

### UNHAPPY SPECULATIONS

Into the life of every professional genealogist, a little rain must fall, especially when, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary to work with a so-called bastard lineage of recent date. It seems that, if the illegitimate ancestor was of great antiquity, or of great importance, like William the First of England, this circumstance might make the descendant somewhat talkative about it, as if it were rather quaint. But if the illegitimate was his own father, grandfather, or a nearby collateral, the hush-hush is on, unless he is the Earl of something-or-other, of course.

There were several bastard children born to the Hollingsworths of Ballycanew, County Wexford, this writer's own family. Thus, the rain falling is close to home. But at least, he isn't in the position of having to be frank with a client about the client's ancestor - a much stickier wicket. John Hollingsworth of Cranacrower, as we have already noted (HR 7:34), was the acknowledged father of at least two children by two different neighbourhood girls. The evidence is that they retained the surname and the responsibilities which went with it. But in our March issue we may have unrightfully accused John of having fathered a third out-of-wedlock child, a son Thomas. Here is the other possibility.

Thomas Hollinsworth, born 21 January 1816, to "John Hollinsworth and Elizabeth Fields, baptised 28 Jan 1816 by Arthur Colley" mayn't be Cranacrower John's fault, but his first cousin's, John Hollingsworth of Ballinakill, oldest brother of our Frederick, and the father of Abraham, mentioned above, the "ghost". The reason we think this, after consideration, is, that this Thomas, the illegitimate fellow, went to Elizabethtown, Ontario, Canada, and married Deborah Ann Crafts having by her, two children, Margaret Eliza, and Wallace Bruce. (See Tom's will, HR 4: 123) If Thomas is the son of John of Ballinakill, it makes him our Frederick's nephew. Our Frederick had a son Wallace also. By coincidence, our uncle Wallace lived in San Diego, California, from 1907 to his death in 1912, and Wallace Bruce Hollingsworth lived there in 1920. In 1816, John of Cranacrower was 33. It seems he would have had better sense, while John of Ballinakill was only 27 (!) and had just lost his father, Samuel, about the time of this child's conception (Sam died 25 March 1815). Maybe he had temporarily lost his senses on becoming the heir at Ballinakill with its responsibilities.

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It is definitely a possibility that our own Frederick was himself a bastard. In fact, legally, we have never been able to prove his relationship as a son of Samuel. His baptism is not on Ballycanew register, even though Samuel's other children, born during the period the register was kept, are duly recorded as having been baptised. This means something, if only that he was taken to another parish church for the ceremony. Samuel's wife was from Gorey parish, and, likewise, there is no entry of Frederick there. Most other surrounding parishes have lost their registers. There the matter stands, except for:

John Hollinsworth, a bastard, baptised 10 April 1803, son of John Hollinsworth of Cranacrower, and Bridget Cullen. Registered at Parish of Toome (Camolin).

Could this child be our Frederick? We have not been able to find further record of such a John to eliminate him, and this is just about right for the birth of Frederick. If this is him, then he is the son of the John of Cranacrower mentioned above, and was evidently taken to live and be raised by his real father's uncle Samuel, at Ballinakill. Bridget Cullen was doubtless a local Catholic lass, who would have had little or no say in the matter of this child's up-

bringing.

Closing this article, let us say that we have mulled over these "unhappy speculations" for some years, these about Frederick. There is very little likelihood we will ever really prove he was the true son of Samuel; but Frederick seems to have thought he was Samuel's son and by Anne Earl, Samuel's wife, daughter of Edward Earl. The fact that Frederick named his oldest son Edward Earl Hollingsworth seems to establish this idea. Bastard children, in those days, usually were aware of the fact, rather than to be raised by others unaware. There is the counter argument.

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