

Genealogy can be a fascinating puzzle with parts that, as we see, can eventually be put together. But in those any way we can flesh out the charts to develop some understanding of the lives of our ancestors? One way to do so is to put together all known information in order to make a family biography. This afternoon I am going to trace the settlement in Nova Scotia of Samuel and Isobel Creelman and of their sons, Samuel Jr., Francis and Matthew. To save time, I will not give you the sources of my information, but I will place them in the appendix of the book.

THE CREELMAN FAMILY

On the 9th of Oct. 1752, the ship "The Harbour" sailed from the Harbour with 150 passengers. Among the new arrivals from northern Ireland was thirty-three year old Samuel Creelman, his wife, Isobel, and their two children, 17 year old Margaret, 10 year old Samuel, 2 year old Francis, and baby Nancy. Arriving 18th in the year, the family was forced to spend some time in the Harbour before obtaining some land. During 1752, the family moved to Anfers, and it was there that Samuel's son, Matthew, was born in 1754.

THE EARLIEST KNOWN CREELMAN

RECORDS FOUND, TO DATE, ARE

FROM 1612 ON PAGE 182.

It was because of his large family that Samuel received two shares of 1,000 acres of land in the Township of Anfers. Samuel Creelman and other emigrants from northern Ireland, who later moved to the Coleridge Townships, re-occupied what the effective land grant was registered in 1752. Samuel Creelman and a Matthew Creelman was granted one share, of 500 acres, and another of 500 acres. Samuel was 35 and Samuel owned 33, it seems likely that the other 33 was owned by another, although that's pure speculation.

ISOBELL CREELMAN

FROM THE TOWN OF KILLMARNOCK,

IN THE COUNTY OF AYRSHIRE

IN SCOTLAND

Selling down in Anfers, Samuel and Isobel had a very prosperous family farm. Pioneer families of the period settled on cleared land from which Acadians had been expelled, and some were even able to obtain farm animals from the Acadians, as well as using Acadian dykes, orchards and husbandry. We do not know the source of Samuel's animals, but by January 1, 1770, he owned 4 oxen, the working animals of a farm, 7 cows, 8 calves, 10 sheep and 2 pigs. He also owned one luxury animal - a horse - which at that time was used for transportation rather than farming. The two teams of oxen and the horse were both extremely valuable as it was the custom to rent them out, often bartering their use for produce or labour on the farm. Although no farm

Genealogy can be a fascinating puzzle with parts that, as we see, can eventually be put together. But is there any way we can flesh out the charts to develop some understanding of the lives of our ancestors? One way to do so is to put together all known information in order to make a family biography. This afternoon I am going to trace the settlement in Nova Scotia of Samuel and Isabell Creelman and of their sons, Samuel Jr., Francis and Matthew. To save time, I will not give you the sources of my information, but I will place a documented copy of this talk in the Archives.

On the 9th of October, in 1761, the ship, *Hopewell*, arrived in Halifax Harbour with 350 passengers. Among the new arrivals from northern Ireland was thirty-three year old Samuel Creelman, his wife, Isabel, and their four children: 12 year old Margaret, 10 year old Samuel, 2 year old Francis, and baby Nancy. Arriving late in the year, the family was forced to spend a difficult winter, probably in Lunenburg, before obtaining some land. During 1762, the family moved to Amherst, and it was there that Samuel's son, Matthew, was born in December, and a third daughter, Ann, was born in 1765, bring the family to its final total of three boys and three girls.

It was because of his large family that Samuel received two shares or 1,000 acres of land in the Township of Amherst. Samuel Creelman and other emigrants from northern Ireland, who later moved to the Cobequid Townships, re recorded when the effective land grant was registered in 1765. Three years later, a Matthew Creelman was granted one share, or 500 acres. As Matthew's grant was Number 35 and Samuel owned 34, it seems likely that this Matthew was Samuel's younger brother, although that is pure speculation.

Settling down in Amherst, Samuel and Isabell developed a fairly prosperous family farm. Pioneer families of the period settled on cleared land from which Acadians had been expelled, and some were even able to obtain farm animals from the Acadians, as well as using Acadian dykes, orchards and foundations. We do not know the source of Samuel's animals, but by January 1, 1770, he owned 4 oxen, the working animals of a farm, 7 cows, 8 heifers, 10 sheep and 2 pigs. He also owned one luxury animal – a horse – which at that time was used for transportation rather than farming. The two teams of oxen and the horse were both extremely valuable as it was the custom to rent them out, often bartering their use for produce or labour on the farm. Although no farm

was self-sufficient, it was customary for families to raise vegetables and fruits for their own use, to cut wood and hunt game in the forests, and to fish the streams. Extra crops, such as wheat, were sold or traded for luxury goods and farm necessities. The wheat crop of 1769 had not been very successful and Samuel decided to change his planting strategy the following year to emphasize flax, the traditional crop of northern Ireland. Consequently, his wheat production fell sharply, but in 1770 he produced over 50 hundred weight of flax and 2 bushels of flax seed.

The same year, Matthew, whom we have tentatively identified as Samuel's brother, was barely able to fulfil the terms of his grant by placing 2 oxen, 2 cows and 2 heifers on his land. He made little progress and, on May 18th, 1774, sold his 500 acres to 23 year old Samuel Creelman, Jr. for thirty pounds. Unfortunately, it has been impossible to trace what happened to Matthew, making it highly probable that he left Nova Scotia.

Early in 1744, a group of relatively affluent Yorkshiremen arrived in Cumberland County. Having sold their land in England, they had sufficient money to pay for flourishing farms in Nova Scotia. On May 26, one such family: William Pipes, a 49 year old man who arrived from England on the ship, *Albion*, with his two sons, Williams Jr., 22, and Jonathan, 20, purchased all the Creelman land. Samuel Sr. sold thirteen hundred and fifty acres for two hundred pounds. On the same day, Samuel Jr., sold the land that he had purchased from Matthew to William Pipes, for fifty pounds, 20 pounds more than he had paid Matthew. At this time it is impossible to know whether he made a profit of twenty pounds in 8 days, or whether animals were included in the second sale.

Why did Samuel and his family leave Amherst? Perhaps the opportunity to sell land for cash was irresistible, but other factors should be considered. Samuel had settled with his fellow Irish Presbyterians, but the arrival of so many Methodist Yorkshiremen meant that the religious and ethnic make-up of Amherst was changing. Perhaps Samuel had already been considering buying land in the Township of Truro, which was totally Irish Presbyterian. From a purely economic point of view the deal he made with David Archibald was a very good one: for one hundred and seven pounds he bought two shares or rights in the Township of Truro, totaling 1,000 acres, plus three

marsh lots, on the Shubenacadie River. The land had much more long-term potential than his Amherst grant. It is not known whether stock and farm utensils were included in these sales, but it is highly likely that at least some of each changed hands.

But even after moving to Truro, there was the ever-present problem of growing sons. In 1775, Samuel Jr. married Mary, the nineteen year old daughter of James Campbell, a former Amherst grantee who had moved to Londonderry. Since it was the custom to move directly into your own farm upon marriage, some provision had to be made for the young couple and it is probably that the 1780 transfer of 500 acres from Samuel Sr. to Samuel Jr. merely formalized an existing agreement.

Two years later, the second brother, Francis, married Mary's sister, Esther, and it may have been that marriage which precipitated the Creelman interest in newly-opening land of the Stewiacke. When the Stewiacke Grant was issued in October of 1783, both Francis and Samuel Creelman are listed among the grantees. However, it seems unlikely that the elder Samuel had any intention of moving again. He was active in town life in Truro and was elected at different times to the responsible positions of Overseer of Roads and of the Poor. Both of these positions involved spending money and were only given to trusted senior men,.

But Samuel Jr., by this time the father of two sons and three daughters, could see the necessity of owning more land and of branching out. In April 1786, he bought Francis's right and in February of 1787, he purchased 500 more acres from Thomas Cochrane, a Halifax merchant. This amount enabled him to establish a mill, which provided a way to earn cash. Later, Francis, who had settled on Samuel Jr.'s Shubenacadie farm, also felt the necessity to move. In 1798, he sold the farm and moved across the bay to Debert, and eventually moved his family to Otterbrook, Stewiacke. Both Samuel Jr. and Francis had large families and it is from these two that the Stewiacke Creelmans are descended.

In those days it was quite common for the youngest son to remain on the family farm, gradually taking over from his father, and eventually looking after his parents. Matthew, the youngest Creelman son, followed this pattern. In 1791, he married Nancy Knox of Londonderry and they settled on the family farm. In 1801, Samuel Sr., then 73, for fifty pounds, made over his farm to Matthew, reserving two cows and their calves for

his own use. The deed even included all of Samuel's farming utensils. Samuel must have trusted Matthew, for unlike many other such deeds, there was no legal agreement for the son to look after his parents. In such cases, the wife also had to sign and this is the first time that we learn anything personal about Isabell — she could not write — but signed her mark. As a Presbyterian, she would have been taught to read in order to read the Bible and Catechism, but her x is a reminder that during the eighteenth century, writing was deemed to be a vocational skill and, as such, was not needed by girls.

Even in death, Isabell, like most women of the day, was an obscure figure. All we know is that she died "sometime before Samuel". Samuel himself died in 1810 and they were both buried in the family cemetery one mile from Black Rock.

These are all the facts we know about the Creelman's and their early settlement, but we can deduce that Samuel and Isabell had been ideal pioneers. They contributed to the growth of both Amherst and Truro Townships by carving valuable farmland out of the wilderness. We know that Samuel took part in the public life of his town, gaining the respect of his neighbours. And, most importantly of all, Samuel and Isabell raised a large family, leaving many descendants who would make the Creelman name common in the Princeport area of Truro Township and throughout the Stewiacke Valley.

From our research we found the early Creelmans in Scotland. Andrew Creelman was born in Wilmshurst, Wiltshire about 1613 and married Marion Smith on July 2, 1638. They had three sons, James and Robert, who were born in Glasgow, Lanark on April 2, 1638. The third son, Creelman was William who was born about 1643 in Wilmshurst, Wiltshire and who married Elizabeth Thomas on June 1, 1742. We have not been able to connect these early Creelmans with Samuel Creelman, the first, of Nova Scotia. Research we may find them to be related.

HISTORY

We know that Samuel Creelman came to Nova Scotia by way of Londonderry, Ireland. He was the son of William Creelman who came from Scotland and married a daughter originally from Ireland. The situation in Scotland and Ireland indicated that this is possible.

OF

part of the 17th century and the northern part of Ireland through a civil war which was accompanied by such bloodshed, the Irish fled and the English occupied the territory. After the flight, English colonization in the new world. To help the English and the Scots to settle in the new world, the English responded to this by about 1610 began to

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immigrate en masse across the Atlantic. When several Scottish regiments were sent over to help in 1607 to keep the peace, a Presbytery was established at Perth, Scotland. At this time in Scotland the Presbyterians were persecuted for their religious beliefs.

CREELMAN

In 1607, they fled to America. Some of their ancestors were a part of one of these early Scottish regiments that left Scotland for either the land that was available or for religious purposes.

FAMILY

The primary reason they fled was that their rights as Protestants were being taken away from them in Scotland. The Presbyterian Church was the established church. Being Presbyterians, they were free to occupy the highest offices in the land, to hold commissions in the army, to sit on Municipal Councils, and to hold a seat in Parliament. They could get a university education and many Scots were professionals. By contrast, when they found themselves in Ulster where the Church of England was the established church, they found themselves considered as despised dissenters. They could not hold office, obtain army commissions, attend the professions or send their children to the universities.

HISTORY OF THE EARLY CREELMANS

From our research we found two early Creelmans in Scotland. Andrew Creelman was born in Kilmarnock, Ayrshire about 1679 and married Marion Smith on July 5, 1704. They had twin sons, James and Robert, who were born in Glasgow, Lanark on April 3, 1709. The other early Creelman was William who was born about 1723 in Kilmarnock, Ayrshire and who married Elizabeth Thomson on June 1, 1748. We have not been able to connect these early Creelmans with Samuel Creelman, the first, of Nova Scotia, but with further research we may find them to be related.

We know that Samuel Creelman, the first, came to Nova Scotia by way of Londonderry, Ireland. We believe that his parents originally came from Scotland and were a part of the Scottish immigration to Ireland. The situation in England, Scotland and Ireland indicates that this is possible. During the reign of James I in the early part of the 17th Century, England acquired the northern part of Ireland through a civil war which was fought in Ireland. After much bloodshed, the Irish landowners who occupied this territory fled and the English occupied it and called it Ulster. Ulster was the first English colony and became known as the Ulster Plantation. It was the model for further English colonization in the new world. To make the land productive, the English enticed the English and the Scots to immigrate by promising them land. Many Scots responded to this invitation and in about 1610 began to immigrate en masse across the channel to Ulster. When several Scottish regiments were sent over to Ulster in 1642 to keep the peace, a Presbytery was established at Carrickfergus. At this time in Scotland the Presbyterians were being persecuted for their religious beliefs. Thinking that Ulster would be a better place for them, they fled in numbers. We believe that Samuel's ancestors were a part of one of these major migrations and that they left Scotland for either the land that was available or for religious persecution.

For whatever reason they left Scotland, the Scots found that their situation in Ireland was a peculiar one. Back home in Scotland, the Presbyterian Church was the established church. Being Presbyterians, they were free to occupy the highest offices in the land, to hold commissions in the army, to sit on Municipal councils, and to hold a seat in Parliament. They could get a university education and many Scots were professionals. By contrast, when they found themselves in Ulster where the Church of England was the established church, they found themselves considered as despised dissenters. They could not hold office, obtain army commissions, enter the professions or send their children to the universities.

Socially, they were looked down upon as only slightly better than the Roman Catholic peasantry. In addition to political and social disadvantages, they suffered economically. Since Ulster was the first English colony, the English adopted a mercantilist policy of looking upon the colony as an area for her own enrichment. The Scots took to raising cattle and were highly successful for a time. However, the English landowners in England found that cattle from Ulster interfered with their own home market, so Parliament forbade the importation of Ulster cattle. Then they turned to raising sheep and sending wool to the English factories, but again the English landowners found that wool could bring them good returns, so the people in Ulster lost their English market. The Scottish settlers of Ulster were an enterprising people and undertook various manufacturing enterprises, only to have them closed down for competing with the enterprises in England.

Because of years of such inequitable treatment, the Scotch-Irish of Ulster developed a great desire for freedom from such direct English control. After 1700 when the tide of immigration to America began to flow strong, tens of thousands of Scotch-Irish crossed the Atlantic to find new homes in the more remote colonies. Samuel Creelman, the first, was one of these immigrants.

When Alexaner McNutt went looking for settlers to fill the hundred of thousands of acres that the government of Nova Scotia had turned over to him, he originally visited Londonderry, New Hampshire where he found many Scotch-Irish who were willing to immigrate to Nova Scotia. Most of these New Hampshire Scotch-Irish settled near Truro. Then he went to Londonderry, Ireland and brought another group of Scotch-Irish to Nova Scotia. This group arrived in Halifax about October 15, 1761 on the ship, Hopewell. Some of this group settled in Londonderry and others went to Cumberland which had been settled by a group of New Englanders. Samuel Creelman, his wife, Isabell, and their four children, Margaret, Samuel, Francis and Nancy, were on the ship, Hopewell, which sailed from Londonderry, Ireland.

When Carol Creelman went to Stewiacke, N.D. to see Gordon Creelman, Gordon Creelman took her to Francis Creelman. The Bible is in his possession. There, Francis and Gordon pointed out that there had been a shamrock put in the Bible. It probably was put in the Bible sometime in the middle 1600s. The Bible could have been published as early as 1641, but we do not know for sure. If more research continues, it is possible that someone may find out when the exact date was. The Bible in the photo is the 1st Volume. The second volume is not yet account for. Hopefully, someday, someone will find it.



Shamrock Leaf found in this Bible

Probably placed there in Ireland CA 1689

Photocopy taken by Carol Creelman

THE CREELMAN NAME

The name Creelman, comes from the Gaelic word meaning wicker work. It has been said that the name was originally Ashmore (Ashmont, Ashcraft). Several stories have developed to explain the origin of the name, Creelman. These are the stories that we have received:

"The Creelmans were from Scotland with the name of Ashmont. They stole horses from the English and sold them to the Scots during the War of 1645. When the Scots lost they moved to Ireland to escape the hangman. When they arrived in Ireland, they took up fishing. They became such good fisherman that they carried large creels to carry the fish in. Thus, the local people called them Creelman."

"The Creelmans originated off the river Cree in Scotland where the family name had been Ashmore, but everyone born along the river was referred to as a Cree-man. Along the river were cattails or rushes which they called Creels and from these leaves they made Creels or baskets. During the religious wars the Stewarts and their friendly clans (which included the Ashmores) were driven away from the Cree valley--first to Ulva Island and later fought their way into and took over a part of Northern Ireland."

"There were two boys by the name of "Ashcraft" serving in the English army. At one of the battles the army was besieged and ran short of water. These two boys volunteered to go down to a nearby stream and get water. The only things that they had to carry water in were creels, presumably waterproofed. As they were coming back from the stream soldiers shouted 'hear come the creel men'. As recognition of their heroism, the King of England changed their name to Creelman."

Miller, in his book, states "It may be here observed that his (Samuel) forefathers names were Ashmore, and that some of them had a large contract for carrying provisions to a number of convicts, which they did in "CREELS" carried across the horse's back, and by this the name was changed from Ashmore to Creelman. The name of Ashmore is still kept as a second name by some of the Creelmans."

None of these stories have been verified so the origin of the name, Creelman, remains a mystery. Hopefully, when research can be done in Ireland, Scotland and England, this mystery will be solved.

SECTION I

SAMUEL CREELMAN, THE FIRST

When Samuel and his family landed in Halifax, they immediately left for Lunenburg, a settlement to the west of Halifax and settled by Germans from Lunenburg in Hanover, Germany. Lunenburg must have been an alien place to Samuel and his family for the language of the settlement must have been very foreign to them. Even though Samuel was a cooper by trade, he was not able to provide for his family for they almost starved during that winter. It has been reported that if they had not been able to catch eels to eat they would have not survived.

After such a hard winter, Samuel returned to Halifax in the spring of 1762. Apparently, Samuel was dissatisfied with Halifax; for that fall, he and his family moved to Cumberland. It has been said that when Samuel left Halifax, he raised his hands and proclaimed in a loud voice to all of Halifax that it was the most wicked place he had ever beheld.

Samuel lived in Cumberland for several years. We do not know any of the details of his life there. He may have farmed or practiced his trade. Two of his children, Matthew and Ann, were born there.

In either the fall of 1771 or the spring of 1772, he and his family moved to Black Rock on the west end of Truro Township. They left Cumberland on the ship, Hector, with Captain Lockard in command and they landed on the point on the east side of the Shubenacadie River which is now known as Lockard's Point.

When Samuel landed, he purchased five hundred acres of land from David Archibald, Esq. This plot of land extended from Lockard's Point four miles up the Shubenacadie River and fronted the river. He also purchased another lot of the same size adjoining the first lot and on the east side of it.

Samuel and Isabell lived on their land for the remainder of their days. Isabell died several years before Samuel. Samuel died at his son Matthew's house in Princeport about 1810. Both he and his wife were buried about one mile from Black Rock.

Samuel and his family belonged to a God-fearing people who were carefully and religiously trained. They were strict in morals and beliefs. They were Presbyterian and members of the Secession Church. Samuel Creelman adhered to the antiburgher party which held that its members could not conscientiously take the burgher oath which required the acceptance of the authorized religion of the land. Later in Nova Scotia, the burghers and the antiburghers became one. Samuel remained a staunch Presbyterian all of his life.