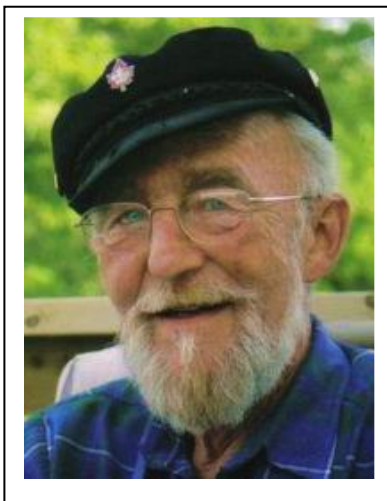


The Canadian Genealogy Centre- A Treasure Trove



Family Tree Magazine selected the CGC as one of the best genealogical sites in 2003 and it has improved since then. It is well worth a visit to find out why. The site is an initiative of the Library and Archives of Canada in conjunction with the Ministry of Culture and a network of partners and was launched in March 2003 at the Ontario Genealogical Society's Ottawa Branch Gene-O-Rama.

In an effort to ensure that the Centre would respond to the needs of researchers they held consultations with over 80 representatives of users groups across the country and they have produced a single window providing electronic access to the genealogical resources of Canada. In addition they provide lesson plans and learning activities in genealogy for the third and fourth grade levels to stimulate interaction between generations and an interest in history.

The heart of the site is a directory of Canadian genealogical resources and databases, called *Avitus* (from the Latin and meaning from the ancestors, or ancestral). When you want to search the site,

go to www.genealogy.gc.ca and select 'Databases'. Some of these databases have been available at other sites and some are new. Furthermore, the CGC enters into partnerships with specific groups through a Memo of Understanding for the production of new databases.

There are several very useful databases available. "Canadian Naturalizations 1915-1932" was produced by the Ottawa and Montreal Jewish Genealogical Societies. This is the first phase of a project that will be of especial interest to researchers whose ancestors came from outside the Commonwealth.

"Immigrants at Grosse Ile (1832-1937)" was produced by Parks Canada and provides information on immigrants who died there or en route to Canada and what ship they were on. The information can help to narrow down when and how a family arrived in Canada. There are also links to the following three resources:

"Amicus Web" is an amazing resource developed by the National Library that can help us to find published sources including, books, newspapers etc. If you want to know if there is a published history of a town where your ancestor lived, or if the registers of the church there have been published, this is a great place to start.

"ArchiviaNet" is the on-line research tool of the National Archives. It includes a variety of databases and access to digitized images of some archival records. We will explore it and the following one in more detail in future columns.

"CAIN" is an acronym for the Canadian Archival Information Network. It provides access to information on the holdings of over 800 archival institutions across Canada. The documents themselves are not available on-line but the database allows you to narrow down your search to where the most useful documents are likely to be.

After using the CGC site you may be asked to fill out a short survey. I would urge you to do so in order to help Director Antonio Lechasseur to ensure that the site continues to grow in ways that are most helpful to us.

An Old Measure

While studying the agricultural returns in the 1861 Census for Québec, I found that quantities of produce were measured in "minots". I have been involved with farming for a number of years and have never met a "minot", so clearly a bit of research was in order.

It turns out that the *minot* is an old French measure of dry volume, equivalent to half a *mine*. The origin of the term is lost in obscurity but it shows up as the root word for *minoterie* (grist mill). It is part of a system of measurement in which it is equivalent to three *boisseaux* or 48 *litrons*. In more helpful terms it is equivalent to 36.3 litres.

The English bushel (4 pecks or 32 quarts) is equivalent to 36.37 litres and is therefore virtually the same as the *minot*. The word *minot* is preserved in the name of a city in North Dakota and wouldn't it be interesting to know the story behind that.