


# PAST FINDER

## DRAYTON VALLEY BRANCH

### ALBERTA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

  
 UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.  
 UNIE VAN SUID-AFRIKA.  
 DEPARTMENT OF POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS.  
 DEPARTEMENT VAN POST- EN TELEGRAAFWESEN.

In the Republic of South Africa  
 the Post Office is established  
 as a public corporation under  
 the provisions of the Public  
 Service Act, 1911.

DATE POSTED.

7 January, 1938.

Mr.,


I am directed to inform you that in view of the present financial condition of the country it has been found necessary to reduce expenditure as far as possible and I am to intimate to you that the Government have been compelled most reluctantly to abolish the office you at present hold in the Public Service in terms of Section 13 of the Public Service Act of 1911.

In consequence of such abolition it has been decided to grant to you, under the provisions of Cape Act 22 of 1925, by way of compensation, an allowance of one third of your years of service for pension purposes and your pension will be calculated accordingly.

Your retirement will take place from the 1st of April next and I am authorized to state that you will be granted a cash payment in lieu of vacation leave not taken, in accordance with the provisions of Treasury Circular No. 3 of 1926.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

  
 OFFICER-IN-CHARGE.

LETTER FROM UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

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Drayton Valley Branch  
 Alberta Genealogical Society  
 PO Box 115  
 Rocky Rapids, AB T0E 1Z0

Meetings held 7:00 pm  
 Third Wednesday of each month  
 Except July, August and December  
 In the library at Wishing Well Apartments  
 5208 – 47 Ave Valley, AB

The Branch library and resources are located at Wishing Well Apartments and are available to members seven days a week from 9:00am to 9:00 pm. The library is on the second floor. Members are given an access code to open the key lock box which will give them access to the building and another key lock box by the library door will give them access to the library.

**EXECUTIVE**

President-	Connie Stuhl	780-542-9288
Past president	Colleen Andersen	780-542-2787
Vice President	–vacant	
Secretary	Bev Wright	780-542-7292
Treasurer	Bev Wright	780-542-7292
Historian	Vacant	
Library	Colleen Andersen	780-542-2787
Newsletter	Miriam Roberts	780-542-2215
Publicity	Miriam Roberts	780-542-2215
Fund Raising	Vacant	
Volunteer Hours	Colleen Andersen	780-542-2787
Communication	Vacant	
Parliamentarian	Vacant	

**TWIGS, BARK & KINDLING**

Please send me some articles for the Pastfinder, I need some input.  
 I request anyone who will be celebrating 25 years as a member of AGS in the coming year, please notify the executive.

We are hoping to get some new members this year.

We extend our sincere condolences to Connie Stuhl and Colleen Andersen who both had uncles who passed away this year, and to Gail Miller, former member on the loss of her husband Lorne.

**NB** Past Finder will be published in Spring and Fall x 2 a year.

## Report on Events



*Miriam Roberts presenting cheque to John Althouse at workshop*

On March 08, 2014 Workshop presented by John Althouse at Drayton Valley.

Seeking the roots of your family, But I'm not a writer, Charting your course and The Changing Map of Europe. Fifteen people attended and it was well received, all of the evaluations were positive, here are some of the comments made about the workshop.

1. Great Workshop! I found the material very interesting and educational. I look forward to using these new resources to continue my research for my family history.
2. John was well informed and presented an interesting course.
3. Speaker was great, down to earth and very easy to understand.
4. I drove out from Edmonton to attend, it was well worth it.
5. Good instruction and good people to share learning with.

April 08, 2014 Family and Community Support Services Supper

Colleen Andersen and Miriam Roberts attended, a number of photographs of branch events were sent to FCSS, and a power point presentation was made and shown at the event.

April 16<sup>th</sup>, Marion Rex came to make a presentation on her great-grandfather, who was a master mariner, using the Canadian Census as a major source of information.. Thirteen people attended, which included 6 members, two former members, and five guests. Marion gave a very interesting presentation with props.

July 09, 2014 Fundraising event, three members and one spouse participated in the Communities in Bloom in conjunction with FCSS, movie night. We thank Conoco Philips who supplied the barbecue and Connie's sister and daughter who helped with barbecuing hot dogs.

Posters were hung at the table, advertising our branch and brochures were available for participants to take.

### Up Coming Events

September 17<sup>th</sup> , 7.00pm. Josie Davidson is speaking about her research to date, and it will be an opportunity for her to seek help to further her research.

October 15<sup>th</sup>, 7.00pm We will visit the Family History Centre at the Church of Latter Day Saints. 4307-52<sup>nd</sup> Street, Drayton Valley.

November 19<sup>th</sup> 7.00pm Paul Spurrell will speak about his experience in the military. Celebration of Drayton Valley Branch 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, in common room at the Wishing Well Apartments.

### President's Report

As I write this, it is a balmy 30° C. outside, summer is here. I am sure everyone is enjoying the nice weather after all the winter we had with all the snow.

I am very happy to be the President of the Drayton Valley Branch and am excited about the opportunities that we can bring to our members to further their own research. If anyone has any ideas or something on their wish list of opportunities that we can assist with, please let us know.

Drayton Valley Branch now has a facebook page. You can find us at:-

<http://www.facebook.com/DraytonValleyBranchAlbertaGenealogicalSociety>

There have been opportunities for members and the public to expand their research, with a workshop in March by John Althouse and a talk by Marion Rex in April. Both are excellent speakers and their talks were appreciated by all. Thank you to both John and Marion for your time and commitment to assisting small branches such as Drayton Valley! There will be more to come in the future. Also thank you to Susan Haga and Mary Ann Legris for their visit to our Branch in May. It was delightful to have you both here and your suggestions are appreciated.

We are also part of the inter-agency group in Drayton Valley so we have a great opportunity to share any programs that are offered to other groups. Hopefully we can generate more interest as we go forward.

Our Branch was formed in January, 1994, so this is our 20<sup>th</sup> year! Where has time gone? Colleen Andersen and I are the remaining founding members of this branch and have seen many changes over the years. From our beginning to now, we have accumulated research material, have a small, but functional library and have been able to present learning opportunities to members. A 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration is planned for the third Wednesday in November. Invitations will be sent out to all past members to attend and anyone wishing to join in is welcome as well.

Thank you to Miriam Roberts, Colleen Andersen, and Bev Wright for stepping forward to make up the remainder of the executive. Your willingness to keep our Branch going is appreciated.

Connie Stuhl.

### A Story Spanning Three Continents By Miriam Roberts

In “Hel Achau” the journal of the Clwyd Family History Society in Wales there was a message in the Help Wanted section for the search of a William Batten. My friend Betty Roberts’ maiden name was Batten. I phoned her to see if there was a connection. There was a minimal connection in that her grandfather worked with leather as did the William Batten in the query.

She shared her interesting family history with me, although we share the same surname we are not related. Before Betty moved from Drayton Valley she showed me the story of the Roberts family crest. The Roberts family originated in Denbighland (Denbighshire, Wales) where they were a family of great antiquity seated as Lords of the manor and estates in that shire.

As Betty shared her story over the phone, I wrote some notes, and I found I was missing some information. I wrote a letter to her at Christmas 2013, asking her some questions, because she now lives in Coaldale, Alberta. She dutifully answered the questions I asked, and mailed them back to me by snail mail!

Betty’s (Elizabeth) Roberts nee Batten was born in South Africa in 1925, her father Howard William Batten was born on September 24<sup>th</sup>, 1879 at Hereford, England. He fought in the Boer War in South Africa, where he was a signaler. While on patrol on horseback he and a fellow soldier exchanged places, his mate got shot and killed by a sniper.

Howard was also involved in the Zulu Rebellion, Betty thinks he was also a signaler in the rebellion.

Howard’s father, William Henry Batten was a leather merchant and was born in Cardiff, Wales. He made harnesses for horses, but as the automobile became more popular he lost business. His wife’s name was Eva Gardiner. Howard also had a brother Rupert whose wife was Beryl and a sister also named Eva.

Howard was also involved in the First World War, in the South African Regiment, in France, and returned to England in 1918. While in Baldock, Kent, England, Howard met Winifred Elizabeth Boodle, who was staying with a friend while recovering from TNT, (Trinitrotoluene, used in bombs) poisoning, because she worked in an armament factory.

Howard and Winifred got married on August 08, 1918 at Harble Down in Kent. Winifred’s father was John Boodle and her mother’s name was Emma. John Boodle was a bailiff on Cherry Garden Farm, a hop farm.

Howard and Winifred went back to South Africa, on the last troop ship to leave England she thinks in 1919, because Betty’s brother Bill was born in Durban South Africa in 1920. They farmed at the foothills of the Drakensberg Mountains, and Howard also worked in the post office. Betty sent me a copy of the letter of him being hired, and also a

letter of him being “retired”. Betty thinks he was “retired” because of his recurring episodes with malaria

After his discharge Winifred wanted to go back to England, which they did when Betty was two years of age, in 1927. Betty said her mother told her she was very inquisitive on the ship and her parents were very busy trying to keep up with her while she was investigating all the nooks and crannies on the ship. They went back to Canterbury, Kent, England. Betty’s brother contracted polio when he was 4 years of age while he was still in South Africa.

Howard was unable to tolerate the damp cold climate of England so they relocated to the island of Jersey. For the first two years in Jersey, the family lived on Howard’s pension. Around 1930 a hotel, in the Parish of St. Martin came up for rent. It had lost its license for 3 years for it had sold liquor after hours! Betty goes on to say “Mum and Dad took it over for 3 years, as a Guest House for summer visitors. The 1<sup>st</sup> year was slow, but the last 2 they were turning people away. Mum did the cooking, had a couple of local girls helping her. Dad also helped and drove visitors sightseeing the island. Dad also played the piano for people to dance in the evening.” Betty says she can’t remember how many rooms the hotel had, but the dining room was very large.

The hotel was named Les Grand Rue, it was a big stone L-shaped building, with a farmhouse attached. Betty also mentions that “My cousin Ruth who lives near Hereford, England, sent her a newspaper clipping of houses for sale in Jersey, and there was Les Grand Rue, looking same as ever. Selling for over a million pounds” Betty also recalls “On the back wall of the Hotel, outside, there had been a picture of Johnny Walker Whiskey washed over, but you could see the sign under it.”

In her recollections, Betty mentions that her dad when, first in South Africa played the piano with the appropriate music, in a theatre, while the silent movies were being watched, he worked at the post office during the day.

They came back to Romford, Essex about 1933 because Betty’s brother needed surgery owing to the effects of Polio. After being in Romford one year, he had surgery on his right leg at Great Ormond Street Children’s Hospital, London where he spent 6 months in total.

After Easter Betty’s parents packed their car up and moved to Tregony, Cornwall, a small village 10 miles from Truro. While in Cornwall. Betty’s father lived on a small civil service pension he had from the South African Government.

Betty’s brother Bill trained at Holman’s Foundry in Camborne, Cornwall, a 4 year apprenticeship, he had to take an extra year because of his polio.

Betty went into nurses’ training at The Royal Cornwall Infirmary at Truro, she was there from 1943 to 1945 when she was diagnosed with Tuberculosis.

She met her husband, Jack while doing her training. He had been an aircraft mechanic in the RAF and in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, for 2years, servicing the planes for pilot training. He loved Canada.

Howard died in 1945 of myocarditis and Chronic Bronchitis. Betty and Jack got married in 1947. They came to Canada in 1952. Betty's mother also came to Canada, she and Betty stayed for a few months, with her sister, Annie Giddings who lived in the Violet Grove area, near Drayton Valley.

Jack worked for Eldorado Aviation and PWA, up in the Arctic and remembered hearing the Inuit children crying as they were leaving their parents to come to the residential schools.

Betty and Jack had a ½ section of land north of Drayton Valley, which they cleared. They moved a house, which was once a weather station located at The Edmonton Airport, to the land and came to live there in 1969. Betty and her daughter Kathy moved to the farm in 1969, her husband Jack did not move until 1972. Betty went to work as a Licensed Practical Nurse in 1973, at the Drayton Valley Municipal Hospital to supplement their income.

Betty and Jack had two daughters, Angela who married Fred, they live in Coaldale, AB and Kathy married Tim who still live in Drayton Valley.

Jack never regretted coming to Canada. Even though Betty moved from Drayton Valley after 38years she is contented in Coaldale.

*Miriam Roberts and Betty Roberts - sitting*





Cape of Good Hope,  
14 April 1904

"APPOINTMENTS."

No. ....

Sir,

I am directed to inform you that His Excellency the Governor, with the advice of the Executive Council, has been pleased to appoint

.....

you

.....

to the Fixed Establishment of the Civil Service of this Colony in terms of Section 20 of Act No. 32 of 1895

£160.0.0. with salary at the rate of one hundred and sixty pounds  
P.A. sterling per annum

to take effect from the 5th October, 1903. You will fully understand that all Public Officers are expected to be prepared to serve at any Station to which the Government may from time to time see fit to appoint them.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant.

*W. MacCollard*  
Assistant Treasurer.

H. W. Batten Esquire,.....

A copy of the letter Betty Roberts sent about her father, Howard William Batten being hired by the government of the Union of South Africa.

Drayton Valley Branch Project

Cutting and pasting Obituaries and Memorials from Western Review to Cards



Ancient Terms relating to people and occupations.

**Bordar, Villager:** differing from the villein in that the latter held little land, (the villein could also be known as a villager or bordar.) The bordar owned less than the villager or the villein.

**Executor:** Person charged with duty of carrying out the terms of a will.

**Heyward:** one of the constables with special responsibility for boundaries and encroachment. (Nothing to do with hay!)

**Homage:** the jury at the manor court, usually twelve tenants who were sworn.

**Pinner:** the constable with the special duty of impounding stray animals.

**Serf or Surf:** In the middle ages, a person bound in service to the landowner and attached to the land, and transferred with it.

**Vassal:** In the feudal system a person holding lands under obligation to render military service or its equivalent to his superior.

Church Related Terms

**Acolyte:** lowest of the four orders of priesthood; a boy who had been taken the 'first tonsure', with a view to becoming sub-deacon, then deacon, then priest.

**Deacon:** a lay church official or subordinate minister.

**Rood –Screen:** screen of open woodwork or stone dividing chancel from nave in a church; the rood was fixed on top of it.

**Tithe:** one tenth of all produce payable to the Church. The great tithes of corn (in England corn refers to grains such as wheat, barley and oats) wool and hay were due to the Rector. The small tithes of fruit, eggs, honey, saffron etc. were due to the vicar

**Tithing:** originally a group of ten men all mutually responsible for the good behaviour of the group.

**Tithingman:** a member of the group. A boy had to join the tithing at the age of twelve. Obsolete by the sixteenth century, but pretence still kept up.

**Tithing maps:** this term was usually applied to a map of an English or Welsh parish or township, prepared following the Tithe Commutation Act 1836. This act allowed tithes to be paid in cash rather than goods. The map and its accompanying schedule gave the names of all owners and occupiers of land in the parish. Individual tithe owners

sometimes prepared maps for their owners and occupiers of land. Tithe maps are not before 1836.

**Tithe Barn:** the tithe barn was used in much of Northern Europe in the middle ages for storing tithe.



**Yeoman** A name given to a farmer in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth century origin unknown.

### Farm Animals

**Gelding** castrated horse.

**Wether** castrated sheep

**Hogget** one year old sheep.

**Capon** castrated cockerel (or cock) intended for eating.

**Bullock/ steer** an ox or castrated bull.

**Heckferth** a heifer before calving

**Hog or hogge**, swine/or pig especially a domesticated swine raised for slaughter.

**Barrow** a male pig castrated before puberty.

**Stag** a male pig castrated later in life.

**Gilt** young female not farrowed.

**Sow** breeding female after first litter.

### Quotes

**Infantry** The term comes from the “infant” –since this part of the army was made up of the knights.

**Irish Luck** Why do we call a surprising turn of good luck the “luck of the Irish”? Because the Irish were always poor but managed to pull through somehow. The potato crop failed but all didn’t die of hunger; the “Big Wind” blew all night but then it went out to sea again; the “luck of the Irish” pulled them through.

**In Dutch** The phrase means “in disgrace”