

Boutilier Research

By Joe Petrie

This document is about researching subscription and free genealogy web sites for descendants of the Jean George Boutilier and Sarah Grange Boutilier who migrated to Nova Scotia in 1752.

Ordinarily, I collect and publish information about free genealogy web sites. The object of this document is to provide information on all web sites that I know of or have used where you and I can search for the descendants of the Boutiliers and find out about them. I'll admit it: Some web sites will not be free!

Background: I had always known that I was a Boutilier. My mother and my aunt (Loretta Elizabeth Tobin – Ethel Petrie - and Mary Aloysia Tobin of Glace Bay) told me about their mother Mary Ann (Nan) Camus, the daughter of Martin Adolphe Camus of St. Malo France, Little Bras d'Or and North Sydney and his wife Lucy Boutilier of Little Bras d'Or and North Sydney. They told me very little about Adolphe and Lucy – probably because they knew little.

Looking back at my early years of doing genealogy, I know now that while I thought I knew a lot about the Boutiliers, I really did not. What I did not know was that:

- Dad was also a Boutilier (he never knew it);
- the Boutiliers were originally from Etoban, Montbeliard (now part of France);
- the Boutiliers emigrated to Nova Scotia on the Sally in 1752;
- they supposedly migrated for religious reasons (fear that the French would force conversion to Roman Catholicism);
- the parents (Jean George and Sarah Grange Boutilier) died at sea before they reached Halifax;
- the remnants of the family that settled Lunenburg were originally and temporarily settled in Halifax while Lunenburg was being built;
- they were moved to Lunenburg in 1752 with about 40 French speaking families;
- the French speaking families were outnumbered by German-speaking families;
- some Boutiliers eventually moved to the St. Margaret's Bay area of Halifax County;
- and some of those Boutiliers relocated from the St. Margaret's Bay area and initially re-settled in Cape Breton's Cox Heath area:
- By 1808, there were four clusters of Boutiliers: France, Lunenburg, St Margaret's Bay and Cape Breton.

I also did not know that there were only a few Boutilier families in Cape Breton who were Catholic and that I descended from two Boutiliers: Lucy Boutilier who converted and Fred Boutilier who married a Catholic - who raised their children as Catholic. I look back at my walks through Catholic Cemeteries in Cape Breton where I probably thought that Boutilier was a really small family – because I thought that all my relatives including the Boutiliers were Catholic. I definitely had a narrow vision then.

Two events changed my narrow Boutilier focus. First, I found and was mentored by Charles "Chick" Buchanan from New Waterford and Sydney. I found out about Charles because he had donated a work book that he and his mother prepared on the Glace Bay Frederick Edward Boutilier and Hester Mackie Boutilier family. The work book was filmed by the Family History Library. I read the tape one evening at the local Family History Center. The workbook showed that my Dad was a Boutilier through Fred and Hester's daughter Mary Ann – Dad's maternal grandmother.

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On a trip to Cape Breton one day, I phoned Charles. Unable to meet on my trip, we met at my home where he gave me hundreds of pages of documents to copy and mail back. Over the years, Charles did that repeatedly.

The second event was at a dinner in Sydney with Charles and John Howie, one of his best friends. John educated me on the Lunenburg County web site. Specifically, John focused on the link to Robert Kim Stevens' data. John also gave me hard-copy material. When I returned home to Massachusetts, I added 4000 more Boutilier records to my database. I became addicted to Kim Steven's material on the the Lunenburg County web site. Initially I harvested only my direct lines' records. Now I harvest Boutilier records that I can link back to the original 1752 Boutilier settlers.

Enough background, now I'll cover the web sites. I'll principally cover major sites that I have used.

www.cbgen.org – I have subscribed for years. I collect family information using the search engine because it searches all records. Search Boutilier and you'll get over 700 results (including a few of my articles.) I suspect that over the years I have read nearly all of them. Sometimes there are articles with more than one occurrence of the word "Boutilier". I search through the article by using Windows keyboard's Control F feature. Press the Control and F key together to get a Find window. In the window, type the word you want to find (like Boutilier). Then press the down arrow symbol next to the window. The software will display the number of results (often 0 of 0). If greater than 1, the software will go to the first result, If more than one result, the user must press the arrow to get to the next result repeatedly if more than 1. (Some software will be a little different.)

I have been told that the items in the Records Tab are free. Sometimes, I go to the Records Tab because I want to focus on one item like censuses, cemeteries, families, pedigree charts, funeral home, links, links/resources, obituaries, research etc. For example, this article will be my eighth in Records/Research. When I find something that I want to read, I select it. Sometimes, I use the Control F feature to select words like Boutilier, especially in census, cemeteries, funeral homes, and obituaries.

One of my seven articles in Records/Research is Researching Lunenburg Families. Essentially it is an update of the Links in the Lunenberg County web site. Originally, there were 56 links. To view a current list of the remaining twenty-one Lunenburg web sites including the database by Kim Stevens, look in Records/Research for my article on Researching Lunenburg Roots. The hyperlinks should work. Kim's site is exclusively Boutiliers. The records that Kim used were primary sources, principally Church records.

Bob Hegerich's site is another one that should be searched. I can't count the numbers of Boutilier records in his nearly 200,000 records. The host is World Connect and their format for Descendants Report and other reports is really friendly. Please note that Bob has recorded a lot of secondary information sources in records which some genealogists would caution against using. Remember that all genealogists can encounter a paucity of primary vital information. For example, in some of my Register Reports, there are more secondary sources than primary sources.

Please note that the Lunenburg County web site still lists the original 56 links but not all of the URLs take users to web sites.

Finally, Records/Links - Resources has a number of my Links articles. One covers Nova Scotia and Cape Breton.

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www.automatedgenealogy.com/census – The Automated Census of Canada has the Censuses for 1901 and 1911. Also it includes 1852 Censuses of New Brunswick. In addition, Ontario and Quebec is combined in the 1852 Census.

I view the Census as a snapshot. There are a lot of disadvantages. The people are not always enumerated. Surnames are often misspelled. Birth dates are sometimes missing. Nicknames are sometimes recorded. The Census taker can make errors in recording information and/or in transcribing it to the official Census form that is furnished to the government. Also, depending on who assisted the census-taker, vital information can have errors. Compare two censuses to show who was added, who left, correct and incorrect ages etc.

I use Windows copy and paste features to copy family records and paste them into my genealogy database's notes section for the Head of Household's record. If there are substantial differences in two censuses, I also note the difference in the individual's record. For example, my father's 1911 Census record lists him as "? Peterie"; (I managed get the record's given name changed to Leo).

www.FamilySearch.org – This free web site is constantly undergoing changes. It is a good news – bad news story. One item of good news is that images of the source records are being added. For example, most of the records for the Nova Scotia Antigonish Catholic Diocese have images that can be viewed. The software requires a user to register and create (and remember) a password.

Another good news item is that the FamilySearch database is currently growing at a rate of a million validated records a week. At my most recent Seminar (on Researching Irish Roots), I found that the Irish Births records (one of seven Irish databases in the historical collection) had grown from 3 million records to 5 million records, almost over-night.

The bad news is that the search criteria screen allows the user to enter a lot of data like a date range and especially to define whether the user wants records that are an exact match. Unfortunately, in its current state, the search software returns records that are not an exact match. Fortunately, another FamilySearch web site provides a work-around, specifically the Family Search Collections List web site. The software allows the savvy user to work around the FamilySearch software problem. I'll cover this site after the next paragraph.

Search Boutilier in FamilySearch.org and the software returns over 69000 records in the Historical collection. There are over 49000 Boutilier records in the Ancestral file. This file has the records from submitted genealogies. In this file there are a lot of redundant records. For example, there are 50 records for Sarah Grange Boutilier who with her husband Jean George Boutilier died on the ship Sally which was transporting them to Canada. Please note that I searched for Sarah Grange and filled in Jean George Boutilier in Spouses' fields to specifically to get the count of results.

www.familysearch.org/search/collection/list - This fairly new web site identifies the items in the historical collection. Currently, there are 76 historical Canadian Collections in the database including 11 Censuses with about 500 thousand records from the Census of 1916. Of interest to Boutiliers, for example, for the Sydney NS Church of England Parish of St George, the following list is the list of the parish image collection: *Baptisms 1810-1838; Baptisms 1852-1945; Baptisms, marriages, burials 1785-1824; Baptisms, marriages, burials 1785-1850; Burials 1813-1945; Marriages 1813-1847.*

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For collections like the Sydney NS Church of England Parish of St George that have images, I have opened the image file files directly from a collection. For example, I have viewed the 657 Boutilier records and images in the Nova Scotia Catholic Antigonish Diocese Collection List directly from the Collection List Search Screen by simply typing Boutilier in the Last Name field followed by clicking the Search button.

Because I like to start searching for people in Censuses, I am pleased that the Collection List contains the following Censuses of Canada. 1851, 1871, 1881, 1891 and 1916. The 1916 Census covers Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta.

Why look at the images? Sometimes the original record contains information that was not transcribed and digitized. For example, in the Historical Collection, the image record for my uncle Charles Edward Petrie's christening record in Immaculate Conception in Bridgeport NS, showed that his godparents were his maternal grandmother Mary Ann Rockett and Richard Rockett. Mary Ann was one of 12 children of Fred and Hester Mackie Boutilier. Richard Rockett was Mary Ann's third husband – Mary Ann was twice widowed. Also, in one of my wife's Irish families' parishes, the priest of the Oughterard, Galway parish when recording a marriage indicated that the bride (Ellen's great grandmother) was from Tuam, Galway. In an Oughterard parish baptism record, a priest indicated that the baby (Ellen's grandaunt) was from Bunnagippaun, a townland about 10 miles from Oughterard. The priest also noted that the townland was where her father was born. (Both Tuam and Bunnagippaun were unknown until I read the images.)

FamilySearch has another software that I have used: histfam.familysearch.org named the FamilySearch Community Trees. It contains records for the Nova Scotia, Catholic Antigonish Diocese. It contains the same 657 Boutilier records - without access to the image. The sort is alphabetical!

www.novascotiagenealogy.com - Information about birth, marriage and death records that is available at Nova Scotia Archives has been transcribed and digitized. Images are available. Currently for Boutiliers, there are 617 Birth records, 1405 Marriage records, and 1189 Death records. For the latter, many of the records identify the cemetery and the date of the burial.

www.ancestry.com – Ancestry is a subscription site. The International subscription with access to 11 billion records costs about \$30 a month. Another version with access to about 5 billion records is about \$20 per month. Ancestry.ca focuses on Canadian records including passenger manifests.

I use my local Library's subscription to Ancestry Library because it is free to me. The good news is that it has 97000 Boutilier records. The bad news is that it is accessible only at the library during normal working hours.

rverpi90.homeip.net/expoactes/index.php – Dwayne Meisner sent the following information: "For anyone who may be researching their ancestors that came from France, including the Foreign Protestants from Montbeliard, I have found a very useful website. It is in French, but with the help of Google Translate or similar, you can figure out what the records mean in English. There are records for Baptism, Marriage, Death, and even Census Records. I was able to find records of the Boutilier (and similar spellings) family from Etobon. Also note that Etobon as an example has two sets of records. One named Etobon and one named EtobonPRO The PRO is short for protestant, which is where I found the Boutilier records."

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In summary, I have about 17,000 Boutiliers in my database. In each record's Notes section except records that come from an obituary, I identify a source or sources. (I believe that attribution is critically important.) Many sources are secondary. The Note section simply shows that the record was provided by an individual or individuals. For people who lived between 1871- and 1911, I often show multiple Census records for the Head of Households.

Late last year, after I discovered FamilySearch Community Trees' Antigonish Catholic Diocese records, I have updated countless records in my database to include Christening Date and Church. As a result, I have replaced out-of-date Register Reports for nearly all of my Dad's families; specifically Casey, Cummings, MacKey/Mackie, O'Brien and Petrie. I am currently working on replacements for my Mom's families. Boutilier Reports will be last to be submitted.

Finally, need help? Recommend that you read a cbgen.org May 2103 Notice in the Notice Tab entitled "Free Consults are Available from Friends of Irish Research." Please follow the process as defined in the second to last paragraph. Specifically it states: "All consults are scheduled by Email by emailing friendsofiresearch@gmail.com. Your Email should provide information on the individual(s) that you need the Friends volunteers to assist you with. A response normally is processed the same day."