

# MORE FAMILY TREE

Arthur J. More

## INTRODUCTION

This project focusses on the ancestors and descendants of WILLIAM ARTHUR MORE (1871 - 1917) and EFFIE MAY WILCOX MORE (1874 - 1941). In all I have obtained information on 11 generations of the family, back to 1634 in one case.

As a grandson of William and Effie I am aware of how little I know of the More side of the family since William died 23 years before I was born. I am also aware of the tremendous wealth of information we have on the Wilcox side, in the old Bible that Effie or her mother began, and of the need to organize it. Hence the focus on William and Effie.

I have had a great deal of help from Merton More (Philo James Merton More) on this project. He has provided a considerable amount of information including the Belfry book which goes back to the Puritans, and helping to locate the the farm originally cleared by John and Mary More. Hence a second focus on Merton's family.

This project follows four lineages:

1. More: John and Mary More came to Canada from Scotland in the 1830's.
2. Belfry: Peter Belfry came to Canada from France in 1777. His great-grand-daughter was Sara Jane Belfry, the mother of William More. An off-shoot of the Belfry's is the Shermans. William Sherman came to Plymouth, Massachussets from England in 1634. Joanna Sherman, his great-great-grand-daughter, married Jacob Belfry, son of Peter Belfry.
3. Wilcox: Elisha Wilcox was a United Empire Loyalist who came to Canada about 1790. His great-grand-daughter was Effie More.
4. Parks: Fanny Parks came to Canada as an infant from Ireland in 1827. Her parents died during the voyage. She was the mother of Effie More.

## Documentation

The documentation comes from many sources including the family Bible which originated with Effie More or her mother Fanny Parks and which contains many old newspaper clippings; Upper Canda Land Petition records (UCLP); a history of Nottawasaga Township in which Creemore, Ontario is located; the Belfry Book published in 1888; Simcoe County Land Records; information from the National Archives and the Ontario Archives; and conversations with many relatives and friends. The source of the information is usually given, and the notation system is given in the bibliography.

### Additional Information

This write-up is only a beginning. I hope it will spur others to send me information - information that is stored deep in memories, in attics, and in family Bibles.

The project is like a jig-saw puzzle, except that the pieces of the puzzle are not all available yet. Each time a piece of the puzzle is fitted in, it gets me started looking for more pieces.

I am particularly interested in knowing more about the lives of the people listed here. Official records are so impersonal. Even the smallest anecdote helps give a picture of the person. And a photograph or sketch is even more enlightening.

I am also interested in pushing back these lineages further in time. In each case I have been able to go back to the shores of North America. Tracing further becomes far more difficult. However the more accurate the information from within North America, the less difficult the task will be in England, Scotland, Ireland and France.

The remainder of this write-up summarizes the information along each lineage. In many cases I have more detailed information which is not of general interest, but which may answer specific questions.

### MORE

#### John and Mary More

John and Mary More came to Canada from Scotland in the 1830's (B-NH, 1861 and 1871 Census). They probably came from the Isle of Islay since the area they settled in, Duntroon, was settled primarily by Scots from the Isle of Islay (B-NH,p.13). They probably came in 1838 as son James was born in Scotland in 1838 and they purchased land in Duntroon in the same year (B-NH,p.142,UCLP, 1871 Census). Their son James makes reference to living in Pennsylvania in recollections of his early childhood (B-NH, p.56-58) but there is no other evidence to support this.

The family first cleared a farm near Duntroon, about 35 mile west of Barrie, Ontario where John was also one of the first school teachers (B-NH,p.16 & 57). In 1850 he and Mary began clearing a much larger farm, a crown grant of 100 acres, at Elm Corners (Lot 10, Concession 8) about 5 miles west of Creemore (B-NH,p.142). Apparently John died before the the land was officially granted to him. The land was finally granted officially to his son Daniel in Letters Patent dated 1871 (Ontario Archives, Ref.No. 30094, Sale No. 9943). A fascinating account of early life in the Duntroon - Creemore area is given in the Nottawasaga History. Nottawasaga is the Township in which these two communities are located.

John and Mary had 9 children: John Jr., James, Daniel, Janet, Mary Ann, Martha A, Bethea, Logan and Kenry. The 1861 and 1871 Census records conflict with each other on this information. This list is taken from an affidavit, signed by each member of the family, which gives interest in the farm at Elm Corners over to Daniel. Birthdates are estimated from this affidavit and the census records. Since the affidavit is a legal

document and contains signatures it is assumed to be correct (Ontario Archives, 7717/70).

#### Daniel and Sara More

Daniel and Sara took over the farm from John and Mary, finished clearing it and added a portion to it, N1/4L9C7. Mary lived with them until at least 1871 (1871 Census). Merton More remembers visiting the farm as a child about 1916. He has an old photograph of the house and barn which were both of solid log construction. Merton, his son David, and I located and visited the farm in June, 1982. The house still stands but the logs have been covered with asphalt siding. The barn is also standing and in active use. It has been raised and extended.

Daniel and Sara had 8 children: Philo, James, Bertha, Jeanetta, Ashton, Rev. J. Herbert, Logan Murray and William Arthur.

#### William and Effie More

Both William and Effie grew up in the Creemore area. Their parents were very active in the Methodist Church and community affairs. Effie lived right in Creemore where her father Elija was a carpenter and owned commercial property. The More farm was about 5 miles west of Creemore (B-NH, Wilcox Bible, Simcoe County Land Records, conversations).

William and Effie were married in Toronto by William's brother, Rev. J. Herbert More. Witnesses were Franklin E. Belfry, William's cousin, and Ida M. Wilcox, Effie's sister (Marriage Certificate, N-1904A)

William and Effie moved to Weyburn, Saskatchewan where William was a salesman for International Harvester (N-1917A). William and Effie had four children in Weyburn: Frances Belfry, Annie Suzie Jeanetta, Rev. Daniel Wilcox, and Edward (Ted) Alexander.

Shortly after moving to Estevan, Saskatchewan, William died suddenly of an infected bowel (probably from appendicitis) while on a training course in Regina. He was 46 and the children 12, 10, 9 and 6 years of age. He is buried in Estevan cemetery.

Effie soon took the family to Salmon Arm where Uncle Will (William J.) had moved some years earlier and had established a large orchard. Effie remained in Salmon Arm until a few years before her death. She died in Vancouver in 1941.

William and Effie had deep religious convictions and were strong members of the Methodist Church. Effie also had a deep devotion to her family. Her feelings towards her faith and her family are expressed beautifully by the poem "God Bless You". She gave copies of the poem to

each of her children on special occasions.

"God Bless You

I seek in prayerful words, dear  
My heart's love's wish to send you  
That you may know, that far or near  
My loving thoughts attend you.

I cannot find a lovier word  
Nor fonder to caress you  
Nor song nor poem I have heard  
Is sweeter than 'God Bless You'

'God Bless You': I've wished you all  
Of brightness life possesses  
Nor can there any joy at all  
Be thine until God Blesses?

'God Bless You': I breath a charm  
Lest grief's dark night oppress you.  
For how can sorrow bring you harm  
If 'tis God's way 'To Bless you'

Lovingly Mother"

#### BELFRY

The Belfry history is certainly the most complete of the four lineages covered by this project. This is because of the existence of the "Belfry Book": A Brief History of Jacob Belfry, Sen. with a Sketch Of His Wife and Family and Their Descendants by P. DeGuerre in 1888. Merton More has an origianl of this book and I have a photocopy. All references in this section are from this book unless otherwise stated.

#### Sherman

The Belfry historical record actually starts with the Shermans who married into the Belfry family in 1797.

William Sherman came to Plymouth, Massachussets in 1734 as a servant with the Puritans. He came from Dedham, Essex County, England. In 1640 he was granted land on which he farmed. He had three sons: William, Samuel and John. One son, Samuel, settled in Ware, Mass., near Boston, where he married Mary Snow. Samuel and Mary had six children: Thomas, Prince, Reuben, Samuel, Mary and Ebenezer.

Prince served in the War of 1776 and returned to Ware where he married Mary Submit Rodgers. Prince and Mary had six children: Joannna, Prince Jr., Ira, Philo, Horace and Thomas. The family left Ware in 1787

and moved to Vermont and later to Canada, probably near Brockville. Soon after the move, Prince died suddenly, leaving his wife, a daughter, four sons and fifth son born after his death.

The eldest child Joanna, met Jacob Belfry in 1797 when she was age 16. Jacob and Joanna were married that year.

#### Peter Belfry, Jacob Belfry and Joanna Sherman

Peter Belfry and his wife, Catheriane Lachioness Young came from France in 1777. Their son, Jacob, was born off the Banks of Newfoundland during the voyage. By the time Jacob was 7 years of age both parents had died and he was left at a Roman Catholic Seminary in Quebec City to train for the priesthood. At age 20 he left the Seminary to strike out on his own. He soon arrived in Brockville where he met and married Joanna Sherman.

The family of Jacob and Joanna was remarkable. They had 16 children including two sets of twins, and all lived to adulthood. They were deeply involved in the Church and the Temperance movement in Sharon, Ontario about 40 miles north of Toronto. Jacob was a successful farmer, a teacher, and a journeyman cooper. A detailed account of the life of the family is presented in the Belfry Book.

#### Philo Belfry and Mary Ann Graham

One of the 16 children was Philo. Philo was born in the United States, where his family lived for a few years before and after the War of 1812. After the family's return to Canada, Philo became very concerned about the corruption of the Family Compact which was governing Upper Canada in the 1830's. He became involved in the Rebellion of 1837 under William Lyon McKenzie and took part in the march down Yonge Street in Toronto. He was jailed for 5 months for his activities. His brother, Oran, was also imprisoned for similar activities.

Philo married Mary Ann Graham and they had eleven children, the oldest of whom was Sara Jane Belfry. The family lived for a few years near Creemore. During that time Sara met and married Daniel More. Sara and Daniel were the parents of William Arthur More, my great-grandfather, and of Philo More, father of Merton More.

#### WILCOX

The Wilcox lineage has been an important part of our family history and the name is carried on into the present generation, being the second name of our oldest son. The Wilcox Bible has been a source of much of the initial information for this project.

#### Elisha Wilcox

I have been able to trace the Wilcox lineage back to Elisha Wilcox who was born in New York state in 1768.

I have some information on Elisha's predecessors written by Ida Aldrich, daughter of M.A. Wilcox, and sent to me by her daughter Marion Wilcox Strandberg of Oregon. I haven't yet been able to fit it in with other written records but it is fascinating.

"In 1760 two Wilcox brothers left England and came to what is now New Jersey. As they left their mother gave each of them a ring, with name and date engraved. One of the two was Dad's (M.A. Wilcox) ancestor, and I have seen the ring which he had inscribed WILLCOCKS 1760; the engraving had been renewed several times I was told, and it was in the possession of my Aunt Elizabeth when I saw it; she lived in Victoria B.C.

"When war broke out between the colonies and England, one of the brothers remained in what is now the United States; the other, loyal to England, moved to Canada. And that branch is ours. This story I have heard from Wilcox families who have always lived in the United States, almost word for word as I heard it from Dad. So I am sure it is authentic."

Elisha Wilcox was a member of Butler's Rangers (UCLP, 1799), a regiment which carried on a guerilla-like action mainly in New York and Pennsylvania. Upper Canada Land Petition records show that he was a member of the Rangers in 1787 under Major Robert Mathews. Mathews was an officer of the King's Royal Regiment of New York to whom four companies of Butler's Rangers were attached during a drive through the Mohawk Valley (B-Fryer). Elisha probably took part in this drive.

The most active and most successful regiment operating in the Northern Department was Butler's Rangers. The name was appropriate; for the men did range over a vast area - from the Kentucky Valley where Virginians were encroaching on Indian land, to the boundary of New Jersey, along the frontiers of New York and Pennsylvania and westward into the Ohio Valley. Butler's Rangers was a provincial corps, the third to be attached to the Northern Department. It had special status owing to an arrangement which its astute commander, John Butler, made with Governor Sir Guy Carleton.

The tactics adopted by Butler were those that had been used with such devastating success in the Seven Years' War by the famous ranger hero, Robert Rogers. Both Butler and Rogers agreed that the first requirement for a ranger that he be able to endure severe hardship for long periods of time, miles from the comforts of civilization. Whereas regular troops and most provincials went into winter quarters when the weather turned biting, rangers were expected to operate all year round. In summer they marched or travelled in bateaux or canoes; in winter they used sleighs, skates or snowshoes.<sup>1</sup>

The key to success was mobility. Rangers travelled with a minimum of equipment to impede them, and their uniform consisted of whatever was comfortable and convenient. Armed with smoothbore muskets that fired buckshot or bullets, many rangers wore short jackets, carried tomahawks, powder horns and scalping knives, and leather bags dangling from their belts held shot. Some had small compasses as well fastened to the bottoms of their powder horns.<sup>2</sup> Other rangers had parade dress, but when operating in the woods they often wore long hunting shirts, leggings or overalls and moccasins.

sins. John Butler wanted his men to carry rifles, either their own, or government issue if available because of their greater accuracy.

In his 'Plan of Discipline' Robert Rogers had set down rules which all ranger corps followed. While on scouting missions rangers walked in single file with enough space between each to prevent more than one being a target for an enemy marksman. When crossing swampy ground, they marched abreast to confound trackers. Camp was made after dark, never before, and always in a spot where the sentries had a clear view and the enemy could not take them by surprise.

When a force of several hundred was out, the men split into three columns, and each marched in single file, with the outer column at least twenty yards from the middle one, scouts forward, to the rear, and along the flanks, watching for indications of an ambush. Men so spread out were difficult to surround. This formation was the antithesis of regular tactics, where soldiers stood shoulder to shoulder and made fire power the important operation. Such concentrated formations could be disastrous in the forests and ranger technique was closely adapted in woodland conditions, where an enemy shooting from cover could slaughter a conventional column. Rangers would also advance from tree to tree, and if the enemy was very strong the front line of rangers would fire and drop, so that the rear line could advance through them, while the front one used the time to reload.

Rangers used darkness to effect. If they were encircled they formed a square and held out until nightfall afforded them the opportunity to steal away. Whenever the enemy came in pursuit, by night or day, rangers turned and circled back in the hope of setting up an ambush. Sentries went out in groups of six, two on duty at a time, the others sleeping. This avoided the normal procedure of sending out fresh sentries to relieve the old guard, which tended to inform spies lurking of the presence of an encampment.

The men were alert and armed by dawn, the choice time for an Indian attack on a ranger position. When returning from expeditions, rangers avoided fords, where the enemy was likely to try an ambush. When on the march they kept a safe distance between them and any stream, so that an attacking force could not pin them against the water.

In summer when rangers travelled by boat, they hid during the day and moved at night. Above all, surprise was the essence of attack. Hit and run were the rules, strike and escape to fight another day if a situation began to deteriorate. Robert Rogers' methods resembled those of modern commandos, and descriptions of Butler's Rangers in action show that they followed many of the rules for frontier warfare in dense forest and sparsely settled country.<sup>3</sup>

The records show that John Butler had less difficulty than other corps commanders in obtaining recruits to fill his ranks. Word spread quickly that the indefatigable rangers were attacking the rebels with devastating success, and were receiving more pay – both of which had great appeal to men willing to embrace the King's cause. During the war nearly 900 men served in Butler's Rangers, although full strength was one battalion. Losses in action, through disease and sheer overwork were higher than in the other corps.

In 1790 Elisha was granted 200 acres near Detroit, then part of Upper Canada. He applied for more land in 1806, presumably to replace his property near Detroit that subsequently became part of the United States. He was granted land at Colchester, south of Windsor (UCLP, W, B 7, p.40a).

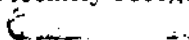
Elisha had five sons although no mention is made of his wife. The sons were Asa(Acy), Elisha Jr., Hezekiah, and James (UCLP,W,7,p.40-42,91) who settled on UEL land grants in southern Ontario, then Upper Canada.

#### Elija Wilcox 1825 - 1905

Five Wilcox's have been identified in the Creemore area; Elijah, James, Samuel, Joseph, and Absalom, All five appear to be related as brothers or cousins. They owned property together in pairs, their names appear together on legal documents and petitions re land (UCLP, 0-6). Elijah and James were definitely brothers (0-9). They appear to related to Elisha Wilcox c.1796. They were all very active in property transactions in and around Creemore. There is a strong oral history that a Wilcox hid William McKenzie during the 1837 Rebellion in his home. This was the home of Absalom Wilcox Sr. in Dundas (B-Guilliet,p.665).

A few minutes later he set off again, and soon came up with Colonel Lount and ninety men. Lount favoured dispersing in all directions, but Mackenzie thought that they should ride westward in a body. As a compromise Mackenzie, accompanied by sixteen partially-armed men, continued on foot through Vaughan Township towards the Humber Bridge. A scout was sent in advance and brought back word that the bridge was strongly guarded, so they followed the shore of the river some distance northward, had supper at a friendly farmer's, and crossed the Humber on a small foot-bridge. Finally, in an exhausted condition, they reached the friendly home, near Dixie, of Absalom Wilcox, several of whose sons took part in the revolt; it was then two o'clock Friday morning. Concerning his stay at Wilcox's Mackenzie wrote:

"Blankets were hung over the windows to avoid suspicion, food and beds prepared, and while the Tories were carefully searching for us we were sleeping soundly. Next morning (Friday) those who had arms buried them, and after sending to inquire whether a friend a mile below had been dangerously wounded, we agreed to separate and make for the frontier, two and two together".<sup>36</sup>

Mackenzie and Allan Wilcox set off that morning and hurried to Comfort's Mills, near Streetsville, where they had dinner. Comfort had not heard of the revolt; upon the state of affairs being explained to him, however, he offered Mackenzie money to help him escape, but the leader would not take it. A number of farmers in this locality recognised Mackenzie, but all spoke kindly to him. 



I visited Dundas in October, 1982 in an attempt to locate the house. I was able to narrow it down to one of four houses on Dundas Street, but I had insufficient information to narrow it further.

Elijah Wilcox (1825 - 1905) was a carpenter who lived briefly where Camp Borden now stands. He moved to Creemore about 1858. He first lived south of Creemore at S1/2 Lot 5 Concession 4 where he built a house on the hill overlooking Creemore. I found the remains of the house in June, 1982 and brought back some of the old, hand-made square nails that Elijah used to build the house 130 years ago. Elijah moved into Creemore where he continued as a carpenter and dabbled in commercial property.

He was a staunch Methodist. He sold the land for the first Methodist Church in Creemore to the church for \$5 and then build the church almost single-handedly. When the congregation built a much larger edifice he was on the building committee.

He was also a staunch Orangeman and had no patience with the large Roman Catholic population north of Creemore. He also was very big and strong. One story told to me by Annie Emmett illustrates this. On Canada's first Dominion Day he wanted to lead a parade carrying the Canadian flag to celebrate. Apparently some of the Catholics opposed this and suggested that they would forcibly prevent the parade. Elijah simply stood in front of his detractors, took a large spike and bent it over with his bare hands, then picked up his flag and led the parade unmolested.

Elijah was married to Fanny Parks and they had a family of nine children including Effie May Wilcox More

#### PARKS

Even though Fanny Parks' ancestry has the potential for being the most interesting, we have the least information on her family. Ida Aldrich wrote:

"In the 1820's there was a potato famine in Ireland, which was so very drastic that anybody who could manage it left Ireland for the United States or Canada. Now, I do not know where in Ireland they lived, but once Dad said his grandfather had been hung in Ireland for being a traitor to the King. Since Dad was always joking and one never knew whether to take him seriously, I do not know if this tale is correct. He never told me, either, what his mother's maiden name was, but when I asked he thought up one of the most Irish of Irish names (always a different one), but I learned from Aunt Elizabeth that their name was Parks.

"On the journey from Ireland to Canada, an epidemic broke out aboard ship and many of the passengers died, among them both parents of Dad's mother, and she was a babe in arms. Friendly neighbours took care of her, took her into their family and raised her."

This is part of the oral history of our family as well, and parts of this are confirmed by Fanny's death notice (N-1918A). She was born in

Dublin, Ireland and is buried at Salmon Arm.

There are three other pieces of information on the Parks family. A scrap of paper in the Wilcox Bible in very old ink and hand:

"William Parke Departed from  
this life on 9 of October  
In the year of our Lord 1827"

"Edward Parke Born on the  
28th of March 1833 "

Another slip of paper lists "Great Grandpa Parke d. 1827"

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#### Books

- (B-B) Deguerre, P. A Brief History of Jacob Belfry, Sen. With a Sketch Of His Wife and Family and Their Descendants Toronto: William Briggs, 1888.
- (B-Fryer) Fryer, Mary Beacon King's Men: The Soldier Founders of Ontario Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1980
- (B-Guillet) Guillet, E.C. Early Life in Upper Canada Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963.
- (B-NH) Let's Reminisce About Nottawasaga, Third Printing. Creemore, Ontario: Creemore Star, 1981.

#### Newspapers

Newspaper references are indicated by the initial N followed by the year of publication and a letter to indicate the number of the article for that year. I have copies of all newspaper articles referenced herein.

#### Other

- (0-1) Marriage list from the Wilcox Bible  
(0-2) Childrens Names List from Wilcox Family Bible  
(0-3) Handwritten list in Bible, probably Frances Brown or Effie More  
(0-4) Official Invitation to Golden Wedding Anniversary of Elijah and Fanny Wilcox  
(0-5) Death announcement of William Arthur More  
(0-6) Ontario Computerized Land Records (Midhurst, Ontario)  
(0-7) Public Archives, Ottawa  
(0-8) Census 1871  
(0-9) Wilcox Bible

