



CENTRAL NEW BRUNSWICK

WELSH SOCIETY

FEBRUARY 2021

HAPPY ST. DAVID'S DAY



Sadly, we will not be able to gather to celebrate **ST. DAVID'S DAY** this year due to the ongoing pandemic. However, we will celebrate virtually so keep an eye on your emails or our Facebook page at the end of the month. If you are not a member of our email list and want to be added, please contact me at bwheal@nb.sympatico.ca

We hope to be able to resume our gatherings in the fall of 2021, dependent on the progress of the Covid-19 vaccination program.



2021 Membership Dues remain at \$15 for a single person and \$25 for a family. Since we are unable to come together, please send your dues c/o Janet Thomas, 100 Epworth Circle, Fredericton, NB E3A 2M6. Dues cover the costs of copying and mailing our newsletters as well as Society events. Cheques must be made out to the **Central NB Welsh Society**. Many thanks to those who have already sent their 2021 dues.



*From the March 10, 1847 edition of **The Headquarters***

SEIZURE.—On Wednesday last the Officers of Her Majesty's Customs at this Port made seizure, near Lepreaux, of eleven barrels of spirits, which had been illegally imported into the Province, with three horses and sleds, engaged in conveying the liquor towards the City. The latter were sold at the Custom House to-day.—*Courier.*

After reading that the horses and sleds were sold, I am now wondering what happened to the liquor?



THANK YOU!

A big thank-you to the many people who sent a donation in 2020 to the NB Welsh Heritage Trust.



ESTER EVANS AND WILLIAM MONTEITH

A lovely portrait of Ester and William Monteith has been hung in the Welsh chapel, donated by their descendants.



Ester (Esther) Evans was the daughter of James and Rachel Evans who arrived on the *Albion* in June 1819 with their young family. James and Rachel were located on Lot 9 on the east side of the road, which is the lot just above the Welsh chapel.

Ester was one of the younger Evans children, born in Cardigan in September 1840. In November 1866 she married William James Monteith in Fredericton at St. Paul's Methodist church. The marriage ceremony was conducted by Rev. Dr. John

Brooke, who was also chaplain to the Legislative Assembly. Their witnesses were Ester's brother, David, and her niece, Eliza Anderson.

William was the oldest son of Robert and Esther Grieves Monteith, Irish immigrants who came to New Brunswick in 1841. The Monteith family lived in Woodlands on lot 10, originally granted to Isaac Jouett. William was born in 1842.

Ester and William first set up housekeeping on 50 acres of land in Woodlands that William had purchased from his father in 1864. Their two children were born there, Rachel in 1867 and Robert in 1869. In the spring of 1871, they sold their 50 acres back to William's father and bought 200 acres in Cardigan. This was Lot 17 on the east side of the road, originally granted to Jonathan Jones.

Sadly, William died just over a year later, at the age of 30. Ester continued to raise her family on the farm in Cardigan. William's mother moved in with her to give her a hand as did William's widowed sister, Esther Carson, and her two young children. It must have been very confusing to have three 'Esters' in the house!

Eventually Ester's children married and began raising their own families. Ester died in Fredericton in 1903. There is no record of her burial place. Perhaps she was buried next to William in the Welsh Chapel cemetery. Her son, Robert, inherited the family farm where he raised his family. Some of Ester and William's descendants still live in the area.

Many thanks to Ester's great granddaughter, Ardean MacKinnon Hayward and her daughter Diana MacKinnon for the family information.

THEY WERE DIFFERENT



The arrival of 180 Welsh men, women and children in June 1819 may have gone unremarked in Saint John, a city which was receiving hundreds of immigrants each week, but for their unique appearance and demeanor. In addition to speaking little or no English, the dress of the Welsh women was distinctive as depicted in this 1818 portrait of a Welsh woman, painted by George Orleans Delamotte.

The most striking feature was the hat, under which was worn a white mob cap, often frilled along the edges. It is unlikely that the *Albion* women wore the tall hat associated with the Welsh national costume today as it



did not come into fashion until the 1840's, after our ancestors had settled in Cardigan.

The *Albion* women would have definitely worn the unique bedgown, a short-sleeved, low-cut top with a long, wide tail in the back. The bedgown was generally made of red and black or dark blue striped flannel. A square cotton or linen handkerchief was worn around the neck and tucked into the neckline of the bedgown. The bedgown was worn over heavy red and dark blue or black and white striped skirts and underskirts. And of course, a white, cream, grey or black chequered apron was worn over the skirt.

A long, blue woolen cape with a large hood might also have been worn for warmth. But the *Albion* women more likely wore a heavy rectangular woolen shawl. The shawls were worn in various ways - around the shoulders, sometimes tied in such a way to carry a baby and free the hands for other tasks or around the waist, tied to allow one to carry bread or provisions. Legs were kept warm with woolen stockings, knit by the woman herself.

The *Albion* men did not stand-out by virtue of their clothing. They were dressed much like any rural man living in Great Britain at the time, in a brightly coloured waistcoat, a blue or grey wool jacket, a neckerchief, breeches, woolen stockings and a black felt bowler-type hat with a broad floppy brim.



THE WELSH SETTLERS AND THE FREDERICTON BAPTIST CONGREGATION

The Welsh settlers brought their deep-rooted Christian faith with them. Most of the settlers were members of the non-conformist churches – Methodist, Presbyterian and Baptist - and faith played a central role in their daily lives. Their desire to practice their own faith in their own language was one of the factors that led to their immigration. The first Welsh-language service held in the province occurred on June 12, 1819, the day after their arrival, at the St. Andrews Presbyterian church in Saint John.

The Welsh settlers arrived in Fredericton in mid-July 1819. Although land was being provided to them, most had little means of support. They were poor, hungry and homeless. Luckily, they were able to make connections with the local Baptist church.

The Baptist church in Fredericton was only five years old when the Welsh settlers arrived in 1819. The small Baptist congregation welcomed the Welsh settlers, with congregation members Jarvis Ring, Amasa Coy, William Estey and William Wilmot all being involved with the Cardigan Emigrant Society. Several of the Welsh families joined the Fredericton congregation in 1820 after producing documents that proved that they were members of a Baptist congregation in Wales. Others joined as well, even though it was an arduous task to get to services in Fredericton from Cardigan.

In the fall of 1820 the Baptist congregations in Fredericton and Cardigan were visited by David James, an itinerant missionary sent to the area by the Baptist Missionary Society of Massachusetts, "to preach the gospel in destitute places." He was able to preach to the Cardigan families in Welsh, and over the next 7 or 8 years, preached in the community often.

The first Baptist church was established in Cardigan in the summer of 1825 by David James. Fifteen members of the church in Fredericton were dismissed to join the Cardigan church, including Jonathan George, David and Elizabeth Saunders, William and Mary Davis, David Davis, John and Mary Edwards, Frances Griffiths, James and Louisa James, Thomas and Elinor Richards, David and Elizabeth Owens. The new Baptist congregation in Cardigan consisted of 45 souls with services being conducted in Welsh. A place of worship and graveyard were constructed on a one-acre lot transferred from David Lewis to the Baptist Society in 1831. This early building was eventually moved to the nearby community of Woodlands to serve as a farm building. It was replaced by the current chapel which served Baptist families in the area for many decades.

Establishment of the Baptist church in Cardigan did not weaken the ties with the Fredericton church. Some Welsh families continued to live and worship in Fredericton, and the difficulty in retaining a full-time pastor in Cardigan led many from the Cardigan congregation to turn to the Fredericton pastors for baptisms, marriages and burials. Over the ensuing decades, many of the descendants of these early settlers moved to Fredericton and joined the Fredericton congregation. Indeed, today, descendants of the Welsh families continue to worship at Brunswick Street Baptist Church.



Do you have a family story to share with others in our newsletter? If so, send it to bwheal@nb.sympatico.ca or to Janet Thomas, 100 Epworth Circle, Fredericton, NB E3A 2M6