

Who is Ann Snelgrove of Lower Island Cove circa 1760's?

The Newfoundland colonial records contain the will of James Snelgrove of Lower Island Cove dated March 26, 1798. The will was registered and proven in Harbour Grace on June 16, 1826. It is likely that James died some time before that, perhaps years before, and the will was registered only at the time of his wife Ann's death and will registration. Unfortunately both James' and Ann's death predates the burial records, and Ann's headstone in the Old Lower Island Cove cemetery is so worn and sunken into the ground, with no legible dates. So, we can only guess when they actually died.

I am the person who originally found their wills in the old Court Books in the Land Registry Office at the Confederation Building in St. John's, and transcribed them and shared them on the internet. The two wills appeared back to back in the book, so this suggests that James and Ann Snelgrove are husband and wife.

In his will, James names his "espouse" as Ann. The children listed are his five sons, John (the eldest), "and as follows, James, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob". We can presume they are listed in descending order of age. He names his "two youngest daughters" as Rachel and Grace, and as of the writing of the will in 1798, they are not "of age". This suggests James has other daughters, but they are unnamed. Given my other research, I have estimated that the eldest son John was born about 1764, through to Rachel and Grace being born about 1785 and 1787, and the youngest being Jacob, born about 1788.

In Ann Snelgrove's will written November 11, 1822, she names "my dutiful son Jacob", and her daughters Rachel and Grace (who get gold rings), and two more daughters Hannah and Ann (who get her clothes). It is possible there are other daughters not named; we know Ann had 5 sons, yet she named only "dutiful" Jacob. From other records we learn that at least Abraham and Jacob have gone to Catalina in Trinity Bay, and John is most likely the patriarch of the Grates Cove Snelgroves. So Ann likely named only "dutiful Jacob", since he is the one who remained in Lower Island Cove. (I do have other evidence that Abraham and his wife Ann did eventually return from Catalina).

It is interesting to note that in his will James mentions money in the hands of William Butt of "Winborn". This is likely Wimborne Minster in Dorset, which will come into play later, as you shall see.

So, who is Ann Snelgrove of Lower Island Cove? Any marriage with her husband James, approximately 1760-1762, would have pre-dated church records, so we have no maiden name.

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Index of Names mentioned:

Butt, William Merchant of Wimborne Minster
Curtis, Mary (nee Thacker)
Gleed, Thomas, Mariner of Southampton
Hiscock, William, grandfather of Elizabeth Symes
Moores, George
Mullens, Anne (previously Thacker, maiden name unknown)
Mullens, Richard, Boatkeeper of Western Bay but now of Sturminster Newton
Perry, Nicholas of Western Bay
Perry, Phillis (nee Thacker)
Phillips, John
Snelgrove, Abraham son of James & Ann
Snelgrove, Ann (nee Thacker) daughter of William Thacker & Anne (Mullens)
Snelgrove, Grace daughter of James & Ann
Snelgrove, Hanna daughter of James & Ann
Snelgrove, Isaac son of James & Ann
Snelgrove, Jacob son of James & Ann
Snelgrove, James (Senior) husband of Ann Thacker
Snelgrove, John eldest son of James & Ann
Snelgrove, Rachel daughter of James & Ann
Symes, Elizabeth, widow of John Symes of Poole
Thacker, John son of William Thacker and Anne (Mullens)
Thacker, Robert godson of Richard Mullens
Vibert, Jacques (also known as Webber, James)

SOURCES:

Will of James Snelgrove of Lower Island Cove, 1798, Newfoundland court records
Will of Ann Snelgrove of Lower Island Cove, 1822, Newfoundland court records
Intestate Administration of William Thacker, 1744 – Ancestry.com Dorset England Wills and Probates, 1565-1858, Image 17 of 490.
Prerogative Court of Canterbury Will of Richard Mullens, Boatkeeper of Western Bay, Newfoundland, North America probated September 30, 1762 – Ancestry.com England & Wales, Prerogative Court of

Canterbury Wills, 1384-1858, Image 798 of 826; also The National Archives, Kew, England, Prob 11/879/529

Prerogative Court of Canterbury Will of Anne Mullens, Widow of Sturminster Newton Caste, Dorset probated February 28, 1765 – Ancestry.com England & Wales, Prerogative Court of Canterbury Wills, 1384-1858, Image 311 of 822; also The National Archives, Kew, England, Pro 11/906/304

Indenture 1801, purchase of a Fishing Room by Ann Snelgrove of Lower Island Cove from Elizabeth Symes, widow of Poole, third party William Butt, Merchant of Wimborne Minster – Newfoundland court records

Volume 13, Conception Bay Plantation Records, Newfoundland Grand Banks genealogy site

So Longe as there Comes Noe Women by Gordon Handcock can be downloaded for free from Memorial University of Newfoundland Digital Archives Library at <https://collections.mun.ca/digital/collection/cns>