

HISTORY 300:11

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TRACING OF THE BALLANTYNE FAMILY TREE
AND
EARLY HISTORY OF CAPE GEORGE

By

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Tracing of the Ballantyne Clan:

In this article I would like to trace out the Ballantyne family tree and add a little interesting information.

David Ballentine (1) (Ballantyne as now spelled) was not one of the Herlihy soldiers, but a British soldier of the 82nd Highland Regiment, a company of which regiment came to Nova Scotia in 1783. He was, at that time, twenty-three years of age, and was a native of Strathaven, in the west of Scotland.

He got a grant of land in Pictou County, Nova Scotia, across the harbour from Pictou Town, known as Fishers Grant. The bears ate his only cow and dug up the seed potatoes that he had planted; he got disgusted and walked through the woods and along the shore line and settled at Ballentines Cove. (Ballantyne's Cove was called after him). He was given a grant of two thousand acres of land.

In 1788 he married Ellen (Helen) Morrison, daughter of George Morrison and Jane Forbes. The Morrison's came to Nova Scotia on the ship Hector and landed in Pictou Harbour on September 15, 1773. Helen Morrison was two years of age when she came to Pictou.

The coming of the ship Hector marked the first Highland immigration to the Maritime Provinces.

When the settlers landed, they found most of the shoreline already taken and they had to move inland away from the water; away from the main source of food supply. They arrived in the woods without the provisions promised and without any form of shelter for the approaching winter. Following a winter of severe hardships, many of the settlers moved up the East River or along the trail that joined Pictou to Truro and settled there.

The Morrisons settled at Merigomish, Pictou County. There is an island there still called Morrison's Island.

The Ballantynes were the first settlers at Cape George. Other families followed and soon there was quite a settlement of Highland Scots at the Cape.

The issue of David Ballentine and Ellen Morrison were George, John, James, William, David, Thomas, Alex. Jane married to Donald Robertson, Big Island. Jannet married to John Small, Pine Tree, and Anne, not married. Each of the sons was given a part of the grant of land.

David Ballentine died at Cape George on the 12th of January 1843 at the age of 83 years. Ellen, wife of David Ballentine, died the 15th of February 1822, aged 50 years. Her mother died the 15th of July and her father, George Morrison, died in the VII of December MCDDDVII in the LXXX year of their age and LVI since their marriage. This was unearthed and copied from a fallen and almost obliterated head stone in an abandoned forest-grown grave yard, Cape George, Nova Scotia, June 1925. This graveyard is across from Albert Livingstone's and presently owned by Douglas Mason, Antigonish.

This is a copy of George Ballentine's marriage license, (George was the eldest son of David Ballentine and Ellen Morrison).

“This may certify that I, this day, joined in the bonds of marriage George Ballentine of Cape George and Nancy Reid of Little Harbour. Agreeable to the acts of this province in that account under approval with my hand at Pictou County of Halifax province, Nova Scotia, this 24th day of August 1819. To whom it may concern. “

The issue of George Ballentine and Nancy Reid were:

David	Born - July 14 th , 1820
Henerita (Henrietta)	Born - August 6 th , 1822 Died October 9 th , 1831
Ellen Morrison	Born - July 31 st , 1824
Ann	Born - September 10 th , 1826
James	Born - November 4 th , 1825
Henerita (Henrietta)	Born - September 29 th , 1831
<u>Stewart</u>	Born - June 20 th , 1834
Joan	Born - January 19 th , 1837
Alex	Born - January 13 th 1840

Stewart Ballentine married Margaret Ann Smith, who was born at Skye Glen, Inverness County, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia. She was born in 1848. They were married at Skye Glen on December 1st, 1875, by the Rev. Alexander Thomson, Presbyterian Minister of Mabou, Cape Breton.

The issue of Stewart Ballentine and Margaret Ann Smith - daughter of James Parker Smith were:

George Freeburn	Born - October 3 rd , 1876
Ellen Morrison	Born - February 28 th , 1878
James Parker Smith	Born - November 10 th 1889
Elizabeth Jane	Born - December 27 th , 1881 Died - October 9 th , 1981
Annie Reid	Born - February 14 th , 1883
John David	Born - December 31 st , 1885
<u>Ernest</u> Pitblado	Born - September 9 th , 1886
John Franklin Forbes	Born - October 20 th , 1888

Mrs. E.J. Morrell (Elizabeth Jane Ballantyne) is the only survivor of the family of Stewart Ballentine and Margaret Ann Smith. She lives in Boston, Mass., and has made a number of trips home the past few years. She hopes to come this summer. She amazes everyone by going for a swim - she will be ninety-two her next birthday.

Margaret Smith (2), daughter of James Smith and Jane MacKeen, married Stewart Ballantyne of Cape George, Nova Scotia. A school teacher by profession, she taught in schools of Inverness County and at Cape George where she made her future home. Margaret acted as midwife in one hundred or more births with outstanding success. In her day and generation,

the people of the community sent for her in time of sickness and distress and she took the place of nurse and doctor to all who were in need. Mrs. Margaret Ballantyne's name will long be remembered in the district where she gave so much of her time and labour for the good of the people. The last baby she delivered was Allan Roberts, presently teaching at St. Andrew Junior High.

Ernest Pitblado Ballantyne married Elizabeth Henrietta MacPhie, daughter of William MacPhie and Catherine McNair.

The issue of Ernest Pitblado Ballantyne and Elizabeth Henriette MacPhie were:

Forbes Leonard	Born - September 10 th , 1917
William Stewart	Born - March 4 th , 1919
Violet Ernestine	Born May 26 th , 1920
Eleanor Margaret	Born - January 29 th , 1922
	Died - May 28 th , 1972
Gerald Wilson	Born - December 28 th , 1924
Helen Katherine	Born - May 18 th , 1926
Mabel Carolyn	Born - March 9 th , 1928
<u>Harold</u> Ernest	Born - December 27 th , 1929
Elizabeth Ann	Born - August 11 th , 1931
Jean Marie	Born - June 14 th , 1933

Brief History of St. Martha's Hospital:

St. Martha's Hospital (3) had its beginnings in 1906, in a six-bed cottage hospital, located on St. Ninian Street, West.

It was found before long that more suitable premises must be secured, and the C.E. Harris property on Bay Street was purchased, and the house equipped for a hospital. In 1926 a fine large building was erected and equipped and St. Martha's Hospital, with 127 beds, took its place among the best Canadian hospitals. Helen Katherine Ballantyne, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Ballantyne, as the first girl born in this new building of St. Martha's Hospital. Some of the nurses wanted her called Martha, but the name was already picked out. The first boy had been born the night before to Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Alex MacDonald or Arisaig.

Early History of St. David's United Church:

St. David's United Church at Ballantyne's Cove, Cape George, celebrated its Centenary and was rededicated to the service of God yesterday - September 12th, 1929. Present at the afternoon and evening services were large congregations of people from Antigonish and Pictou Counties and the Island of Cape Breton.

Rev. E. Lockhart of St. James Church, Antigonish, moderator of St. David's, rededicated the house of worship in the afternoon - the responses were given by the Congregation. Rev. R.D. MacIntosh of Port Morien gave the scripture reading and offered prayer.

(3) Widden, D.G. - "The History of the Town of Antigonish".

The choral service was by the combined Cape George and St. James Choirs. Special numbers were given by a quartet composed of D.R. Graham, J.E. Falt, J.A Falt and A.L. Kerr, and a solo by Miss Sutherland of Trenton.

A.J. Fraser of Green Hill, Pictou County, Pine Hill student in charge of the Cape George mission at present, thanked the congregation for their co-operation and all those present for their assistance, as well as others who had helped in different ways but were not able to be present.

In giving an historical sketch of the church, Rev. Mr. Lockhart traced the work at Cape George for 110 years, which was not the beginning. He traced the beginning back to the time when David Ballantine first settled at Cape George.

The Ballantynes and other settlers of the Kirk faith held divine services in their homes for a time and subsequently in a barn, belonging to Mr. Ballantyne. This barn was still standing in 1929.

David Ballantyne deeded 100 acres of land for church purposes and the structure of today was erected 100 years ago. For a time after it was built it was not large enough to accommodate all the communicants and on Communion Sundays it was necessary to utilize Mr. Ballantyne's barn. The historic little building was thoroughly renovated this summer.

For a number of years, the services at Cape George were conducted by lay preachers who read sermons. One of the most outstanding of these was the late Robert MacDonald.

In 1933, the Cape was included in the Antigonish field, and the Rev. Thos. Trotter, pioneer minister, had the dual pastorate for thirty-five years until 1853. In 1886 Cape George was formed into a separate mission and was ministered to by divinity students each summer. Rev. Dr. Christopher Munro was the first student in charge of the field, followed by Rev. J.W. MacKenzie, of Korean fame, in 1887.

The Presbyterian Church at Cape George became a Congregation of the United Church of Canada in 1925, at the time of church union.

Early History of Catholic Church:

With the four hundred Catholic Highlanders who arrived at Pictou in 1791 and took up land along the Gulf Shore came a priest, Rev. James MacDonald. (4)

Father MacDonald's people, the first parish of Catholic Highlanders in Nova Scotia (including Cape Breton) erected at Arisaig in 1792, near the site of the present wharf, a small church built of logs with a board roof. Father MacDonald named the church St. Margaret's and from there ministered to a mission described as extended from the Rivers of Pictou to Antigonish, a distance along the shore of 70-80 miles. Overwork brought on a premature physical and mental decline in Father MacDonald, the first resident priest of Pictou and Antigonish Counties, and after a long illness he died in Quebec in 1807.

Father Angus Bernard MacEachern took over Father MacDonald's responsibilities coming regularly from Prince Edward Island to serve the Catholic populace from Pictou to Judique. Father MacEachern was assisted by laymen in his arduous travels, among them a schoolmaster of Pictou, John Hanarahan, the first Catholic licensed to teach school in Nova Scotia. Hanarahan accompanied the priest on a mission trip in winter. The pair left Pictou on March 17, 1800, on foot with snowshoes. That night they reached MacAra's Brook. The second night they reached the eastern side of Cape George, the third night they were at Tracadie and on the fourth day they went over the water to Judique.

The first Catholic Church in Antigonish Town, built in 1810, was a mission of St. Margaret's at Arisaig.

At this time the parish of St. Ninian included Morrison, Antigonish Harbour, William's Point, Heatherton, St. Andrew's, Lochabar and St. Joseph's, and was under the pastoral care of the Rev. Alexander MacDonald, who was the resident priest, since 1802, of St. Margaret's, Arisaig, which parish extended from Merigomish on the west to Cape George on the east.

In November 1891, the Holy Rosary Catholic Church was opened at Ballantyne's Cove. Rev. J. Chisholm said Mass in the new church. According to the Casket of November 12, 1891, one hundred fifty persons received communion on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday. The Rev. Father preached on the different occasions.

News Events:

December 1, 1890 was not soon forgotten by the inhabitants of Cape George. On that day one of the greatest storms within the recollection of the oldest settlers took place.

The storm began with rain followed quickly by snow, the wind gradually increasing in violence, until about noon there was a blinding snowstorm.

About eleven o'clock a vessel was seen trying to get into the Cove. She was apparently unmanageable for, in spite of the efforts of the crew, she drifted past. They then dropped an anchor, but she snapped the chain and in a few minutes was driven out of sight.

Several boats, which were hauled up on the shore where they were supposed to be safe for the winter, were carried away and strewn in pieces on the beach.

All the covering of the old part of the wharf and some of the posts were washed away and also an old forge in which was contained then or fifteen tons of coal.

There were very few people from the point of the Cape all along the South Side who did not meet with some loss - even one new house was blown off the foundation; and the roofs were blown off two barns.

Donald MacEachern was busy in the summer of 1891, framing material for a new house, to replace the one destroyed by fire in May. Sympathy was felt for Mr. MacEachern in his old age to meet with such a heavy loss.

In the fall of 1891, the fish buyers were very busily engaged preparing their fish for market. They sent their fish, oil, sounds, etc., by vessel to the Halifax market.

Also in the fall of 1891 the very fine barn of Capt. Angus MacDonald (grandfather of Ray and Gussie MacDonald, Ballantyne's Cove) was discovered on fire at six o'clock in the morning. Before assistance could arrive the entire building, with all its valuable contents was totally destroyed. The barn was 90 feet long and contained about 40 tons of hay, also wheat and oats.

The loss was around \$1,800 - a big loss in those days. Only two hours before the fire, the Captain started for Antigonish to join the schooner "Soudan". The cause of the fire was unknown, but it was believed to have started from the lighting of a pipe, as the farm hands were around the barn early that morning. It was only with the greatest difficulty that the house was saved. Had the wind been one point more to the west, nothing could have saved it.

Dougald MacEachern, a blacksmith, returned from the Halifax market in November 1891. He had gone with a load of colts and sheep. He was very displeased with the result. Beef at the time was selling in Halifax for 2 ½ to 4 cents per pound and sheep from one dollar to two dollars and twenty-five cents a head. At those prices, farmers and traders would feel the consequence.

There were two lobster factories by 1892. John George MacMillan (father of Mrs. Theodore Johnson of New Hampshire) had built a new factory at Livingstone's Cove, North Side Cape.

On April 21, 1892 the schooner Telephone from Halifax captained by McConnell, arrived with supplies for MacMillan's lobster factory, and goods for other ports. This was the earliest date at which any schooner arrived here for a good many years past.

Considering the number of hands and the length of time they were at work, the can making establishment had turned out no small amount of work.

On 1892, some 1200 traps were set from Georgeville to Morristown, quite a change from today!

The service rendered by the packet "S.S. Hamblin" proved very satisfactory. When required it makes two trips per week. She brought a cargo of seed potatoes and oats from P.E.I.

According to the Casket of June 23, 1892, the first road in Cape George east of Georgeville, is the one which is the main road through the settlement. This road was first laid off by John Graham. He settled on the south side of Cape George. On one occasion he carried a sack of potatoes on his back from Barney's River, Pictou County. When he came to where Georgeville is now, he saw that there were five miles of untrodden woods before him to his home on the other side. He was obliged to take to the sea shore, a route of 15 miles around the point of the Cape to his home. Shortly afterwards he supplied himself with a picket compass and blazed a road that now passes through the rear settlement.

The 1400-ton steamer, "Emperor of St. John" came ashore at Cape George off Will MacPhie's on Tuesday, December 7, 1926. She struck during a heavy north east gale. She had been off the shore for some time and Monday evening during the storm she was seen to be in a dangerous position. Due to the heavy surf, communication between ship and shore was impossible for a few days.

A week later 19 of her company left for New York to sign on with a sister ship, "The Emperor of Fredericton". The Master Captain Lewis went to Montreal to attend an investigation into the cause of the wreck. The boat was proceeding from Montreal to Guysborough in ballast.

The skipper thought it could be pulled off at very high tide, but the fishermen in the neighbourhood of the wreck thought otherwise. The boat came ashore in an extremely high sea, piled up by the gale and so safely crossed two ledges that bared the way to deep water. It was kept in charge of the first officer and the Stewart for the winter.

The desk that was used in the Cape George School was the Captain's desk from the "Empress of St. John".

The Emperor of St. John was scrapped during the war for the metal. The remains of the “boiler room” from the “Emperor of St. John” can still be seen in the waters of St. George’s Bay across from the property of Margaret MacPhie - daughter of the late Will MacPhie.

Early History of Ballantyne’s Cove:

Ballantyne’s Cove was the scene of much activity during the early 1900’s. Gravel and sand were shipped to Prince Edward Island for road construction. At first it was shipped by sail boat and later by motor power. It was loaded off the beaches by horse and dump carts, hauled to the wharf and dumped into the boats by chutes. Some boats that couldn’t afford to hire horses and dump carts used to haul it in dories to the bigger boats that were anchored off shore.

I trust that someone will gain some value from this project, and that in years to come I will be able to write it more up-to-date.

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