

THE BARAGARS OF MANITOBA

Charles Arthur (1885-1936), Henry William (1887-1976), Francis Bell (1889-1943), Ernest Albert (1890-1960), Frederick Drury (1891-1964) and Sophia Jane (1883-1972) were the great, great, great grandchildren of Heinrick Berger of Churchtown, Columbia County, New York. Heinrick's son Jacob married Elizabeth Finkle in St. Paul's Anglican Church in Fredericksburg in Canada West. Elizabeth's father George Finkle had enlisted in the Royal Regiment of New York. It was through her that a land grant was applied for in that area.

Jacob's son Henry Berger became *Henry Baragar, married Catherine Rose, and along with his brothers served in the War of 1812 under Ketcheson. Henry's son Charles Baragar married Jane Ward and settled in Rawdon Township, Hastings County.

It was Charles Baragar's son Charles Inkerman Baragar who came to Manitoba in 1892. He bought land at Elm Creek in 1895, and was appointed Justice of the Peace in 1899. He won the first prize in all of North America for his alfalfa seed at the Dry Land Exhibition in Kansas City, Missouri in 1917. He was Secretary Treasurer of the Wingham School Board from 1905 to 1917 and Secretary Treasurer for the Quarterly Board of the Methodist Church from 1898 to 1917. Willingly he shared his great knowledge of nature with school students in the area and taught them how to prepare projects for school fairs.

The eldest son of Charles Inkerman Baragar and his wife Emily Bell was Charles Arthur. He attended **Wesley College in Winnipeg, taught school in the summers and graduated from the Manitoba Medical College in 1914, having specialized in Pathology. He went to work with Dr. D. A. Stewart at the Ninette Sanitarium to assist him with the treatment of tuberculosis in the province. However, in 1915, in spite of a heart condition caused by a childhood bout of rheumatic fever, he was called by Col. Blanchard to join his army medical unit in England.



L-R Francis Bell (Frank), Frederick Drury (Fred)
and Charles Arthur (Arthur) Baragar

After service at the front lines in France, his final posting was as Commanding Officer of the 2,000 bed Canadian Special Hospital in Lenham, Kent. Here he became very interested in patients with mental problems and shell shock. Upon his discharge, he was offered the position of Superintendent of the Brandon Mental Hospital by Dr. A.T. Mathers, the Dean of Medicine at the Manitoba Medical College. Before returning to Manitoba in 1920 he took special training in England and New York for his future work in Brandon, where he remained until he resigned in 1930 to become Provincial Psychiatrist for Alberta. While in England, Charles Arthur married Nursing Sister Blanche Eugenie Ledoux, who had been born in Quebec City but raised at McCreary, Manitoba. In 1936 he died and was buried in Edmonton.

The second Baragar son Henry William worked for the Bank of Hamilton before taking over the management of the farm from his father and experimenting with new types of crops. He became a

member of the Wingham School Board in 1917 and later served many years on the Elm Creek School Board. He and his brother Ernest were partners in Baragar Brothers, a company which did winter hauling for mine and dam projects in Northern Ontario in the 1920s, dug ponds for water conservation during the “dry thirties”, built emergency airfields for the original Trans Canada Airway and later was heavily involved in road construction. Henry married Edith Belle Nugent, a teacher and registered nurse from Sanford, Manitoba.



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Frank Baragar, Bill Francis and Matt Berry, N.A.M.E. [Northern Aerial Minerals Exploration] Camp, 15 miles north of Dismal Lakes, July 2, 1931
Library and Archives Canada

Their next son Francis Bell graduated from Manitoba Agricultural College. He joined the Royal Air Force (RAF) and was awarded the Air Force Cross in World War I. After the war he became a bush pilot, flying into Northern Manitoba, Ontario and the Coppermine area of the Northwest Territories. Madeleine Halloran became his English war bride in 1921.

Their fourth son, Ernest Albert, earned his degree at

the Manitoba Agricultural College and taught at Raymond Agricultural School in Alberta, returning to Manitoba to rejoin his brother in Baragar Brothers. At the time of his death in 1960, he was the Reeve of the Municipality of Grey. He married Alice Maude Brownlow, a school teacher from Altamont, Manitoba, in 1920.

The fifth son, Frederick Drury, graduated from **Wesley College. He was a Major in the Canadian Army and was awarded the Military Cross for bravery in World War I. During World War II he served as an instructor at Camp Shilo, Manitoba. As a teacher, then as the principal of Principal Sparling and Laura Secord schools he spent thirty-seven years in Winnipeg schools. In 1919 he married Edith Anne Robertson, a graduate of Wesley College.

Sophia Jane (Jennie) Baragar, the eldest sibling and only daughter, married Frederick Laing in 1913. They farmed at Claresholm, Alberta.

*In the Guffin Cemetery, Sydney Twp., Hasting County, Ontario, the headstone for Henry read “Bargar” and for his wife, Catherine, it is Baragar. From then on, this branch of the family used Baragar, however other lines (and many that remained in the Palatine settled region of New York) have used many and varied ways of spelling their surname.

** Wesley College became United College and then the University of Winnipeg.

Source: D. Anne Baragar Crossin, Registered Nurse, daughter of Henry William Baragar and Edith Belle Nugent. Anne married Alan L. Crossin in 1957 and owns the Baragar Centennial Farm at Elm Creek, Manitoba. July 31, 2005

