

Genealogy and Technology – Our 40 Year Adventure

The Genealogy Experiences of
Peter and Brian Cassidy

How we harnessed technology to research and publish
the story of The Cassidys of Cassidy Lake

March 2019

Peter – pcassidy@cassidys.ca
Brian – bpc@unb.ca
www.cassidys.ca



Peter and Brian – May 2013

Peter's A36 Bonanza in the background





Cassidy
Homestead

Hwy 865

Cassidy Lake – August 2001
Located east of Norton in Kings County
Photo taken from Peter's aircraft (A36 Bonanza)

August 2001

Cemetery

Homestead

Church



Cassidy Lake Homestead - 1950



Cassidy Lake and Francis Edward Cassidy Memorial Church – 1950
The church was built by Francis Edward Cassidy in 1883
and renovated and rededicated in his honour in 1949



2010





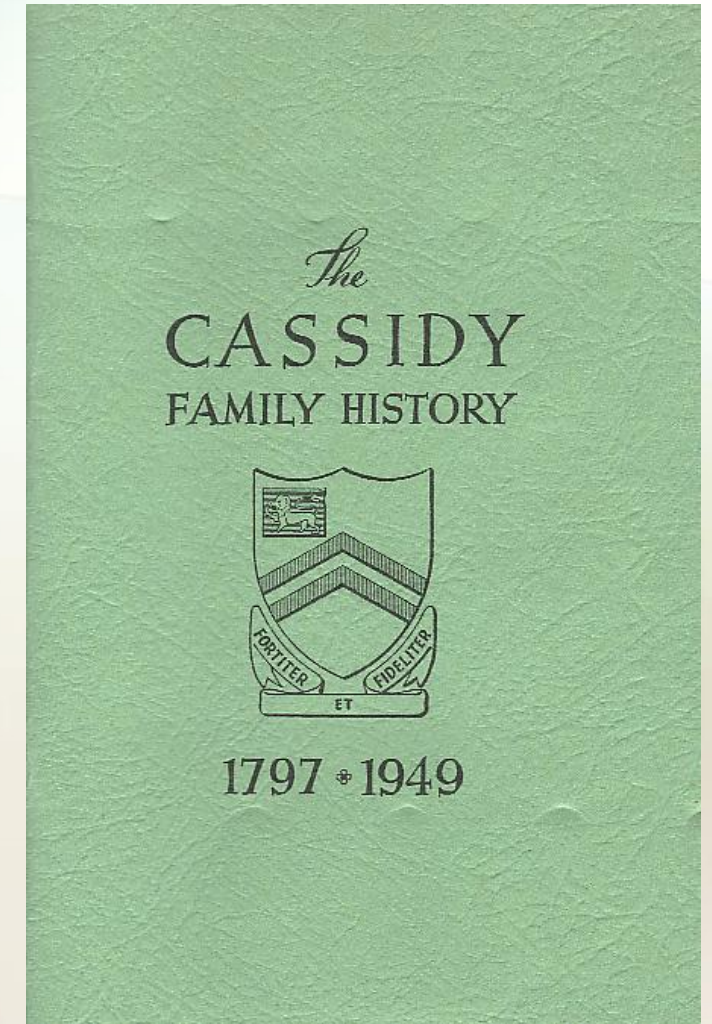
May 2018 – Following a major renovation project by owner Paul Cassidy

Cassidy Lake Church

- The only remaining structure on the Cassidy family property
 - No longer existing: homestead, barn and cheese factory
- Built 1883 by Francis Edward Cassidy and family and friends
- Dedicated as the Clover Hill Methodist Church
- Sold in 1890 to the Methodist Church and became the property of the United Church of Canada in 1925
- Major renovation in 1949 and rededicated as the *Francis Edward Cassidy Memorial Church*
- Sold by UCC to Paul Cassidy (Vancouver) in 2018 who undertook another major renovation.
- Focal point for periodic family reunions
 - Next reunion is August 11, 2019

The Inspiration - 1980

- The Green Book
 - No ISBN – limited print edition
- Published in 1949 by our grandparents and their siblings in conjunction with the dedication of the Francis Edward Cassidy Memorial Church at Cassidy Lake
- Format 6x9
- 18 families
- 98 individuals (including Peter and Brian)
- A brief forward told the story of William Cassidy's emigration from Ireland in 1819 (St. John) and the eventual (1823) settling at a small lake near Sussex
 - As charming as this story was, it begged for more details; details that we were determined to find.



Getting Started

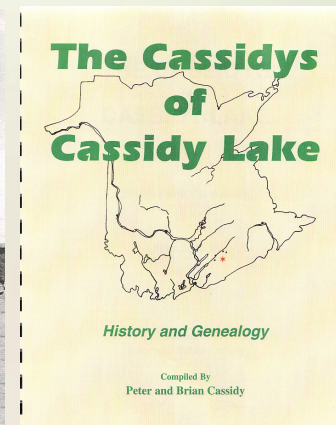
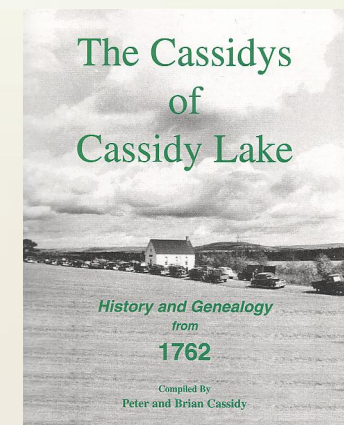
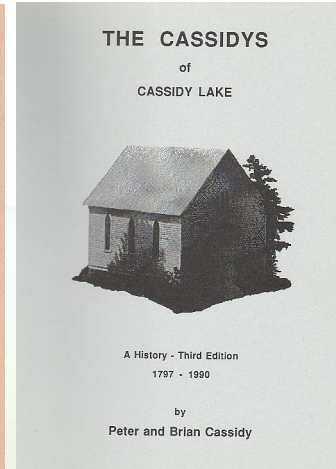
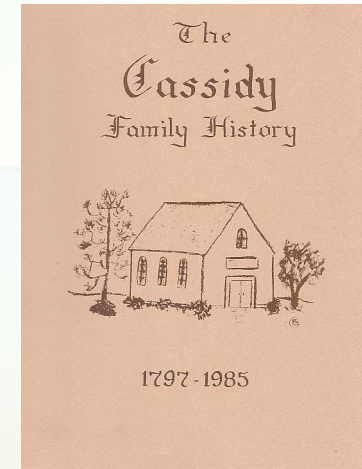
- The Green Book (now 30 years old) was in serious need of updating
- We knew that *we needed to publish our research and our preference was to be our own publisher*
- As engineers (we both have degrees in electrical engineering) and with Brian's extensive experience with information technology, we wanted to leverage the technology of the day as much as possible
- We also wanted to be independent operators and publishers which would allow us maximum freedom

Early Research

- Our parents had collected quite a bit of family info
- We collected birth, marriage and death records
- We interviewed family members
- We collected old family letters, photographs and other memorabilia
- We put together stories from the interviews and letters. We knew that such stories would bring our genealogy to life.
- Data was entered into Family Tree Maker and Microsoft Word (later Adobe PageMaker)
 - It is important to note that data in Family Tree Maker had no role in print publishing. FTM data was used to generate data for online web publishing.

Print Publishing 1985-2004

- 1985 – Second Edition
 - Format 8½x11 – 118 families
- 1990 – Third Edition
 - Format 8½x11 – 163 families
- 1997 – Fourth Edition (200 year anniversary)
 - Format 7½x9¼ - 185 families
- 1998-2002 – Three revisions of the Fourth Edition
- 2004 – Fifth Edition (multi-volume)
 - More than 300 families and 1,000 individuals



The Cassidy Print Publishers

- Peter acquired the computers and printers and did all printing at his home in Brentwood, Tennessee (near Nashville)
- Software used was Adobe PageMaker
- PageMaker data was maintained independently of data in Family Tree Maker.
- The books were never sold; just donated to family members, PANB and the Kings County Museum
- All editions have an ISBN and are registered with the National Library of Canada

Enough Already!

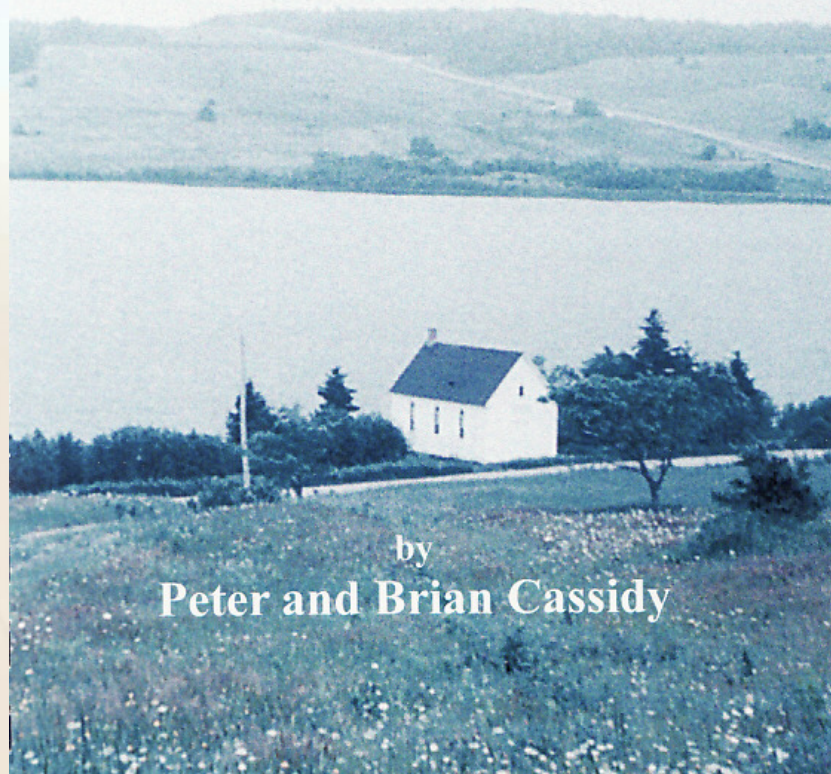
- By the time of the Fifth Edition (2004), we realized that print publishing was no longer practical
- We started *online publishing (website)* in 2000 and the decision was made in 2005 to drop printed versions of the Cassidy Family History
- We decided that future books would be small and tell a specific story about people or places or our Irish roots etc.

The Cassidy Story and DVD

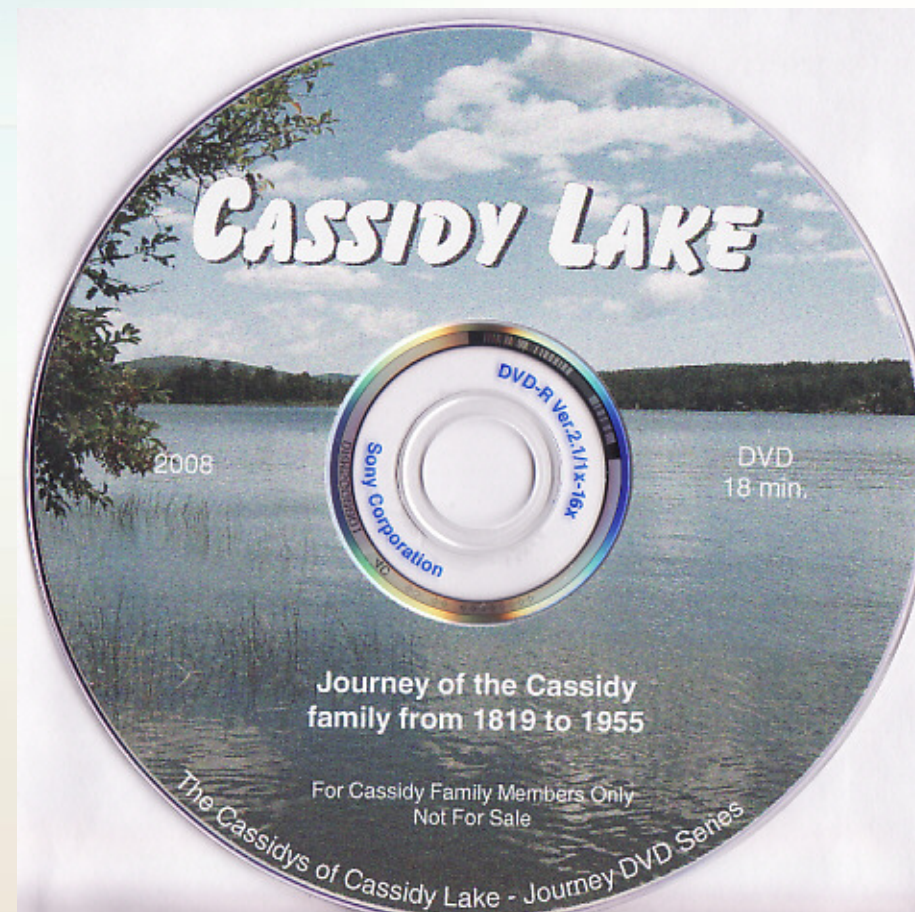
- 2007 - Our last book - includes a DVD – Format 6x9
- *The Cassidy Story from Ireland to Cassidy Lake and Beyond*
 - Free download from our website (www.cassidys.ca) and NBGS (nbgs.ca)
- Tells the story of our arrival in Canada from Ireland, life at Cassidy Lake and the story of the Francis Edward Cassidy Memorial Church. Also highlights the lives of several prominent Cassidy individuals.
- An extensive research of the homestead property at Cassidy Lake was undertaken at PANB (beginning with a crown grant in 1815)
 - Homestead property and church property now owned by Paul Cassidy of Vancouver
- The DVD featured clips from treasured family reunion colour film taken by our father 1949-1953. Software used was Adobe Premiere, Photoshop, Audition and Encore.

The Cassidy Story

from Ireland
to Cassidy Lake
and Beyond



by
Peter and Brian Cassidy



CASSIDY LAKE

2008

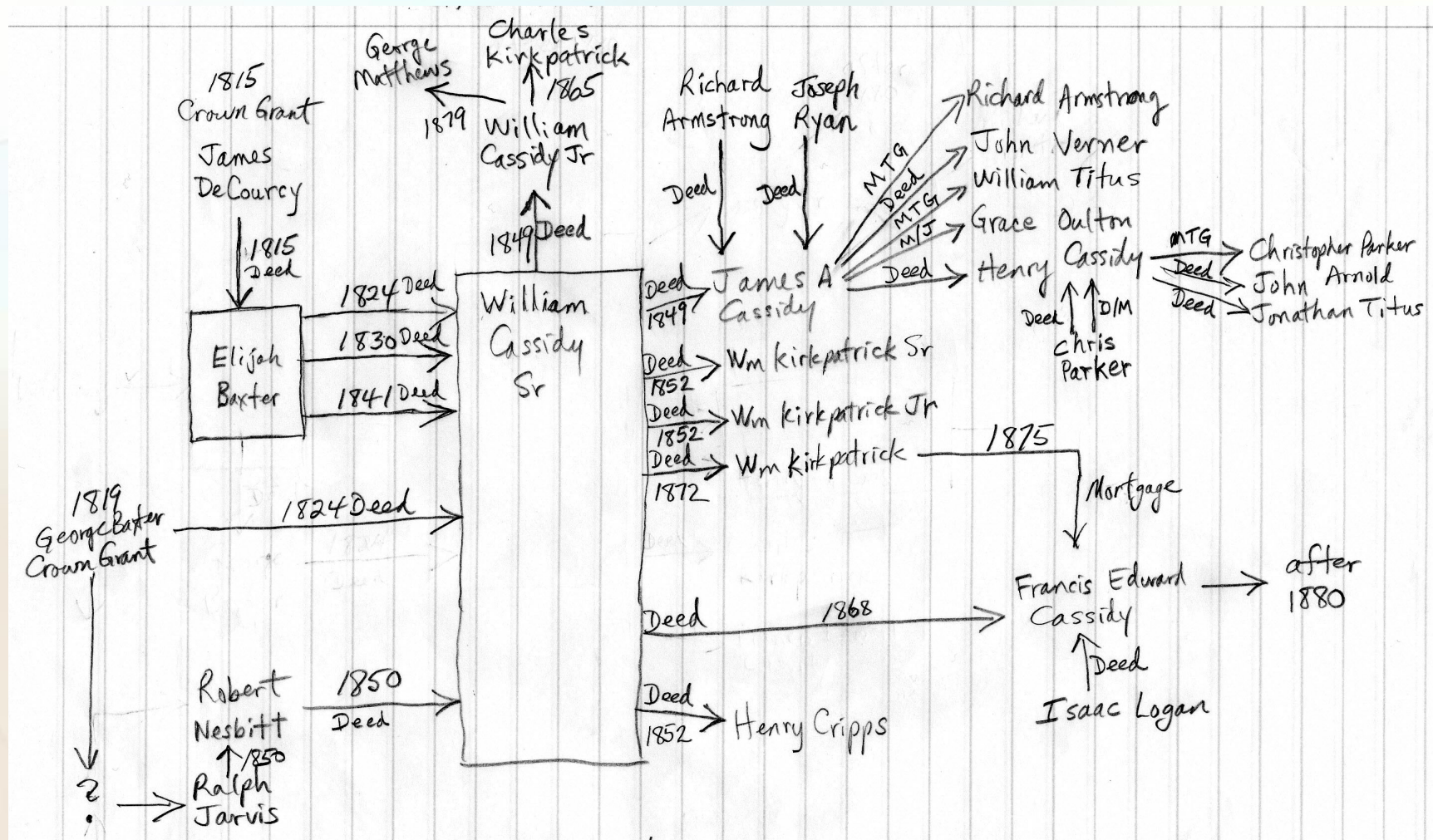
DVD
18 min.

Journey of the Cassidy
family from 1819 to 1955

For Cassidy Family Members Only
Not For Sale

The Cassidys of Cassidy Lake - Journey DVD Series

The Land Research Nightmare



Web Publishing

- We wanted our own website to be independent of the genealogy website providers. We wanted a site with ***no advertising***.
- 2000 – Website prototype developed
- 2001 – Obtained domain cassidys.ca
- 2001 – Established website www.cassidys.ca
 - Hardware located in Peter's home in Tennessee – two servers (one for backup)
 - Linux operating system
 - Genealogy software was Indexed Gedcom (generated from Family Tree Maker)
 - Web development software was Adobe Dreamweaver
- 2010 – Switch to PhpGedView – A system for collaborative genealogy. This is now where all our genealogy data is stored. Family Tree Maker now obsolete.

The 2013 Meltdown – Enter AWS

- February 2013 – Server hardware crash
- Time to rethink the hardware maintenance issue
 - Maintaining our own hardware expensive and time consuming
 - Power outage at Peter's home will take down our website
 - Brian Jr – Why not try AWS?
- AWS – Amazon Web Services
 - Cloud Computing – Amazon supplies and maintains the hardware
 - No restrictions on operating system or other software
- AWS free for one year and then charges based on traffic and data stored.
- cassidys.ca has been running on AWS since March 2013 (Ubuntu Linux and PhpGedView) and we are very happy with the service. Highly stable. We recently increased the amount of disk space available to us.

Website Layout (genealogy section)

- **Genealogy** – Link to PhpGedView where you can browse the Cassidy Family Tree. An account is required to see info for living persons.
- **Irish Roots** – The story of our roots in the Parish of Inver, County Donegal, Ireland
 - In 2005, we travelled to Ireland to attend a Cassidy Clan reunion and we took the opportunity to tour around Ireland and County Donegal in particular
- **Cassidy Lake** – Stories from the homestead, church, cheese factory and family gatherings
- **Cassidy People** – Stories about William Cassidy and a few of his descendants
- **Memorabilia** – Photos and stories of significant objects
 - e.g. Stan Cassidy (our father) Order of Canada medal (1985)
- **Resources** – Links to books and presentations we have published and a photo/video archive. Also various maps and census records.
- **Research Guide** – A brief overview to help people wanting to know if they are related to us. Includes DNA testing overview.

Managing Photos and Videos

- We have established a photo and video archive on smugmug.com
 - <https://cassidylake.smugmug.com/>
- Albums established
 - Church and Cemetery
 - Family Gatherings
 - Homestead
 - People
 - Maps
 - Ireland
 - Videos
 - Cassidy Lake
 - Stan Cassidy Profile
 - Stan Cassidy Family
 - Brian Cassidy (UNB interview)

Publishing with PowerPoint Presentations

- 2003 – Researching and Publishing One's Family History
- 2005 – Extending FOAF to Genealogical Data
- 2008 – Home Publishing Your Family Genealogy
- 2011 – PhpGedView – A web based system for collaborative genealogy
- 2014
 - The Cassidys of Cassidy Lake
 - Stan Cassidy – Aviation Enthusiast (Peter)
- 2015 – Making Sense of the Census
- 2016 – Genetics and Genealogy
- 2017
 - Using DNA Testing to Explore One's Family History
 - Canadian Airways on Cassidy Lake – 1940 (Peter)

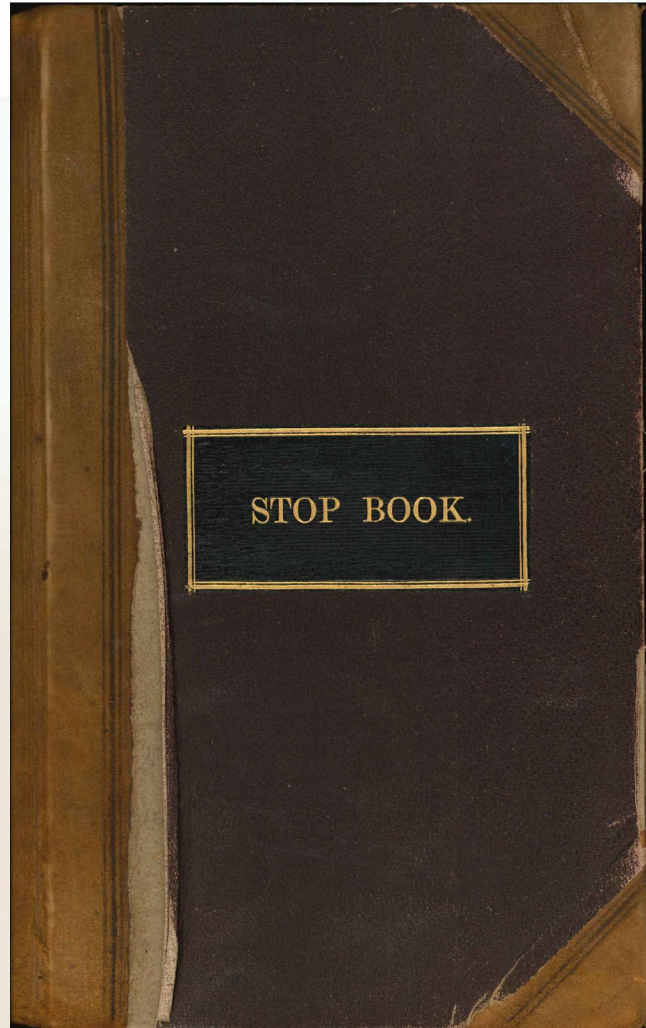
More Recent Research

- The Stop Book Project 2015-2016
- DNA Testing – 2015 to Present

The STOP BOOK Project – 2015-16

- In 2015, we discovered a curious and very old book called a STOP BOOK
- Entries from 1880 to mid 1940s
- Gold mine of info regarding running of the farm and cheese factory at Cassidy Lake
- New details about the landing of an airplane on Cassidy Lake in February 1940
- The book is a detailed accounting of farm operations in the early 1900s showing goods bought and sold and their price. This info would be of interest to social historians.
- *Our ability to extract useful information from the STOP BOOK was helped considerably by our knowledge of the family history. It shed new light on the census data from 1921.*

STOP BOOK Cover and Sample Page

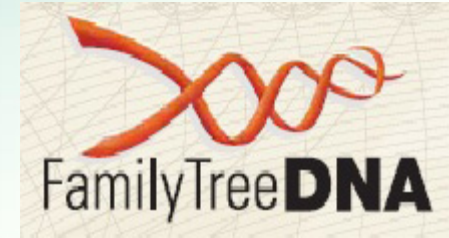


		14 ² 43		
5 Dec/82	Barrington William, Horseshoe Victoria B.	15 ² 45	15/12/83 4/6 sent	50
15/1/84/83	Barter Allan London University Stn	15 ² 45	15/1/83 4/6 sent	40
31 Dec/82	Cash Dr. H. R. Briest Matmorland Co. N.B.		15/1/83 4/6 sent	70
Feb 1/81	Clark B. & Co. W.		15/1/83 4/6 sent	70
31 Dec/82	Prauford Bea. W. 9 Elmwood St. Somerville Mass.		15/1/83 4/6 sent	70
Mathew				
1919	Mathew Candy in account with R. G. Candy			
May 20	To 10 lb. Sugar @ 4.00		40.00	
" 17	To 10 lb. Salt @ 8.00		80.00	
" 23	To 3 lb. Raisins @ 4.00		12.00	
May 18	To 10 lb. Butter @ 3.00		30.00	
July 18	To 6 sections and rivets		48.00	
Aug 1	To 57 lb. milk @ 2.00		114.00	
Aug 1	To Cheque		10.00	
Aug 15	To 100 lb. Sugar		40.00	
Aug 2	To Cheque		43.34	
Oct 2	To Cheque		30.42	
Aug 1	To Cheque 82.00 @ 3.00		246.00	
Aug 15	To Cheque 3 lb. @ 3.00		9.00	
Oct 11	To Cheque 7 lb. @ 2.80		19.60	
Dec 30	To 10 lb. Beef @ 1.20		12.00	
			84	
By 5616 lb. milk			142.54	

Canadian Airways plane lands on Cassidy Lake in 1940 due to engine failure



DNA Testing



- In July 2015, Peter and David Cassidy (an apparent distant cousin) ordered a Y-DNA37 test from Family Tree DNA
- The objective was to determine if David and Peter had a common (male) ancestor.
- The answer was yes but most likely back 6 or 7 generations and our current research goes back only 5 generations
- Our haplogroup is I-M223 (Europe/Ireland)
- We occasionally receive emails from FTDNA when a new Y-DNA relation has been encountered
- Peter added the Family Finder Test (autosomal DNA test) in 2016 and this gave an insight into our ancient ancestral origins and a list of people to whom we may be related

Conclusions and Recommendations

- A rewarding (and sometimes frustrating) adventure
- Research – Organize – Publish == again and again and...
 - Publishing forces one to be organized and helps establish new connections
- Publish – print, website, social media, presentations, ...
- Use technology to your advantage
 - Few people will build a website from the ground up as Peter and I did. Commercial web hosting services offer a simplified web design interface which will meet the needs of most genealogists.
- Our website is our best source of new connections
 - We have been online now for close to 20 years
 - About one enquiry per month and one solid connection per year
 - We now have 500+ families, 400+ surnames and 1500+ individuals in our database
- DNA testing has opened up new possibilities and we are still figuring out how to best leverage this technology. No solid connections yet.

Questions?



A Cassidy Family Genealogy

The Cassidys of Cassidy Lake

New Brunswick, Canada

Peter Cassidy – pcassidy@cassidys.ca

Brian Cassidy – bpc@unb.ca

www.cassidys.ca