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Subject: Roland Smith / Christina Whitlock
Date: Sun, 30 Mar 2003 22:50:04 -0500
From: Keith Davey <davey.pg@sympatico.ca>
To: whitlock@bcegg.com

Dear Peter

Thank you so much for your e-mail regarding Roland Smith and Christina Whitlock.

Roland Smith, as I may have mentioned, was my wife's great grandfather. My wife's mother, who is now 80, had no knowledge that her grandfather was married to Christina (or Christena - she is noted in other references as "Tena") and certainly would not have known that she had other great uncles and aunts. Nor did we know that Roland died in 1909. In fact, if I hadn't come across a newspaper clipping about the wedding on the web (why anybody would have posted such an obscure piece is another coincidence) I would never have put two and two together. But the relationship between the Whitlocks and the Smiths it turns out is is a bit more complicated than that.

Roland Smith must have been a bit of a rogue with an eye for the ladies. An illiterate labourer, he had an illegitimate son at the age of 22; married his wife, Marelda, a week before their eldest son was born; and as a 47 year old widower, married Christina who was twenty years younger than he was.

Roland was born 14/10/1857 in Quebec and I am quite sure that he was born in Bourg Louis. From his wedding registrations, his parents were John Smith and Margaret Stearns (with an 'a' according to my reading of the registrations).

In the 1881 census, he was living with Cornelius and Margaret Donovan in Alvinston Township, Lambton County. Margaret Donovan was born Margaret Smith in Bourg Louis and putting two and two together we are 90% sure that Roland and Margaret were brother and sister - an important point as you will see later.

His first child was Harry Wentford Smith (9/11/1880 to 30/5/1943) an illegitimate son born (according to the family) as a result of an affair with an aboriginal woman in Quebec.

He married Marilda Sutton on 8/9/1882 and their first child was William John Smith (14/9/1882 - cir 1942) was born just a week later. Their other children were: Elizabeth (Bessie) Smith (25/12/1885 - ?), Margaret (Maggie) F. Smith (1/5/1887 - 24/5/1912); and Thomas Roy Smith (18/10/1894 - 2/3/1947). Marilda Sutton died 28/3/1900.

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The witness to Roland and Christina's wedding, Maggie Smith, was presumably Roland's daughter.

What is really interesting is that Jennie Donovan who married Charles

Whitlock in September 1904 (just before Roland married Christina) is the daughter of Cornelius and Margaret Donovan and therefore Roland's niece.

Looking at the records that you sent me, I find it rather interesting that Christina had an illegitimate child, Harry Frank WHITLOCK in 1902. Considering Roland's track record and the fact that his first son was also named "Harry" (not "Harold"), you have to be a bit suspicious.

I hope that this is of interest to you. I would be happy to send you more on the Smith family although as I pointed out, we knew nothing of the Whitlock connection other than what I have just found out myself and therefore nothing more about the Smith - Whitlock descendants. However, if you want more about the others please let me know.

I am curious as to how Roland and Christina's youngest son ended up with a last name of Emmons. I would assume by the dates that Christina died in childbirth and then Roland, according to your information, died the next year. Cecil must have been adopted but the name Emmons does not appear anywhere in our family tree nor in the list that you sent me. However, as you pointed out that Rita Whitlock Somers is the local expert, I will send her a copy of this e-mail and maybe she clear that up.

If you could send me the copies of the sources I would be grateful. Please mail them at your convenience to:

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Again, thank you so much for sending me the information which let's me fill out some more details on this rather interesting soap opera. If you require any more information from me, please do not hesitate to ask.

Best Regards
Keith Davey

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