The provenance of the pioneer cradle in Dundas Museum

By W. Raymond Cummins

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The cradle on display at the Dundas museum on 19 Sep 2015 was, according to its receipt #134, donated to the museum in or before November 1958 by Mr. Ed. Morden and his son, Clifford Morden, of Rockton, Ontario.

Although they may not have realized it at the time, the donors were descendants of Samuel Morden but not of Ralph Morden. Samuel Morden was a contemporary of Ralph Morden and probably a relative of Ralph Morden. Ralph Morden was the deceased husband of the widow, Ann Morden (nee Durham).

It is very unlikely that Mr. William Edgar Morden or his son, Mr. Clifford Edgar Morden, could have been in possession of material from the estate of the widow, Ann Morden, who is widely recognized as the first settler in Dundas. She died in Middlesex County, Ontario in 1832.

It is more likely that the cradle was brought to Canada from Pennsylvania by their ancestor, Samuel Morden.

Mr. Clifford Morden had been born on the farm of his father Mr. Ed (William Edgar) Morden in Flamborough West Township in 1912. In 1934 Clifford and his wife Helen Blanche (nee McDonald) moved to North Adams, Massachusetts where their daughter, Marilyn Jane Morden, was born in 1935. In 1937 Clifford managed a store in Springfield Massachusetts. By 1950 Clifford was operating a grocery and butcher business in Dundas. In 1974 he operated a bakery in Dundas. He died in 1985 and was buried in Rockton Cemetery where is wife Blanche was also buried in 2001.

The other donor was Clifford ‘s father, William Edgar Morden, who was born in West Flamborough Township in 1878. He sold the family farm in 1918 and moved close to the village of West Flamboro on Highway 8. In 1945 he moved to a house at Bullock’s Corners. He died in 1951 and was buried in The Grove Cemetery in Dundas next to his wife, Florence Bertram “Bertie” Morden (nee Hanes).

Their ancestor, Samuel Morden, was born in Bucks County, Pennsylvania about 1845. He was the son of James Morden who wrote his will on 12 Apr 1758 and died in Northampton County, Pennsylvania in Apr 1760. In 1773, before the U.S. Revolution, Samuel Morden was assessed for taxes in Oxford Township, Sussex County, New Jersey. In 1786 he was named in the will of his father-in-law, John Van Etta, in Sussex County, New Jersey. Samuel and his family subsequently moved west to the wilds of Northumberland County, Pennsylvania where they were enumerated in Bloom Township in 1800. In 1802 he was assessed for taxes in the community of Little Fishing Creek there. That same year (1802) Samuel and most of his family (including his son Thomas) emigrated from Pennsylvania to Upper Canada. In 1811 Samuel Morden, a resident of Flamborough West, confirmed a petition of his brother, Daniel, for property in Upper Canada. We do not know where or when Samuel Morden died or was buried.

Samuel and his family came to Canada too late (1802) to be considered as United Empire Loyalists although many of his descendants have assumes that they are entitled to the UE designation.

The obituary of Thomas Morden published in *The Christian Guardian* on 9 Sep 1863 stated that he “… was born in New Jersey Oct 19, 1790 and came to Canada in 1802 settling in Flamboro West…”

Photographs of the donors, Mr. Ed. Morden and Mr. Clifford Morden, can be found on page 9 of the book entitled "*West Flamboro Township Centennial 1850-1950*" which was published in 1950 by the Centennial Committee chaired by Mr. Gordon R. Jackson for the Council of the Township of Flamborough West. Also pictured on the same page were the ancestors of Ed. and Clifford Morden back to Thomas Morden. The Morden genealogy and the story of Ann Morden presented on pages 9 & 10 in that book are not completely accurate.

Below is the pedigree of Mr. Clifford Morden:

Clifford Edgar Morden (1912-1985) born & died in Wentworth County

William Edgar Morden (1878-1951) born & died in Wentworth County

Peter Melville Morden (1850-1930) born & died in Wentworth County

Moses Morden (1821-1911) born & died in Flamborough West

Thomas Morden (1790-1863) born New Jersey died in Flamborough West

Samuel Morden (about 1745-after 11 Jul 1811) born Pennsylvania died in Flamborough West

James Morden (?- Apr 1760) died in Northampton County, Pennsylvania

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