

What's in a name

Garland

There is a tradition in some branches of the Garland family that at least one person of that surname was among the band of colonists who came out from England with John Guy in 1610 and settled the first formal English colony in Newfoundland, at what is now Cupids.

If that fact remains tradition without subsistence, let the fact be known that it is on record in the Colonial Office in England that the surname of Garland was represented in Newfoundland as far back as 1675. A Jon Garland was recorded as living at Musketa Cove (now Bristol's Hope) in Conception Bay in that year and another Garland was recorded as living at Harbor Grace.

According to Dr. E.R. Seary in his best-seller book "Surnames of the Island of Newfoundland," the surname Garland is found in England, Scotland and Ireland. In England and Scotland it is derived from the occupation . . . "a maker or seller of metal (garland-s), or it is taken from the Old English (dweller by the) gore, triangular piece of land. It may also be derived in some instances from the English place name Garland, in Devon.

The surname Garland is one of the oldest in Newfoundland. Apart from the Jon Garland associated with little Belle Isle in Conception Bay in 1708. There was a Moses of Placentia in 1725. There was a man named Garland who was justice at Carbonear in 1730 and old records show a George Garland as a judge in the St. John's District, also in 1730.

Other early instances of the Garland surname in Newfoundland as cited in Dr. Seary's book: Charles Garland was in possession of property at various localities in Conception Bay from Manuels to Lower Island Cove

from 1757 to 1810. There was Henry Garland recorded at Lower Island Cove in 1790.

George Garland operated a salmon fishery at Trouty and New Harbor, Trinity Bay in 1804; at Indian Bay, Freshwater Bay, Dog Creek and Indian Arm in 1808. There was a James P. Garland a magistrate at Trinity in 1816. The surname was also very early found in Bonavista, Greenspond, Pushthrough, Brigus and Seal Cove (now Champneys.)

The present status of the surname, according to Dr. Seary, is that it is scattered, but especially found at St. John's, Carbonear and Lower Island Cove.

According to the Gazetteer of Newfoundland and Labrador, the surname is commemorated in Garland's Cove, Garland's Pond and Garland's Bight.

A number of distinguished persons proudly bore the surname of Garland, not the least being John Bingley Garland. He carried out an extensive business at Trinity and when, in 1832, representative government was granted to Newfoundland, he was elected first member from Trinity District and, of greater historical significance, was elected as first speaker of the first legislature of Newfoundland.

Joseph R. Smallwood, in his "Dictionary of Newfoundland Biography," says that a Charles Garland was one of the most prominent residents of Conception Bay in the 17th century and helped defend the area by securing the residents on Carbonear Island during an attack by the French.

NOTE: This a continuing series. If you have some background or anecdotes on your own family name you are invited to send the information to the R-B News Service, P.O. Box 8660, St. John's. Your family name may be featured next.)