

William Mullett Family Letters, Canada-England, 1821-1859 — Thomas Sylvester, June 1997

These nine letters record the personal experiences and hopes of an English family who participated with other Quakers to emigrate and settle on Amherst Island, Upper Canada in 1821. The letters were written by the children to their maternal grandmother in England. The letters having become family treasures, were typed in 1899 by Mary Bowerman. The location of the original letters is unknown. Merton Y Williams of Vancouver, BC donated xerographic copies of the manuscript to the Wellington Public Library in June 1965,³ and to the Archives of Ontario. Mrs Frances Howes of Adolphustown, ON donated her manuscript including these letters to the Queens University Archives, Kingston, ON.⁴

Sylvester computer-scanned the Wellington Library copy into the current format. Not even the most obvious typing errors, nor original spelling errors have been corrected. The supplement notes that had been presented within round brackets (for example) were likely added *circa* 1892-1899.

Five families of Friends from the Bristol area joined their resources and chartered a vessel which was appropriately named "Friends." William Mullett was one of the leading spirits in this venture. The Boones, Nashs, Shepards and Sweatmans were the four other families. They collectively bought 500 acres of land on Amherst Island July 1821.⁵ In May 1825, William Mullett [Jr] and [William] Clendean drew seven year leases on South Shore Lots 1 & 2 (200 acres), 3 & 4 (209 acres) respectively. Both were extraordinarily large leases.⁶

The known intermarriages help identify some of the individuals named by the correspondents. Sarah, daughter of William and Mary Mullett married widower James Sweatman, eldest son of Jerome Sweatman. James had emigrated directly to the US and by 1825 had settled in Montreal. He died young. Widowed Sarah moved to Fredericksburg and in time married Morgan Outwater. Thomas Nash married Hannah, daughter of Jerome Swetman. They settled in Picton. Isabella, daughter of Jerome Swetman married Ebenezer Shepard. He was identified as a merchant in Bath, UC in October 1821. They built a large house on Amherst Island by 1825, and eventually settled in New York State. The William Faulkner family sailed in the same cabin with the Mulletts and were known to Aunt Martha Clothier Gillett. George Boone had kin Ambrose Boone and Hannah Boone.⁷

Correspondent Mary Mullett Jr married William Clendenan an Irishman, whose father had settled on the south shore of Amherst Island in 1822.⁸ They lived with his parents briefly, then settled on the frontier; a.k.a. Maria? Deborah Mullett married C.? Haight blacksmith. James Clothier Mullett of Adolphustown moved up the country to their remote new farm; Island 1830? Rachel Mullett & husband and two young sons had gone 100 miles up country 1830. William Mullett Jr Island 1830? John Mullett daughter Deborah by 1824, nearby 1830. Cousin Edward (Mullett?) poison ivy; took a fancy to a daughter of George Boone, considered entering partnership with John Mullett. young Henry Mullett. Bathsheba Mullett.

³ "William Mullett Family Letters, Canada-England, 1821-1859," pp34, 971.03 Wil. Wellington Public Library, PO Box 370, Wellington, Ontario, K0K 3L8.

⁴ QUA, Arch 2999 Mullett Family Letter book 1821-1830, pp54.

⁵ QUA, Addington Copy Book E 521.

⁶ QUA, Burleigh Papers, Series III, Box 16, File 17, "Rental Book of Richard Hitchins [1824-1846]," p2, 16-18.

⁷ Anonymous, *Pioneer Life on the Bay of Quinte*, Rolph and Clark, Toronto, 1904, reprinted Mika Press, Belleville, 1976, p740-743; Lennox & Addington County Archives, Letters Sweatman/Nash, Edward [Mullett?] to Anna Hannah Sweatman, Montreal, 20 Oct, 1821 and "The Nash family of the Bay of Quinte area" by M.Y. Williams, Oct 1961; QUA, Addington Copy Book E 752 & G 1887.

⁸ Sylvester, Thomas *Early Residents of Amherst Isle*, (Curbside Publishing, Stella, ON) 1998.