June 2014 Newsletter

Happy Canada Day!

Remember that you have the legal right to control the e-mail that you receive. There are a couple of methods that you can use with respect to this site:

1. Under account management you can select to not receive any broadcast e-mails related to this site. The account management dialog is presented when you first register as a user, and can be displayed by clicking on the button with your user name in the top right of any page.
2. In your e-mail user agent you can set up a rule to automatically file any message with "[JamesCobban.net]" in the subject line into a specified folder, including the trash folder. This is the recommended method since it means that although you are not required to take any manual action on any specific message as it is received, you can at any time decide to review past messages.

One of the objects of my web-site is to create as complete a family tree of every family that passed through or had a relationship with anyone in south-western Middlesex County. To achieve this goal it is necessary to be able to identify what we don't know, so we can collectively focus effort on filling in those blanks. That is the significance of the colour coded completion cells in the pages that track the degree of completion of the effort in transcribing censuses and BMDs. For example:

CA1881 District 168 Middlesex West Status

<--- district 167 Middlesex East

SubDist	Div	Name	Done	Pop.	%Done	%Linked	Action	
A	1	Mosa	1,394	1,394	100.00	29.70	Details	Surnames
A	2	Mosa	1,278	1,278	100.00	27.31	Details	Surnames
B		Wardsville	540	540	100.00	1.30	Details	Surnames
C	1	Ekfrid	1,294	1,294	100.00	7.26	Details	Surnames
C	2	Ekfrid	1,729	1,729	100.00	13.77	Details	Surnames
D	1	Metcalfe	1,022	1,022	100.00	7.83	Details	Surnames
D	2	Metcalfe	1,170	1,170	100.00	26.24	Details	Surnames
E	1	Caradoc	1,203	1,202	100.08	33.11	Details	Surnames
E	2	Caradoc	1,172	1,172	100.00	54.95	Details	Surnames
E	3	Caradoc	1,348	1,348	100.00	8.68	Details	Surnames
E	4	Caradoc	1,507	1,507	100.00	14.07	Details	Surnames
F	1	Strathroy	1,189	1,189	100.00	4.63	Details	Surnames
F	2	Strathroy	1,288	1,288	100.00	5.75	Details	Surnames
F	3	Strathroy	1,340	1,340	100.00	7.76	Details	Surnames
G	1	Delaware	1,278	1,278	100.00	11.03	Details	Surnames
G	2	Delaware	1,396	1,396	100.00	16.40	Details	Surnames
H		Newbury	546	546	100.00	3.85	Details	Surnames
I		Glencoe Village	801	801	100.00	4.74	Details	Surnames
	Total		21,495	21,494	100.00	16.39		

<--- district 167 Middlesex East

This page shows that all 21,495 individuals enumerated in the district of Middlesex West have been transcribed into the database but only 16.39% of them have been linked to specific individuals in the family tree. This low percentage is primarily a consequence of incomplete effort. Linkages between census lines and individuals in the family tree must be explicitly defined either by citing the census as a source for a fact about an individual in the family tree, or by performing a manual search for a line in the census. Human intervention is required to establish these linkages because there is simply too much variability in the way that individuals are described in the various sources.

A secondary issue is that the functionality to link the census and BMD records to the family tree, and vice versa, was only implemented several years after the site came into existence. So, in particular, source citations made from the family tree to the census only started automatically creating the back link from the census a couple of years ago, after tens of thousands of citations had already been recorded. There is a tool on each detailed census transcription page to partially deal with this: If you view a transcription of a census page observe the buttons at the top of the transcription:

1881 Census of Canada Update

<--   dist 168 Middlesex

Transcriber: jcobban

| Display Original Census Image | | Correct Image URL | | Match Family Tree Citations | |

Line	Fam	Surname	Given Names	Sex	Age	BinY	Birth Place	Religion	
01	20	Breacher	John	M	73		England	Ch. of England	Eng
02	20	Breacher	Rebecca	F	30		Ontario	Ch. of England	Eng

Clicking the "Match Family Tree Citations" button identifies all existing citations to the current census page from the family tree, and then searches the page for the closest match to each individual that has such a citation and creates the matching link to the family tree. On the detailed transcription page established links and individuals that are not yet linked to the family tree show up appropriately labelled buttons in the far right column:

Line	Fam	Surname	Given Names	Sex	Age	BinY	Birth Place		Remarks	Line	FT	
01	20	Breacher	John	M	73		England	C		01	Find	
02	20	Breacher	Rebecca	F	30		Ontario	C		02	Find	
03	21	Jenkins	Alfred	M	28		Ontario	W		03	Show	Clear
04	21	Jenkins	Mary Ann	F	26		Ontario	W		04	Find	
05	22	Nagle	Robert	M	33		Ontario	C		05	Show	Clear
06	22	Nagle	Caroline	F	33		Ontario	C		06	Find	
07	22	Nagle	Frank F.	M	7		Ontario	C		07	Find	

Note that on this particular page the only citations in the family tree were for the occupations of heads of household. So the linkage method linked Alfred Jenkins to the corresponding individual in the family tree, but not his wife Mary Ann Jenkins. If you click on the "Show" button the family tree page for that individual as a head of household is displayed so you can verify that the linkage is correct. If the automatic linkage was incorrectly made because of the limited intelligence of the matching algorithm, just click on the "Clear" button to remove the linkage.

Linkages to the family tree may also be established manually, which provides for more human intervention and establishes links in which there is no corresponding citation from the family tree. For example if we click on the "Find" button for Mary Ann Jenkins you are presented with a list of probably matches based upon name similarity, gender, and birth date:

21	Jenkins	Mary Ann	F	26	Ontario	Irish	04	Find
						Irish	05	Show
						Irish	06	Find
						Irish	07	Find
						Irish	08	Find
						Irish	09	Find
						American	10	Find
						Irish	11	Find
						American	12	Find
23	Goodridge	Mary Vic	F	13	Ontario	American	13	Find

Jenkins, Mary Ann born 1855

Choose from the following partial matches:
Jenkins (Robinson), Mary Ann(Jul 1854-)
Jennings, Clara Mary(1855-1929)
Jervis, Hannah(about 1854-)
Johnson, Eliza Ann(6 Feb 1860-26 Apr 1946)

Cancel

In this case the first entry is the obvious match, as can be verified by clicking on the "Show" button for her husband. When you click on the matching row the dialog changes to:

| 21 | Jenkins | Mary Ann | F | 26 | Ontario |

Jenkins, Mary Ann born 1855

Choose from the following partial matches:
Jenkins (Robinson), Mary Ann(Jul 1854-)
Jennings, Clara Mary(1855-1929)
Jervis, Hannah(about 1854-)
Johnson, Eliza Ann(6 Feb 1860-26 Apr 1946)

Select

| 23 | Goodridge | Mary Vic | F | 13 | Ontario |

Clicking on the "Select" button in the dialog changes the "Find" button for this individual to a "Show" button.

The example page demonstrates some of the limitations of any automatic algorithm for matching names as entered by a human being. The family which appears on this page with the surname "Goodridge" actually spelled their name "Goodrich", like the tire company. But this match is missed both by the "Match Family Tree Citations" button, and by by the "Find" button. To complete linking this page it is necessary to temporarily "correct" the surname of the family in the census to match the family tree, click on the "Find" buttons, and then reset the surname to the value entered by the census enumerator. The final result is that 23 of the 25 lines on this page, or 92%, correspond to individuals in the family tree. For Caradoc township, which is the township that I have been researching for the longest time, this is a typical result. Probably 90% of the individuals appearing in at least the later censuses of Caradoc are already in the family tree:

Display Original Census Image	Correct Image URL	Match Family Tree Citations

Line	Fam	Surname	Given Names	Sex	Age		Line	FT	
01	20	Breacher	John	M	73		01	Find	
02	20	Breacher	Rebecca	F	30		02	Find	
03	21	Jenkins	Alfred	M	28		03	Show	Clear
04	21	Jenkins	Mary Ann	F	26		04	Show	Clear
05	22	Nagle	Robert	M	33		05	Show	Clear
06	22	Nagle	Caroline	F	33		06	Show	Clear
07	22	Nagle	Frank E.	M	7		07	Show	Clear
08	22	Nagle	Edith R.	F	5		08	Show	Clear
09	22	Nagle	Ethel Maud	F	3		09	Show	Clear
10	23	Goodridge	George	M	48		10	Show	Clear
11	23	Goodridge	Nancy	F	40		11	Show	Clear
12	23	Goodridge	George	M	15		12	Show	Clear
13	23	Goodridge	Mary Vic.	F	13		13	Show	Clear
14	23	Goodridge	Ellen ?.	F	11		14	Show	Clear
15	23	Goodridge	Margaret	F	7		15	Show	Clear
16	23	Goodridge	Joseph	M	5		16	Show	Clear
17	23	Goodridge	Francis	F	3		17	Show	Clear
18	23	Goodridge	Charlotte	F	8m		18	Show	Clear
19	24	Portsmouth	Peter	M	49		19	Show	Clear
20	24	Portsmouth	Rachel Ann	F	46		20	Show	Clear
21	24	Portsmouth	Eliza Jane	F	25		21	Show	Clear
22	24	Portsmouth	Richard	M	20		22	Show	Clear
23	24	Portsmouth	Emma	F	18		23	Show	Clear
24	24	Portsmouth	Thomas	M	16		24	Show	Clear
25	24	Portsmouth	Matilda	F	14		25	Show	Clear
Line	Fam	Surname	Given Names	Sex	Age		Line	FT	

Update Database	Reset to Defaults	Add a Row

If you search for individuals on this page using the census query capability the result shows the linked individuals using hyper-links to the family tree:

Action	Page	Line	Name	B.Year	Birth Place	Occupation	Sub-District
Details	5	1	**Breacher**, John	1807	England	Farmer	Caradoc
Details	5	2	**Breacher**, Rebecca	1850	Ontario		Caradoc
Details	5	3	**Jenkins**, Alfred	1852	Ontario	Blacksmith	Caradoc
Details	5	4	**Jenkins**, Mary Ann	1854	Ontario		Caradoc
Details	5	5	**Nagle**, Robert	1847	Ontario	Farmer	Caradoc
Details	5	6	**Nagle**, Caroline	1847	Ontario		Caradoc
Details	5	7	**Nagle**, Frank E.	1873	Ontario		Caradoc
Details	5	8	**Nagle**, Edith R.	1875	Ontario		Caradoc
Details	5	9	**Nagle**, Ethel Maud	1877	Ontario		Caradoc
Details	5	10	**Goodridge**, George	1832	USA	Laborer	Caradoc
Details	5	11	**Goodridge**, Nancy	1840	Ontario		Caradoc
Details	5	12	**Goodridge**, George	1865	Ontario		Caradoc
Details	5	13	**Goodridge**, Mary Vic.	1867	Ontario		Caradoc
Details	5	14	**Goodridge**, Ellen ?.	1869	Ontario		Caradoc
Details	5	15	**Goodridge**, Margaret	1873	Ontario		Caradoc
Details	5	16	**Goodridge**, Joseph	1875	Ontario		Caradoc
Details	5	17	**Goodridge**, Francis	1877	Ontario		Caradoc
Details	5	18	**Goodridge**, Charlotte	1880	Ontario		Caradoc
Details	5	19	**Portsmouth**, Peter	1831	England	Farmer	Caradoc
Details	5	20	**Portsmouth**, Rachel Ann	1834	Ontario		Caradoc
Details	5	21	**Portsmouth**, Eliza Jane	1855	Ontario		Caradoc
Details	5	22	**Portsmouth**, Richard	1860	Ontario	son	Caradoc
Details	5	23	**Portsmouth**, Emma	1862	Ontario		Caradoc
Details	5	24	**Portsmouth**, Thomas	1864	Ontario	son	Caradoc
Details	5	25	**Portsmouth**, Matilda	1866	Ontario		Caradoc

This exercise has demonstrated that there is a family that probably should be in the family tree. When we do a quick search for John Breacher/Bracher we find him already in Caradoc in the 1842 census at lot 24 R1S, in the 1852 census at lot 17 R1S (CW, dist 23 Middlesex, subdist 214 Caradoc, div 1 page 2), in the 1861 census at S ½ lot 17 R1S (CW, dist 22 Middlesex, subdist 238 Caradoc, div 1 page 23), in the 1871 census (dist 7 Middlesex West, subdist E Caradoc, div 3 page 5), and in the 1881 census (dist 168 Middlesex West, subdist E Caradoc, div 3 page 5). His wife Jane died at Caradoc on 17 Sept 1873 (death registration). John died on 24 Nov 1890 at the age of 84 yrs. 9 ms. 15 ds (census transcription) and was buried in Christ Church Cemetery in Delaware. So this is definitely a family that should be in the database, but which would have been missed if it were not for this exercise in checking for linkages.

You are invited to try your hand at filling in the linkages, one census page at a time. Many hands make light work.

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