She married **Alexander (Sandy) WALKER**.

Minnie WALLACE and Alexander (Sandy) WALKER had the following children:

- 44 i. William<sup>4</sup> WALKER was born on (birth date unknown).
- 45 ii. Clark WALKER was born on (birth date unknown).

## Gabriola settlers family trees



### Silva Family Tree

#### Story of John Silva coming to Gabriola Island

##### Change of Name

At the age of sixteen Jacque was Press ganged onto a Spanish galleon. Jacque was a young and inexperienced sailor who longed for a friend and sea companion. When the captain had difficulties in comprehending Jacque's name, it was Joe Silvey who called out the name of John Silva. A name to be passed down to his family forever and a new found friend for life, when Silvey had befriended a nervous young sailor.

##### Canada

John now seventeen, jumped ship in 1854 with Jeo Silvey and other crew members in Victoria. At that time only about 800 white inhabitants lived on Vancouver Island.

##### Victoria Store

In 1863, John gave up his life as a sailor and opened a store at 27 Johnson Street in Victoria where he sold fruit and vegetables. The Klondyke Saloon stood next door and faced Weddington Alley.



##### Meeting of John and Louisa

Marelee came to Victoria and cooked for one of the colony families. Dances on board the sailing ships were frequent and Louisa remembered the town criers, John Butts, pacing through the streets ringing the bell to announce the coming events. Either through the dances or through the store. Marelee met John and it was he who endowed her with the name of Louisa, probably after her own heritage.

##### Married

John and Louisa were married when she was 15 years old in Victoria in 1873 (no record, ? First Nation Marriage). Church marriage record in 1881 At ST. Anns Church in Duncan.

##### Mayne Island

To purchase Land you had to be a Citizen, John took an oath before the judge at the County Court in Victoria June 27 1876. (25 cents for certificate and 50 cents for registration) John continued to sell his vegetables but at the same time on November 20, 1875, he purchased homestead land on Mayne Island. He purchased all the property surrounding Village Bay at Active Pass. (He bought 237 acres at \$1.00 per Acre.  [Map](#) ) Active Pass at this time was called Plumper Pass. On July 5 1881 William and Isobella Silva were boating in Plumper Pass when their canoe overturned and the two children were lost. They sold their property to John Deacon in 1883.



##### Lulu Island

The Fraser river area was familiar to John and they decided to try farming at Lulu Island, where John also fished the Fraser river. The mosquitoes were thick and they bothered Louisa, one problem led to another and they decided Lulu Island was not for them.

##### Gabriola Island



John again applied for homestead land and found that a Mr. Henry Peterson had abandoned property on Gabriola



Island, September 14 1880, which he had applied for but did not occupy or work. John bought this adandoned land along with several adjoining portions of land on April 23 1883. (Area later became Silva Bay)  [Map](#)  John purchased 133 acres, cleaned it, farmed it and paid for it in four years. (\$33.25 April 1884, \$33.25 May 1885, \$33.50 April 1886, and final payment #33.00 June 1887) John and Louisa were issued Homeowers Land Grant in 1887

### Gabriola Island

John himself was a small man but a hard and earnest worker. By now he had built his own fishing vessel the, "Corliss Queen". He fished the local waters and the Fraser, coming home only on weekends during the fishing season. When he was home, he brough up a family, cleared his land and farmed.

Louisa was a hard working, easy-going women. They built their home situated between what is now Silva Day Resort and the Silva Bay Shipyard.  [Homestead](#) 

### Catholic Churh

John Silva donated part of his land to the Catholic Church in 1920. Abe Crocker along with Dan and William McConvey, hauled the logs by horse from the beach and worked on building the Church. John also leased part of the land to a Japanese fellow by the name of Tanaka, who built the sawmill, "Sunrise Lumber Company".

### East Gabriola School

Abe Crocker obtained permission for the building of a school and John Silva donated yet another section of land to place it on. Abe brought the logs from the beach and had the logs cut at the Sunrise Mill and helped with the building of the East Gabriola School in 1921.

- [Home](#)
- [Settlers Families](#)
- [Contact](#)

## Family

- [John Silva 1845](#)

## John Silva descendents

- [Joseph Silva 1879](#)
- [Mary Hall 1884](#)
- [Louisa Crocker 1889](#)
- [John Silva 1893](#)
- [Louis Silva 1895](#)
- [James Silva 1898](#)

## Silva Family

### LOUISA MARELEE

- Born. between 1858 - 1862 in Tlatki Tribe Cowichan group (Jun 1851 in Canada Cunsus 1911)
- Died: [3 June 1926 on Gabriola Island.](#)
- Buriel: Gabriola Cemetry
- married in 1881

### JOHN SILVA ( **Jacque De Almeida** ) (Spouse)

- Born. May 1845 in Lisbon area
- Died: [10 July 1929 on Gabriola Island.](#)
- Burial: Gabriola Cemetry

divider

Children of **Louisa** and **John Silva** are:

divider

#### 1. **WILLIAM JOHN SILVA**

- Born. 4 December 1873, Victoria
- Died. 5 July 1881, Plumper Pass Mayne Island.
- Burial: Plumper Pass Mayne Island.

#### 2. **ISOBELLA CHARLOTTE SILVA**

- Born. 11 December 1874, Mayne Island
- Died. 5 July 1881, Plumper Pass Mayne Island.
- Burial: Plumper Pass Mayne Island.

#### 3. **MARY (MATILDA) SILVA**

- Born. 1876, Mayne Island
- Died. 13 December 1887, Mayne Island
- Burial: Church of St Ann Cowichen

#### 4. **JOSEPH SILVA**

- Born. 15 October 1878, baptized at 15 months old on April 1880 Mayne Island. (Oct 1886 in Canada Census 1911)
- Died. 12 october 1954
- Burial: ( no info)
- [Family of Joseph Silva](#)

#### 5. **JACOB SILVA**

- Born. 1881, 13 days old baptized 4 Sept 1881 Mayne Island
- Died. 13 December 1887
- Burial: Church of St Ann Cowichen

#### 6. **MARY ( ANGELINE) SILVA**

- Born. 1884, Gabriola Island
- Died. 1920
- Burial: ( no info)
- [Family of Mary Hall](#)

#### 7. **WILLIAM SILVA**

- Born. 1885, Gabriola Island.
- Died. 01 December 1907
- Burial: ( no info)

#### 8. **LOUISE SILVA**

- Born. 1889, Gabriola Island.
- Died. 19 September 1941
- Burial: ( no info)
- [Family of Louise Crocker](#)

#### 9. **FRANK SILVA**

- Born. Jun 1891, Gabriola Island
- Died. 1917 in WW1 France
- Burial: [MIA remembered with honour on the Vimy Memorial](#)
- [29th Battalion, Canadian Infantry](#)

#### 10. **JOHN SILVA**

- Born. Apr 1893, Gabriola Island
- Died. 25 April 1965
- Burial: ( no info)
- [Family of John Silva](#)
- [29th Battalion, Canadian Infantry](#)

#### 11. **LOUIS SILVA**

- Born. Aug 1895, Gabriola Island
- Died. 27 June 1946

- Burial: ( no info)
- [Family of Louis Silva](#)
- [29th Battalion, Canadian Infantry](#)

12. **JAMES EDWARD SILVA**

- Born. 20 September 1898, Gabriola Island
- Died. 6 August 1971
- Burial: ( no info)
- [Family of James Silva](#)

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## Robert Stubbin(g)s

## Stubblings - Sopwith Family Tree

## Sopwith

Robert Sopwith (b. 1756, Rochford, Essex) and Martha (b. 1753, Rochford Essex)  
married 1777/1778, Rochford, Essex, England

children are: Sophia, Robert, John, James, Mary, Thomas, Susannah, Robert, Martha, Sarah, Charlotte,  
Maria, Anne, John and Arthur

James Sopwith (b. 1781, Rochford, Essex) and Mary Coppen  
married January 24, 1804, Rochford, Essex

children are: James, Eleanor, Sophia, Mary Anne, Caroline Elizabeth, Emma Sophia, Charlotte and Louisa Jane

## Stubblings

Robert Stubblings (b.1808, Rochford, Essex) and Mary Anne Sopwith (b. 1812, Rochford, Essex)  
married October 9, 1833, Rochford, Essex

children are: Robert, Ellen, Mary Ann, James, Elizabeth, William, John, Emma, George and Frederick

Their first son, Robert, born April 6, 1834, Rochford, Essex, is my great great grandfather. Thanks to Keith Stubblings, "a new friend" acquired in the course of my research in Essex, he sent me the following:

*"Rochford is proving to be a frustrating parish to research. Although it is today and was in the 18th and 19th centuries a relatively small place, the records are exaggerated by the existence of a 'union house' in the parish. This place was a home for the poor and the homeless. By way of example: in 1831 there were 1526 souls living in the parish and between 1813 and 1865 there were 2020 burials!"*

And from the Genuki - Essex site: **Rochford**, this ancient town is situated on the small river Roche, a confluent of the river Crouch, and the river is navigable for vessels of considerable burthen to.. within a mile of the town. It is 40 miles east of London 12 miles south of Maldon 19 1/4 south of Chelmsford, 23 miles from Brentwood Station, 6 miles east of Rayleigh and 4 miles north

*of Southend .. The parish consists of about 1,855 acres. Population in 1861 was 1,481." [Kelly's Directory of Essex, 1862]*

At age 17 (1851), Robert was working as an agricultural labourer living with his family in Mascall's yard, West Street, Rochford, Essex. His father (Robert) was also working at that time as an agricultural labourer.

After being recruited by Thomas Skinner, at age 18 1/2, Robert boarded the ship Norman Morison on August 15, 1852, in London and after 5 months at sea arrived in Esquimalt harbour on January 16, 1853. From the Hudsons Bay Archives I received his Appointments and Service Record; which is as follows:

1852/1853 Out to Fort Victoria by Norman Morison in steerage as a single man, recruited by T. J. Skinner. Sharing Berth No. 3 with William Weston, William Page, John Grant, Daniel Thomas and John Baikie.  
1853-1855 Labourer, Puget Sound Agricultural Co. (Constance Cove Farm)

*"And they arrived in Victoria in a blinding snowstorm. It was night, pitch dark, the waters in the harbour showing white caps in the dim light of the ship's lanterns. When morning dawned the storm had not abated, but the ship's boat was launched and they were rowed ashore. No one but Indians on the beach. The fort gates locked. The palisades grimly forbidding."*

Through the BC Archives Textual Records, I also have the document that he signed for John Graham to get out of his contract with the HBC in 1854. Part of it says " And for your further security as the payment of the same - Robert Stubbings, Labourer, Constance Cove Farm - binds himself conjointly that the above sums be paid as stipulated in this letter and that on payment of the cash installments, as before mentioned, that I will be discharged of the contract I have with the PSAC in Vancouver Island." signed witnesses James Stewart, Thomas R?, John Graham - my mark and Robert Stubbings. Dated May 22, 1854 at Craig Flower, Vancouver Island.

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### A Little History

The success the Puget Sound Agricultural Company had enjoyed was disrupted in 1846 with the Oregon Boundary Dispute. This dispute resulted in the division of the 49th parallel as the line separating British and American Territory.

The hopes of the Hudson's Bay Company, as well as the new Puget Sound Agricultural Company were shattered. Their lands in Oregon would no longer be held for Britain. The main headquarters at Fort Vancouver were lost to the Americans and the remaining farm of Fort Langley and three small dairy farms around Fort Victoria could in no way be expected to make up for the loss.

There was also a need for more farms north of the boundary line, so with this opportunity, and in urgent

desperation the Puget Sound Agricultural Company decided to set up farms on Vancouver Island. James Douglas now in charge of the western headquarters of the Puget Sound Agricultural Company divided the ten acres reserved for agricultural use around Fort Victoria into four farms. The four farms were Craigflower farm, View Field Farm and Colwood Farm and Constance Cove Farm. Bailiffs and their families were sent out from the old country to take charge of the farms. With all possible speed, they established View Field Farm in 1850, Colwood in 1851, as well as both Constance Cove Farm and Craigflower Farm in 1853.

From Charles Lilliard's book *"7 Shillings A Year: The History of Vancouver Island"* he writes: *"Viewfield was established in 1850 and never did well. In 1855 only 35 of the farm's 600 acres were cleared; there were 14 Europeans on the land, but nine of these were children. This was the poorest of the four and it did not survive beyond 1860. Constance Cove Farm was little better off and when it was taken over by the HBC in 1865; T.J. Skinner and his family moved to the Cowichan Valley."*

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Each farm comprised six hundred acres and each one had a large complement of men and machinery. In Mr. Dean's diary he speaks of two hundred and twenty colonists, Scotch and English, coming to Vancouver Island, the former for Mr. McKenzie's farm, the latter for Mr. Skinner's place.

The Vancouver's Island Colony Land Sales Annual Report shows that on November 7, 1856 Robert bought Lot 26 of Thomas Skinner's Section 26 (20 acres - Constance Cove Farm), which was next door to Dr. John Sebastian Helmcken's Section 27.

While at Constance Cove Robert was living with a native woman. Whether they married or not, I don't know, but they had two children: Mary Ann born October 2, 1859 and George born 1864. It is unclear what happened to the mother as from Peggy Nichols *"From the Black Country"* volumes it says: "It was on the farm that Mary Ann and her brother George were born. They came to Nanaimo when Robert's contract was fulfilled. Their B. C. born mother did not accompany them here. Robert worked for a time in the sawmill. He missed the farm and moved to Lasqueti Island where he raised sheep for market with Albion Tranfield."

As George, Robert's son was born in 1864, my assumption is that they must have stayed on the farm for 8 years or so, arriving in Nanaimo between 1865 - 1867 and as he missed the farm bought property on Gabriola Island.

- 1853 - arrival on Norman Morison to Constance Cove Farm
- 1855 - T J Skinner sells Robert a 5 acre? section of Constance Cove Farm lot/section 26
- 1855 to 1859 - meets Indian woman from nearby Esquimalt Band
- 1858 - Royal Engineers huts, the first permanent structures here, and the acreage between Land and [Skinner's Cove](#) (now part of Naden), were turned over to the Navy.
- 1859 - Mary Ann is born on October 2
- 1864 - George is born

- 1865 to 1868 - Did their mother die? They left for Nanaimo. Did he sell the land to the Navy right next door?
- [Constance Cove Early Map](#)
- [Constance Cove Esquimalt Municipality Map](#)
- [Aerial view today of Constance Cove \(part of CFB Esquimalt\)](#)
- 1868 - On July 8, 1868, Rear-Admiral George Fowler Hastings of the Royal Navy purchased an acre of land from the [Puget Sound Agricultural Company](#)
- 1868 - land pre-emption on Gabriola Island with Robert Gray (on South Bay);
- 1869 - BC Directory - Nanaimo;
- 1871 - BC Directory - Nanaimo;
- 1872 - marriage to Margaret (an Indian) in Nanaimo on December 12th;
- 1874 - BC Directory - Nanaimo;
- 1874 - marriage of Mary Ann Stubbins to George Sage February 14th;
- 1875 - Voters List - Gabriola;
- 1877 - BC Directory - Gabriola;
- 1881 - Census - living in Nanaimo District;
- 1882 - 1890 - land pre-emption on Lasqueti Island (NW 1/4 & NE 1/4 Section 3); John Heath shows as pre-empting NE 1/4 Section 3 before 1882;
- 1882/1883 - BC Directory - farming on Lasqueti Island;
- 1882-1886 - marriage of George Stubbins to Sarah Jane;
- 1886 - birth of George Stubbins' daughter Lily, not listed on BC Archives;
- 1887 - Wellington Directory - farming on Jedediah Island;
- 1890/91 - birth of George Stubbins' son Robert, not listed on BC Archives;
- 1896 - Voters List - farming on Lasqueti Island;
- 1899 - Robert's death in Nanaimo on July 22nd (see newspaper articles at the end);
- 1901 - Sarah Jane's death in Vancouver on September 2nd;
- 1904 - death of George Stubbins and son Robert by drowning, in Steveston, July 21st;
- 1913 - marriage of Lillian Stubbins to James Riddell, Lasqueti Island, March 13th
- 1917 - Margaret's death on Lasqueti Island on April 8th;
- 1948 - Mary Ann Stubbins Sage's death in Victoria April 24th.

Nanaimo Free Press Articles with thanks to Barrie from the [Gabriola Museum](#)

Nanaimo Free Press, July 29, 1876  
Gabriola Island

On Monday last Mr. T.L. Fawcett, government agent, accompanied by the Rev. G. Mason and Miss Mason, visited the East end of Gabriola Island. Mr. Fawcett held a meeting of the settlers at Mr. Stubbin's house, for the purpose of deciding how the government grant of \$500 should be expended. It was decided that the money

be equally divided between the East and West ends. J. Martin was appointed foreman for East and H. Heath for the West end. Under the shade of two large and wide-spreading maple trees, near the public school house, the Rev. Mr. Mason baptised four of the settler's children and after the baptismal service delivered an earnest and eloquent exhortation to the settlers present. Great preparations had been made by the Gabriolians to welcome their visitors, and the substantial repast provided by the wives of the settlers was very creditable. Before returning to Nanaimo, Mr. Fawcett visited all the settled portions of the Island for the purpose of assessing the real estate and personal property.

Nanaimo Free Press, May 22, 1889  
The Drowning Accident!  
The Rescuers Search For The Bodies!!

The parties who so valiantly went to the rescue of Cowper and Davis yesterday afternoon have been suitably rewarded by them. The rescuers were George Stubbins, Tommy Spealmer, and Alexander Jones. This afternoon several boats went out to the scene of the accident and attempted to find the bodies, but up to the time for going to press, they had not returned. The task is almost a hopeless one, as the tides and currents are so strong of Gabriola Island that there is no telling how far the bodies may be carried by this time.

Nanaimo Free Press, October 19, 1892  
Lost On Lasqueti

Ignatio Millan, supposed to have his life! The following letter received by Chief Constable Stewart from R. Stubbings of Lasqueti Island, indicates that Ignatio Millan, generally known as Miller the Chilianian, has lost his life.

October 18, 1892  
Mr. Stewart

Dear Sir: - I am sorry to have to inform you that I am afraid that Miller, the Chilianian is lost. He let William Rous' house on Lasqueti Island on Saturday morning the 15th, to go out hunting and had not returned when this was written. It is very seldom that any one stays out all night on the Island when hunting and he had no food nor extra clothing with him, for he went away in his shirt sleeves, we are afraid some accident has befallen him. Either he has fell from a rock or shot himself. W. Rous has been out for three days after him. The second day he came to me and we have both been out the last two days, in every directions tht we think he could have gone but can find nothing of him, so we thought it would be as well to let you know tht he is missing.

Yours truly,  
Robert Stubbings

P.S. Please let the Editor of the Free Press know. I have sent this by Andrew Olsen as we cannot come down ourselves, as we wish to search further.



The following description of the missing man is kindly furnished by Chief Stewart: Ignatio Millan, Aged 25, native of Chili, height 5 ft 5 inches, weight 136 lbs, grey eyes, brown hair, dark complexion, scar on nose.

Nanaimo Free Press Articles that I have found:

#### Death of Robert Stubbins

Another of the pioneers of the Province crossed the boundary this morning and passed into the Great Beyond. Robert Stubbins, who was well know throughout the district, died at an early hour this morning at the reidence of his son-in-law, Mr. George Sage. The deceased was a native of London, England, aged 64 years, and came out to Vancouver Island in the early days for the Hudson Bay Company as herdsman at their farm at Craigflower, near Victoria. He has been in this city and district for a great many years, but of late years has been farming and sheep raising on Lasquiti Island. The funeral will take place from the residence of Mr. Geo. Sage, Newcastle Townsite, on Sunday afternoon, at 4 o'clock. Hilbert & Son will conduct the funeral.

#### Funeral of Robert Stubbins

The funeral of the late Robert Stubbins took place from the residence of his son-in-law, Mr. Geo Sage of New Castle Townsite yesterday afternoon. The pall bearers were Messrs. Geo Bevilockway, S. Waddington, Thos Whithers, Wm Hoggan, John Thompson and Jas Gillespie. Rev W W Baer officiated and Hilbert & Son had charge of the interment.

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As more of this story unfolds, I will update the webpage. If you would like to contact me with information I can be reached by [email](#)



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CAPTAIN BALDWIN A. WAKE

-  
and Family

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Settlers of Valdez Island  
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"It was the mystery of the year 1880! All Vancouver Island talked of it: everyone had his own solution."

So opened an article written by James K. Nesbitt, for The Daily Colonist, Victoria, June, 1950, seventy years after the mysterious event. This Weekend Magazine article explores the unsolved disappearance of a retired Royal Navy Captain.

The article continues:

"Baldwin A Wake, for long time a prominent resident of Victoria, a retired Naval officer, disappeared at sea off Nanaimo, and his small sloop was found washed ashore, and his valuable treasures buried."

Nesbitt ponders:

"Was Captain Wake murdered by the Indians? Such things did happen. These were Indians known to be unfriendly, living on small islands. Had pirates captured Capt Wake? Were they holding him for ransom on some desolate, isolated island? Had he merely been washed over board in a storm? No one ever knew. The body of Capt Wake was never found."

On January 16, 1880, retired Royal Navy Captain, Baldwin Arden Wake, departed from

[Nanaimo Harbour](#), in his small sloop, with the plan to sail to his settler homestead on Valdez Island. This destination was never realized.

The first details of his mysterious disappearance, and the discovery of his damaged sloop were reported in [The Nanaimo Free Press, January 17, 1880.](#)

The mystery deepened. Evidence was revealed about a robbery to the sloop in the [The Nanaimo Free Press, January 21.](#)

Further information about the disappearance of Captain Wake was revealed in [The Daily British Colonist, January 24.](#)

More information about the robbery of goods from the sloop, and further speculation about the disappearance of Captain Wake were disclosed in [The Nanaimo Free Press, January 31.](#)

George Wake, Captain Waks's son, offered [a reward](#) for information leading to any clues about the disappearance of his father.

Two years later, in 1882, a settler on Thetis Island found some human bones near the beach where Captain Wakes's sloop was discovered. A [coroner from Nanaimo](#) who evaluated these bones, concluded that they were not of Captain Wake.

**One hundred and twenty-two years later, the mystery remains unsolved!**

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*Created 2002 by Lynda G. Poulton*