

Our Nelson Ancestors

by
James Retson

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Any revisions or corrections should be emailed to [jretson @shaw.ca](mailto:jretson@shaw.ca)

Nelson

David Nelson	About 1752 - 1788
Samuel Nelson	1778 - 1875
Robert John Nelson	1810 - 1887
Rebecca Nelson	1841 – 1924 Married James Clifford

Nelson Surname

The surname Nelson comes from ‘son of Nel’ where Nel may have been short for Neill but was much more likely ‘son oghelen or Eleanor according to Issue 13 of the magazine Your Family History

David Nelson Abt 1752 - 1788

The origin of David Nelson are uncertain. Campbell and Smith claim that “Lancaster MA or Northern Ireland are equally viable but seem flawed and lack documentation”¹. I tentatively will use the approximate date of 1752 and Northern Ireland, the location.

On 24 March 1768 a list of persons are to have lts laid out for them on the North side of Minas Bason between Londonderry. on 21 June 1770 he purchased 500 acres and 100 acres in Derry Village in Truro. NS. A map entitled “David Nelsons Fram Containing 500 Acres Survey’d for him Oct 1 1771 by Samuel Archibald shows nNelson’s land in Truro Township with various topographical features such as Salmon River, The Black Rock, The Black Rock Hole, very high bans and McNutts House²

On 13 September 1770 David Nelson was one of 50 Subscribers Elders Freeholdewrs and Other Inhabitants of the Township of Truro and Members of the Presbyterian Congregation who signed a Call to Rev. Daniel Cock to come to Truro. At one time the Author owned to communion tokens of this Reverent.

He married Margaret Archibald 28 November 1775 at Truro Nova Scotia.³

In 1777 the local government in Nova Scotia sent two magistrates to Truro and the surrounding Townships of Onslow and Londonderry to administer the oath of allegiance to the inhabitants. All but 4 male inhabitants refused. David Nelson was one of only four who swore allegiance.

1 Campbell & Smith (2011) p 773

2 Campbell & Smirh (2011) p774 citing NSARM Maps F/230-11771 Colchester

3 Campbell & Smith (2011) p 774 citing Register of Marriages , Births Truro

Children of David Nelson and Margaret Archibald include,

1. Robert Nelson b. 24 Aug 1776
2. Samuel Nelson 15 March 1778 (See below)
3. Martha Nelson 8 Dec 1779
4. John Nelson 12 Mar 1782 Truro Township; m. Margaret Archibald (b. 1785 Musquodoboit, Halifax County, NS daughter of John Archibald 1st and Alice Moore)
5. David Nelson 22 January 1785
6. Elizabeth Nelson 6 Mar 1787

This data was recorded as a unit by John Harris ⁴

On 3 January 1776 he was one of 64 signatories of a Petition of the Inhabitants of the Township of Truro opposed to new Provincial Militia Acts. On 5 May 1777 his name appears on a list of names who refused to swear an oath of Allegiance. However a notation in a different hand indicated that David Nelson took the oath along with three William Logan, Luke Upham and Nathan Upham. No action was ever taken against those who refused to take oath of Allegiance.⁵

David Nelson died intestate 28 August 1788 at Truro Nova Scotia.⁶

His wife Margaret (Archibald) Nelson remarried within a year to Jeremiah Murphy by whom she had further issue.

Samuel Nelson 1778 - 1875

Samuel Nelson, son of David and Margaret Nelson was born 15 March 1778 in Truro Township. Possibly same as Samuel Nelson and Mary Wilson who were issued Marriage bond on July 19 1809. His occupation was Cordwainer / saddler. He died on 7 May 1875 in Onslow, Colchester County. He is buried in Crossroad Cemetery Valley Nova Scotia, Colchester County. Samuel was blind the last years of his life and lived with his daughter Malinda Blackmore and her husband Richard.

Their children include,

Robert John Nelson, born 22 Jun 1810 (see below); m. Agnes (a.k.a. Nancy) Hoar (daughter of David Hoar and Rebecca Smith) on 9 Jan 1831; d. 10 August 1887.

Mary Ann Nelson b. 1818; m. Christopher Patriquin (b. May 1812 in Tatamagouche son of David Patriquin and Catherine Perrin) 13 Apr 1853 d. 14 Jan 1895 buried in Crossroad Cemetery, Valley Colchester County For descendents see previous foot note reference.

Margaret Malinda Nelson b. 25 Apr 1819 m. Richard Blackmore 20 Apr 1848 in Onslow, Colchester County. For descendents see previous foot note reference.

Unknown Nelson

Elizabeth Jane Nelson b. bat 1825; m. James Albert DeBrisey Cove 13 Jul 1850, buried in River Philip United Cemetery, Cumberland; d. 19 May 1879. For descendents see previous foot note reference.

⁴ Campbell & Smith citing NSARMMG\$ v. 150A

⁵ For further information see entry entitled Cobequid Recusants in Campbell & Smith (2011) v. 1 p.175

⁶ See Campbell & Smith for additional information concerning his estate and property transactions

Robert John Nelson 1810 - 1887

Robert John Nelson, son of Samuel and Mary Nelson, was born 22 June 1810 .probably in Colchetser County Nova Scotia. He married Agnes (AKA Nancy) Hoar (daughter of David Hoar and Rebecca Smith) on 9 Jan 1831. They resided in East Mountain, Colchester County. His occupation was merchant/ Farmer/ Saddler. He died 10 August 1887. He is buried in Crossroad Cemetery Valley, Colchester County

Their children include,

Samuel Scott Nelson b. 7 Feb 1831 m. (1) Mary May Bailey 12 Jun 1853; m. (2) Melissa Archibald, 3 April, 1870; d. 1908 in Yazoo, MS, USA For descendents see previous foot note reference.

Mary Nelson b. 24 Sep 1832; m. Jacob Slack; d. 28 May 1888 . For descendents see previous foot note reference

David Nelson b.16 Nov 1834; m. Eliza Jane Bailey; d.18 June 1912. For descendents see previous foot note reference

Robert Nelson, Jr. B. 20 Nov 1836; m. Frances Harriet Lynds; d. 21 April 1913. For descendents see previous foot note reference.

John Nelson b. 17 Feb 1839; m. Elizabeth Slack; d. 10 February, 1893. For descendents see previous foot note reference.

Rebecca Nelson b. 4 Apr 1840 See below; m. James Clifford 27 May 1863; d. 18 March 1924.

Rebecca Nelson 1841 - 1924

Rebecca Nelson, daughter of Robert John and Agnes Nelson, was born in Truro, Colchester County, Nova Scotia on 4 April 1841 . She married James Clifford on 27 May 1863 in Truro . Their children include,

Infant Clifford , a stillborn, evidence for the existence of this child is sketchy

Mary Alice Clifford b. 1863, m. John Henry Archibald d. 15 April 1899

David L. Clifford b. 1868, d. 1878 died of Diphtheria

Nanetta known as Nettie Clifford b. 1868 or 1869, Married Howard Mills (b. 1854), d. 1896 buried Acadia Mines

Benjamin Scott Clifford b.13 Aug 1871, m. Lilly Taylor 27 Dec 1899 d. 3 Jul 1965

James William Clifford b. 1873, East Mountain Colchester County, NS; m Ethel May McNutt (b. Feb 3 1884) Brookside (daughter of William McNutt and Mary B. McNutt known as May, moved off to Chase BC. D. 21 May 1946

Noble Clifford b.1876, d.1878 died of Diphtheria d. 26 May 1878 age 1 Yr 10 Months

Lena M. Clifford b.1879, d 1901 died of TB 27 Feb 1901 age 21 yrs

Sarah Pearl Clifford (a.k.a. Sadie) b. 25 June 1882 , d. 20 Jan 1902 died of TB age 19 yrs

Beatrice Clifford b. 16 February 1887, m. William Rankin Retson, 25 December 1905, d 16 Sep 1958

Only 4, Mary, Nettie, Benjamin Scott, and Beatrice lived long enough to marry and leave offspring. The family faced one tragedy after another. 1878 brought the death of David and Noble of diphtheria. Two girls who looked after others with TB also succumbed in 1901-02. Another child was born stillborn.

Rebecca, on her mother's side came from a long line of puritans known for their great purity or strictness of life and religious principles. On her father's side, her great Grandfather, David Nelson in 1777 was one of only 4 residence of Truro, Nova Scotia who swore allegiance to George III. She lived with her daughter Beatrice (Clifford) Retson the last few years of her life on the campus of the Nova Scotia Agriculture College Campus. She died 18 March 1924. She is buried at the Crossroads cemetery Valley, Colchester County

Sources of Information on Nelson Family

Campbell, Carol and James F. Smith (2011) Planters and Grantees of Cobequid, Nova Scotia, 1761-1780, Volume 2 (I-Z) p773

Nova Scotia Archives and Record Management, Halifax, NS formerly PANS (currently abbreviated NSARM)

Wile, Jane The Descendents of Samuel & Eleanor Taylor
Longworth, Israel History of Colchester County, Nova Scotia (circa 1886)