

A-Calnan family (03-01)

Mary Calnan attends family reunion at ancestor's university in Boston

Cobourg resident, Mary Calnan nee Tufts attended a Tufts family reunion recently at the university named after her forebearer Charles Tufts, in Medford, Massachusetts.

The reunion was organized by Herbert Adams whose former wife's grandmother was a Tufts. Through his research and efforts, 125 members of the Tufts family from all over the United States and Canada gathered at Tufts University to meet each other and tour the sites of family homes, offices, monuments and cemeteries.

According to Mrs. Calnan, the first Tufts, Peter, landed in the Boston area around 1638.

He married Mary Pierce of nearby Charlestown and the couple settled in Malden where they raised their 10 children.

Within a few years after his arrival in the new country, Peter Tufts not only owned a penny ferry between Charlestown and Malden but also held extensive land titles in Malden, Medford and Charlestown.

Sometime between the years 1728 and 1750, Gerswin Tufts left New

England and settled in Nova Scotia.

It is from this branch of the Tufts family that Mrs. Calnan is



Charles Tufts

descended.

Her father, Charles moved from Nova Scotia to Cobourg before Mrs. Calnan was born.

In 1852, another Charles Tufts, whose family remained in Medford, donated the land then called Walnut Hill, on which Tufts University was built.

According to a report in the Medford Bicentennial book, "A friend who was talking one day with Mr. Tufts asked what he intended to do with the grass-covered, wind-swept hill, and received the prophetic reply. "I will set a light on it."

When the university out-grew its boundaries, Charles Tufts gave another two parcels of land.

"Today, the whole university is crammed onto 120 acres," Mrs. Calnan said.

While in Medford, the Tufts family and relations stayed in the student residences on campus.

Ironically, as Charles Tufts, the founder of the university had no descendants, there were no direct relations of his at the reunion. In fact, according to Adams "hardly anyone named Tufts has gone to Tufts College."

Cobourg Star, July 29, 1980