

Recollection of a very peculiar occurrence

Salut et bonjour! Je m'appelle Jayne Emery.

Je suis la fille de Ken Emery, le président de la *Belfast Historical Society*. This is a true story that took place on June 25th, 2005 at the Lord Selkirk Provincial Park in Eldon, Prince Edward Island, site of an ancient Acadian burial ground followed later by Scottish interments and now the site of the Acadian-Scot Memorial Cäirn.

It was around 10:00 in the morning, on a sunny bright day of June, that occurred the peculiar event that is about to unfold. The event took place at Lord Selkirk Park on the day that preceded the dedication of the memorial cäirn with its two plaques remembering the trials and injustices suffered by the Acadian and Scottish people, in particular the Acadian Deportation of 1755-1762 and the martyrdom in 1305 of William Wallace, the chief champion of Scotland's independence.

The occasion for the dedication was therefore the observance of two anniversaries, the first being the 250th anniversary (1755-2005) of the beginning of the Acadian Deportation which took place in *Acadie* (peninsular Nova Scotia) and continued in 1758 on Isle Saint-Jean (now P.E.I.), especially as regards the Pointe-Prime area, and the second being the 700th anniversary (1305-2005) of the martyrdom of William Wallace.

The text of the much bigger plaque was composed by three members of the Sister Antoinette DesRoches Historical Committee (Francis Blanchard, David Le Gallant, Georges Arsenault) while the text of the bottom smaller plaque was composed by David Le Gallant on behalf of the *Association du Musée acadien de l'Î.-P.-É.* and Ken Emery on behalf of our Belfast Historical Society.

The date of the said peculiar occurrence was June 25th, 2005, the morning before the official dedication of the cäirn which was to take place at 2 o'clock the next day.

Ken Emery, the president of the Belfast Historical Society at the time, was on the site checking for last minute details before the dedication, when he happened across an extremely tall, strong elderly Scotsman who stood about 6 feet, 6 inches at least.

This very rugged-looking, upright gentleman had long, long arms and large strong bony knuckles and was wearing a tweed cap and a tweed jacket. In his hand he carried a large gnarled wooden walking stick. Ken was working

at the cäirn, finishing up the molding around the plaque when he saw the shadow. He looked up to see a very polite, well-mannered gentleman with a thick Scots burl. Ken introduced himself, and the Scots gentleman told him his name was Mr. Brown and that he was from Ottawa.

The mysterious gentleman stood by the cäirn looking at the inscription, reading it very slowly. Down at the bottom of the plaque was a short description of William Wallace.

In a few moments he finished reading the inscription and he said the French were very fine people, and then he went on to talk about William Wallace, and Ken felt from the way he talked that Ken himself should have known William Wallace.

The gentleman asked Ken if he had ever seen Wallace's sword. Ken said he hadn't, but would like to see it, but he had never been to Scotland, though would like to go if he ever got the chance.

The strange gentleman then went on, with very descriptive and detailed directions as to where to go in Scotland, and that Wallace's sword was on display at an abbey in Scotland, describing the sword almost as if it were his own. The handle was about a foot long and there was a chunk missing from the tip of the blade, but there was still at least five-and-a-half feet of blade remaining well above the handle.

After a few more moments he mentioned to Ken that he understood there was a Free Church of Scotland in the area and he would like to see it, so Ken took him up to the location.

As they were walking, he referred back to the French. He said "I like to spend my summers where the gold is". And Ken asked him where that might be, and he said it was in Val d'Or in Québec, and that he often stayed there in the summer months - very much appreciated the hospitality and the friendship he found among the very fine people of the region.