

# THE LIFE OF JAMES JOHN CONDON (1873-1966)

by Eileen Maloney Condon

*The search for the details of my father-in-law's life was started long after his death in 1966, and the family did not know much about his background. Sadly, we did not ask him to tell us his life story, and very few documents were found among his possessions. There was a baptism certificate, a birth certificate, and some correspondence (as early as 1911) from parish priests in Liverpool. Mr. Condon (as I always called him) had told the family that he had been orphaned, that he had been raised by his grandmother until she grew too old to care for him, and that he was then placed in the Workhouse. He said he had been sent to Canada about 1885, and had lived near Belleville, Ontario, before arriving in Lebrét shortly after the turn of the century. That was about the extent of information we had.*

*These details led to some very interesting research possibilities, as it became obvious that he was part of the massive juvenile emigration program undertaken by the British and Canadian governments. These children are now known as "Home Children" and they are of interest to many Canadians who can trace their ancestry back to the approximately 100,000 children who were arbitrarily sent to Canada between 1869 and 1939.*

Our Condon history begins in England. James John Condon<sup>1</sup> was the only known child of Thomas Condon and Mary Miller (nee Rodgers). He was born at 23 Lydia Ann Street, Liverpool, on June 22, 1873, and baptized three days later at nearby St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church on Seel Street.<sup>2</sup>

*My interest in genealogy began in 1979 when I typed the manuscript for Mom & Dad's book, The Genealogy of John Maloney and Deborah Moriarty, and I decided to tackle the CONDON/CARRIÈRE ancestry. This was before the days of computers, and before the Internet evolved into the magical tool it is today. All genealogical research was a slow process, and depended on on-site visits to libraries and archives. Many letters were written and the replies usually were very slow in arriving. The whole topic of "Home Children" was just beginning to be defined. I had learned about the genealogical interests of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (the "Mormons") and about the Salt Lake City Family History Library and its worldwide system of local Family History Centers. At that time, Regina did not have a Center and the nearest was in Saskatoon. Attempting to find the family in the 1871 Census of England was my first research attempt after taking some basic genealogy classes in the fall of 1980.*

Taken two years before John's birth, the April 1871 census revealed his thirty-two year old widowed mother, Mary Miller, residing at 28 Greetham Street; she was an unemployed charwoman born in Liverpool. Her mother Catherine Rodgers was the head of the household, seventy-four years old,

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<sup>1</sup> To avoid confusing James Condon Sr. and James Condon Jr., the following usage will be used throughout this manuscript: James John Condon (1873-1966) is referred to as either John (the Liverpool years), James, James Sr., Jimmy, or Mr. Condon; his son James Patrick (1937- ) is referred to as James Jr., Condy or Jim.

<sup>2</sup> John Condon birth, Volume 8b September 1873, page 135, no. 363; certified copy issued 26 June 1928, General Register Office, London, England. [This birth entry records the birth as 11 August 1873, a direct conflict with the child's baptism record. Since John's mother did not register the birth until 17 September 1873, she may have provided a false date in order to avoid the penalty for late registration.] Baptism certificate issued 23 October 1928 by Rev. R.B. Primavesi OSB, St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church, Seel Street, Liverpool, England. "John Condon, born 22 June 1873, baptized 25 June 1873, son of Thomas Condon and Mary Condon, formerly Rodgers. Godparents – Felix McEleaney & Bridget Nolan. [This certificate was accompanied by a letter from Rev. Primavesi stating that he had searched 1865-1885 and "you are the only Condon baptized". I later searched these registers myself to verify this.]

married and born in Newry, County Down, Ireland. Mary's eight-year-old son Thomas Miller was the other member of the household, and also born in Liverpool.<sup>3</sup>

*Since I knew the street address where John was born, I had assumed it would be easy to find his parents living at that address at the time of the 1871 census. How wrong I was! I wrote to Salt Lake City in early November 1980 asking for advice about which microfilm reels to order; these would be sent from Salt Lake City to Saskatoon for viewing there. I received an answer in late December, sent a copy of the reply (by mail) to Saskatoon, they ordered the films in early January and on 5 March 1980 I received a phone call that the films had arrived. It was not until early May that I finally was able arrange to drive to Saskatoon and excitedly look at my first microfilm. Five months to accomplish a search that today would be a mouse-click away! These records are now online and indexed and can be searched in a matter of minutes. Research back then was definitely a pains-taking process! Amazingly, I found the family by doing a line-by-line search of the census schedules. Although they were not living where I had expected to find them, they were in the same neighborhood. I didn't realize at the time how serendipitous it was for me to find the family enumerated somewhere on the two reels I had ordered. The population of Liverpool in 1871 was 489,000<sup>4</sup> and the census enumerations filled thirty-two microfilm reels. Beginner's luck!*

## John's Childhood

The next census was taken in England in April 1881 and this provided the earliest "snapshot" of the family after John's birth—and confirmed the family tradition. At that time, eight-year-old John was living at 19 Simpson Street with his elderly grandmother Catherine Rodgers and his twenty-year-old half-brother Thomas Miller.<sup>5</sup> His parents may have already died. Catherine is listed as a widow although later research indicated her husband was still alive (a long-term patient in an institution several kilometres away.)<sup>6</sup> She may have lost contact with him when he was moved from one institution to a more distant one; I can't help but wonder how she could have communicated since neither could read or write. John spent his early childhood years living in the poverty-ridden dock area of Liverpool. He probably attended the nearby St. Peter's Boys' School run by the Catholic clergy and nuns—and affiliated with the church in which he was baptized.<sup>7</sup>

*Records from Salt Lake City and two trips to Liverpool enabled me to find out quite a bit more about the Rodgers family, although I have still not been able to find out anything more about John's father Thomas Condon.*

John's grandparents, Owen and Catherine (Lavery) Rodgers, had come from Northern Ireland (if the census entry is correct) to Liverpool with their eldest son sometime before 1831, when their next son Thomas was born in Liverpool. The known children were John (born in Ireland about 1826), Thomas (1831), Charles (1833), Mary (1834; died 1836), Ellen (1836) and Mary (1839). This second Mary was the one who married Charles Miller in 1861 and had one known child before Charles died in 1868. All the known Liverpool-born children were baptized at St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church, on Park Place.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Cathrine Rodgers household, 1871 Census of England and Wales, Liverpool, Lancashire, England, Piece RG10/3776, ED 5, folio 147, page 86; FHL microfilm 841,889.

<sup>4</sup> Marjorie Kohli, *The Golden Bridge: Young Immigrants to Canada, 1833-1939* (Toronto: Natural Heritage Books, 2003), 5.

<sup>5</sup> Catherine Rodgers household, 1881 Census of England and Wales, Liverpool, Lancashire, England, Piece RG11/3616, Enumeration District [ED] 6, folio 37, page 68, household 392; Microfilm 1,341,866, Family History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah. [FHL]

<sup>6</sup> This research is detailed on page 4.

<sup>7</sup> Edward McGuinness (Headmaster 1886-1927), *History of St. Peter's Seel Street*, Class number 942 DAN – Liverpool Record Office and Local History Department, Liverpool Public Library, William Brown Street, Liverpool, England. [It is my theory that John Condon attended this school, based on two facts. 1) proximity and his baptism parish. 2) A 1930 postcard from Rev. Primavesi to John Condon suggests he contact Mr. McGuinness for details about his childhood, implying that Rev. Primavesi presumed John had attended that school.]

<sup>8</sup> See page 16 for details and citations .

*When we visited Liverpool in 1989 with Darryl, it was a thrill to be able to visit this church and talk to the parish priest. The building was built in 1827 and so was the actual site of the Rodgers family baptisms. Darryl's great-grandmother had been baptized there in 1839 and it was amazing to us that—one hundred and fifty years later—we could be in the exact spot where that event had occurred.*

## **Liverpool 1841-1871**

It is important to have some idea of the social conditions that existed in Liverpool during these years. It is not possible to know why the Rodgers family left Ireland to come to Liverpool when they did. They were not famine immigrants since they came well before those years. By the time Queen Victoria ascended the British throne in 1837, Owen and Catherine had been there for several years. Many Irish immigrants came to Liverpool for employment, as the bustling docks provided more employment than was available in Ireland. The area around the Liverpool docks was overcrowded, and, for the most part, the people were poor and living in squalid conditions.

The Rodgers family was located in the 1841 census living on Newbird Street.<sup>9</sup> There were three families in the same dwelling. Thirty-four-year-old Owen, a labourer, is listed with his thirty-five-year-old wife Catherine, fifteen-year-old John (also a labourer), eight-year-old Charles, four-year-old Ellen, and fifteen-month-old Mary. It is presumed that Thomas (who would have been nine years old) had died at a young age. These years were tumultuous ones in Liverpool. The famine in Ireland had a big impact:

"In 1847 alone no fewer than 300,000 refugees from famine sailed to Liverpool, a great many of them crammed on the decks of so-called coffin ships... their only possessions the ragged clothes in which they stood, herded together, drenched by spray. More than a quarter of this half-starved host stayed in the already grossly overcrowded port... They dare not apply for parish relief because this so often meant being sent back to Ireland... At one period it was estimated that 23,000 children were running wild in the dockland area alone; and yet one of every two children born in Liverpool at that time died before reaching the age of eleven."<sup>10</sup>

The city had to contend with an outbreak of typhus in 1847, and in 1849 the city endured a major cholera epidemic with over 5,000 deaths among the estimated 15,000 to 20,000 actual cases.

By 1851 the family had moved to 5 Court on Bell Street.<sup>11</sup> Labourer Owen was forty-seven years old, his wife Catherine was forty-six, and daughters Ellen, fourteen, and Mary, twelve. Neither twenty-five-year-old John nor eighteen-year old Charles was living there; they may have died, married, moved elsewhere, or emigrated. The family's living conditions were likely difficult as a "court" in this time period was not a pleasant place to be.

"A court was a series of houses grouped around a narrow paved yard and set at right angles to the main street. Access to the court was through a single, narrow entry from the street. There could be several courts off one road and the houses of one court would back on to the houses of another court. These court dwellings became places where sickness and disease spread. There was often only one water pump or tap for each court and one lavatory to be shared between the houses, which were badly overcrowded. A number of families lived in one house and sometimes whole families would live in one room or even in a cellar."<sup>12</sup>

In 1854 there was another cholera outbreak with 1,290 deaths; four years later, an 1858 outbreak of scarletina resulted in the deaths of over 1,100 children.

Owen Rodgers was admitted to the medical section of the Liverpool Workhouse in June 1856 and remained there for ten days. He was described as being 57 years old, Catholic, his settlement being

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<sup>9</sup> Terrance Fagan household (includes Owens Rodgers family), 1841 Census of England and Wales, Liverpool, Lancashire, England, Reference HO107 565, ED 20, page 31; FHL microfilm 438,717.

<sup>10</sup> Howard Cannon, *Portrait of Liverpool* (London: Robert Hale & Co, 1970), 75-76.

<sup>11</sup> Owen Rodgers household, 1851 Census of England and Wales, Toxteth Park, Lancashire, England, Reference H.O. 107/2186, ED 1N, folio 279, page 26, household 104; FHL microfilm 087,193.

<sup>12</sup> "Port Cities - Housing Problems in Liverpool" Article. *E. Chambré Hardman Archive* accessed 31 January 2006 (<http://www.mersey-gateway.org/server.php?show=ConNarrative.107>).

"Ireland".<sup>13</sup> He was again admitted to the medical section on March 21, 1859, and was subsequently discharged on April 13th to the Asylum in Rainhill—about fifteen kilometres east of Liverpool.<sup>14</sup>

By 1861, sixty-year-old Catherine Rodgers was living at 28 Jordan Street.<sup>15</sup> She was listed as a "lodger" with the Gray family (one of five families at that address), and again states that she was born in County Down, and is married. Owen was enumerated as a patient of Rainhill Asylum, described as being 60 years old, married, and born in Ireland.<sup>16</sup> He was also enumerated in the same institution in 1871,<sup>17</sup> and in a similar institution in 1881;<sup>18</sup> where he died in 1888.<sup>19</sup>

*What a tragic life history is suggested by these records! It is almost impossible to comprehend how difficult his life must have been. For someone to survive for almost thirty years in these institutions must have been a rare occurrence. The living conditions may have been even worse than those in the workhouses.*

*Owen was a resident of a "Lunatic Asylum". It is important to understand how lunacy was defined in the mid-nineteenth century. An 1856 dictionary contains the following definition:*

*"lunatic - one who has had an understanding, but who, by disease, grief, or other accident, has lost the use of his reason. A lunatic is properly one who has had lucid intervals, sometimes enjoying his senses, and sometimes not."<sup>20</sup>*

*The term was applied to persons with many different afflictions in addition to mental illnesses. Today, we would recognize these ailments as Alzheimer's Disease (not recognized until 1906), epilepsy, Parkinson's Disease, Huntington's Disease, Multiple Sclerosis and other debilitating neurological disorders. In today's world, such institutions and their patients are described in gentler and more "politically correct" terms.*

Relative to the 1861 census, it is not known where Owen and Catherine's older children were enumerated. Their daughter Ellen, who would have been twenty-four years old, may have married by the time the census was taken. When twenty-two-year-old Mary had married Charles Otto Miller in March of that year, they both indicated their residence to be 26 Jordan Street, but when the census was taken in April, the young couple was one of the four families living at 36 Beacon Street.<sup>21</sup> Charles was thirty-two years old, born in Denmark, and a seaman with the Merchant Service; no occupation is shown for Mary.

*When Charles applied for a marriage license, he declared that he and Mary were both single, both over twenty-one years of age, and both residents of Jordan Street. (The actual marriage record states this to be 26 Jordan Street for both of them.) This demonstrates a typical practice at that time. The couple may not have*

<sup>13</sup> Liverpool Workhouse Admission and Discharge Registers 1841-1928. Liverpool Record Office File 535SEL19/9 Register #2408. [FHL microfilm 1,648,027 Item 2]

<sup>14</sup> Liverpool Workhouse Registers, File 535SEL19/10 [FHL Microfilm 1,648,028 Item 2]

<sup>15</sup> Alice Gray household, 1861 census of England and Wales, Liverpool, Lancashire, England, Piece RG9/2679, ED 24, folio 46, page 17,; household 85; FHL microfilm 543,011.

<sup>16</sup> Patient Owen Rogers, 1861 census of England and Wales, Sutton, Lancashire, England, Piece RG9/2754, [ED] County Lunatic Asylum, Rainhill/Sutton, folio 118, page 12, patient 15; FHL microfilm 543,024.

<sup>17</sup> Patient O. Rogers, 1871 census of England and Wales, Sutton, Lancashire, England, Piece RG10/3867, [ED] County Lunatic Asylum Rainhill, folio 148, page 1, line 2; FHL microfilm 841,937.

<sup>18</sup> Patient Owen Rogers, 1881 census of England and Wales, Whittingham, Lancashire, England, Piece RG11/4248, [ED] Lancaster County Lunatic Asylum, folio 89, page 19, line 13; Image from <Ancestry.com > database downloaded 4 March 2006.

<sup>19</sup> Owen Rogers, entry of death, volume 8e December 1888, page 478, no. 330, certified copy issued 22 March 2006 by General Register Office, London, England.

<sup>20</sup> "Bouvier's Law Dictionary, Revised 6<sup>th</sup> edition (1856)" database, *Online Dictionary at Datasegment.com* accessed 4 March 2006 (<http://onlinedictionary.datasegment.com/word/lunatic>).

<sup>21</sup> Charles O. Miller household, 1861 census of England and Wales, Liverpool, Lancashire, England, Piece RG9/2658, ED 55, folio 124, page 34, household 202; FHL microfilm 543,008.

actually both resided there. "Giving the same address avoided paying for two sets of banns in different parishes. Residence was established by putting a suitcase in the bride's house for three weeks."<sup>22</sup> The census taken a month later states that one of the residents at 26 Jordan Street was "Ann Jones". This is the same name as one of the witnesses to Charles and Mary's marriage. The same census shows Mary's mother living next door at 28 Jordan Street—likely where Mary resided. Charles, being a mariner from Denmark, may not have had a permanent address.. Incidentally, their marriage record is the only source found which gives an indication of what kind of labourer Mary's father was; Owen is said to be a "stevedore".

Charles and Mary's son Thomas was born in December 1861 at #2 Court, Jordan Street. It can be assumed that conditions in this court would have been similar to the one Mary had lived in as a child. By 1864, living conditions in the courts were of such serious concern to the Liverpool authorities that they banned the construction of any new courts. At the time it was estimated that there were almost 4,000 of them, consisting of nearly 18,000 households for approximately 110,000 people.<sup>23</sup> The courts and cellars were typical housing for the poorer area of Liverpool and its largely Irish population.

Still another cholera outbreak occurred in 1866 with over 2,000 deaths reported. Two years later, Charles became ill and was admitted to the medical section of the Liverpool Workhouse on 25 October 1868.<sup>24</sup> He was recorded as being forty years old, and a rigger by occupation; he died of dysentery in the Workhouse on 26 December of that year. Mary, at the age of twenty-nine, was widowed and left with seven-year old Thomas to support.

As mentioned earlier, Mary was still a widow at the time of the 1871 census; she apparently married Thomas Condon after that date. Several individuals with his name were enumerated in the 1871 census, but it is impossible to be sure whether any of them are the correct individual.<sup>25</sup>

*I have been unsuccessful in locating a marriage record for Mary (Rodgers) Miller and Thomas Condon despite extensive searches.<sup>26</sup> The 1873 birth and baptism records of their son John indicate that they were a lawfully married couple; Mary's maiden name and the surname of her first husband were appropriately recorded in the records. As to their marriage, the law required civil registration and—if they were married in a church—there should be a church record as well. However, many Liverpool churches sustained extensive damage during the bombing raids of World War II and records were lost at the parish level. On the other hand, the war did not affect the Civil Registration records, and the civil record of their marriage theoretically should exist.*

## **Admission to the Liverpool Workhouse**

As mentioned previously, when the 1881 census was taken, eight-year old John was living with his elderly widowed grandmother and his half-brother Thomas Miller. It is possible that his parents had died by then, or for some reason were living elsewhere. It has not been possible to identify Thomas and Mary Condon from among the persons of those names enumerated in the 1881 census.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Photocopy. This copy of a page from a genealogical guide book was made in 1984 and I did not note the source! It was from a book I no longer possess.

<sup>23</sup> Howard Cannon, *Portrait of Liverpool* (London: Robert Hale & Co, 1970), 75.

<sup>24</sup> Charles Miller entry, Liverpool Workhouse Admission Registers, Board of Guardians, Liverpool, England; Liverpool Record Office, record group 353 SEL, volume 19/25 (May 1868 – September 1869 L-Q) entry no. 267 (original registers).

<sup>25</sup> Details of this research is outlined in Appendix A.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

*I have made extensive searches for death records for both Thomas Condon and Mary (Rodgers) Miller Condon—under several name variations [see Appendix A]. The death certificates obtained either do not provide enough identifying information to be sure that they apply to John’s parents, or contain details which definitely indicate them to be other individuals of the same name.*

Life must have been difficult for young John; his grandmother was already seventy-four years old when he was born. In nineteenth-century England, it was quite rare for adults to live that long, and it can be assumed that she was probably not in the best of health during John’s early childhood. He was not yet nine years old when he was admitted to the Liverpool Workhouse on 9 March 1882.<sup>28</sup> In later years, he told his family that he was sent to the workhouse because his grandmother was too old to care for him. It is heartbreaking to think about such a young child being uprooted from what little stability he had known and suddenly placed in an institution. (Those familiar with Charles Dickens’ *Oliver Twist* or the musical *Oliver* have seen portrayals of the typical life of workhouse children.)

The first Liverpool Workhouse was built in 1732, and gradually expanded until it reached its final stage, when it extended more than a city block. At one time it was home to over 5,000 residents. There were workhouses in every major city in England, being operated by the authorities responsible for implementing the Poor Law. The British system of Poor Law mandated that every person had a place of “settlement”. A person’s birthplace dictated which jurisdiction (parish, village, city, country) was responsible for him/her in the event that government assistance became necessary. A jurisdiction was not obligated to provide help to those with a “settlement” elsewhere and had the power to send someone back to that home parish. For Irish-born British residents, this meant that their “settlement” was Ireland, and, in theory, they could be sent back to Ireland rather than become a burden to the British system. This resulted in a situation in which the Irish immigrants were extremely reluctant to apply for help, and many preferred to live under difficult circumstances rather than risk being deported.

When young John was admitted to the Workhouse, the record stated that his “settlement” was Liverpool, his father was Thomas “a seaman”, his mother was dead, he had never received parochial relief before, his condition at the time of admission was “alone”, he had slept the previous night at 27 Simpson Street, and was admitted by order of “J. Fraser”.

How poignant is the word “alone” and what does it mean? During that time period, there were thousands of homeless children throughout England—often referred to as “Waifs and Strays”. There was extreme poverty that resulted in begging and petty crime. The gangs of children portrayed in *Oliver* engaging in criminal activities historically did exist.

One of the most well-known advocates for Liverpool children was Msgr. James Nugent (1822-1905) who ministered to the Liverpool Catholics for many years, and who began the first Catholic philanthropic society dedicated to the poor and homeless Liverpool children. He was a strong proponent of the juvenile emigration program and personally accompanied groups of children to Canada as early as 1870.

“...Father Nugent had been appalled at the sight of the streets over-run by hordes of homeless vagabond children struggling for a precarious existence by theft, begging, and street trading in all its forms. There were newsboys, match sellers, shoeblacks... some of them not more than seven or eight years of age, girls as well as boys, ragged, barefoot, and starved. Many found their way to the prison or the workhouse, but many more were sharp enough to steer a wide berth of both places. At a later date, he estimated that there were some 23,000 children running wild along the Liverpool dockside.”<sup>29</sup>

John may not have been one of these homeless children, but he certainly would have been exposed to the living conditions described. His grandmother was still alive at the time of his admission to the Workhouse and may have been still residing at the Simpson Street address provided to the

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<sup>28</sup> John Condon entry, Liverpool Workhouse Admission Registers (original), Board of Guardians, Liverpool, England, record group 353 SEL, volume 18/13 (June 1881 – April 1883 A-K), entry no. 3445; Liverpool Record Office.

<sup>29</sup> Canon Bennett, *Father Nugent of Liverpool*, Second edition (Liverpool: Catholic Social Services, Archdiocese of Liverpool, 1993), 29.

authorities. (Six months later, when she herself was admitted to the Workhouse, the address mentioned was 25 Simpson Street.) During the week that John was admitted to the workhouse, there were 279 admissions, 333 deaths or discharges; the population at the end of the week was 3,076.<sup>30</sup>

After a week in the Workhouse, John was transferred to the Kirkdale Industrial School. The records of that institution reveal his admission on 17 March 1882 to Form [Grade] Three, an orphan, both parents dead, and indicate his discharge "to Canada" on 28 August 1884.<sup>31</sup>

In September of 1882 his grandmother Catherine (Lavery) Rodgers was admitted to the Workhouse Infirmary,<sup>32</sup> described as being old and infirm, the wife of Owen, a labourer. Her settlement was "Ireland" and she had never received any previous parochial relief. She was, as John had been, admitted by order of J. Fraser. It is not known who "J. Fraser" was, but he may have been one of the Overseers of the Poor, or a Workhouse staff member. The week of Catherine's admission saw 292 admissions, 276 discharges or deaths; the end-of-week population was 2,813.

### What Happened to John's Family?

Except for his name, very little is known about John's father, Thomas Condon. John's birth certificate records his father's occupation as "railway porter" and eight years later when John was admitted to the workhouse, he is said to be a deceased "seaman". Thomas' age, parentage and birthplace remain unknown; without these identifying details that may have been provided on a marriage record, it is impossible to select a "Thomas Condon" from census or death records and be certain it is the correct individual. [In 1936, John reported that his father Thomas had been born in Liverpool,<sup>33</sup> but in 1940 he contradicted this by stating that his father was Ireland-born.<sup>34</sup>]

The death of John's mother, Mary (Rodgers) Miller Condon, apparently occurred between his birth in 1873 and the 1881 census. The English death indexes do not record any "Mary Condon" having died in the Liverpool area during that time period, although she could have died elsewhere, or even married again. The indexes do contain numerous references of deaths for "Mary Miller". However, none of the certificates purchased for these deaths are applicable.<sup>35</sup>

Nothing more is known about the life of John's half-brother Thomas Miller. He may have married but not been in a position to care for his younger brother; he may have relocated, or he may have died. Although the name is quite common, the countrywide 1891 census index contains only one individual of a similar age who was born in Liverpool. He was living in Liverpool and is described as single, 28 years old, employed as a dock labourer. He was living in a lodging house that included 131 male lodgers, five male servants, and the family of the lodging house manager.<sup>36</sup> This could be the correct individual, but more proof is needed to be certain. No-one was found in the 1901 census with similar identification, except for a married 38-year-old individual who also had a brother Peter in his household—quite possibly the same individual found in 1891—and thus not likely "our" Thomas Miller (who was about two years older) and not known to have siblings.

*It is a major disappointment to me that I have not been able to trace Thomas Miller. If he survived and has any living descendants, they could be the only*

<sup>30</sup> See note 27.

<sup>31</sup> John Condon entry, Admission/Discharge Register (original), Records of Kirkdale Industrial Schools, Liverpool Board of Guardians. Record #353 SEL 24/3, admission number 16476, workhouse number 3445. Also, Jno. Condon entry, Classification Register March 1880-August 1885 (original), Record #353 SEL 23/1, number 16476; both records at Liverpool Record Office.

<sup>32</sup> Cath<sup>n</sup> Rogers entry, Liverpool Workhouse Admission Registers (original), Board of Guardians, Liverpool, England, record group 353 SEL, volume 18/14 (June 1881 – April 1883 L-Z) entry no. 6983; Liverpool Record Office.

<sup>33</sup> Condon- Carrière marriage, registration no. 281-1936, Province of Saskatchewan, Canada; certified photocopy issued 1 February 1988 by Department of Public Health, Division of Vital Statistics, Regina.

<sup>34</sup> James J. Condon 1940 National Registration (Dominion of Canada); Typed transcript received March 1989 from Statistics Canada, Census Operations Division, Ottawa, Ontario.

<sup>35</sup> See Appendix A.

<sup>36</sup> Henry Roper household, 1891 Census of England and Wales, Liverpool, Lancashire, England, Piece RG12/2920, Folio 67, Page 29, Enumeration District 15, St. Anne's Parish.

*known British relatives from the "Condon" side of our family. It is even possible that he immigrated to North America, and these descendants could be in North America. Perhaps some future researcher will be more successful in this search than I was!*

## Emigration to Canada

After two years at the Kirkdale Industrial School, [James] John was discharged to Canada on 28 August 1884. He was part of a group of one hundred children under the sponsorship of the Liverpool Catholic Children's Society who left Liverpool that same day as steerage passengers on SS *Sarmatian*. The ship sailed first to Londonderry and left there the next day for the eight-day voyage to Canada with a total of 533 passengers on board. The Children's Society group comprised 39 boys (under twelve), 29 girls (under twelve), 29 males (over twelve) and 3 females (over twelve). The passenger list records him as "Jas. Condon, age 10".<sup>37</sup>

*Although John's early Liverpool records consistently refer to him as "John", throughout his life he used the name "James John". When the "James" was added is not known, but the passenger list recording his voyage to Canada lists him as "James", even though the record discharging him from the school—on the same day—refers to him as "John".*

*Finding James/John on the passenger list was another item of my earliest research. This search was undertaken in Regina in August 1980 long before I knew any of the details of his life in Liverpool. All I had to start with was that he had come about 1885. Because the microfilmed passenger lists for this time period were available at the Archives in Regina, I began a line-by-line search working backwards from 1885. Again, that I found him at all was amazing, especially considering the poor quality of the films. And I was very excited in the subsequent years to find that the date he was discharged from the Industrial School matched exactly with the date on the passenger list I had found. Today, since the whole subject of "Home Children" has become better known, many more records are available on-line. The National Archives of Canada website<sup>38</sup> now includes indexed lists of home children, and his entry can be found in a matter of a few mouse-clicks—made easier since there are only six "Condon" entries in the entire database!*

SS *Sarmatian* was the first straight-stemmed Allan steamship. It was iron-hulled, 370 feet in length, 42 feet wide, and had three masts and one funnel. It was capable of speeds up to 13 1/2 knots (about 25 km/h) and had a capacity of up to one thousand passengers. It had been built in Scotland in 1871 and was in use until 1908 when it was scrapped in Rotterdam.<sup>39</sup>

The *Sarmatian* arrived in Quebec City on Sunday, 7 September 1884. When these groups of children arrived in Canada, they usually were placed in receiving homes until they could be assigned to a family and/or employer. Unfortunately, it has not been possible to locate any records that would identify where this group—and James particularly—were placed either temporarily or permanently. Catholic placements in Canada were sometimes dependent on local priests,<sup>40</sup> and there were Catholic receiving homes in Montreal, Ottawa and Kingston. It is not known whether James went to any of them; Kingston would have been the closest geographically to his first known residence in Addington County.

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<sup>37</sup> Jas Condon entry, SS *Sarmatian* Passenger Manifest, 7 September 1884, Ship #87 Ticket #09073; in *Passenger Lists for the Port of Quebec 1884-1886*; National Archives of Canada microfilm C4534.

<sup>38</sup> ([http://www.collectionscanada.ca/archivianet/020110\\_e.html](http://www.collectionscanada.ca/archivianet/020110_e.html))

<sup>39</sup> "Sarmatian 1871" article, *The Ships List*, <<http://www.theshipslist.com/ships/descriptions/ShipsS.html>> accessed 10 March 2006.

<sup>40</sup> Letter dated 28 October 1986 from Phyllis Harrison, Penticton BC to Eileen Condon. Ms. Harrison is the author of the 1979 book *The Home Children*. [See bibliography.]

## Ontario 1884-1905

Not much is known about this period in James' life. He had told the family that he was placed with an Ontario family in Ontario, and had lived in the Tweed-Stoco area in Hastings County. The family thought that he may have lived with a "Carey" family, but knew no other details. He told stories of having seen Prime Minister John A. McDonald in Belleville. [Sir John A. McDonald died in June 1891 at his home in Ottawa, so James would have been younger than eighteen at that time.]

Many years later, a co-worker in Lebret recalled:

"... what Mr. Condon told me how he was treated in Canadian homes. He was telling me he was barefooted whole summer chasing cows home often toes bleeding on stony pastures. I don't remember if he did say anything about the places he stayed in Ontario. He was a man very independent, smart and very proud. He didn't like to talk about the past. ...I remember Mr. Salamon telling me... he [Condon] was an orphan and had nobody."<sup>41</sup>

The first Canadian census in which James would have been enumerated was taken in April 1891—seven years after his arrival. He was living near Harrowsmith in Addington County in Ontario, working on the Alexander Charlton farm, said to be sixteen years old, born in England of England-born parents.<sup>42</sup> This village is now in Frontenac County north of Kingston. It is not known if this would have been his first placement, or if he had spent time in other homes.

The family also believes that James worked for a while in a logging operation, either in Ontario or northern Minnesota. It was common at that time for Ontario men to seek employment in the timber industry during the winter months and then return to their homes in the spring. The Ottawa River was one of the busiest logging centers in the nineteenth century. The loggers cut the trees, and shaped them into square timber; they then tied the timber together in large rafts which were floated down the Ottawa River. Workers would "ride" the rafts and sometimes temporary shacks were built right on top of the rafts for the journey which could take up to six weeks. James Jr. recalls his dad telling him about an incident that happened while he was "walking" on the moving logs in the river. He remembered it as being very dangerous and difficult to maintain one's balance on the swift-moving logs, and that he fell in the water and had to be rescued. He was hurt in the accident, and did not return to the same job, but was employed in a safer area of the logging camp.

Few clues to his life in Ontario remain. Among his personal possessions was a postcard addressed to "Mr. Denis Charbineau, Stoco, Ont." It had been mailed on 9 March 1909 (and apparently subsequently returned). The reverse side has a photograph that he (Condon) had taken of the interior of the old church in Lebret. Photography was a life-long hobby of his. He had a camera long before they were a common household item and was often the "unofficial" photographer for Lebret events.<sup>43</sup> Also found was a prayer card inscribed: "To my dear Godfather... Mary St. John".

*Subsequent research revealed that there were several Charbonneau families in the Tweed-Stoco area, and only one had a son named "Dennis". In 1909, he would have been 29 years old, and was the probable recipient of the postcard. It has not been discovered who "Mary St. John" was or where she may have been born. There were also several Carey families in the area.*

James was also enumerated in the April 1901 Ontario census. He was listed as a lodger (but in a separate household) with the family of Stoco merchant Patrick Murphy. There apparently were two dwelling houses on the large property (459 acres) that Mr. Murphy owned in Concession Eight. The Murphy family lived in a six-room frame house and had six out-buildings (barns, stables, or other similar structures). James was renting a two-room frame dwelling on a half-acre parcel, and was said to be

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<sup>41</sup> Letter dated 17 April 1986 from Bruno Skalski, Fort Qu'Appelle, Saskatchewan, to Eileen Condon.

<sup>42</sup> Alexen Charlton household, 1891 Census of Canada, Portland Township, Addington County, Ontario, page 32, household #170.

<sup>43</sup> Very few of these photographs have survived, but, fortunately, some of the negatives have. Several years ago, Paul Grudniski found some on the Lebret property, and later passed them on to us. Although damaged, some may be suitable for printing, and are now in Darryl's possession.

twenty-seven years old, single, born 22 June 1874 [sic] in England, Catholic, a shoemaker, and that he had immigrated in 1884.<sup>44</sup>

*Since James did not marry or own land during his years in Ontario, he would not have appeared in church, civil or land records. Searches of the Catholic parish registers in Belleville, Tweed and Stoco have not revealed a reference to him acting as a godparent or baptism sponsor. His name is not found in Belleville city directories.*

How he heard about the Lebret Indian Residential School is unknown. The School's principal, Father Hugonard, occasionally traveled east to recruit employees and to talk to Ontario Catholics about his work in the west. This may be how and why James decided to head west to Saskatchewan. It is thought he arrived in 1905. The co-worker mentioned previously recalled that "he learned his trade in Ontario and through a priest he found the job in Lebret".<sup>45</sup> A family member has said that James was "gypped" by his Ontario employer and did not have enough money for the entire train trip to Lebret. He was forced to get off the train in Winnipeg and "went by pony express" the rest of the way.

### **Lebret 1905-1936**

James was employed at the Residential School primarily as a shoemaker and harness maker. At that time, the staff members, who also would have been responsible for shoe repair, made all the children's shoes. Another shoemaker hired by Father Hugonard was my grandfather Michael Salamon; the Salamon family arrived from Pennsylvania in 1908. A third shoemaker, Bruno Skalski, was hired some time later, and the three men began a life-long friendship. The School provided living quarters for the staff. Both Michael and Bruno were married with families, but as James was single, he probably had a small living space in the shoe shop, or a room in some other building in the School complex.

Saskatchewan and Alberta became provinces in 1905 and the following year, a special interim census was taken to determine the populations of the new territories. James was enumerated on that census.<sup>46</sup> The entry contains errors in the information provided; it is possible that Father Hugonard supplied the information to the census-taker for all his staff.

James continued to be employed at the School and was an involved member of the community. As mentioned, he had a life-long interest in photography, and photographed many special events at the School. Pageants, powwows and other gatherings were frequently held, and he took many photos of these events. He also had what was the first radio in Lebret—a crystal set.

Crystal radio receivers were first built about 1900. They required no batteries or electricity, and could be easily made at home with simple materials. When James acquired his radio (or possibly built it himself) is not known, but these types of receivers were most popular in the early 1920's, and continued to be used long after vacuum tube radios became common.<sup>47</sup>

The 1911 census records James employed as a shoemaker at the Lebret Industrial School and a lodger in a household of nineteen individuals headed by [Rev.] Joseph Hugonard.<sup>48</sup> He is single, thirty-five years old, born in England June 1875 [sic] of Irish origin, Roman Catholic, had immigrated in 1884, and had worked sixty hours in each of fifty-two weeks in 1910. Other than a widower with two young

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<sup>44</sup> James Condon entry, 1901 Census of Canada, Hastings County, Ontario, Schedule One, Hungerford Township, page 10, line 9, dwelling and family no. 95; National Archives of Canada microfilm no. T6472.

<sup>45</sup> Skalski letter of 17 April 1986.

<sup>46</sup> Joseph Hugonard household, 1906 Census of Canada, Saskatchewan, Qu'Appelle (District 15), Lebret (Sub-district 41), Qu'Appelle Industrial School. Pages 35-36, family 281, enumerated 21 July 1906.

<sup>47</sup> "Crystal radio receiver" website, *Wikipedia The Free Encyclopedia* <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crystal\\_radio\\_receiver](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crystal_radio_receiver)> accessed 5 February 2006.

<sup>48</sup> Joseph Hugonard household, 1911 Census of Canada, District 215, Sub-district 10 (Township 21, Range 13, W2nd), pages 3-4, dwelling/family 29, Saskatchewan; digital image by subscription, *Ancestry.com* <[www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com)> accessed 10 March 2006; from Library and Archives Canada microfilm no. T-20458.

daughters, the household comprised single adults. They may have all lived in one building or in several smaller buildings on the School property, but were all apparently considered to be in Rev. Hugonard's household.

Elsewhere in the same census the other shoemaker, my grandfather Michael Salamon, was enumerated with his family; they lived in a School-owned residence nearby. When Michael and Anna's youngest daughter Elizabeth Clara (my mother) was born in 1912, James Condon was asked to be her godfather. (Who could have foreseen that almost fifty years later their children would marry?). James was a caring and involved godparent who took a special interest in Mom's life; he helped her financially when she decided to become a teacher.

*I know firsthand about one of the special gifts he had given her. It was a small fountain pen with her name engraved (or embossed) in gold. I believe it was a gift for her high school graduation. For some reason, she gave it to me when I was about ten years old—and probably too young to be entrusted with it—and I remember taking it to school where one of the boys took it away from me. After more than a few tears, I eventually got it back, but unfortunately, somewhere over the years, it was lost permanently. What a special heirloom that would have been for us now!*

A special census of the Prairie Provinces was held in 1916, and James was enumerated in Lebret as "James John Condon", 41 years old, had emigrated from England in 1884, and was the owner/operator of a harness shop.<sup>49</sup>

The federal census of 1921 revealed a surprise when James was located in Abernethy, Saskatchewan, as co-owner/operator of a grocery store.<sup>50</sup> It is not known how long he lived there, as family members were unaware of this relocation. Abernethy is located about thirty kilometres from Lebret.

By the 1926 census of the Prairie Provinces, he was back in Lebret at the Industrial School as a shoemaker.<sup>51</sup>

In July 1930, James purchased property on "High" Street. It consisted of two lots with a dwelling, and he bought it from George Harrison for \$200.<sup>52</sup> It is thought he probably purchased this house as an investment, and did not reside there initially. At one time he rented it out for use as a bank.

In the mid 1930's there was a change of policy at the Residential School regarding the shoemaking operation there. It was decided that ready-to-wear shoes would be purchased for the children, rather than having all the shoes made by hand on site. This meant that three shoemakers were not needed to handle what shoe repair and harness work remained. Both James and Michael (Salamon) were terminated. No pension, no more supplied housing, no job! Michael was in his mid-sixties and thereafter his adult children supported the family. James began operating his own shoe repair business in the village.

The small shop was located on the south side of "High" Street close to the present-day Hotel. It may have been at that same time that he began to live in the nearby home he had purchased several years earlier.

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<sup>49</sup> James John Condon household, 1916 census of the Northwest Provinces, Saltcoats Division, Saskatchewan, page 6, dwelling 59; RG 31; digital images, The Generations Network, *Ancestry.com* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com)); from National Archives Canada microfilm T21943.

<sup>50</sup> Harry Town household, 1921 Census of Canada, Saskatchewan, Saltcoats District, E.D. 17, page 3A, dwelling/family 24, Village of Abernethy.

<sup>51</sup> Library and Archives Canada, "1926 Census of Prairie Provinces," database and images([www.bac.lac.gv.ca](http://www.bac.lac.gv.ca) : accessed 26 Feb 2019). Cit.

Date: 27 February 2019; Saskatchewan, Melville Electoral District 26, ED 42 Lebret Village, Page 7, Lines 5-24, Dwelling/Family #51 enumerated 15 June 1926, Industrial School. Line 24: shoemaker Jas J Condon 50 single, born England of Ireland-born parents, immigrated 1884, Canadian, speaks English (mother tongue), can read/write.

<sup>52</sup> Transfer of Land in Saskatchewan, dated 14 July 1930 (registered 3 October 1930) from George J. Harrison to James J. Condon; photocopy received from Land Titles Office, Regina, Saskatchewan, July 2000.

The family believes that he may have returned to Ontario on one or more occasions to visit acquaintances there. This would almost certainly have been before his marriage.

After more than sixty years of bachelorhood, in February of 1936 James married a young widow,<sup>53</sup> and acquired an instant family of seven children—the oldest not yet twelve and the youngest less than one year. What a major decision this must have been for him! A household of nine—after years of living alone—must have been quite a life-changing experience!

## Carrière-Grudniski Family

Germaine (Carrière) Grudniski had been widowed the previous year when her husband, Emil Grudniski—at the age of thirty-six—died of cancer in March 1935.<sup>54</sup> Emil was born 24 February 1899<sup>55</sup> in Kaczyka, Bukovina;<sup>56</sup> and is buried in Lebret. He was the incumbent Mayor at the time of his death and had operated a garage in the village for thirteen years. His death and illness had been a continuing sadness for the villagers. Lebret was—and still is—a small community. It probably has never had more than a population of about three hundred. Especially in those early years, it was a very close-knit and community-minded place in which to live. Everyone belonged to the same church and the same organizations and one person's misfortune became everyone's concern. As it happened, Emil was one of two young family men who were dying of cancer at that time. The other was my Aunt Agnes Paquin's husband Rosaire who died in June 1935; at the time his son Louis was only ten months old.

Before Emil died, the Grudniski family lived in the "DeCorby" house on "High" Street just east of the former McLennan-Fitzpatrick grocery store. After his death, Germaine purchased a house on "Low" Street for \$500 and the family moved there.<sup>57</sup>

Germaine was the eldest child of Cléophas and Clara (Gendron) Carrière who had come to Saskatchewan from Montreal about 1912. After living in Regina for two years, the family settled in Lebret where Cléophas operated a blacksmith shop. His brother Joseph was the parish priest in Lebret at that time. Germaine had three brothers and a sister. It is possible that Germaine (who was attending a convent school in Montreal) may have stayed in the east longer than the rest of the family. The recollection of some family members (unsubstantiated) is that she had contemplated becoming a nun and that her Dad went back to Montreal and brought her home. Cléophas' blacksmith shop was located on the south side of "High" Street east of the café. Clara (Gendron) Carrière died of cancer in Lebret in 1920 at the age of fifty and Cléophas died in 1929. Their son Armand operated a small confectionery/tea room (across the street from the blacksmith shop) in the early- to mid-thirties.

Family members have stated that Germaine had been working in Regina (possibly as a tutor, nanny or servant) when she met Emil. However, they were both enumerated in Lebret on the 1921 census. Twenty-five year-old Germaine was listed with her widowed father and siblings; no occupation is listed for her but her brothers worked in their father's blacksmith shop.<sup>58</sup> Emil, twenty-two years old, was recorded as being a motor mechanic employed in a garage, residing with a local family.<sup>59</sup> The garage was located a couple of doors west of the blacksmith shop on the same side of the street.

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<sup>53</sup> Condon-Carriere marriage, registration no. 281-1936, Province of Saskatchewan, Canada; certified copy issued 1 February 1988, Department of Public Health, Division of Vital Statistics, Regina. The record names parents.

<sup>54</sup> Emil Joseph Grudnizki, death registration no. 1605-1935, Province of Saskatchewan, Canada, certified copy issued 28 August 1987, Department of Public Health, Division of Vital Statistics, Regina. The record includes details of his burial in Lebret on 26 March 1935.

<sup>55</sup> Emil J. Grudnizki tombstone, Sacred Heart Cemetery, Lebret, Saskatchewan, Canada.

<sup>56</sup> An assumption based on the known birthplace of Emil's brother Rudolph in 1896.

<sup>57</sup> Transfer of Land in Saskatchewan, dated 19 September 1930 (registered 10 August 1940) from Albina Filiatrault to Germaine Grudniski; photocopy received from Land Titles Office, Regina, Saskatchewan, July 2000.

<sup>58</sup> 1921 Census of Canada, Saskatchewan, District 226 Saltcoats, SubDistrict 20, page 4 [Image 5/18], dwelling /family 38; digital images, Ancestry Operations Inc., *Ancestry.com* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com)); Village of Lebret.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.* Page 5 [Image 6/18] dwelling/family 41

Germaine and Emil were married in Regina in December 1922,<sup>60</sup> and likely remained in Regina until some time after their daughter Dorothy's birth in 1924. They then relocated to Lebret where Emil, a mechanic, operated the service station. The other children were all born in Lebret: Leo in 1925, Roy in 1928, Paul in 1930, Agathe "Terry" in 1932, Evelyn in 1933, and Alfred in 1935 (three months after his father's death).

Following their marriage in 1936, James, Germaine and the children moved to the "High" Street home. James built an addition to it, and sometime after, moved his shoe shop building to this property; a barn and chicken coop were also situated on the lot, and the family at various times had a cow, several chickens and a horse. Also located on the property was a building which the family always called "the shack". This had been a former cottage owned by neighbor Mr. Harrison and moved to a location in back of the residence. After James retired, the shoe shop building was sold and moved.<sup>61</sup>

On 18 March 1937, Germaine gave birth to a son, James Patrick. His father wrote the details of his son's birth in a small notebook. What a wonderful treasure to have—a birth announcement in his handwriting! We can only imagine how thrilled he was to become a father at the age of sixty-three!

*Several books have been published in which "Home Children" reminisce about their lives. Many of these children had unhappy childhoods before emigrating, and many were mistreated after their arrival in Canada. Nearly all of them were deprived of the usual family life most of us take for granted. A common theme is apparent in these stories; despite the past, they were all grateful for the benefits of life in Canada, and all seemed to possess an almost unlimited capacity to create a happy childhood for their own children. James Condon Sr. became such a loving and caring father quite late in life; he may have felt he had been given the opportunity for the "normal" family life that he had not had in his own youth. It was a challenge that many of us would not be willing to undertake.*

James Sr. had no military service. His name does not appear in the lists of the Canadians who served in the Boer War.<sup>62</sup> At the time of World War I, he would have been forty-one years old, and likely not eligible for military service. When Canada became involved in World War II, a national registration was undertaken for all male citizens—whether eligible for service or not. James Sr. completed this form on 19 August 1940<sup>63</sup> and included the following details about his life and origins: James J. Condon, Lebret, Saskatchewan, age sixty-seven, born in Liverpool, England 22 June 1873, of Irish origin, married, sole support of wife and seven children under the age of sixteen; parents born Wexford, Ireland, British subject by birth, immigrated 1884; had primary education only; fair health, a self-employed shoemaker with forty-seven years experience; also a harness maker of forty-seven years; can handle a horse, not able to do other farm work; no military service, never rejected for military service.

As the years passed, the older children left home. Dorothy married Ed Griffith in early 1943, Leo joined the Navy and served in World War II, Roy moved to Winnipeg and also saw military service in Korea, Paul went to work in Alberta before joining the RCMP, and Terry and Evelyn both moved to Winnipeg in the early 1950's. Alfred also went to Winnipeg to finish high school about the same time. James Jr. graduated from high school in 1956 and moved to Estevan (Saskatchewan) to work on a survey crew.

In 1958, Germaine suffered a stroke and was hospitalized for several months. She regained her speech but not her mobility; her entire left side had been paralyzed. From that time forward, she was bedridden and eighty-five-year-old James became her primary caregiver.

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<sup>60</sup> Grudnizki-Carriere marriage, registration no. 4414-1922, Province of Saskatchewan, Canada; certified copy issued 28 August 1987, Department of Public Health, Division of Vital Statistics, Regina. The record names parents.

<sup>61</sup> Handwritten notes of conversation with Evelyn (Grudniski) Heckert 1 July 2006.

<sup>62</sup> "Soldiers of the South African War (1899-1902)" database, *Library and Archives Canada* <<http://www.collectionscanada.ca/archivianet/south-african-war/index-e.html>> accessed 10 March 2006.

<sup>63</sup> James J. Condon 1940 National Registration (Dominion of Canada); typed transcript received March 1989 from Statistics Canada, Census Operations Division, Ottawa, Ontario.

James Sr. maintained a large garden, tapped the trees for sap (for syrup), and, after Germaine's health deteriorated, did the housework and cooking with limited outside help. He was always known as "Jimmy Condon", which is probably why his son was never known by this same nickname.

*James Jr. was (then and now) called "James" by his family members, and by the priests, teachers and other adults in the village. His classmates called him "Condy" and, to my knowledge, he didn't become known as "Jim" until after he left Lebret and had begun his adult life.*

James Sr. was an intelligent and well-read man despite his limited education. He apparently did not attend school in Canada, although the families who accepted "Home Children" were required to allow them to attend school until they reached the age of sixteen. This requirement was not always met, and the inspectors were over-worked and unable to supervise all the children. I remember that my Dad (Bill Maloney) always passed on the daily newspaper to Mr. Condon, and he read it cover to cover. He was interested in politics and world events and liked to discuss these topics. He also read the *Reader's Digest* regularly, and was interested in all types of sports. A life-long cigarette smoker; he rolled his own cigarettes by hand—using "Vogue" tobacco and papers. I can easily visualize him sitting in his favorite chair rolling a cigarette. My memories of him only extend back to shortly before Condy and I were married, at which time Mr. Condon was almost eighty-eight years old, and I was twenty—a significant age gap. My only personal recollection of him from my childhood years was seeing him in church and in Dad's grocery store, as he liked to do the grocery shopping and visit with Dad and other customers.

He was relatively healthy throughout his life, although he did have some recurring facial skin lesions that were malignant. He would travel to Regina by train for treatment (likely radiation) and would stay at the Champs Hotel on the corner of South Railway Street [Saskatchewan Drive] and Rose Street.

*Mr. Condon was so happy and proud at our wedding. Although Mrs. Condon's health prevented her from attending, she wore her best dress for our visit; we went to their house directly from the church. The photographs reflect what a special day it was for both of them. Mr. Condon attended the other functions and thoroughly enjoyed the whole day! After we were married and living in Regina, we travelled to Lebret most weekends and they always enjoyed our visits. Our time always was divided between the two homes. After Joanne was born, Mr. Condon told me over and over that for most of his life he could not even imagine ever having a child, let alone a grandchild! They were both doting and generous grandparents to Joanne, and later to Kelly.*

Mrs. Condon had to be hospitalized (Balcarres) in the summer of 1965, and it soon became apparent that she would not be able to return home. The care she required was more than he could handle. That same summer, it was obvious that his physical and mental capabilities were rapidly diminishing, and in early September, we brought Mr. Condon to Regina to live with us; he was ninety-two years old. We were in our early twenties with two young children, so it definitely was a challenge. At the time we lived in a small—very small—rented home on Harvey Street. There were two small bedrooms, a kitchen, living room and bathroom. [This house was almost identical to Evelyn's house in Winnipeg—same floor plan and square footage.] So, we moved Joanne's bed and Kelly's crib into our bedroom and gave the other bedroom to him.

Looking back, I now think that he may have had Alzheimer's—or just the senility of old age—but he was very disoriented and confused, and unhappy to be away from his life-long home. Our house was unfamiliar to him, and we had to be careful that one of us was always supervising him so he wouldn't wander off. We had home care come in to help with his bath and other personal care. One of our kindly elderly neighbours would supervise him when we travelled to visit Germaine. We would drop the girls off at Mom and Dad's, travel to Balcarres, and return to Regina the same day.

It was during those months, that we tried to ask him questions about his life, but we had definitely waited too long, and we were unable to obtain any information.

In early December we moved into our new home on Shannon Road, and now had three bedrooms and much more space. He was hospitalized in mid-December, and a few days before Christmas, the hospital staff told us he was well enough to come home; we were too naïve, inexperienced—and trusting—to doubt them. We didn't know that hospitals sometimes drastically reduce their staff for the holidays, and try to reduce the number of patients. It never occurred to us to refuse. Evelyn and Sam came to spend Christmas with us and she arranged with the family doctor in Balcarres to have him transferred to the hospital there. On Boxing Day, he was transported by ambulance to the Balcarres Hospital where he died a few days later (2 January 1966).

He probably wouldn't have thought that his life was unique, but it seems to me that it was, and he experienced events and situations that most of us never incur—or never will. He had to overcome the trauma of being separated from his parents and other family—and never knew what became of them; was relocated to a foreign country at a young age, probably endured hardship in his early years in Canada, worked hard for many years; and in his later life, raised a large family, and was a caring and patient caregiver to his wife for many years. Although physically he was a "small" man, he lived a very "large" and successful life.

[29 Jan 2006 – 8 Jun 2006; 13- 19 May 2014; 11-12 July, 2020 ]  
condonstory.doc

*This article was published in the Saskatchewan Genealogical Society's Bulletin in Volume 16 #3 (September 1985) page 132-138. It was not originally intended for publication, but was a summary of my research written for analysis by the Society's Librarian. She decided it was print-worthy, and it was published without any further editing or reformatting.*

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## ONE SEARCH FOR A JUVENILE EMIGRANT (PART 1)

### ANCESTOR: James John CONDON

Problem:     - To find date and place of his parents' marriage  
              - To find data on all grandparents  
              - To find information on time spent in sheltering home. Reason? Deaths of  
                  parents and grandparents?

Known:       John CONDON born June 22, 1873 at 23 Lydia Ann Street, Liverpool, England  
              Parents:        Thomas CONDON, railway porter  
                              Mary CONDON, late MILLER, formerly RODGERS  
              Birth registered: 17 September 1873 by mother, who signed with an "X"  
              Baptized:     St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church, Seel Street, Liverpool on  
                              June 25, 1873  
              Godparents:   Felix McELEANEY and Bridget NOLAN

John CONDON was sent to Canada under the sponsorship of the Liverpool Catholic Children's Protective Society, Liverpool on *SS Sarmatian*, which left Liverpool 28 August 1884, arriving at Quebec, Canada, 7 September 1884. Age on passenger list shown as 10 years old. He was part of a group of one hundred children. This Society ceased sending children to Canada in 1902; in 1894 it was located at 99 Shaw Street, Liverpool. Canadian receiving home was St. George's, Ottawa, Canada.

Public Archives of Canada advises:

“Microfilm reel C-4733 (1892-1904) covers the total extent of our holdings on that particular organization. (5 May 1983).

### CORRESPONDENCE:

Catholic Record Society, London, England:

“... cannot help you... do not do any genealogical research. But I would doubt if any records of the Society you name have survived as Liverpool archdiocese has not till now had an archivist and a great deal has been destroyed.” (22 December 1982)

Liverpool Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (10 September 1983):

“I do not hold out a great deal of hope of finding anything in the Liverpool Society's old records as almost all of them were destroyed in 1954 when the National Society took the Liverpool Society over.” (10 September 1983)

“Further to my letter... not been able to trace any record in the old Liverpool SPCC files. It appears that children who were sent abroad mainly arrived in USA. However, I have had a talk with the Liverpool Catholic Social Services and they tell me they may be able to help. Many of the children handled by them those days did go to Canada.” (4 November 1983)

**Catholic Social Services (Liverpool):**

“I have checked our records, but I have drawn a blank... majority of our records seem to begin in 1890.” (17 November 1983)

**Chancery Office, Diocesan Pastoral Centre, Ottawa, Canada:**

“St. George’s Home no longer exists. The Sisters of Charity of Saint Paul who looked after the Home left in 1934 to go back to England. No records were kept in Canada, therefore you might try the Sisters’ Motherhouse.” (4 June 1984)

**SEARCH RESULTS TO DATE**

**(A) 1871 Census, Liverpool (FHL Microfilm #841889 – Sub-Registration District 455, Sup. District 5A, Enumeration District #5)**

28 Greetham Street (near Lydia Ann Street)

#499	Michael Redmond	head	Mar	27	tailor	New Ross, Co. Wexford, Ireland
	Mary I	"	Wife	27		Liverpool
	Thomas Quinn	boarder	Unm	54	solicitor	Newry, Co. Down, Ireland
#500	Catharine Rodgers	head	Mar	74		"
	Mary Miller	dau	Wid	32	charwoman (unempl)	Liverpool
	Thomas "	grson	Unm	8	scholar	"
	Grace Williams	lodger	Unm	54	late a cook	"
	Ellen Wainwright	visitor	Mar	55	waistcoat maker (unempl)	Dublin
	Mary Purdy	"	Wid	73	vendor of fruit	Liverpool
#501	Bridget McBoyd	head	Wid	47	seamstress	Sligo, Co. Mayo, Ireland [sic]
	Thomas "	son	Unm	24	labourer	Liverpool
	James "	son	Unm	20	painter	"

74 Gilbert Street (intersects with Greetham)

# 69	Owen Nolan	head	Mar	28	tailor	Ireland
	Bridget "	wife	Mar	28		Ireland
	Eliza "	dau	Unm	5		Liverpool
	John "	son	Unm	3		Liverpool

23 Lydia Ann Street

#202	Francis Goodwin	head	Mar	30	Bricklayer’s helper	Ireland
	Ellen Goodwin	wife	Mar	20		Ireland
	Catherine "	dau	Unm	1		Lancs. England
#203	John Oliver	head	Mar	64	cotton porter	Ireland
	Jane Oliver	wife	Mar	50		Ireland
#204	William Morgan	head	Mar	42	cotton porter	Ireland
	Bridget Morgan	wife	Mar	50		Ireland
#205	John Connor	head	Mar	30	labourer (brass founders)	Ireland
	Therese Connor	wife	Mar	28		Staffordshire, Hanley

I assumed I had found my people. Mary MILLER, widowed, living with her mother surnamed RODGERS, and her son Thomas MILLER. First husband must already be dead and so she could have married Thomas CONDON in 1872 before John CONDON was born in 1873. Catherine

RODGERS listed as “married”—where was her husband? Could Thomas QUINN, who was born in same place as Catherine, be her brother? Could Bridget NOLAN, living around the corner, be the godmother on John CONDON’s baptismal certificate? Incidentally, John CONDON’s church of baptism on Seel Street is only a couple of streets away.

**(B)** Sent to St. Catharine’s House for marriage record of Thomas CONDON and Mary RODGERS, indicating her first marriage as MILLER. Received a reply:

“Search has been made in the indexes to marriages registered in England and Wales during the years 1870-1874 inclusive, but no trace has been found of an entry agreeing with the particulars you supplied.” (15 May 1981)

**(C)** Searches of marriage Indexes for England and Wales (Family History Library, Salt Lake City) – Searched the indexes of 1868, 1869, 1870, 1871, 1872, 1873 and 1874 myself; checked CONDON, RODGERS, MILLER, to find matching bride/groom entries. Found nothing, but concentrated mainly on those listed in 8b, 8a areas, believing this to be the Liverpool area. Also rechecked using misspellings such as LONDON, CONGDON, KONDON, CONDIN, LONDIN, CONDEN, LONDEN, CONLIN, etc. However, am not satisfied that these searches were conclusive. Have since been advised that errors do exist in the indexes and it is sometimes possible that a marriage can be found by ordering certificates with only the name of the bride OR groom. Have not pursued this.

Note: Most of the persons I have discussed this matter with (all non-professional genealogists however) seem to think that the evidence points to the fact that Thomas CONDON and Mary (RODGERS) MILLER were indeed married. But there is always the possibility that a marriage never took place, I suppose.

**(D)** Searches of marriage indexes for Mary RODGERS and \_\_\_\_\_ MILLER

FHL Microfilm #55924:	RODGERS, Mary	Liverpool	8b	117
	MILLER, Charles Otto	Liverpool	8b	117

Ordered this certificate and believe it could be Mary RODGERS’ first marriage, and fits in with the age of Thomas MILLER (8 years old in 1871 census). The certificate contained details: March 3, 1861; St. Michael’s Established Church [Church of England], Liverpool. Groom Charles Otto MILLER 32 bachelor, mariner, 26 Jordan Street, Father – Charles Miller, mariner. Bride Mary RODGERS 21 spinster, 26 Jordan Street, Father – Owen Rodgers, stevedore.

Note: 26 Jordan Street is also in the area previously involved. Mary’s age seems to fit with the 1871 census age. She signed with an “X” (as on baptism certificate).

**(E)** Searched death indexes for death of Charles Otto MILLER.

FHL Microfilm #951788	MILLER, Charles	40	Liverpool	8b	187
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Ordered this certificate. It could be the correct one. Age seems to fit; Brownlow Hill Street is not very far away. The certificate contained details: Charles MILLER died on 26 December 1868

at the Brownlow Hill Workhouse, aged 40 years, dysentery, Occupation "Rigger" [a marine-related occupation??]

**(F)** Search of 1851, 1861 and 1881 censuses

Brief searches of these censuses did not show any repetition of my names at the addresses found in 1871. However, at the time of these searches, I did not have the "26 Jordan Street" reference, so this was NOT searched. I did search in 1881 for the 99 Shaw Street reference (possible site of Sheltering Home located there in 1894). However, it was a private dwelling of a slate merchant, his wife, five children and six servants—a Mr. William Dawborn.

**(G)** IGI Searches

Our Genealogical Society has the 1981 IGI. I have not found anything conclusive, but further work could be done.

One possible birth record, which I have not followed up on:

Charles MILLER, son of Charles and Ann MILLER, 27 April 1828 Manchester Cathedral  
(IGI fiche, England, Lancashire, Page 47,452, Frame CO7)

**(H)** Searches of Death Indexes

I have only briefly examined some English death indexes for 1873-1876.

**CONCLUSIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS**

If any of the above is proven:

Mary RODGERS (born c1839-1840) daughter of Owen RODGERS and Catherine \_\_\_\_\_ (c1797- )

Charles MILLER (born c1828-1829) son of Charles MILLER

Thomas MILLER (born c1863) son of Charles Otto MILLER and Mary RODGERS

Thomas CONDON (?????)

**REMAINING SEARCHES TO DO**

Deaths:	Mary (RODGERS) CONDON	after 1873	(born c1839)
	Thomas CONDON	after 1873	(born _____)
	Thomas MILLER	after 1871	(born c1863)
	Catherine (____) RODGERS	after 1871	(born c1797)
	Owen RODGERS	c1870	[not on 1871 census]
Marriages:	Mary RODGERS/Thomas CONDON	c1872	
	Owen RODGERS/Catherine	before 1838	

Births: Mary RODGERS c1838 d/o Owen and Catherine RODGERS)  
Thomas MILLER c1863 s/o Charles Otto MILLER and Mary RODGERS

Census: 1861 - 26 Jordan Street Charles Otto and Mary (RODGERS) MILLER  
- Owen and Catherine RODGERS  
1871 - 26 Jordan Street  
- Brownlow Hill Workhouse

Liverpool City Directories: Do these exist and for what years?

Liverpool Railway records: Thomas CONDON (railway porter) – do records exist?

Parish Records: none searched

Sheltering Home: keep trying to locate some records either in England or in Canada

Sisters of Charity in England: Have not yet had a reply to my inquiry

Thomas MILLER: would be a half-brother to John CONDON. What happened to him?

November 1984

## ONE SEARCH FOR A JUVENILE EMIGRANT (PART 2)

The article that was published in the previous article of the *Bulletin* regarding my father-in-law, John CONDON, was a summary of my research during the five years ending in the fall of 1984. I had not made any further progress at the time the Saskatchewan Genealogical Society sponsored a research trip to Salt Lake city in May 1985. I went with a long list of specific searches in mind, and once again started with the Civil Registration Indexes for England and Wales.

### Marriage of Thomas CONDON and Mary MILLER (nee RODGERS)

The marriage record of John's parents still eluded me, so I searched the indexes again (for the fourth time!). In addition to again checking possible misspellings<sup>64</sup> of CONDON, I also searched every name that began with the letter "C" for any possibility. But I could not find any matching entries of bride and groom, or even a possibility for Thomas. Since Mary's name is more common, several references were found that occurred in the specific time period (1871-1874) that were possibilities, so I decided to order these marriage certificates even though I did not have a corresponding entry for a groom, and could only list a bride's name on the requisition. Certificates that are ordered from England through Salt Lake City are mailed directly to your home several weeks later, so it is a matter of waiting and hoping

### 1861 Census

From the marriage certificate for Mary's first marriage (to Charles MILLER on 3 March 1861), I now had a specific address to search the 1861 Census records. The 1861 Census was taken on April 7<sup>th</sup>, so I hoped to find the couple at that address or nearby. When searching census records in an urban area such as Liverpool, it is helpful and timesaving to consult the street index. The street index for this census of Liverpool is on microfilm and when I tried to find the listing for Jordan Street, I was disappointed to find that the entire "J" section had been omitted. The staff at the Family History Library was equally surprised! All was not lost, though, since I had a detailed map of the area and could easily look up adjacent streets to find the enumeration district and hence the correct microfilm number.

A word about maps. In my experience, it is absolutely essential to have detailed maps of the areas you are researching. The larger the scale—the better; the closer to the time period—the better. Until you fully understand the geographical area involved, you are at a disadvantage when it comes to the actual research. Finding the names of godparents, marriage witnesses, or other family members in the immediate neighborhood often contributes to the proof of a certain event.

The 1861 Census of Liverpool listed two households living at 26 Jordan Street. The first comprised a married woman, her three children, two boarders (sailor brothers from Norway), and

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<sup>64</sup> Such as London, Landon, Lardon, Lordon, Gendon, Gerdon, Gordon, Gondon, Gardon, Conlin, etc.

a seventeen-year-old servant girl. The second household (in the cellar) was Hugh and Margaret ROGERS (both born in Ireland) and their young son. The name caught my attention and could be a relative, although I would expect to find any of Mary's siblings to be born in Liverpool, as she apparently was. However, the name of the servant girl was Ann JONES—and one of the witnesses at Charles and Mary's marriage had been an Ann JONES. The same person? Probably. Why did both parties give her address as their place of residence? Where did they live after the marriage? I later learned that their first child was born at a Jordan Street address, so it is likely that they were in the area somewhere. When time permits, I will have to do a street-by-street search of the entire area and beyond in an effort to find them.

The search of the immediate neighborhood proved interesting. Living next door at 28 Jordan Street were five families, mostly of Irish origin. A lodger with the fourth family was sixty-year-old Catherine RODGERS, married, born in County Down, Ireland. I think this is probably John's grandmother. The age, birthplace, marital status, and neighborhood match the 1871 census data. Living in the cellar at 24 Jordan Street was a young couple: Hugh RODGERS (twenty-five years old, born in Liverpool, a cooper), his twenty-three-year-old wife Catharine (born in Dublin, Ireland) and a sixty-year-old widowed aunt born in Ireland. Is it possible that there is a connection here? Could Hugh be an older brother to twenty-one-year-old Mary (RODGERS) MILLER? They were both born in Liverpool; however, it will be necessary to find the marriage record of Mary's parents (Owen RODGERS and Catherine \_\_\_\_\_) before siblings can be determined.

In order to better interpret the census records, it is necessary to understand as fully as possible what this area of Liverpool and its people were like at this period in history. Thousands of Irish immigrants poured into England at the time of the famine in Ireland.

"In 1841 it was estimated that over 400,000 inhabitants of Great Britain had been born in Ireland; many more tens of thousands were born in Britain of Irish parentage. The great majority of these were Catholics, and among the poorest-paid labourers; most of them lived in London and in the industrial towns. In Liverpool and Manchester anything between one-fifth and one-third of the working population was Irish."<sup>65</sup>

In Liverpool these lower working-class people were crowded into tenements and courts in an area near the dockyards where many of them worked. Many of the men were sailors or had other marine occupations. The women were fruit vendors, factory workers, charwomen, servants, and other similar occupations. It must be remembered—when relying on listed occupations on census records—that a respectable-sounding occupation did not always reflect the actual situation. This holds true for any census, in any country and in any time period. An understanding of living conditions in the area of interest will help to evaluate and interpret the census. It is sometimes necessary to read between the lines!

So my area of interest was at that time a crowded, impoverished, working-class neighborhood close to the harbor and docks. There were many Irish and other immigrants and it was a difficult life. Infant mortality was extremely high. Adult mortality was high as well, and in the late 1870's in this area, the life expectancy for a male was thirty-eight years. The head of the

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<sup>65</sup> E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, 1<sup>st</sup> Vintage Edition, (New York: Vintage Books, 1966, c1963), 249.

household in many instances was a widow. You will also find many households with a married woman listed as head of the household. This was partially due to the fact that so many of the men, being sailors, were often away from home. Also, sometimes the husband lodged nearer his place of employment while the wife and children lived elsewhere. Life was especially difficult for the children. One child in four did not reach its first birthday. One out of every two babies born in Liverpool at this time died before reaching the age of eleven.

Another difficult in tracing these families is that they were very mobile. They moved from place to place easily if conditions were a bit better somewhere else. Their possessions were few and probably could be carried relatively simply. They moved—sometimes only a few doors away—to evade debt-collectors, or they were evicted. Life was extremely harsh and they struggled to survive. They were not always able to register births, be officially married, etc. It is surprising that any record of their lives exists at all!

### Birth of Thomas Miller

The birth of John's half-brother was another source of information, so I again searched the Civil Registration indexes. Working backwards from his age on the 1871 census (eight years), the date of his parents' marriage (1861), and the census indication that he was born in Liverpool, I searched the years 1861-1864. The name is fairly common, but I found three possibilities and again ordered certificates for all three.

### Marriage of Owen and Catherine RODGERS

I searched the indexes from 1837-1842 (calculating their daughter Mary to be born c1839). For events occurring prior to 1837, it is necessary to use other sources. I checked Boyd's Marriage indexes (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> series), which have separate indexes for brides and grooms. I did not find the marriage. However, since Boyd's indexes do not include most of the Liverpool parishes<sup>66</sup>, I was not too surprised at my findings. If Mary was born in Liverpool, it is possible that their marriage occurred there also. Parish records will have to be searched for this marriage; the civil registration indexes should be re-checked. Scotland and Ireland records must be considered, and other existing sources must be investigated. Catherine's maiden name would be a big help!

### Death of Catherine RODGERS

Since Catherine was listed on the 1871 census (taken April 2<sup>nd</sup>), I began my search in that year, concentrating on Liverpool entries. Finding nothing by 1877, and remembering that English death certificates do not usually provide much genealogical information, I abandoned this search for the time being. Our Salt Lake City trip was coming to an end.

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<sup>66</sup> Cecil R. Humphrey-Smith, editor, *The Phillimore Atlas and Index of Parish Registers*, 2<sup>nd</sup> rev. ed. (Chichester, England: Phillimore, c1995)

## 1881 Census

I started a street-by-street search for any mention of these people. I also checked carefully all hospitals, institutions, schools, orphanages, and the Liverpool Workhouse. Knowing that John immigrated to Canada in 1884 at the age of 11, it was likely that in 1881 he could have already been under the guardianship of the authorities, possibly the Liverpool Catholic Children's Protective Society, which had been listed on the passenger list as the sponsor of the group of one hundred children with which he had sailed. After many hours of searching, it was with great excitement that I found the following household listed among the five families at 19 Simpson Street:

Catherine RODGERS	Head	80	Wid		Ireland
Thomas MILLER	Grandson	20	Unm	dock labourer	Lancs. Liverpool
John CONDON	Grandson	8	Unm	scholar	Lancs. Liverpool

Simpson Street is in the immediate vicinity and intersects with Jordan Street! This entry, if I accept it to be the correct one, leads to many questions. Where was Mary—the boys' mother? Where was Thomas CONDON—John's father? Were they both dead? Had one or both of them abandoned the family? Were they living elsewhere? And what was life like for this hardy old Irish grandmother raising an eight-year-old in difficult circumstances, with Thomas' wages probably the only means of support for the family? But, despite the questions, the entry also provided answers, and I had another specific date to work with. The fact that Thomas was working, and that John was apparently attending school, provided more insight into their way of life.

I found this entry approximately one hour before we had to leave the Library in Salt Lake City for our return bus trip to Regina! Time was running out, so I once again turned to the Death indexes to see if Catherine had died soon after the census taken that year on April 3<sup>rd</sup>.

## Death of Catherine RODGERS

I began searching the indexes from 1881 onwards. An entry in the fourth quarter of 1885 sounded promising:

Catherine ROGERS	86	8b (Liverpool)	Volume: Dec. 1885	Page: 101
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I quickly ordered this certificate and left Salt Lake City satisfied with my searches and results, but frustrated that this final discovery had come so late in the week that I did not have time to pursue it!

## Birth of Mary RODGERS

Many of those reading this article have probably already noticed a very significant oversight in my research. I realized this myself on the return bus trip, and although it had been on my list of searches to be made, somehow I had neglected to undertake the one search that should have been done before some of the others. I had neglected to search the Civil Registration Indexes for the birth of Mary RODGERS! I knew her father's name, her mother's first name, that

she was born in Liverpool, and a probable year of birth (1839). Since this is after the commencement of civil registration in 1837, had I found the birth, I would have obtained Catherine's maiden name, as well as an address that could be used to check the 1841 and 1851 censuses. It would also provide more information about her father, Owen RODGERS, and his occupation at that time. Indeed a very significant omission—which will be first on the list for any future trip to Salt Lake City!

### Certificates

I had ordered six certificates while in Salt Lake City. Needless to say this is an expensive and somewhat inefficient method of searching, but often necessary if other methods fail. When the certificates arrived several weeks later, I received some good news and some bad news! The two marriages listing Mary MILLER as the bride were not the correct ones. Of the three birth certificates ordered for Thomas MILLER, one was correct:

Thomas MILLER, born 22 December 1861, at 2 Court, Jordan Street. Son of Charles MILLER, seaman Merchant Service, and Mary MILLER, formerly RODGERS. Registered by Mary on 8 January 1862, signed with an "X", her residence stated as 2 Court,, Jordan Street.

So there was Jordan Street again! Further evidence that I should be able to find Charles and Mary somewhere in the neighborhood on the 1861 census!

The death certificate for Catherine had also been the correct one, despite the spelling variation:

Catherine ROGERS, died 3 November 1885 in the Liverpool Workhouse, of senile decay. Occupation listed as wife of Owen ROGERS, general labourer, 28 Simpson Street.

Simpson Street again—although not the same house number as one the 1881 census. I had not expected to find a reference to a husband, this being the first death certificate—for a female—that I had ever ordered from England. If this is typical, it would seem to justify the expense of obtaining a death certificate for a female ancestor—either as a first source of that information—or as proof that you have found the correct death.

### Conclusion

One of my first goals when I began this research several years ago was to locate the marriage record of John's parents. I have still not found it, and it is possible that I may never find it. There may not have been a marriage. And when my other findings are summarized on a pedigree chart, it may seem as though I have not made much progress over the years. But, I feel that, in some ways, the disappointments and dead ends along the way have been valuable experience that I can apply to other research. I learned a great deal about research methods and sources, gained a better understanding of nineteenth century Liverpool, and developed a keen interest in the entire subject of juvenile emigration and its ramifications—on both sides of the Atlantic.

Many searches have yet to be done—or repeated. As many researchers have discovered, sometimes a search done once is worse than one not having been done at all. If nothing is found, there can be a tendency to rule out that source in the future. It is all too easy to miss something the first time. When more details are known and one has become more experienced, it is well worth rechecking any source. All it takes is a little time and patience!

The final article in this series will deal with some other sources that I have used, correspondences that have been established, the results of my recent visit to Liverpool, and my efforts to learn more about John's childhood as a "home child" in Canada.

I would welcome any comments or suggestions about this research problem.

### ONE SEARCH FOR A JUVENILE EMIGRANT (PART 3)

The previous two articles in this series summarized my research into the background of a "Home Child" by using the most common sources and methods: the IGI, census records, parish records, vital records of births, marriages and deaths, and printed certificates. Besides these more obvious sources of genealogical information, results can often be obtained by more indirect methods, such as establishing correspondences, answering and inserting queries in various publications, and searching for possible school and institutional records. These are usually more time-consuming methods but sometimes are the most useful and rewarding. And one never knows just which letter will be the one to contain the vital missing information!

For the benefit of those who may not have read the first two articles published in this Bulletin in 1985 (Volume 16, #3 and #4), I have been attempting to trace the early history of my father-in-law, JOHN JAMES CONDON, who was born in Liverpool, England, in 1873. His parents apparently died while he was very young and his elderly grandmother cared for him. In 1884 he was part of a group of children sent to Canada under one of the juvenile emigration schemes in operation at that time. He arrived in Quebec, aged eleven years, and was assigned to a rural home somewhere in eastern Canada.

#### Letters to Liverpool

One of the first things I did when I began this research several years ago was to attempt to contact other CONDONs in Liverpool. At that time I did not know whether there might be other descendants still living in England—a potential valuable source of information. A trip to the Regina Public Library yielded several Liverpool telephone directories. Since CONDON is not a common surname, I was not surprised to find that there were only twenty-two listed in the 1978 directories for Liverpool and the immediate surrounding area. I wrote to them all and received about ten replies. None were able to relate their families to my information about John CONDON and his parents (Thomas CONDON and Mary RODGERS, widow of Charles MILLER). I received a detailed and lengthy reply from an elderly gentleman, coincidentally also named Thomas CONDON, who did not have a telephone but who had been given my letter by another member of his family. I have continued corresponding with him over the years and he has been extremely helpful. He has provided me with maps, information, and newspaper clippings about the area as it was then and is now, exchanged his family history, and has checked various church records in the local library. He is not involved in genealogical research himself, but still has been a valuable contact and friend.

#### Liverpool and District Family History Society

Membership in the genealogical society of the area you are researching is very important. I joined the Liverpool and District Family History Society in 1981, and after not receiving immediate answers to my queries, decided to let the membership lapse. Another mistake! And

one common to beginners—a lack of patience! It takes time to collect information little by little, and one of the best ways of doing this is to keep in touch with what resources and services the local society can provide and what projects its members are involved in. Articles and photographs are published that often pertain to the general history of your area, even if not specifically involving your family. I rejoined the Society in 1984 and obtained almost immediate results from another query!

### A Letter from Wales

Help often comes from the most unexpected sources and as a complete surprise! About a year ago our SGS librarian asked me to reply to a inquiry she had received from someone in Wales who was also trying to locate information about a “Home Child”. Our librarian had already checked all the available sources here in Regina and thought I might be able to add a little. In my reply to the inquiry, I had outlined my own research problem, comparing it to hers and offering possible suggestions and sources that she may also find helpful. I did not ask her to do any research for me and was totally taken by surprise when several months later I received a lengthy letter from Wales. She had spent several hours in Liverpool libraries, had checked cemetery records, city directories and church records on my behalf. She had also visited the Liverpool Catholic Social Services—with whom I had been corresponding—and searched the admission and discharge records of the Liverpool Workhouse. These records are located at the Liverpool City Library, which also holds the records of the Liverpool Catholic Children’s Protective Society. These records are not open to the public and may only be searched by library personnel upon written permission of the Liverpool Catholic Social Services officials. She confirmed some of my own research and provided me with some entirely new and valuable information from the records of the Workhouse:

Charles MILLER, admitted 8 October 1868 to the hospital section, age 40, died 25 December 1868

Catherine ROGERS, admitted 12 September 1882, age 82, 25 Simpson Street. “No release—taken as died”

These entries agreed with the information I had obtained from the death certificates and would seem to the correct persons.

The information about Catherine RODGERS was especially helpful because it narrowed down the time period that John CONDON would have been under the guardianship of the authorities. He came to Canada in 1884 and, assuming he entered the Workhouse about the same time as his grandmother in 1882, there were only two years unaccounted for.

I was very grateful for this valuable assistance and began to think that maybe I was finally heading in the right direction.

## A Query Answered

Another pleasant surprise arrived in August 1985 when I received a reply to my query in the Liverpool and District Family History Society's publication! A Liverpool member had also checked the Workhouse records and found the following additional entry:

Thursday, 9 March 1882. John CONDON, age 8 1/2, religion RC, Settlement Liverpool, Father Thomas, a seaman. Mother dead. Observations: "alone". Parochial relief before: No. Slept last night at 27 Simpson Street. Located to School.

She also had checked the workhouse school records and found the following important entry:

John CONDON, age 9, admitted to the school on 17 March 1882. Father dead. Mother dead. Discharged 28 August 1884 to Canada.

Subsequent searches of the Select Vestry Minutes revealed that fifty workhouse children were entrusted to the Liverpool Catholic Children's Protective Society at a cost of £8 per child passage money and £3 for an outfit of clothes.

So there it was—finally! After all the years of research, an unexpected reply to my most recent query had provided me with the answer! I was confident that from this information I would be able to search these records of the Children's Protective Society and obtain full genealogical information about John and his parents.

I had already obtained written permission to search these records myself and so it was with great excitement that I looked forward to an upcoming vacation trip to England. I hoped to be able to get to Liverpool and spend some time in the Record Office!

## Liverpool City Record Office

The Liverpool Record Office is located in the central libraries complex on William Brown Street in Liverpool. It was an interesting experience to attempt research in an English library, as the system differs somewhat from that used in Canadian and American libraries. One significant difference was the "card catalogue" which consisted of a large number of small loose-leaf books. Each binder outlined a different category of record source and it meant looking through all of them and then trying to guess possible subject categories to check. It was more time-consuming than the familiar A-Z listing of subjects, titles and authors, as is found in our libraries—not to mention the modern computer catalogue such as we are fortunate to have here in the Regina Public Library! Another difference was that each item had to be requisitioned in writing. A library staff member would bring the item to you, carefully recording it against your name in the attendance register. Liverpool at that time was on the verge of a general strike and the library staff was "working to rule" so my progress was a little slower than desired. I would have benefited greatly from talking to someone thoroughly familiar with the library and its genealogical materials. Looking back now, I know that I should have attempted to arrange a meeting with a member of the local genealogical society for some assistance.

Since I had only a limited time, it was of major help that I already knew the exact dates and, in some cases, the file numbers. I would not have had the time to become familiar with the library procedures, determine which records to search, and also to carry out the searches.

### The Liverpool Workhouse

The records of the Liverpool Workhouse consist of large thick hand-written ledgers. They measured approximately 18" x 24" x 4" and were extremely cumbersome and awkward to handle. Once requisitioned, the library staff brought them out on large wheeled cars. Each volume contained the records of three or four months and only for a portion of the alphabet. Without the exact dates, it would have taken days to go through them all. It was not difficult to imagine a Dickens-like clerk sitting on a stool and laboriously entering names and details in these ledgers with a quill pen! I was surprised to be allowed to handle the original records. I hope that they have been microfilmed!

I was again grateful for the information that enabled me to order the exact volumes and to be able to confirm the information previously received, adding a few details:

Name:	John CONDON	Catherine ROGERS
Date of Admission:	Thursday, 9 March 1882	Sunday, 11 September 1882
Age:	8 1/2	82
Settlement:	Liverpool	IR [Ireland]
Religion:	RC	RC
By whose order admitted:	J. Fraser	J. Fraser
Where located in house:	School	Infirmary
Father:	Thomas, a seaman	
Mother:	Dead	
Spouse:		Wife of Owen, a labourer
Condition at time of admission:	Alone	Old and infirm
Where slept last night:	27 Simpson Street	25 Simpson Street
Parochial relief before:	No	No

At the end of each week's entries there were summaries of the current number of residents. These summaries were very interesting and led to speculation on what the living conditions must have been like.

Inmates beginning of week:	3130	2797
Admitted this week:	<u>279</u>	<u>292</u>
	3409	3089
Discharges and deaths:	<u>333</u>	<u>276</u>
	3076	2813

The Liverpool Workhouse was constructed in 1771 and was apparently the largest in England. It is difficult to imagine three thousand persons being housed in this structure that, at the time of my interest, was already one hundred years old. The building was located on the site of the present Roman Catholic Cathedral, construction of which began in 1928. The Workhouse must have been demolished some time prior to that date.

I would have liked to have had the time to do a detailed year-by-year search of the registers to see if John's parents had been admitted during the period from John's birth in 1873

to his own admission in 1882. Hopefully, I will be able to have someone undertake this search in Liverpool for me.

### Kirkdale Industrial School

I also checked the records of the Kirkdale Industrial Schools and found the record confirming the fact that John CONDON, an orphan, had been placed there from the Workhouse, to Form 3, and discharged to Canada. The 1881 census had indicated that he had been attending school at that time, so I also checked for records of several possible neighborhood schools, including the one connected to his church of baptism—St. Peter's Seel Street. Nothing conclusive was found, but the old records were extremely interesting. One 188 report from His Majesty's Inspector states:

“The efforts made by the manager to promote regular attendance and to civilize and elevate these, for the most part, rough lads, deserve the fullest sympathy and commendation.”

### Other Searches

Although I already had a copy of the baptism certificate for John CONDON, I searched the records of St. Peter's and photocopied the original Latin entry. I could not find a marriage entry for his parents, which was not a surprise since others had looked for it before. The priest who had sent John his baptism certificate in 1928 had stated that he had “looked through our books from 1865 to 1885 but you are the only Condon baptized.”

Not many of the records for St. Michael's Pitt Street (Church of England) have survived. This church was heavily damaged during World War II and was later demolished. The baptism records remain for the years surrounding the 1861 birth of Thomas MILLER, but I could not find a baptism entry for him. The marriage records have not survived.

As previously mentioned, I had received written permission to search the records of the Liverpool Catholic Children's Protective Society, and after years of trying to locate them, I was hopeful of finding the answers to many questions about John's parents, their marriage, deaths and so on. However, I was to be disappointed. There was no file for him. I can only guess at the reason for this. Because this Society was listed on the passenger list for these children, I had always assumed that John had been under their jurisdiction in England. However, it now seems that he had been under the guardianship of the Liverpool Workhouse who paid for his passage, and that this group of children simply traveled together with those for whom the Protective Society was actually responsible. It may be that I have found all the information that exists about John's Liverpool childhood.

Unfortunately, time did not permit me to visit the actual streets and vicinities of interest in Liverpool. However, the entire area has long since been redeveloped and rebuilt so the chance of viewing actual buildings was remote. Maybe some day I will have a chance to return to Liverpool for a longer stay.

## Home Children in Canada

Although I have now learned several facts about John's early life in England, and know that he was sent to Canada in 1884, there is still a large portion of his early life in Canada that is unknown. *SS Sarmatian* with its five hundred and thirty-three passengers arrived in Quebec City on 7 September 1884. But I have not been able to determine where the children were sent from there. One of the receiving homes used by the Liverpool Catholic Children's Protective Society was St. George's Home in Ottawa, but efforts to locate the records have not been successful. There were several other receiving homes throughout Quebec and Ontario from where the children were assigned to rural families in those provinces.

It has recently come to my attention that the Barnardo Homes are now in the possession of many of the records of these Canadian receiving homes—even those administered by other agencies. One of our members has recently received full details of her "Home Child" from this source, even though Dr. Barnardo had not sponsored the child. Inquiries should be addressed to:

Director, Registration Office and After Care Services  
Dr. Barnardo's Homes  
Tanner's Lane, Barkingside  
Ilford, Essex, England      1G6 1QC

A great many of these "Home Children" were not well treated in their new Canadian homes. They were looked down upon, blamed for petty crimes, often misunderstood and abused. They came mainly from heavily populated urban centers in England, yet were generally placed in rural situations in Canada. It is not too surprising that these lonely little children, uprooted from another culture, had some difficulties. The sponsoring families were required to educate them until age 16. However, in many cases, this requirement was not met. They were treated as hired hands, sometimes kept apart from family members, and the routine inspections legislated by the authorities did not always take place.

In John's case, I have not yet been able to determine exactly where he was placed. Family members think it might have been in Hastings County in Ontario, but I have not been able to locate any mention of him in school and church records of the township. As a child of eleven, he should have been sent to school in Canada. The newly released 1891 census should reveal his whereabouts, but it might be a time consuming page-by-page search.

This emigration scheme continued into the 1920's in Canada. It was somewhat controversial both in Canada as well as in England. In 1924, the British government appointed a delegation to come to Canada to inspect the entire system. It was a ten-week study and its report recommended that children not be sent to Canada before the age of fourteen. The Canadian government endorsed the recommendation and the emigration program gradually drew to a conclusion.

There are many of the "Home Children" still living. In books, articles and television interviews, they all tell a similar story. Most of them have experienced a lack of love in their early childhood, together with experiencing extreme and harsh living conditions on both sides of

the Atlantic. In later life when they married and had children of their own, they greatly appreciated and valued the family unit. Many of them are not bitter about their early situations, saying that it has helped them become stronger and more independent persons. Many realize that the alternative to emigration—remaining in the industrial slums of England’s larger cities—would have been less desirable.

I have found the entire subject fascinating and my research will continue. There are still many searches possible and new approaches to be tried.

The genealogist encountering a “Home Child” on his family tree has a unique opportunity to become more personally involved with one of the more intriguing aspects of Canadian history.

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### Unexpected Feedback

“I have read your three articles in the Saskatchewan Genealogical Society *Bulletin* with great interest. Your method was so intriguing, and by the third part, when you had some luck, I was really rooting for you! I just wanted to congratulate you on writing something so interesting. My own grandfather was a Barnardo boy; his time with his employers was as difficult as the stories usually describe, but he spent his adult life telling anyone who would listen how lucky he was to have been sent here under the scheme... Your emphasis on how much the adult Barnardo children appreciated family life was well-taken by the examples in our family. Keep up the good work.”

(6 April 1986 - Ryan Taylor, Editor, *Branch Notes*, Waterloo Wellington Branch OGS)

“I found all three of your articles most interesting, but I must admit the Workhouse entry for JOHN CONDON in 1882 brought tears to my eyes, “alone”, a word applied to any human being is awful, but that poor little child with no parents really knew the meaning of that work, didn't he? Thank God, there were good kind people who tried to help such children, and ease their suffering. Ten years ago when we founded the society we did not know how it would take over our lives, but if we had not, there would have been no publication to put your query in, and your success alone makes it all worthwhile.” (14 August 1986 – Harold Culling, Honorary Secretary, Liverpool & District Family History Society, Liverpool, England)

## Our 1989 visit to Liverpool

*This was written at 6:00 a.m. on Monday, 7 August 1989 in Liverpool, as I wanted to record my impressions of the previous day's activities while they were still fresh in my mind. Darryl was with us as well.*

The thrill of a lifetime—to visit the ancestral streets!

[We walked Lime, Ranelagh, Hanover, Seel, Slater, Duffolk, Lydia Ann, Kent to Upper Frederick (could not get down Pitt to Greetham), Greetham, Park Lane, Jamaica, Blundell, Simpson, Jordan, New Bird, Newhall, St. James (back to RC Church at Hardy); St. James Street to St. James Place, Park Place (to St. Patrick's Church) back along Park Place etc to Parliament, stopping to peer down Ashwell [a square block around Britton Street blocked off]; on down Parliament and into Brindle Street; down to Chaloner, Wapping. "Baltic Fleet" pub on corner of Grayson; Carpenter's Row, Beckwith to Park Lane, Paradise Street, Hanover, Ranelagh and back to Lime Street.]

### 1. St. Peter's Church, Seel Street

Well kept old building, surrounded by dereliction. A spooky area—streets deserted except for a few vagrant men. While we were there they knocked at a door across the street and a nun came out. Doors of the church locked but services still held—now a Polish church.

Biggest impression of the entire area is how well I had pictured the area in my mind! It was like I had been there before—to see the same street names—Jamaica, New Bird, Simpson, Lydia Ann, and others—a very eerie sensation and strong feeling of "déjà vu". Also the fact that the distances were not far apart—St. Peters, 28 Greetham Street, and 23 Lydia Ann Street just a couple of minutes' walk! The factories and rice mill (also Phoenix Foundry). Buildings still remain—right where they should be!

Most of the area has been rebuilt and light industry taken over, but there were blocks and blocks of abandoned post-war housing developments—boarded up and not a sign of life—not a dog, cat, person. Like it was the last place left after a nuclear attack. The most eerie feeling I've ever had!

### 2. 23 Lydia Ann Street

Across the street from the above-noted development! Re-bricked buildings and nothing original left. But the oil mill fixtures, smokestack, etc, still there.

### 3. Kent Street

Site of old St. Michael's. Still church property, low-rise convent or school, seniors' home, etc.

### 4. Greetham Street

Cobbled but no buildings left. New development from Pitt north to Gilbert.

**5. Simpson Street**

Bricked up walls and buildings, deserted, down past existing warehouses and businesses

**6. Jordan Street**

Up Jordan (in shadow of Anglican Church) #28 must have been near #2 Court as buildings north of there numbered 10 and 12.

**7. St. Vincent de Paul Church**

Abandoned Roman Catholic Church on St. James & Hardy. No signs, boarded up and railed off.

**8. St. James Market**

To St. James Market site, now an open field, looked like existing building on Great George Place (between two pubs west side of square)

**9. St. Patrick's Chapel**

1827 to present. Old headstones—burial spot at one time. Met priest and got inside—emotional experience. Church needing renovations; they're trying but no money! Poor area and parishioners probably the people from the new developments. Surrounded by abandoned buildings.

Blundell west side; seems like original wall of Wapping Station could still be there.

Sailors' Home site (Paradise and Hanover), building gone but a billboard about the Home remains. A blue scaffolding structure erected on the site.

Mountie (sign) on the wall—Blundell and Chaloner; on rebuilt wall of shell of old building.

# The Life of James John Condon | Context Map



- 1. 23 Lydia Ann Street**  
*JJC Born 22 June 1873*
- 2. St. Peter's RCC**  
*JJC Baptized 25 June 1873*
- 3. 28 Greetham Street**  
*Mary Miller lived 1871*

- 4. St. Patrick's RCC**  
*Rodgers children baptized*
- 5. New Bird Street**  
*Rodgers Family - 1841*
- 6. 26&28 Jordan Street**  
*Catherine & Mary 1861*

- 7. RCC Cathedral**  
*Location of former Liverpool Workhouse*
- 8. 27 Simpson Street**  
*Last residence prior to admission to Workhouse*
- 9. Approximate location of Bell Street**  
*Rodgers Family - 1851*

## **Appendix A: (My Wish List)**

The following is a summary of the research that I have undertaken that has not yet produced the desired information and/or proof. Future researchers may be more successful than I was.

### **A. The marriage of Thomas CONDON and Mary (RODGERS) MILLER.**

A record of this marriage has not yet been found despite numerous searches:

1. Staff at the General Register Office, London searched 1870-1874 and “no trace has been found of an entry agreeing with the particulars you supplied” (*May 1981*)
2. -- I searched the microfilm indexes in Salt Lake City extensively and repeatedly 1868-1874 using various spellings. Brides as MILLER and RO(D)GERS. Extracted all “Mary Miller” entries 1871-1874 for 8a, 8b, 8c, 8d, 8e – none had matching entries for CONDON. Also for the several “Thomas Condon” entries there were no matching entries. Certificates received for two Mary Ann Miller entries – neither was the daughter of Owen Rodgers. (*1984-1986*)
3. Search made by V.A. Masters, Genealogist & Record Agent of the Hayes Computerised marriage index for Wales - Negative. (*June 1985*)
4. Search of Greater Liverpool Marriage Index by Harold Culling, Honorary Secretary, Liverpool & District Family History Society. Negative. (*September 1985*).
5. I searched Scotland Marriage indexes (and registers) 1870-72; one entry found for 'Thomas Condon' but bride was not Mary Rodgers. (*1986*)
6. I searched Irish marriage indexes 1869-1876 for both bride and groom. No matches found, despite numerous "Thomas Condon" entries. (*1986*)
7. Search made by staff of the office of the Superintendent Registrar of Liverpool Registration District – Negative (*May 1987*)
8. Search made by Patrick Neill, Liverpool, of marriage index to St. Augustine Roman Catholic Church. He also checked marriage registers of RC churches - St. Nicholas, St. Peter, St. Philip Neri, St. Vincent de Paul. All negative. (*September 1992*)
9. Searches made of the online indexes (Ancestry.com) that, while not providing images of the certificate, do show all names on the page. Extracted and cross-checked all Thomas CONDON, Mary MILLER, Mary RO(D)GERS entries. No matches. (Feb-March 2006)

### **B. Identification of Thomas CONDON in the 1871 census**

Since no personal details are known about Thomas Condon, it is not possible to identify the correct individual in the 1871 census. A “Thomas Condon” is named as the father of John Condon on both the baptism record, and the civil registration of this 1873 Liverpool birth. It is possible he was living in Liverpool in 1871, but it is also likely that he had not yet arrived in the city. The birth registration indicates his occupation as “railway porter”. This occupation does not refer to an individual who travelled on the trains in more modern times and was called a “porter”. In the 1800’s a “railway porter” would have worked at a railway station, and would have loaded baggage on and off the trains. The workhouse admission records of his son give his occupation as “seaman”.

There is an online index to the 1871 British Census. An England-wide search for “Thomas Condon” resulted in a list of only nineteen adults; none of whom lived in Liverpool, or

even in Lancashire, and none identified as “railway porters”. There was a twenty-one-year-old sailor on an unnamed ship whose occupation was “mate”. A broader SOUNDEX search resulted in hundreds of individuals of varying similar-sounding surnames; one was a Liverpool resident named “Thomas Condon”, a forty-three-year-old unmarried dock laborer, born in Ireland, and a boarder in a home on Furlong Street.

Although there was no “Thomas” in Liverpool, there were other individuals and/or families with that surname, including a “James Condon” family living at 59 Jordan Street—a street that has been significant in our Condon/Rodgers/Miller ancestry. And, it must always be remembered that spelling variants are common, and searching only for “Condon” severely limits the possibilities.

### **C. Identification of Thomas CONDON and/or Mary CONDON in the 1881 census.**

There is an online index to the 1881 British Census, and England-wide searches revealed seventeen adult individuals named “Thomas Condon”—three of whom lived in Lancashire County. [One of these three lived in Liverpool, and would have been twenty-four years old at the time of John’s conception—a possibility even though Mary would have been about ten years older at the time.]

Searches for an England-born “Mary Condon” resulted in twenty-two adults, only two of whom were Liverpool-born and residing in Liverpool. None of them was of the correct age to be John’s mother.

As it was possible that Mary and Thomas were not married, searches were also made using the same criteria to find a “Mary Miller”. There were three adult women of about the correct age, born in Liverpool, and residing in Liverpool, but the family structure of each household did not reveal a suitable match.

### **D. The parentage, birth and death of Thomas CONDON.**

It is irresponsible to assume that any death record located for an individual named “Thomas Condon” refers to John’s father, since no confirming details are available for comparison. However, with the increased information available on the Internet, it is possible to search English death indexes and easily order copies of the relevant registrations. A search of the ten-year period 1872-1882 yielded seventeen individuals (throughout England). Twelve of these were infant deaths, and of the remaining five adults, only one of them had died in Liverpool. He was indexed as being thirty-six years old—a possibility. This certificate has been ordered in the hope it will contain some details that would enable a connection to be made.

### **E. The death of Mary (RODGERS) MILLER CONDON.**

1. I have searched for the death of Mary (Rodgers) Miller Condon in the indexes 1873-1881 (Mary MILLER and Mary CONDON). There were several “Mary Miller” entries in Liverpool. Obtained seven certificates, of which none were applicable. Did further follow-up for one (30 July 1876 at 59 Simpson Street for 35-year-old Mary Miller, wife of Thomas Miller, seaman.

Have newspaper item about coroner's report, and have a record of her burial in Rice Lane Parochial (Free Ground) Cemetery, Walton. No proof that she is the correct one.

2. These indexes are now available online (Ancestry.com) and they were searched. Have ordered additional certificates for Mary MILLER. No likely Mary CONDON entries found. (Feb-March 2006)

#### **F. The marriages and/or deaths of siblings of Mary (RODGERS) MILLER CONDON.**

Since nine-year-old **Thomas** was not with enumerated with his parents on the 1841 census, it is assumed that he died prior to June 1841.

The oldest known child of Owen and Catherine Rodgers was **John** who was born in Ireland before the family emigrated. He is not enumerated with the family in 1851 when he would have been about twenty-five years old. He may have died, but he could also have married and lived elsewhere. Searches of the death and marriage indexes (1841-1851) reveal several individuals of that name, and extending the search beyond 1851 adds even more. It would require ordering numerous certificates to determine if any are correct. The same situation applies to **Charles** who was also not enumerated in 1851 when he would have been about twenty-four years old.

The last known reference for **Ellen** Rodgers was the 1851 census. Online indexes have been searched for a death or marriage 1850-1860 but have been unsuccessful in identifying her.

#### **G. The marriage and death of Thomas MILLER.**

The last known reference for Thomas was the 1881 census enumeration when he was living with his grandmother and half-brother John Condon. He may have died, moved away or emigrated; he may or may not have married.

Searches were made in 1995 in the microfilmed marriage indexes (1889-1890) that are on film in Salt Lake City. Three possibilities were found and certificates ordered. None had fathers named Charles. By 2006, these indexes were available online, and a search made for 1880-1890; two additional possibilities were found in 1887, and certificates not ordered at this time. Since it is not known if Thomas did marry, or where a possible marriage might have taken place, this is difficult research.

Thomas would have been 29 years old at the time the 1891 census was taken. The online census indexes (for Liverpool only) were searched for any of the above five couples in an effort to provide more details (birthplaces, age) but no positive identifying information was found. One individual is a possible match. He was single, twenty-eight years old, Liverpool-born, a dock laborer living in a large lodging house (121 male lodgers). A possibility only.

In the event that Thomas died in Liverpool after the 1881 census, a county-wide search (1881-1891) revealed seventy-two deaths. [It is a sad commentary on the mortality rate that twenty-six were for children under the age of ten.]. Only two entries were for men of the correct age and neither death occurred in Liverpool. These certificates were ordered.

## **H. The origins in Ireland of the RODGERS family; the marriage of Owen RODGERS and Catherine LAVERY.**

- 1) Ulster Family Research Services search commissioned. Report of John McCabe, Director, found no marriage record in their Family Register. He also searched the Flax Seed Premium records and Griffiths Valuations; several references were found for RODGERS and LAVERY individuals. *(November 1986)*
- 2) Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Armagh: search commissioned. Researcher Eileen Vallely found no marriage record, no birth record for either Owen or Catherine or their son John. She did find an "Owen Rodgers" born 21 March 1798 in Ardee Parish, County Louth, and a "Eugene Rogers" born 22 June 1786 in Drogheda Parish, County Louth. I did considerable further research on the 1798 Owen, but found his marriage in 1847 in Ardee Church records. This eliminated him as a possibility as "my" Owen was known to be in Liverpool 1831-1851. *(September 1990)*
- 3) Query placed in "Irish Heritage Links" No replies. *(November 1990)*
- 4) Undertook research in Salt Lake City in selected County Down records (based on the assumption that the census reference was correct) Attempted to identify parishes and townlands where both surnames were found. Many references to the surnames found in church, gravestone and Valuations records, but nothing to prove these are the correct people. *(1987-1990)*

## **I. Identification of known associates of the RODGERS family**

1. Owen and Catherine had 5 children baptized in St. Patrick's Church, Liverpool between 1831-1839. The godparents were: Patrick FEARN, Anne LAVERY, Patrick McEVOY, Bridget McCOMINSKY, James SLOAN, Mary CAIN, John FITZPATRICK, Bridget CAIN, Daniel RODGERS, and Mary RODGERS. Due to the frequency that all these names occur, it is almost impossible to determine who they were. It is traditional in Roman Catholic records for women to be identified by their maiden names, so it is not known if any of these women were married and to whom. Searches were made of the baptism records for couples of these names, but nothing found. The 1841 census is not yet indexed, although the subsequent ones are indexed online, there are too many same-name occurrences. A street-by-street search of the 1841 census would probably be more likely to find suitable candidates, but this has not yet been done and would be extremely time-consuming.
2. The same applies to the 1861 marriage witnesses for Thomas MILLER/Mary RODGERS who were Henry McSWEEN and Ann JONES. As mentioned earlier, I believe that the Ann JONES residing at 26 Jordan Street (the address given by both Thomas and Mary) is likely the marriage witness.
3. The baptism sponsors for John CONDON in 1873 were Felix McELEANEY and Bridget NOLAN. Neither has been positively identified yet.

## ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

(Books in my personal library.)

Ayers, Pat. *The Liverpool Docklands*. Liverpool, England: Docklands History Project, no date.

Sub-titled *Life and Work in Athol Street*, this book is about the people who lived and worked in the Liverpool Docklands, using the words and photographs of the people themselves to uncover the reality of life in a dockland community and how this changed over time.

Bagnell, Kenneth. *The Little Immigrants*. Toronto, Ontario: Macmillan of Canada, 1980.

Subtitled *The Orphans Who Came to Canada*, this book discusses the entire juvenile emigration movement, both from the standpoint of the children, and also from the sponsoring groups.

Bennett, Canon. *Father Nugent of Liverpool*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Liverpool, England: Catholic Social Services Archdiocese of Liverpool, 1993.

In 1854 Father James Nugent became concerned about the plight of thousands of homeless children in England. He was the founder of a philanthropic group in Liverpool now known as the Nugent Care Society.

Brack, Alan. *All They Need is Love*. Neston, South Wirral, England: The Gallery Press, 1980.

This is the story of the Liverpool Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (1883-1983).

Harrison, Phyllis, editor. *The Home Children*. Winnipeg, Manitoba: Watson & Dwyer Publishing Ltd., 1979.

This is a compilation of the personal stories of individuals who travelled from Britain as part of the British Child Emigration movement. I purchased this book directly from Ms. Harrison and corresponded with her in the early 1980's.

Kohli, Marjorie. *The Golden Bridge*. Toronto, Ontario: Natural Heritage Books, 2003.

Subtitled *Young Immigrants to Canada, 1833-1939*, this is a comprehensive resource which was extensively researched and incorporates background detail on agencies and key organizers who sponsored the groups of children.

May, Trevor. *The Victorian Workhouse*. 2002; reprint, Princes Risborough, Buckinghamshire, England: Shire Publications Ltd., 1997.

This book looks at the principles that lay behind the New Poor Law of 1834; at the design and construction of workhouses; and at the lives of those who entered them, either as officers or as paupers. It is illustrated with many drawings and photographs.

Parr, Joy. *Labouring Children*. Montreal, Quebec: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1980

Subtitled *British Immigrant Apprentices to Canada, 1869-1924*, this study of the child immigrants, based on original sources, presents new views on turn of the century childhood, evangelical social work and Canadian rural communities. It discusses these children through adulthood, and also presents how the movement ended after World War I.

*St. Patrick's 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Souvenir*. Liverpool, England: no publisher, 1978

This is a history of one of Liverpool's oldest Catholic church—St. Patrick's, Park Place, Liverpool; It mainly served the Irish population of south Liverpool. We obtained a copy of this publication in 1989 when we visited the church and its parish priest.

Woolley, Peter W. *Liverpool: A Portrait of a City in Old Picture Postcards (Volume 1)*. Nr. Market Drayton, Shropshire, England: S.B. Publications, 1988.

A nostalgic tour of Liverpool's historic waterfront and city center illustrated by old and rare picture postcards.